

HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK NEWS

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 2-3, AUGUST 2010

HATE GROUP HOLDS PUBLIC EVENTS, COMMUNITY RESPONDS IN EXTRAORDINARY NUMBERS

In a series of three public events at the Kalispell library, Flathead-area white supremacists promoted Holocaust denial and bad revisionist history. They showed three films they hoped would change viewers' minds as to whether the right side won World War II and paint Adolph Hitler's Third Reich in a positive manner.

Beginning on March 29, the first night of Passoverwhite supremacists in Kalispell, who are organized as a Pioneer Little Europe and are trying to create a "conscious white community," showed the series of films over a three-month time period. The events drew a small handful of supporters, including out-of-town white supremacists.

On the other hand, the Network helped community organizers turn out hundreds of people to protest the films. From faith leaders and Network activists, to youth and seniors, the community responded to the film showings with proclamations that "love lives here" in the Flathead Valley. While the films have stopped for now, these white supremacists aren't going away and, as evidenced by a physical altercation at the second film showing, there is room for concern about what they will do next.

PLE Steps Out of Virtual Reality

Clearly on a first name basis at the March event, members of the Kalispell Pioneer Little Europe (PLE) have attempted to publicly distance themselves from charges that they are a formal organization. It is true that the Flathead-area white supremacists do associate with a variety of national hate groups, from The Creativity Movement to Aryan Nations and the National Alliance. It is also now clear they are communicating beyond the bounds of Stormfront, a white supremacist online forum where frequent discussion occurs about creating a Kalispell PLE, and are trying to turn it into a reality (for more on the Kalispell PLE, see the December 2009 edition of *Network News*).

April Gaede and husband Mark Harrington have been well known to the Network since their arrival in Montana in 2006. Despite her own



Photo from KRTV

April Gaede
Kalispell PLE

(Kalispell, cont. on page 2)

*Human Rights
Network News is a
publication of the
Montana Human Rights
Network, a non-
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(Kalispell, from page 1)

white supremacist activism, it is Gaede's daughters who are her biggest claim to fame. Her twins, Lamb and Ynx, comprise the white power musical group Prussian Blue, and the two girls have been referred to as the Nazi Pop Twins. While the duo has not toured or released any new music for over a year, Gaede has stayed busy by promoting her matchmaking service for white supremacists and encouraging the creation of a PLE in Kalispell. The Kalispell PLE just recently put up its own website.

At the second film showing, Gaede and Harrington were arrested on charges of assault and criminal mischief after throwing down the camera of and injuring a woman participating in the community rally against the Holocaust denial film.

Before her arrest, Gaede said, "I'm loving it. This is great. I love politics, and I especially love race politics. And these people are bringing it right to my door." The couple did not attend the third film and have court appearances scheduled for the beginning of September.

Other attendees of the films included Brian Gray and Kaitlyn Bolliger. The couple posted advertisements for the films on Stormfront prior to the events (for more on Bolliger and Gray, see the November 2009 edition of *Network News*).

In addition, Greg Gerdes of Deer Lodge attended the first film. Gerdes runs the National Association of Forensic Historians, which is a Holocaust denial group. It offers a \$54,000 reward for anyone who can provide proof of mass graves from the Holocaust's death camps, which Gerdes and his group claim don't exist.

In the past, supporting documentation on Gerdes' website has come from white supremacist groups including the National Alliance and the National Socialist Movement (also known as the American Nazi Party).

Gerdes unsuccessfully attempted to get a book about the history of the Holocaust removed from Deer Lodge's Kohrs Memorial Library in 2009.

"Creator" on Board

Creativity Movement adherent Zachariah "Zac" Harp also attended the films. According to online profiles, Harp lives in Kalispell, and his interests include tattoos, choppers, and shooting weapons. Born and raised in Montana, he makes his living as a driller and served in the Army. He claims to live his life by the "14 Words." It's a shorthand reference for the statement: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children." Written by a white supremacist who died in jail for his role in murdering a Jewish radio show host, the 14 Words are popular among racists.

Online, Harp claims to follow the religion of The Creativity Movement, and his dislikes include: "ZOG [Zionist Occupied Government], MHRN, muds, trash, tweakers, rap...." He also claims that "race traitors should be dealt with as treason against our people." Harp is the son of former Kalispell Republican legislator John Harp.

Harp has posted extensive homophobic and anti-Semitic rants online. He also wrote extensively about the efforts of the Bozeman community to respond to the efforts of The Creativity Movement in 2009. Following a rally that drew approximately 2,000 people in Bozeman, Harp complained that "local Bozeman residents gathered to sing puff the magic dragon, kumbia [sic], and hold hands while jewish [sic], black, and christian [sic] speakers spewed tolerance, freedom, and hate." He noted that the Network was involved in planning and holding the event.

(Kalispell, cont. on page 3)

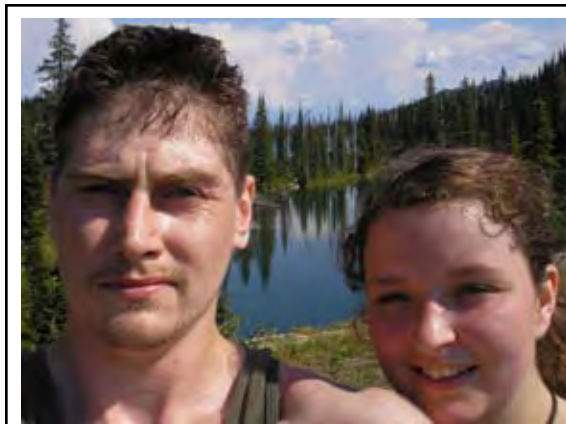


Photo from Stormfront



Photo from New Saxon

Brian Gray (top left), Kaitlyn Bolliger (top right) and Zac Harp (bottom left) all promoted and attended the film in Kalispell.

