

HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK NEWS

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POLLING RESULTS CONFIRM- MONTANANS SUPPORT EQUALITY FOR GAY AND LESBIAN PEOPLE

For years, the Montana Human Rights Network has said that Montana law is out of touch with the beliefs of everyday Montanans on issues of equality for gay, lesbian, bi, and transgender people. Now it has the data to back it up.

In a scientific opinion poll, nearly 9 out of 10 Montanans agreed that nobody should be discriminated against in their employment solely because they are gay. The majority went on to say that the law should be strengthened to reflect those beliefs.

That's good news for Montanans like Diane Keefauver who was fired from her job in February. Keefauver worked at a box store in Missoula. When she interrupted her co-workers' anti-gay joke with a simple "Cool it guys, I'm gay" everything changed. She was given higher performance standards, far beyond those of her co-workers, and eventually fired for not meeting them. Keefauver believed she was fired for being gay, so she attempted to file an EEOC discrimination complaint. She was not allowed to do so, because gay people are not included in the Montana Human Rights Act.

When employees believe they have been fired because of their age, gender, race or religion, no matter what "official" reason they are given, they may file a complaint with an unbiased agency. There is an investigation and determination of what really happened. Montanans like Keefauver are simply asking for the same access to justice.

"Seeing these poll results tells me that my neighbors think what happened to me is wrong, and that we should take action to prevent it from happening to anyone else," Keefauver said. "That is certainly a comforting feeling, and it gives me hope that we can change the laws in Montana this year."

More than 9 out of 10 Montanans polled also said no one should be harassed or intimidated just because they are gay. Seven out of 10 agreed the state's hate crimes law should be updated to reflect that view.

That's good news for Jess Keith, who was severely beaten on the streets of Missoula last November, just for being a lesbian. Keith was walking alone one evening when four assailants attacked her shouting anti-gay slurs as she lay in the fetal position in the empty parking lot of the Missoula Public Library.

"I'm no different than anyone else. I am a very caring, loving person who wants to be accepted and deserves to feel safe in my community," said Keith. "If a law was passed...it would make [would-be assailants] think twice and stop some of

(Poll, continued on page 2)

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(Poll, from page 1)

them from participating in this type of violence.”

Keith responded to the incident by moving away from Montana. “Montana is my home and this saddens me. It is where I want to be and where others I know want to stay,” she said in a statement shortly after the attack.

Who is Worried About the (Secret) Gay Agenda?

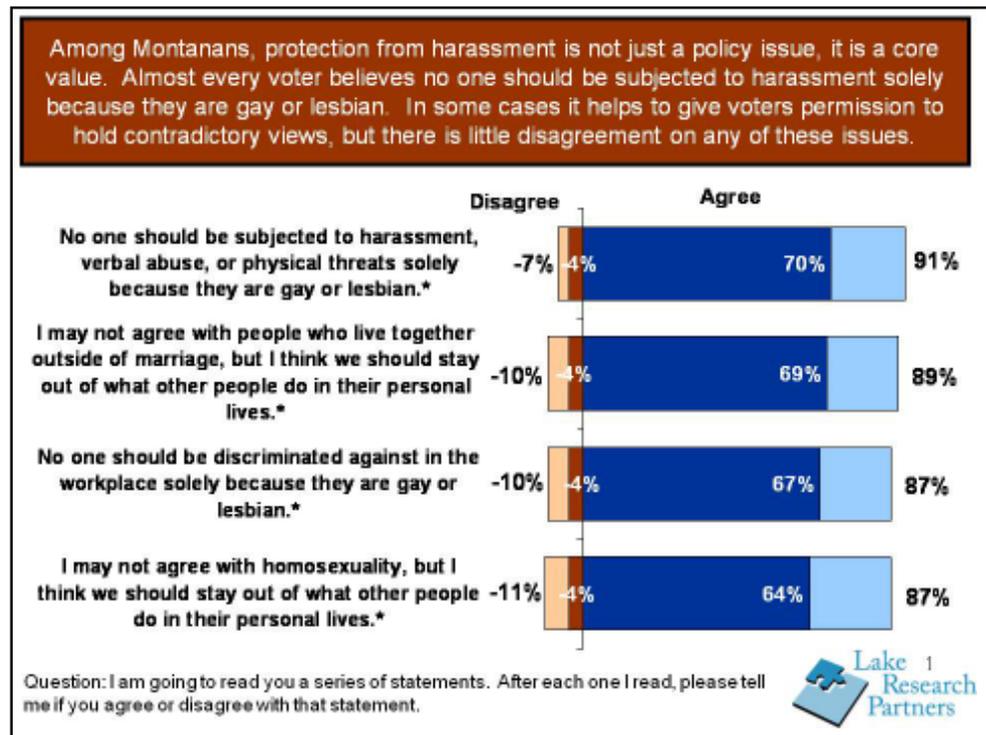
It turns out few Montanans are worried about the “gay agenda.” When asked whether they were more worried about the agenda of gay and lesbian groups or the agenda of religious-political conservative groups, nearly twice as many feared the conservative agenda (41%) than the gay agenda (23%). Many Montanans were not concerned about either.