(*Kalispell*, from page 2)

Although he gave a false last name to a reporter, in October 2009, Harp was featured in a photograph by the *Flathead Beacon* waving The Creativity Movement flag at a white supremacist rally in Kalispell. While Billings Creator Allen Goff was awaiting trial and sentencing on weapons charges, Harp moved The Montana Creativity Movement post office box to Kalispell (see related article on page 6).

An Aryan with Attitude: The Public Organizer

Karl Gharst was the public organizer of the films. While he tried to present himself as a World War II and German history aficionado when advertizing for the films, the Network's Travis McAdam told the Montana press, "He has failed miserably, because he can't keep a lid on his hardcore white supremacist beliefs."

In 2004, the *Daily Interlake* reported that Gharst faced charges for threatening and harassing a social worker. Court records referred to Gharst as a "self-identified member of Aryan Nations and a white supremacist." Gharst reportedly called the social worker a "greasy, turd-colored mongrel," a "filthy mongrel," and a "wild savage from the Flathead Indian Reservation." He also threatened her by saying she only had a short time to live, and he claimed to be forming a group to take physical action against her and her co-workers. He was arrested on the charges in Idaho, where he was staying at the home of Richard Butler, Aryan Nations' leader. Gharst eventually pleaded guilty and was sentenced to and served five months in the Flathead County Detention Center.

At the first film, Gharst praised the Ku Klux Klan and alluded to his belief that people of Northern European (white) descent are God's chosen people. The second remark is a core tenet of Christian Identity, the religion of Aryan Nations, which is based on a racist interpretation of the Bible. It teaches that white people are God's chosen people; that people of color are sub-human "mud people;" and that Jews are the literal children of Satan.

He also talked about the four pillars of "common

law," a term used frequently by the white supremacist and anti-government "patriot" movements. Gharst said the fourth pillar of common law was that he doesn't "have to live with someone I don't want to," and that currently we are forced to do so in this country.

The Films

The first film shown was titled *The Holocaust Debate*. It featured Mark Weber, who argues that the Holocaust didn't happen and Adolph Hitler's "Final Solution" was to deport the Jewish people, not exterminate them. The two-hour film featured Weber claiming that Jewish people chose to go to "labor camps" to work to help the country. He also claimed that concentration camp gas chambers were only used to kill lice on clothes and that the deaths were a result of malnutrition due to embargos and US military aggression.

The second film, *Epic: The Story of the Waffen SS*, glorified Hitler's Third Reich and featured former Waffen SS soldier Leon Degrelle, according to a description by *The Barnes Review*. *The Barnes Review* is a publication dedicated to denying the Holocaust. Numerous white supremacist and Holocaust denial websites feature a book by Degrelle with the same name as the film. The book is described in glowing terms for its positive treatment of the Waffen SS and Hitler.

The third film, *The Truth Behind the Gates of Auschwitz*, denied the existence of the gas chambers in the Nazi concentration camps. Filmmaker David Cole is a well-known Holocaust denier and conspiracy theorist. In the preface to the film he says:

"Since the end of World War II, we have been told repeatedly that many of these camps served a darker purpose: the genocide of six million Jews and the execution of five million non-Jews through the use of homicidal gas chambers in what is now commonly known as the 'Holocaust.' The largest number of people are said to have been murdered at Auschwitz. But there are

(*Kalispell*, cont. on page 4)



The first film shown featured Mark Weber of the Institute for Historical Review

(Kalispell, from page 3)

some people who maintain these claims of mass murder have never been proven. These people point to the lack of documentation other than the highly questionable and partially discredited evidence supplied by the Soviet Union at the Nuremberg Trials, and the unreliable nature of the eyewitness testimonies, many of which have also been discredited.”

The purpose of all three films was to appear educational and merely to create dialogue about history. In reality, the films are tools of anti-Semites and white supremacists to make them appear less controversial. The community of Kalispell wasn't fooled.

The Community Response

In response to the films, the community joined together in protest with a positive message. Along with United Church of Christ minister and Flathead Valley Multi-Faith Coalition member Darryl Kistler, Network board members helped stage a counter demonstration and walk-out during the first film.

In the small library basement room, nearly 50 people filled the seats and listened to Gharst and the video. Then, in quiet solidarity, 90% of the room rose in protest and silently exited the building. The lone eight white supremacists watched the rest of the film alone. Outside, another 50 people held signs praising equality, diversity, and love.

As the second film showing on April 29 drew near, organizers again rallied the Flathead community in response. Some 300 people gathered



Darryl Kistler speaks to the crowd of Kalispell citizens who came to protest the films shown by the Kalispell PLE.

outside the library, this time joined by the Jewish community which was no longer observing Passover. Large numbers of the community's youth attended and chants were heard throughout Kalispell's downtown. From diversity flags to signs protesting hate, the crowd made it loud and clear that the community was standing in opposition to the hate group's message.

By the time the third film was set to be shown, the community didn't just respond to the film. The organizers held their own event. Under the banner "Love Lives Here," the Jewish community, numerous Christian groups, the Network, the ACLU, Citizens for a Better Flathead, and many more came together for a great event. Drawing almost 200 people on a sunny holiday weekend, the event included music, speakers, and a film.

The film, *Paper Clips*, chronicles Tennessee's Whitwell Middle School students as they engage in an extraordinary experiment in Holocaust education. Struggling to grasp the concept of six-million Holocaust victims, the students de-

cide to collect six-million paper clips to better understand the extent of this crime against humanity. The film details how the students met Holocaust survivors from around the world and how the experience transformed them and their community.

"What I'm hoping to do is to show the people of the valley that this is not primarily a reaction against a group," Love Lives Here's John Monroe told the media, "but it's a group of people that have a vision of positive tolerance and open mindedness in the valley."

Perhaps the white supremacists got the message. Early in May, Gharst claimed to be organizing more summer events, but thus far the May film was the last.

Cobb Comes to Town: What's Next?

While their public activities have subsided, there is no doubt April Gaede and the other white supremacists in the Flathead aren't moving anytime soon. Gaede's efforts to recruit other white supremacists to

(Kalispell, cont. on page 5)

Photo from The Daily Intertake

(Kalispell, from page 4)

the area have persisted, and statewide communication between factions of the white supremacist movement across the state continues.

Perhaps as a result of the heightened activity in the state, nationally-known white supremacist Craig Cobb recently moved to Kalispell.

Like Zac Harp, Cobb follows The Creativity Movement. He founded "Podblanc," a video sharing service for white supremacists along the same lines as You Tube. At Rosa Park's funeral, Cobb told onlookers she was a "shit skin communist," and he was celebrating her death. In 2003, on a far-right online forum, Cobb posted the home address, a map, and family photographs of the same US judge that Matt Hale tried to have killed.

Hale, the former leader of The Creativity Movement, was sentenced to 40 years in prison for trying to have the federal judge assassinated. After Cobb's posting online, the judge's mother and husband were subsequently murdered.

Asked about the murders, Cobb replied, "I was just fine with it. I think it was well done."

Cobb grew up in the US, served in the armed forces, and spent time in Canada. In 2005, he moved to Estonia to establish an "International Office of White Diaspora." In 2009,

he was incarcerated for endangering state security, public order, public safety, and other public interests. He was deported to Canada.

As of March 2010, he was identified as living in Vancouver. But, as reported in an online expose in June, Cobb claims to have been arrested by a Canadian hate crime unit and released. He claims to have made a bus and foot trek across the border into Montana.

An online posting by Cobb read:

"I want to thank the Montana militiaman and his Jesse James-descended wife who picked me up 60 miles into my walk just outside Olney, MT. There is no public transport up here; my knee and foot were swollen...I will most probably take a lesson from Terrible Tommy Metzger and Glenn Miller and run for Congress from a northwestern Montana district in an internet/door-to-door campaign in 2012."

In July, Billings Creators claimed to have been contacted by Cobb looking for Kalispell white supremacist connections. A posting also reported that Cobb was looking for April Gaede and Mark Harrington.

A Kalispell post office box and the address of a homeless shelter were posted as his contact information. The Network was able to verify that, while he was no longer there, Cobb had stayed at the homeless shelter, where Kaitlyn Bolliger had left messages for him.

Is Cobb's arrival in Montana a sign of more to come? Perhaps, but the immense energy and collaboration that resulted in a large, peaceful, and powerful response by the community was no accident. In the face of white supremacist activities that have occurred in the Flathead and across Montana in the last year, the Network continues to provide information and support to communities, so they can understand what is happening and take action.

"It is important that the people of Kalispell are not duped into thinking that these white supremacists are only interested in bad revisionist history. Their goal is to create an Aryan homeland in the Flathead Valley," says the Network's McAdam. "We applaud the the community for standing strong against these racist efforts. We hope more people will join the cause."

For more information about how to get involved in the efforts in the Flathead, contact us at 406-442-5506. □

ABOUT THE ENCLOSED RAFFLE TICKETS

Inside this newsletter is a flyer with tickets and prizes for the 16th Annual Montana Shares Raffle. Please buy some raffle tickets and help the Human Rights Network by supporting Montana Shares, a partnership of non-profits working together to improve the quality of life in communities across Montana.

Take a moment to look over the flyer and the many different prizes you could win. Your donation will help Montana Shares in its work to support the Human Rights Network. As an associate member of Shares, the Network has to sell \$250 worth of raffle tickets. We hope you'll help us reach that total!

To enter the raffle, return the tickets on the flyer, along with any donation by September 11, 2010 to: Montana Shares, P.O. Box 883, Helena, MT 59624. Thank you for your support of Montana Shares and the Human Rights Network.

“BACK WITH A BANG:”

THE CREATIVITY MOVEMENT NOT SLOWING DOWN IN MONTANA

Interruptive, challenging and aggressive. That was the description the Billings police gave of white supremacist Allen Goff's behavior when he confronted Network Director Travis McAdam at a presentation about the “Speaking Volumes” art exhibit at the Yellowstone Art Museum in May (for more on the exhibit, see the March 2008 edition of *Network News*).

Just two days after his acquittal on charges of felony assault with a weapon, Goff showed up at the museum with his brother and blamed the Network for ruining his life. Goff signed his name as “Matt Hale” in the museum's guest book, and museum staff identified him as the person who had previously attempted to take one of the *White Man's Bibles* from one of the exhibit's art pieces.

Hale is the former leader of The Creativity Movement, a national white supremacist group of which Goff is a member. Currently, Hale is serving a 40-year sentence in federal prison

for trying to have a federal judge killed. Goff has written extensively about admiring Hale.

The museum confrontation and Goff's trial are the latest developments concerning a new generation of “Creators” in Montana. While The Creativity Movement has had activists in the state for over two decades, this current iteration is led by young leaders. It has active chapters in Billings, Bozeman and Kalispell. Goff, the central figure in Montana even though he is only 17 years old, has been on the Network's radar for a few years (for more information, see the July 2008 and November 2009 editions of *Network News*).

On the felony assault charges, Goff's main argument was the shooting was in self defense. In July 2009, Goff shot a former friend, Christopher Ortiz, a Latino male, in the knee outside a late-night house party. Although Ortiz did not have a weapon, the jury found that Goff employed a justifiable use of force, because he felt threatened and scared by Ortiz's actions.