Support for an extreme religious/political agenda of inequality is clearly eroding. Republicans were split nearly evenly on the question. Folks from the rural eastern part of the state were more concerned about the conservative agenda by 42% to 24%. Of people under 55 years old, 45% expressed concern about the conservative agenda.

What About Marriage?

Nearly 2/3 of Montanans support some level of legal recognition of the relationships of same-gender couples. While 20% support the same legal right for these couples to marry, another 13% believe they should receive all the legal benefits of marriage, but it should be called something else. In addition, 31% approve of civil unions, domestic partnerships, or some other recognition that includes many of the benefits and protections of marriage.

“Discrimination in the institution of marriage needs to end because that’s the way society distributes many benefits,” said Christine Kaufmann, Executive Director of the Montana Human Rights Network. “However, we remain focused on ending discrimination in the areas of employment, housing, and public accommodations. Montanans have clearly shown their support for that, and it has greater impact for more people.”



About the Poll

The poll was conducted by a reputable national polling firm, Lake Research Partners. Of the Montanans polled, 38% identified as Republican, 30% as Democrat, and the rest as Independents. The sample was balanced between east and west, and urban and rural. The poll was released by the Montana Human Rights Network, along with the Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, the United Church of Christ (Montana Conference), Service Employees International Union HealthCare 775 NW, Forward Montana, WEEL, NARAL Pro-Choice Montana and Montana PFLAG.

The full results of the poll are posted at www.mhrn.org.

RIGHT-WING ROUNDUP: 2008 PRIMARY ELECTION SEASON

Koopman Launches "RINO" Hunt

For over two decades, there has been an ongoing struggle in the Montana Republican Party. On one side is the party's right wing which rose to prominence during the Religious Right's infiltration of the GOP during the early 1990s. On the other side are the more moderate and traditional Republicans, which the right wing derides as "RINOs" or "Republicans In Name Only."

This internal fight went public during the 2007 Montana Legislature when members of the party's right wing were elected to leadership positions in the Montana House. By the end of session, the different factions of the GOP had taken their sniping public. It continued after the session and into the Republican primaries.

In March, Rep. Roger Koopman

(R-Bozeman) announced his intention to conduct a RINO hunt of his own. In an e-mail to David Hart, the state coordinator for Ron Paul's presidential campaign, Koopman outlined his intention to recruit 13 "pro-freedom, Constitutional conservatives" to run in primaries against "socialist incumbent 'Republicans,' who have consistently sold out the cause of liberty in the Montana Legislature."

He called his plan "The Liberty Project" and claimed he was working under the banner of the Republican National Assembly, which bills itself as "the Republican wing of the Republican Party." Koopman said he would design campaign plans for those conservatives who decided to run. He based his list of targets on a voting record compiled by Rob Natelson's Montana Conservatives.

Montana Republicans quickly condemned Koopman's actions. Rep. Bob Lake (R-Hamilton) said

Koopman had "very little credibility in the state Legislature." Sen. Jim Shockley (R-Victor) stated Koopman was "way out of line."

Rep. Tom McGillvray (R-Billings), who was leading the Montana Republican Party's candidate recruiting efforts, blasted Koopman's effort. He said it was wrong to expect all Republicans "to



Rep. Roger Koopman
(R-Bozeman)

goose-step to one person's philosophy" because that is what "cults are made of."

Of the incumbents Koopman targeted, only five faced challenges in the primary. Three lost their seats: Rep. Bruce Malcolm (Emigrant), Rep. John Ward (Helena), and Rep. Carol Lambert (Broadus).

All three were targets of nasty mailings from groups based out of Bozeman. Saying they lost because of "last-minute, sleazy" campaign attacks, the trio announced they will run as write-in candidates for the General Election.

Koopman, who decided not to run for re-election, denied having anything to do with the mailings. He also said it was ignorant of the three Republicans to blame the mailings for their losses. He said the trio should just accept their defeats.

Extremist Party Fields Slate of Candidates

The Constitution Party of Montana, as it has since appearing on the scene in 2000, will have candidates on the November ballot. The party combines many tenets of the anti-government "patriot" movement with ultra-conservative Christian doctrine. Its platform supports "unorganized militias," which are groups like the
(Roundup, continued on page 9)

CONSTITUTION PARTY CANDIDATES

Office	Name	Location
SD 6	M. Neal Donohue	Polson
SD 50	Kandi Matthews-Jenkins	Missoula
HD 1	Freeman Johnson	Troy
HD 6	Timothy Martin	Kalispell
HD 13	Renn Bodeker	Plains
HD 20	Terry Poupa	Great Falls
HD 21	Kent Holtz	Great Falls
HD 22	Jonathan Martin	Great Falls
HD 23	Christopher Gregory	Great Falls
Secretary of State	Sieglinde Sharbono	Stevensville

YOUNG “CREATORS” WREAK HAVOC IN BILLINGS: COMMUNITY GROUPS, NETWORK RESPOND

In March, the media reported that a Billings synagogue was vandalized with pudding. Since Jewish property is often the first target of white supremacists, the Human Rights Network began looking into the incident. The Network discovered that an Asian restaurant and an adult bookstore were vandalized in a similar way.

The Asian restaurant and synagogue are unmistakable targets for white supremacists as they signal the presence of people of color and Jewish people in the community. The adult bookstore also fits, as many white supremacists believe Jewish people run the pornography industry. The targets led Network staff to continue investigating. What the Network found is not good news for the Billings community.

A small group of teenagers and high school students are emulating the World Church of the Creator (also known as The Creativity Movement). The Creativity Movement was one of the largest and most notorious hate groups of the 1990s, until its leader was sent to prison for trying to have a federal judge killed. The group had a formal chapter for years in Montana that was maintained by a small group of dedicated white supremacists.

While the teenagers in Billings are only in high school, they have quite a past. They initially got into trouble while attending middle school in 2006. They threatened Hispanic and Jewish students, and threatened to assassinate their principal. White supremacist propaganda was found as the school dealt with these incidents. One of the students was expelled and one served an extended suspension.

The students have continued this behavior in high school. The student expelled in middle school has handed out business cards to his classmates featuring Creativity information. School officials have also confiscated a white supremacist T-shirt and one of the main books used by the Creativity Movement to promote its hateful beliefs.

Some of the Network’s sources have speculated that the father of one of the students may be providing the white supremacist ideology and acting as a mentor

to the high school students. According to reports, their home is filled Nazi paraphernalia. The Network has yet to find a connection between the father and the well-known Creativity activists that have been in Montana.

In early June, three Billings restaurants were vandalized. All of them are minority-owned establishments. At each one, swastikas and messages like “scum out” and “white power” were painted on the buildings. One of the restaurants was hit twice, the first time when a brick painted with white supremacist messages was thrown through a window. The Rimrocks near Black

Otter Trail have also been vandalized. Over 100 feet of white supremacist graffiti was painted and a large Nazi flag was displayed.

The Network has been working with Not In Our Town-Billings, a community group organizing against the white supremacist movement locally. The group’s Eran Thompson put the current events in context when talking to a local television station.

“They’re testing us,” Thompson said. “Bricks through windows with swastikas,

swastikas on the backs of buildings, swastikas all over town, they’re testing us to see what our response will be. If we decide this is okay and do nothing the next target will be people.”

For the Network, the current situation is a rerun. The most recent example was the recruitment of high school students by the Montana Front Working Class Skinheads, a group of young Nazi skinheads. The group’s leaders thought minors would receive shorter prison sentences if arrested and convicted. The group became more and more violent, until six of its members were convicted on hate crimes charges and sent to federal prison.

Most Billings residents also remember the events of 1993 when white supremacists terrorized the Jewish and Native American communities, giving rise to The Not In Our Town response that birthed a national movement.

The community is already organizing events to help clean up the graffiti and plans for “eat ins” at the targeted restaurants are also in the works. □



*The Creativity Movement's
logo*

NETWORK CONTINUES EFFORTS TO PASS I-155

By mid-June, it was clear that Initiative 155 (the Healthy Montana Kids Plan) had gathered more than the required number of signatures to qualify for the November ballot. I-155 expands two existing, efficient and effective public healthcare programs (CHIP and Children's Medicaid) to offer comprehensive access to 30,000 Montana children who are currently uninsured.