Prosecutors had charged Goff under the state's hate crime statute and alleged that the shooting was racially motivated. However, District Court Judge Ingrid Gustafson ruled that extensive evidence of Goff's white supremacist activities would not be allowed to be introduced during the trial.

The evidence included photographs of Goff with Creativity Movement banners and guns, in addition to copies of his online comments from white supremacist and anti-immigrant forums.

Goff's attorney was Jack Sands, a former Republican legislator and candidate for attorney general.

Arguing to keep the information out of the trial, Sands said the shooting had nothing to do with race. He also claimed Goff is part Native American and part Jewish, but he later declined to comment further to the *Billings Gazette*. The suppressed evidence eventually was released, and some of it can be viewed on the *Billings Gazette's* website.

While he was acquitted of the felony charges, Goff did plead guilty to a misdemeanor charge of carrying a concealed weapon. When he was initially arrested after the shooting, he was carrying a 9 millimeter Glock pistol. (Goff, continued on page 7)



This is one of the pictures of Allen Goff that a judge ruled inadmissible during his trial. The photo is currently posted on the Billings Gazette's website.

(Goff, from page 6)

tol, ammunition, and knives in a backpack. He also had a pair of brass knuckles in his back pocket. On the misdemeanor charge, Goff was sentenced to six months of probation and fined \$150.

Goff appears to be back in the middle of The Creativity Movement's organizing in the state. He was recently pictured with Bozeman Creator Keith Sones in a still image of a video promoting The Creativity Movement (for more on Sones, see the November 2009 edition of *Network News*). Also engaged in the video and other merchandise-making activities is 27-year-old Nick from Miles City. Nick, who calls himself "TCM Soldier," recently posted online:

"for anyone doubting our chapter is dead look at the site everyone is gonna sh** their pants when things are fixed for us 'BACK WITH A BANG NOW!!'"

Nick has been actively promoting the new Montana White Berets, a security arm of The Creativity Movement. The Berets' website encourages members to organize into cells. On dealing with "Law Enforcement" and acting in "Self Defense," it says:

- ◆ "Never trust police, FBI, ASIO [Australian Security Intelligence Organization] or other agents of the JOG [Jewish Occupied Government].
- ◆ Self-educate themselves in physical fitness, martial arts, first aid techniques,

police communications and armed self-defense. Legally own at least one handgun and become proficient with it through frequent target practice.

◆ Our main goal is to revive the **ATTITUDE OF WHITE MILITANCY — THE WILL TO FIGHT FOR WHAT IS WHITE**



Another photo of Allen Goff posted on the Billings Gazette's website.

AND DEFEND THE ONE AND ONLY, TRUE AND REVOLUTIONARY WHITE RACIAL RELIGION — CREATIVITY!

White People Awake! Save the White Race! - The final hour of White Power. White Man, join **THE CREATIVITY MOVEMENT**, now!-

◆ I recommend the use of steel cap work boots to kick your opponent unconscious while their [sic] on the ground after your initial

strike (yes it's not fair is it), after all if they get back up their [sic] going to hurt you."

Nick temporarily took control of the Billings Creators' post office box while Goff was facing his trial. Upon Goff's acquittal, Nick posted, "Well, we have one of our best back! CONGRATS!!!"

Creators obviously see guns and Montana's laws about self-defense as benefits for their cause. In an online post praising the near-death shooting by white supremacists in Portland of an anti-racist skinhead, a Creator going by "Montana" wrote, "They [anti-racist skinheads] never get brave here, they know we take advantage of our states gun laws..." The Network believes that Allen Goff is "Montana."

Most likely, the post is referring to a law passed last legislative session. The 2009 Montana Legislature passed the "Shoot to Kill Bill," which was authored by Gary Marbut of the Montana Shooting Sports Association and sponsored by Rep. Krayton Kerns (R-Laurel). The bill codified that anyone "who is lawfully in a place" and feels "threatened" can use lethal force as a first option. The code also says it is up to the state to prove "beyond a reasonable doubt" that a shooter's actions were not justified. The jury foreman in Goff's trial said the jury ultimately felt there was too much reasonable doubt to convict him on the felony charge.

Even while awaiting trial, Goff didn't stop his white supremacist activities. In December 2009, he,

(Goff, continued on page 14)

RECAPPING THE MISSOULA CAMPAIGN: COUNCIL ADOPTS ANTI-DISCRIMINATION ORDINANCE

Just before 2:00 in the morning on Tuesday, April 13, the Missoula City Council, by a vote of 10-2, made Missoula the first city in Montana to protect members of the lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) community in housing, employment and public accommodations.

The vote marked the first-ever legislative victory for Montana's LGBT community, and the decision received attention from across the state and nation.

Ordinance No. 3428, titled the "Anti-Discrimination Ordinance," brings Missoula into a growing list of cities and counties across the country that is adding protections for LGBT residents and visitors. The momentum has grown steadily since Minneapolis became the first city to pass a local ordinance in 1975.

At the state level, Montana law currently provides no protections to LGBT residents and visitors. Legally what this means is quite simple: employers can fire someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity; a hotel owner can refuse service to LGBT couples; and members of the trans community can be denied access to public restrooms.

The Missoula campaign began in the fall of 2009 when the ordinance sponsors, council members Stacy Rye (Ward 3) and Dave

Strohmaier (Ward 1), were approached by a constituent interested in similar legislation that had passed in Salt Lake City, UT. Meanwhile, the Network was beginning to hold meetings with members of the community in Missoula to talk about what shape a local ordinance campaign would take. The ACLU of Montana worked with the council sponsors and the Network to draft the ordi-

workers on why equality and dignity mattered. They were also conversations about how the community could come together to make its policies reflect its values.

"Bathroom Panic"

A small yet vocal minority, mostly from outside Missoula County, came forward in opposition to the ordinance and named themselves "Not My Bathroom." One strategy these anti-gay activists used was promoting "bathroom panic," which assumes that trans people using bathrooms that match their gender identity will make public bathrooms less safe. This line of opposition assumes that a group of people who are more often the victims of harassment and violence are actually per-

petrating it.

"Not My Bathroom" was spearheaded by longtime opponents of LGBT equality, including Dallas Erickson and Tei Nash (for more on them, see the April 2010 edition of *Network News*). The group's main activities included picketing twice outside the city council chambers (including on the night of the vote), in addition to a small door-to-door literature drop that featured a homophobic flier.

(Ordinance, continued on page 9)

SPONSORS OF THE ORDINANCE



*Stacy Rye
Ward 3*



*Dave Strohmaier
Ward 1*

nance, which was introduced at the campaign kickoff in the City Council Chamber Building in February 2010.

The campaign saw tremendous support from the over 40 organizations which publicly endorsed the ordinance, and petitions circulated by multiple campaign partners reached over 3,500 signatures by the time of the vote.

Each signature gathered was, in a way, an individual conversation between neighbors, friends and co-

(Ordinance, from page 8)

In response to the transphobic rhetoric from opponents, the Network worked with members of Missoula's trans community to host a standing-room-only film screening and panel at the YWCA of Missoula. Following a screening of *Everybody Matters: Dignity and Safety for Trans People*, participants were able to hear stories about the day-to-day experiences of trans people in Missoula and ask questions.

During the campaign, allies also responded to the opponents' claims that the ordinance would make bathrooms more dangerous for women and children.

Nine women's advocacy, health, and service organizations with membership in Missoula signed a letter to the city council calling for the ordinance's passage. The letter stated, "As organizations dedicated to the rights, safety, and full participation of women throughout

lobbied Missoula Mayor John Engen to proclaim the day of the vote "Diversity Day" and worked hard to organize a rally attended by at least 600 supporters of all ages and backgrounds. The rally culminated in a march to the council chambers, where the supporters of the ordinance gathered peacefully along both sides of the street, carrying signs that featured slogans of solidarity and support for all who live and work in Missoula.

The Public Hearing and the Vote

The council chambers, with its overflow-rooms and hallways completely full, filled with people ready to speak on both sides of the issue. Proponents of the ordinance outnumbered opponents by almost 2-1.

One of the most powerful moments of public testimony came when Tei Nash's daughter stepped to the

"As a Latino gay man, for the past few days I've been compared to rapists, pedophiles, and adulterers. I hope the council members are able to see the truth about who we are as LGBT individuals. We are much like everyone else. That said, there are ways that we differ. Most glaring is that we are not equal citizens under the law. One of the reasons I began my own business was so that I wouldn't have to deal with the real possibility of discrimination as a result of coming out to an employer"

~ David Herrera, board member of the Western Montana Community Center and founder of the Montana Two-Spirit Society, during the public hearing on the ordinance.

Missoula and Montana, we are proud to announce our public support of the Missoula Non-Discrimination Ordinance."

Faith leaders from a number of Christian, Jewish and other denominations and faith traditions in Missoula came out with a robust call of support for the ordinance. Calling themselves "Flush the Fear" members circulated a petition using a website they created that called for the city council to pass the ordinance. "Flush the Fear" also took out a large faith-based ad that ran in *The Missoulian* the day of the final hearing and vote that featured the names of those who had signed the petition.

Middle school students involved in the Respect Club, an after-school program facilitated by National Coalition Building Institute-Missoula, chose Diversity Day as their annual project to raise awareness of, and celebrate, Missoula's unique and diverse community. The students

podium to speak. Taryn Nash urged her father to stop his "ignorant and hurtful" crusade against the LGBT community. She came out as a member of the LGBT community during her testimony. The media reported that Tei Nash left the building before she spoke.

"Dad, I strongly disagree with the way you have been portraying the LGBT community," she said. "You have gone too far. I will not sit back any more and be quiet. I love you because you are my dad, but I have lost respect for you...Right now, I am ashamed to call you my father."

Representatives from allied organizations also spoke in favor of the ordinance. "Let's be clear, violence against women in our society is a real issue and one that we hope policy-makers and community members continue to address," said Olivia Riutta of Montana Women Vote and a member of the campaign steering committee.

(Ordinance, continued on page 14)

“PATRIOTS” ON PARADE: LIBERTY CONVENTION ORGANIZERS OVERESTIMATE INTEREST

Celebrating Conservatism, based in the Bitterroot Valley, held its “Liberty Convention” in late May in Missoula. Leading up to the event, the organizers had touted it as bringing together up to 5,000 “patriots” from across the state. Instead, the event fizzled with about 250 attendees in a largely-empty Adams Center on the University of Montana campus.

Those who attended listened to a slate of speakers that included many prominent members of the anti-government “patriot” movement. They included an anti-Semitic tax protestor; a former sheriff adored by the militia movement; a former presidential candidate for a party that combines Christian fundamentalism and themes of “patriot” movement; and a gun rights activist from Alaska who was arrested twice in March 2010.

The event’s main organizer, Mona Docteur, said the convention cost \$30,000 to put on, and speakers throughout the weekend pleaded with attendees for donations. The convention emcee Rick Jore, who currently chairs the Constitution Party of Montana, asked anyone with extra income to please help. Docteur told the media that the Constitution Party of Montana financed a significant portion of the weekend.