The Network has been involved with the I-155 campaign for over a year and will continue its support until the initiative passes and becomes law on November 4. Network staffers have been active in both discussions about the policy itself and public education efforts supporting it. The Network and its members also participated in the signature gathering to put I-155 on the ballot, turning in over 10,000 signatures.

All indicators show that the current, market-based healthcare system is failing individuals and families across the state and the country. According to Families USA, over 271,000 Montanans were uninsured for all or part of 2006-2007. Of that number, 35,000 of those individuals are children under 18.

The market-based approach doesn't even work for those who can afford insurance. According to a Harvard University study, 50% of personal bankruptcies in the U.S. are medical bankruptcies. Seventy six percent of those medical bankruptcies are individuals or families who were insured at the time they got sick.

The Network believes that healthcare is a human right as articulated in Article 25 of the *Univer-*

sal Declaration of Human Rights. The only true solution to our society's healthcare crisis is a publicly-financed system that is universally accessible and offers an acceptable quality of care to every member of our society. In other words, everyone is in and no one is left out.

So why would the Network expend so much time and energy on I-155, a policy that does not meet its



insure our future

own criteria for a "true solution?" The answer is that a thoughtful approach to building momentum and support toward a true universal system will take many steps. I-155 is a good initial step. By expanding access to public programs for children and talking about how these programs strengthen society, save money, and create opportunities, we move the dialogue forward.

Public discourse on healthcare reform has been hampered by a general misunderstanding of what public financing actually means. Phrases like "socialized medicine" are used to demonize any approach that includes public funding of a healthcare system. Publicly funded, universal healthcare systems are not all the same. There are models from France, Japan, Germany, Canada and

the United Kingdom, all of which are publicly financed and each of which is very different from the others.

What is truly remarkable is our society's unwillingness to think of a publicly funded, universal approach as an investment in ourselves. A frequent criticism of developing a healthcare system that includes all of us is how much that system will cost. According to the World Health Organization, the United States ranks first in health expenditures and 37th in health system performance. Health system performance refers to how efficiently a health system translates expenditures into positive health outcomes.

The bottom line is that we are simply not getting what we pay for. We can have a better performing health-care system and pay much less for it. By including everyone and sharing both risk and reward, we will save money. This will take resolve, creativity and commitment. It won't happen overnight.

The Network believes that I-155 can be the beginning of real healthcare reform in our state. The initiative begins a dialogue about how public programs, like CHIP and Medicaid, work. It implements a policy that demonstrates how publicly-funded healthcare programs can offer availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality.

Building upon the momentum started with I-155, we can achieve true universal reform. I-155 is an opportunity to talk about our failing healthcare system *and* solutions to build something new that works for all of us. □

AT THE INTERSECTION OF STATE AND JUSTICE

NETWORK SEEKS END TO THE DEATH PENALTY

The Human Rights Network, as part of the Montana Abolition Coalition, is currently engaged in a campaign to educate the public about the death penalty and, ultimately, to repeal the death sentence in Montana.

During the 2007 Montana Legislature, the Coalition again asked lawmakers to abolish the death penalty and replace it with life without possibility of parole. The bill passed the Senate before failing by a slim margin in the House. In 2008, the Network hired a full-time staff member to work with the Coalition to bring an end to this institutional injustice.

The Montana Abolition Coalition includes the Montana Human Rights Network, Amnesty International, ACLU of Montana, Journey of Hope, Montana Catholic Conference, Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights, Montana Association of Churches, and Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation. Each organization in the Coalition brings a different perspective on why abolishing the death penalty is necessary. The Network will focus on the inequalities that exist in the application of the death penalty and base the case for abolition in a human rights context.

The death penalty is the ultimate, irreversible denial of human rights. The abolition of the death penalty fits within the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* as part of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The Covenant was adopted in 1976 and seeks to limit the death penalty where it is still applied. The U.S. ratified the Covenant in 1992 and is thus bound by it.

In addition, the 1997 U.N. High Commission for Human Rights approved a resolution stating that "abolition of the death penalty contributes to the enhancement of human dignity and progressive development of human rights." Much of this is based on Article 5 of the *Universal Declaration* which states, "No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment," and Article 7 which declares, "All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law."

In 1972, the death penalty was declared unconsti-

"Even under the most sophisticated death penalty statutes, race continues to play a major role in determining who shall live and who shall die."

- U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun, 1994

tutional by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Furman v. Georgia*. Evidence of its discriminatory use by the states led the court to call the death penalty "harsh, freakish, and arbitrary." When the courts reinstated the practice in 1976, the problems of fairness continued despite new trial and sentencing requirements.