Docteur, Celebrating Conservatism’s founder and a recent transplant from California, kicked off the weekend by telling the crowd “the media screwed us.” She said the low turnout resulted from a *Missoulian* article that heavily referenced a briefing paper put out by the Network, which provided back-

ground on seven of the scheduled “patriot” speakers. She asked the crowd for a show of hands on which counties were represented, and it turned out attendees came from only seven of Montana’s 56 counties.

The convention hosted about 20 information booths in the lobby for groups such as the Oath Keepers,



Photo from Missoula Independent

Celebrating Conservatism founder Mona Docteur was the main organizer of the “Liberty Convention.”

Fully Informed Jury Association, Montana ProLife Coalition, Montana Shooting Sports Association, John Birch Society, Idaho for Sovereignty and Free Enterprise, Libertarian Party, and the Leadership Institute of Washington D.C., among others.

The Speakers

Jore introduced the first speaker in the “patriot” lineup, Chuck Baldwin. Baldwin, a Florida pastor and the Constitution Party’s 2008

presidential candidate, encouraged the audience to elect true Christians to office and reassert state sovereignty. He proclaimed, “Thank God for Arizona!” and “Thank God for the Montana Firearms Freedom Act!” He said both were good examples of the states telling an overreaching federal government what to do.

His reference to Arizona was based on an anti-immigrant law that makes the failure to carry documentation of citizenship status a crime. It also gives police broad power to detain anyone suspected of being an undocumented immigrant, which is an open invitation for racial profiling and other harassment of people of color.

The Montana Firearms Freedom Act passed the 2009 Montana Legislature. It exempts Montana-made firearms and ammunition from “federal law or federal regulation.” The constitutionality of the law is currently the subject of litigation.

Baldwin said he fantasizes about Montanans standing up to the federal government by saying, “This is it. Montana will live free. Montana will bow to the knee of Caesar no more!” He hoped that sentiment would infect other states.

The next speaker on the agenda was Red Beckman, a well-known anti-Semitic tax protestor. In May 1994, Beckman was evicted from his property near Billings after a 20-year battle with the IRS over not paying his income taxes. In the lead up to his eviction, Beckman praised anti-government allies who threatened to kidnap the officials who were fore-

(Convention, cont. on page 11)

(Convention, from page 10)
closing on his farm.

Beckman follows Christian Identity, a religion based on a racist interpretation of the Christian Bible. It teaches that Jewish people are the literal children of Satan, and people of color are sub-human “mud people.” He has written that the Holocaust was a judgment “upon people who believe Satan is their god.”

Beckman took the stage and urged people to take back power from the federal government. He cited as historical examples the Montana Vigilantes of 1860s who lynched their sheriff and Romanian soldiers who executed their own dictator in 1989.

He then went on to tell the crowd that immigration and abortion are tied together, because they are both about God’s judgment. He said that, since

the first “victims” of *Roe* would be in their 30s by now, America doesn’t have enough people to complete our workforce. That vacuum, he claimed, is now being filled by criminals crossing the border.

Before closing, Beckman told the crowd that we need citizen grand juries to protect people like Henry and Judy Matthies, a couple from Laurel, who are doing time for tax evasion (for more on the Matthies, see the July 2008 edition of *Network News*).

Franklin Shook, who is also known as Elias Alias and is the leader

of the Montana Oath Keepers, administered his group’s oath to the attendees. The oath encapsulates many of the one-world government conspiracy theories that undergird the “patriot” movement (for more on the Oath Keepers, see the April 2010 edition of *Network News*). He was followed by Gary Marbut of the Montana Shooting Sports Association.

Marbut said he planned to res-

firearm regulations. Marbut’s “Sheriff’s First Bill” passed the 1995 Montana Legislature but was vetoed by then-governor Marc Racicot.

Docteur introduced former Arizona Sheriff Richard Mack to the convention and said that Paul Stramer of Lincoln County Watch had first introduced them.

Stramer has supported both the Montana Freeman and the Militia of Montana. He sold radio equipment to

the Montana Freeman and helped arrange the sale of weapons to the group. Like Mack, Stramer still defends his anti-government friends. In 2008, Stramer said bogus money orders created by the Freeman were just as legal as regular dollar bills. He also said the Militia of Montana was the “lawful militia.”

Mack became a rising star in the militia movement during the 1990s when he successfully sued the federal government over the

Brady Bill, a gun control measure. He began speaking on the anti-government “patriot” circuit in the early 1990s and never stopped.

Like Marbut, Mack promotes the Posse Comitatus’ views about the supremacy of the county sheriff. His statements over the years reflect the Posse tradition. “The federal government doesn’t have any jurisdiction to tell me what to do as sheriff,” he has told the press. While running for the US Senate in 2006, Mack stated he would “do everything in my power to abolish the income tax and
(Convention, cont. on page 12)



Red Beckman (right) and Chuck Baldwin (top) were two of the national speakers at the Liberty Convention.

urrect his “Sheriff’s First Bill,” which would require any federal officers in Montana to get permission from a county sheriff before carrying out any arrests, searches or seizures. The bill is patterned after the Posse Comitatus’ view of the county sheriff as the highest legitimate law officer in the land. The Posse, a white supremacist group, believed citizens were not subject to federal authorities. For the Posse, it was up to the sheriff to use force, if necessary, to prevent any perceived encroachment by federal institutions, especially when it came to tax and

(Convention, from page 11)
its ‘Gestapo’ police, the IRS.”

Mack started his remarks at the Liberty Convention with a commercial for a freeze-dried food company. He then told the audience that he used to be a “jerk cop” but now he understands what it takes to be a “constitutional sheriff.” Mack said he prays that sheriffs will take on the IRS.

He also railed against immigrants and praised Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Arizona’s Maricopa County. The ACLU of Arizona and others have sued Sheriff Arpaio for racial profiling and harassment of people of color. He also has been criticized for the brutal conditions in his “tent city” jail and chain-gangs in Phoenix. The *New York Times* has called Arpaio “America’s Worst Sheriff.”