When Race and Wealth Determine Who Dies

The U.S. Constitution guarantees fairness and equity before the law and yet one of the death penalty's fatal flaws is the unequal application to minorities and those in poverty. Numerous governmental and non-governmental studies have shown that racial, economic, political, and gender biases permeate our legal system and lead to inequalities in sentencing.

In 1990, the U.S. General Accounting Office reported, "Our synthesis of the 28 studies [on the death penalty] shows a pattern of evidence indicating racial disparities in the charging, sentencing, and imposition of the death penalty after the *Furman* decision" and that "race of victim influence was found at all stages of the criminal justice system process."

While African Americans make up only 13% of the U.S. population, they make up a disproportionate 42% of those on death row. Race discrimination infects America's capital punishment system. According to a recent landmark study regarding race and the death penalty, a black defendant who kills a white victim is up to 30 times more likely to be sentenced to death than a white defendant who kills a black victim. According to Amnesty International, more than 20% of black defendants who have been executed were convicted by all-white juries.

While structural inequities exist in the death penalty's
(*Death Penalty, continued on page 11*)

TAX PROTESTORS RECYCLING COMMON LAW SCHEMES

In November 2007, Flathead-area resident Rolan Becker was convicted of tax evasion. U.S. District Court Judge Charles Lovell called Becker an “economic terrorist” and compared him to the Montana Freemen.

In 1996, the Montana Freemen made national headlines when they engaged in an 81-day standoff with law enforcement in Garfield County. Many of the Freemen who participated in the standoff were sent to prison. The two main leaders of the group, Leroy Schweitzer and Daniel Petersen, remain incarcerated.

Following on the heels of Timothy McVeigh’s 1995 bombing in Oklahoma City, the Freemen standoff was another signal to the anti-government movement that law enforcement was taking it seriously.

Increased scrutiny and prosecutions, however, didn’t signal an end to the ideology. Some recent examples in Montana illustrate that common-law beliefs like those of the Freemen, especially when it comes to the income tax, are alive and well.

Rolan Becker maintained throughout his trial and sentencing that he was acting in good faith when he didn’t pay taxes from 2000-2006. He said he had researched the validity of the income tax and believed he

didn’t have to pay it. He attended seminars, read books, and listened to tapes that told him he didn’t have to pay. There are many groups and individuals that peddle this false information, including Bob Schulz’s We the People Foundation, Las Vegas’ Irwin Schiff, and Joe Banister’s Freedom Above Fortune.

for attorneys representing common law activists), he is a favorite of the anti-government movement and a frequent speaker at right-wing events.

One of Becraft’s favorite arguments is that tax protestors who believe they are not breaking the law should not be convicted. While it fails the vast majority of the time in courts, Becraft did successfully use it in a 1993 Tennessee case. Based on that victory, he continues to use it as a defense, as he did for Becker.

Judge Lovell didn’t find Becraft’s argument persuasive. Lovell, who presided over the trial of Leroy Schweitzer, called Becker “the most flagrant protestor and tax dodger that I have seen.”

Lovell ordered Becker to pay over \$91,000 in restitution, \$50,000 to help cover the costs of his 27-month incarceration, and another \$1,700 to pay for the government’s prosecution of him.

Laurel Couple Also Convicted

Lowell Becraft also represented a couple from Laurel that was convicted on charges of tax evasion in 2008. Henry and Judy Matthies faced charges for their tax-protesting activities going back to 1997.

In May, Henry Matthies received three years in prison, while his wife was sentenced to two. They were (*Tax Protest, continued on page 10*)



Lowell Becraft (right) represented both Rolan Becker and the Matthies (above).

Becker’s attorney, Alabama’s Lowell Becraft, comes from that tradition. Notorious for representing common-law tax protestors, he has argued in court that the 16th Amendment, which established the income tax, is unconstitutional.

Because he has scored a couple of victories (which is highly unusual

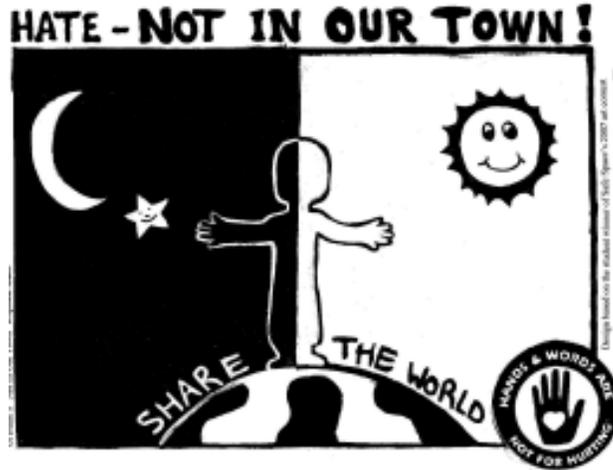
BIAS-BASED ASSAULT COMMITTED, BUTTE COMMUNITY RESPONDS

On April 13, a woman was attacked in Butte because of her skin color. The woman, an Iraq War veteran stationed in Idaho, was in town visiting family.

While walking through a neighborhood, she was assaulted after three attackers used a racial slur and told her to leave the neighborhood. She was hit between 12-20 times in the head and body. She suffered a black eye, bruises, and injuries to her ribs.

“It was incredibly important that the community responded to this hate crime,” said the Network’s Travis McAdam, who lives in Butte. “The assault was meant to send a message that people of color are not welcome. We know that sentiment and the attackers’ actions did not represent the values of the community as a whole. Our community’s condemnation of the attack and our support for the victim and her family needed to be clear.”

Following the attack, the Network brought together a group of Butte citizens to discuss ways for the community to respond. The citizens represented a diverse segment of the community—peace activists, domestic violence work-



ers, elected officials, veterans, and the arts community.

The group, which adopted “The Not In Our Town Response Team” as its name, came up with ways to show support to the victim and her family, while also demonstrating that violence, intimidation, and harassment are not community values.

The group published an insert in

the *Montana Standard* featuring a picture (see inset graphic) that people were encouraged to put up in their windows as a show of support.

Butte citizens were also asked to add their names to a statement which expressed outrage over the attack, support for the targeted woman and her family, and the need to stand up against violence, intimidation and harassment.

Signatures are still being gathered. People can sign the statement through the Network’s website or in person at locations around Butte (see inset box).

Finally, Chief Executive Paul Babb issued a proclamation encouraging the residents of Butte to hang up the newspaper inserts in their homes and add their signatures to the sign-on statement.

The woman said her attackers were one woman and two men who all looked to be between 18-25 years old. The Butte Silver-Bow County Sheriff questioned one person of interest in the attack. However, no arrests have been made and the person questioned was not considered a suspect.

Because the attack involved a possible violation of civil rights, the FBI has joined the investigation. □

PETITION LOCATIONS

Business	Address
Chamber of Commerce	1000 George Street
Great Harvest Bread	1803 Harrison Ave.
Hummingbird Cafe	605 West Park St.
Insty Prints	120 West Park St.
MOFAB	405 West Park St.
Venus Rising	124 South Main St.

(Roundup, from page 3)

Militia of Montana. It also supports the fusion of civil law with biblical law.

The party is fielding 10 candidates this year, nine for the Montana Legislature and one for Secretary of State (see inset box on page 3). All but one of the legislative candidates (M. Neal Donohue) has run for the legislature on the party's ticket before.

For more information on the party and its candidates, please read the Network's comprehensive report at: <http://mhrn.org/publications/specialresearchreports/CPMTreport.pdf>.

Sieglinde Sharbono, the party's candidate for Secretary of State, is also a first-time candidate. Last election cycle was the first time the party ran a candidate for statewide office. It was a successful strategy that allowed the Constitution Party of Montana to garner enough total votes to maintain its ballot access this election cycle. Sharbono's candidacy is no doubt a continuation of this strategy.

Former Constitution Party Candidates Win as Republicans

During the 2006 campaign cycle, Polson's Ron Marquardt ran for Clerk of the Montana Supreme Court on the Constitution Party of Montana's ticket.

Without a Republican in the race, he received over 86,000 and finished second. His vote total allowed the party to maintain its ballot access for the 2008 election cycle.

In 2008, Marquardt switched parties. He ran in a three-person Republican primary for House District 12. The incumbent, Constitution Party Rep. Rick Jore (Roman), was termed out and couldn't run again. Marquardt won the Republican primary with 58% of the vote. He faces off against Democrat John Fleming in the General Election.

Across the state in Livingston, another former Constitution Party candidate also ran as a Republican. Joel Boniek ran on the Constitution Party ticket for House District 61 back in 2004. This time around he ran as a Republican against incumbent Rep. Bruce Malcolm (Remigrant).