Mack stated the US government is violating the First and Second Commandments of the Old Testament. Because the government is disrespecting God, he explained, the US is going to fall. He said, “The king I serve says it’s going to go down.”

When Schaeffer Cox, a 26-year-old Alaska militia founder, took the microphone, he made the other speakers appear almost moderate. Cox criticized the tactics of the other speakers and implied that they were not revolutionary enough. They were trying to reform a broken system, whereas Cox stated, “We should let it crumble.”

Cox leads the Second Amendment Task Force in Alaska and is “commander” of a militia group called “The Alaska Peacemakers Militia.” The militia group holds firearm and survival training sessions. Before speaking in Missoula, he had recently been arrested twice in March 2010 while in Alaska. In March, Cox was charged with second-degree

felony assault for choking and punching his wife in front of their two-year-old son. He ended up pleading guilty to a lesser charge of reckless endangerment and received a suspended sentence.

Also in March, he was “monitoring” an arrest as part of his “Liberty Bell System.” The system notifies other “patriots” if somebody believes their rights are being violated.



Schaeffer Cox

The “patriots” receiving the alert are supposed to rally to the location where the supposed abuse is happening. While responding to an alert, Cox failed to tell an officer at the scene that he was carrying a concealed .38-caliber pistol and was arrested. Cox pleaded not guilty to a misdemeanor charge of weapons misconduct. While the case was pending, Cox was barred from carrying a firearm.

Calling himself and his wife the king and queen of dissidents, Cox told convention attendees that Alaska “is on the edge of blood in the streets in Fairbanks,” and that he has 3,500 men under his command. He claimed

that his militia could have anyone it believes to be tyrannical put to death. He said:

“They only understand us if we speak in their language of force...I have a hunch that they will only see that light when it is a muzzle flash. Know what I mean? We can’t beat them at the polls, because we can’t overcome the votes bought with money stolen from us...Declare war. I have....It takes only a few more people willing to kill for freedom than those willing to kill for tyranny.”

He also encouraged attendees to participate in the Liberty Bell System, common law courts and the militia.

He asked the crowd if they would kill for freedom, saying, “Do you have it in you to join the war? Are you willing to fight for what is right?”

“Liberty Convention”— Bad for Communities

Going into the Liberty Convention, the Network’s Travis McAdam told the press, “We think these are the last people that communities should look to for guidance and information.” The remarks made by the “patriot” speakers reinforced this belief.

The “Liberty Convention” had two purposes. One was to preach to the choir and solidify Celebrating Conservatism’s base. The other was the hope that the event would bring in new people, and the speakers
(Convention, cont. on page 13)

Photo from Fairbanks Daily News-Miner

PROGRESSIVES LOSE A TRUE CHAMPION

“It requires troublesome work to undertake the alternation of old beliefs.”

~John Dewey

**By Ken Toole,
Board Member and
former Network Co-Director**

On Jan. 21, 2010, our friend Greg Haegele passed away after a courageous fight against cancer. He was 46 years old.

Greg was a close friend and advisor to the Network, serving for a short period of time as the interim director when my co-director at the time, Christine Kaufmann, and I began serving in the Montana Legislature. He was also the first director of our sister organization, The Policy Institute. While that defines Greg’s institutional connection to our work, it fails to convey the impact he had on our mission.

Greg was a “player” in Montana and national politics. He worked for the Democratic Party as an organizer and ran Mark O’Keefe’s field campaign in the 2000 election. He left Montana and worked on Bill Richardson’s gubernatorial campaign in New Mexico, ran a mayoral campaign in Fort Wayne, IN, and finally landed as the Political and Conservation Director of the National Sierra Club. That is just a part of Greg’s bio.

None of that really captures why Greg was unique. The quote at the beginning of this article is from a philosopher and social reformer from the turn of the century, John Dewey. Greg’s doctoral dissertation was on Dewey. I often jokingly told Greg that I could not understand how he wrote a whole dissertation on the guy who developed the system for organizing library books.*

Perhaps it is with Dewey that we find the essence of Greg’s motivation and philosophy of social justice and social change. Greg understood that our work is to redefine how people view the world and our behavior in it. And he understood that our work is long term and difficult. Most importantly, he clearly understood that

our work involves pushing our friends and allies as much as confronting our opponents.

Greg was unflinching and courageous in his advocacy for human rights. And he did it while effectively working in the world of electoral politics, which is so often driven by cynical self-interest and manipulation. He was a rare combination of political pragmatism, highly-developed skills for organizing campaigns and, perhaps the rarest characteristic of all, a clear and uncompromising vision for progressive social change.

I was recently watching a documentary on the passage of the national healthcare reform bill. President Obama said, “This is what change looks like.” It prompted me to think about Greg. I wondered how things might have been different if Greg had been sitting at the table advising the President. Anyone who knew Greg and his work knows that this was not just a fantasy. Clearly, the trajectory of Greg’s life was leading to those tables and clearly the results would be different if he were there.

There are not a lot of people like Greg, and fewer still who actively engage electoral processes. He will be sorely missed.

**The Dewey Decimal System was actually developed by Melvil Dewey. So far as I know, he is no relation to John Dewey. □*



Greg Haegele

(Convention, from page 12)

would get the recruits up to speed on the latest “patriot” beliefs.

Celebrating Conservatism managed to preach to the choir, but clearly didn’t have the turnout for which it had hoped. The fact that they still drew 250 is troubling.