Malcolm was one of the legislators targeted by Rep. Roger Koopman's Liberty Project (see above). Aided by the publicity surrounding Koopman's Project and nasty mailings from Bozeman-based groups targeting Malcolm, Boniek won the Republican primary with 56% of the vote. Malcolm has announced he will run against Boniek

as a write-in candidate in the General Election. There is no Democrat running in HD 61.

Roots and the GOP Grassroots

Livingston's Roger Roots, whose involvement in the white supremacist movement is well documented, ran for a seat on the Park County Republican Central Committee. The Network became very familiar with Roots in 1994 when he sued the Network for libel after it called him a Klan organizer. A jury ruled in the Network's favor.

Roots' involvement in the white supremacist movement is well documented. He was an associate of John Abarr, a Klan organizer in Montana and Wyoming, throughout the 1990s. In the early 1990s, Roots authored the pamphlet *Whites and Blacks: 100 Facts (and One Lie)*. Among other things, the pamphlet stated whites are more

intelligent than people of color and suggested people of color should be classified as a different species.



Roger Roots

Serving as a correspondent for *The Jubilee*, Roots wrote articles supporting Red Beckman, an anti-Semitic tax protestor from Billings. *The Jubilee* was a publication based on Christian Identity, a racist theology claiming people of color are subhuman beasts and

Jews are the literal children of Satan.

In 1999, Roots graduated with honors from the law school at Rhode Island's Roger Williams University. However, he was denied a license to practice law in Rhode Island due to his criminal past and his lack of candor and truthfulness on his application. Roots re-applied two years later and received his license.

He is now living in the Livingston area and has started a business called Trial and Error Enterprises. He is also serving on the advisory board of the Fully Informed Jury Association (FIJA). FIJA, a popular "patriot" group, teaches that jurors can ignore laws they don't like and set free defendants even if evidence proves the law was broken. At a 2006 FIJA meeting, Roots reconnected with his old friend Red Beckman, whom FIJA presented with an award for being the "Grandfather of FIJA." Roots is currently representing Rudy Stanko, a self-proclaimed reverend of the white supremacist Creativity Movement, in a Nebraska lawsuit.

(Roundup, continued on page 10)

(Tax Protest, from page 7)

ordered to pay \$204,000 in restitution and \$3,000 in court costs.

This wasn't the first time one of the Matthies was sent to prison for not paying taxes. In 1998, Henry Matthies spent a year in federal prison and was ordered to pay \$10,000 in prosecution costs after a jury convicted him on three counts of failing to file income taxes. Calling the government "evil, wicked, immoral" and saying his religion defined government as a "false God," Matthies represented himself in that case. He claimed he acted in good faith while not following the tax code. To no avail, Becraft and the Matthies used the same argument this time.

According to court records, the couple developed their argument that they didn't have to pay income taxes after attending a 1985 meeting in Washington. The couple also bought books with titles like *How to Fight the IRS and Win* and continued their supposed "legal" research.

"It's obvious Mr. Matthies didn't have any respect for the law," stated U.S. District Court Judge Richard Cebull when handing down the sentences. "He thumbed his nose at the law."

Copyrighting Names

"Redemption" is a common-law scheme based on an elaborate conspiracy theory claiming the United States went bankrupt in 1933. To pay off the country's debts, the scheme explains, the U.S. began using American citizens themselves as collateral by registering their birth certificates as securities.

Advocates of redemption promote strategies

whereby citizens can regain control of these securities, which they refer to as a "straw man." By doing this, redemption proponents say citizens can get access to and use the funds associated with the straw man.

A main tenet of redemption is that a person's name spelled with all capital letters is different from the same spelled with lower case letters. For more on redemption, see an essay by the Anti-Defamation League's Mark Pitcavage at <http://www.adl.org/mwd/redemption.asp>.

The Network recently came across some 2003 and 2004 filings with the Musselshell County Clerk and Recorder, which Pitcavage identified as part of a second-wave of redemption. The filings are attempts to copyright individuals' names. They state that all forms of the names are now considered trademarked and cannot be used without the express consent of the individual. Pitcavage said this particular scheme is an attempt to keep government officials from filing charges against "patriots." The theory goes that the government violates the copyright of the names if it serves papers on the "patriots."

The Musselshell County filings, all in identical language, came from nine people: Gordon Walters, Ann Walters, Clyde O'Neil, Willa Atkins, Jeffrey O'Neil, Roseltha Croston, John Croston, Cheryl O'Neil, and Glenna Hartsell.

Gordon and Ann Walters have run into problems with the Montana Auditor for selling securities not registered with the state. In response, they have tried to file liens against the property of state employees. They have also billed one state employee for \$235 million, saying the employee violated their copyrights by using their names in official documents. The Walters have tried to call God has a witness in proceedings. □

(Immigration, from page 12)

he features a list of U.S. Senators and the names of cities with corresponding zip codes. In the message circulated by Bonner, Dolz wrote, "LESSON... When we call Senators outside our state BE PREPARED to give them a CITY and ZIP CODE for that state." Dolz created a special page on his website dedicated to this scam.

The Network is currently investigating whether or not this lobbying scheme is legal. □

(Roundup, from page 9)

In the campaign for a position on the local GOP Central Committee, Roots lost by a vote of 108-51. This wasn't the first time he showed up in Republican circles. Back in 1994 while using a fake name, Roots worked for the re-election campaign of U.S. Sen. Conrad Burns (R-MT). When the media broke the story about Roots' true identity, the campaign fired him. Roots claimed that Burns' campaign manager suggested using the alias to facilitate Roots' employment by the campaign. The Burns campaign denied the claim. □

(Death Penalty, from page 6)

use and make it unjust to racial minorities, it is also true that few defendants with wealth and private attorneys find themselves on death row. Those in poverty have a greater chance of receiving a death sentence.

According to recent findings, 95% of defendants charged with capital crimes are impoverished and cannot afford their own attorney to represent them. In the *Furman* case, Justice William O. Douglas noted, "Money buys good attorneys. Lack of money means you get whoever the state assigns to you."

Innocent on Death Row

The Death Penalty Information Center currently features profiles of

eight men who may have been innocent of crimes for which they were executed by states. Evidence suggests that hundreds of errors have occurred in spite of safeguards designed to guarantee that no innocent people are executed. The exonerations of 129 innocent people in the U.S. since 1976 have shown that human error is inherent in our criminal justice system.

In October 2002, Jimmy Ray Bromgard was exonerated by post-conviction DNA testing. Bromgard spent 14.5 years in a Montana prison for a crime he did not commit. Bromgard was a victim of inadequate counsel and corruption in the justice system.

Although Bromgard's case has led to changes in the system, his case illustrates that, even when Montan-

ans believe our justice system is working, human error exists and the innocent can be put behind bars.

Ending the Death Penalty in Montana

The death penalty remains fraught with arbitrariness, discrimination and error. Montana can offer life without possibility of parole as an alternative to a death sentence in an attempt to create a more equitable system and meet human rights standards for justice. The Network is hoping to put an end to this denial of human rights by working to legislatively abolish the death penalty in Montana in 2009. □

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ANTI-IMMIGRANT ACTIVISTS: LIE TO U.S. SENATORS

While U.S. Senators represent the people of the nation, they are often particularly attentive to the concerns and needs of their state constituents.

In an effort to influence policy concerning immigration reform, anti-immigrant activists are encouraging their allies to call Senators from across the country and masquerade as constituents. These activists are providing cities and zip code listings to facilitate their allies misrepresenting where they live to appear to be Senators' constituents. This unethical lobbying approach was recently encouraged by a Montana activist.

The current debate over immigration policy uses undocumented immigrants as the scapegoats for everything from loss of jobs to problems with America's under-funded social service systems.

The Network believes all people, regardless of citizenship or national origin, should be treated with respect and have the right to life, liberty and security of person. In the current



Tony Dolz's website features a picture of him (left) with Chris Simcox (right), one of the founders of the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps.

debate, too often the reform proposals contribute to the politics of fear, resentment, and are racist at their core. For more on the current debate over immigration, see the August 2007 edition of *Network News* at www.mhrn.org.

Brian Bonner lives near Basin and is a member and facilitator of "The Coalition Against Illegal Immigration: Bloggers for Securing our Border and Ending Illegal Immigration." The

"coalition" is an online clearinghouse for blog entries that reinforce the current anti-immigrant fervor among the radical right.

Bonner regularly writes online as "The Uncooperative Blogger" and hosts an online radio show almost daily with his wife, Susan. In addition to his extensive commentary degrading immigrants in the "weekly illegal alien report," Bonner expresses his outrage for the supposed communist nature of U.S. politics, his hatred of environmentalists, and offers his "armed citizen re-

port." On air, he also frequently criticizes his wife for being incompetent.

In late May, Bonner circulated a message from Tony Dolz, an anti-immigrant activist from California. Dolz is active with the Minuteman Civil Defense Corps, a national border militia group.

In 2005, he participated in the group's patrol of the Mexican border in Arizona. On Dolz's website, (*Immigration, continued on page 10*)

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