“Celebrating Conservatism and its allies continue to fracture communities and create environments where only those who yell the loudest and have the most weapons feel safe,” says McAdam. “These are not the indicators of a healthy community or democratic process.” □

(Goff, from page 7)

Sones, and other Montana Creators went on a road trip. They met up with Paul Mullett of Aryan Nations for the annual memorial for Robert Mathews in Washington.

Mathews founded The Order, a white supremacist group that engaged in a crime spree in the 1980s that involved armed robbery and murdering a Jewish talk show host in Denver.

Mathews died in a shootout with law enforcement in 1984 on Whidbey Island in Washington. White supremacists hold an annual event to remember and honor him. Numerous pictures of Goff and Mullett are posted online from the event. Some feature Goff and Mullett in front of Creativity Movement and Aryan Nations flags while giving “Heil Hitler” salutes.

The Network and members of the Billings community had speculated what impact Goff’s arrest and trial would have on The Creativity Movement’s efforts in Montana. It was hoped that it would serve as a wakeup call, and Goff would turn his life around. However, his actions while awaiting trial and after being acquitted of felony weapons charges seem to signal that he feels more emboldened.

“Goff can now say he shot a person of color and got away with it,” says the Network’s Travis McAdam. “He can tout himself as a genuine warrior for his race. Unfortunately, we think we’ll see much more of Goff in the future.” □



Aryan Nations’ Paul Mullett (left) and Allen Goff (middle) pose in front of The Creativity Movement and Aryan Nations’ flags.

(Ordinance, from page 9)

“Basic rights such as those outlined in this ordinance, and protections under the law, have been invaluable to the women’s movement, the advancement of women in our society, and our participation in the democratic process, [including] me being here today. We believe that the same rights must be afforded to members of the LGBT community here in Missoula.”

At the conclusion of the almost seven-hour hearing, the council voted on the ordinance. The final vote was 10-2 in support of the ordinance. The only dissenting votes were from council members Lynn Hellegaard (Ward 4) and Renee Mitchell (Ward 5).

While the ordinance was signed by Mayor Engen and took effect on May 13, there have been challenges to the ordinance over the past three months. Numerous petitions have been submitted to the County Clerk and Recorder’s Office calling for the ordinance to be repealed, or as opponents call it, “ratified,” by the electorate.

In June, a lawsuit by “Not My Bathroom” members Tei Nash and John Porter was filed against the City and County of Missoula, and its City Attorney and Clerk and Recorder. The suit alleges that the City and County have willfully delayed and blocked attempts to have petitions circulated calling for the ordinance’s repeal. The Network will continue to update our membership as this lawsuit moves forward.

The successful ordinance campaign would not have happened without the work of the campaign steering committee—Montana Women Vote, YWCA of Missoula, Forward Montana, Montana Equality Now—or the work of NCBI Missoula, ACLU of Montana, and the two sponsors of the ordinance. It absolutely would not have happened had it not been for the efforts of our hundreds of supporters, members, allies and volunteers who came forward in Missoula. You helped make history. □

(Lenders, from page 16)

November 2010. For a month and a half, the Network, Montana Women Vote and several other non-profit organizations worked with the "400% Is Too High – Cap the Rate" ballot committee asking Montanans to sign petitions that would place Initiative 164 on November's General Election ballot. In mid-July, I-164 qualified for the ballot. Approximately 27,000 registered voters signed petitions, and I-164 qualified in 54 legislative districts. The Network and its volunteers gathered about 3,000 signatures in support of placing I-164 on the ballot.

Come November, Montanans will have the opportunity to vote yes on I-164 and cap interest rates on payday and title loans at 36% APR. This is a huge victory for Montana communities, especially for low-income Montanans who each year fall into the predatory lending debt trap.

Many Montanans are unfamiliar with how predatory lenders work, and how they trap cash-strapped individuals and families in a cycle of debt that can often end in bankruptcy. Payday loans are short-term loans (usually two weeks or a month in duration) which are secured with a postdated check. The borrower writes a check for the amount of the loan plus a fee and is obligated to pay the entire amount back at the end of the

loan period. If the borrower is not able to repay the loan, lenders "flip" it.

Flipping a loan means that the borrower pays back the original loan by immediately taking out a new one and paying additional fees. According to the Center on Responsible Lending, payday and title lenders generate 90% of their business from individuals and families who are trapped with five or more in a year. Additionally, the average payday loan borrower repays \$800 on a \$300 loan.

Predatory lenders hurt Montana families, and they drain important financial resources out of our communities. They amount to legal loan sharking. This November, Montanans will get to vote in favor of just lending practices. The campaign to regulate this industry has a great start and a lot of momentum, but there is a great deal of work to be done between now and November. We need to talk to our friends, families, and neighbors about the need for fairness in lending; write letters to the editor in support of I-164; and cast our vote for effective regulation of this industry and protections for low and moderate income Montana families.

The Network hopes you will join the effort. To get involved, contact Kim at kim@mhrn.org.

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LENDING AS LOAN SHARKS: INITIATIVE SEEKS TO REIN IN PREDATORY LENDERS

After leaving an abusive relationship, Amanda needed money to pay the rent for her and her young child. She took out a payday loan for \$200. "I had to take out another loan to pay off the first one," she says, "and take out a third loan to pay back my brother [after borrowing money from him]." After taking a total of three loans and paying off only one, she lost her job and couldn't pay back the remaining two.

The payday lender sent in her personal check, which was collateral for the loan, repeatedly. This caused her check to bounce multiple times, and she owed fees each time it bounced. The bank eventually closed her checking account. "Currently I owe over \$1,000 for a \$400 loan," Amanda says.

Unfortunately, Amanda's story is not unique in Montana. According to the Montana Department of Administration's Division of Banking, each year Montanans pay over \$9

million in fees and interest on short-term, high interest payday and title loans. These loans put Montana families that are already in financial hardship into far more desperate situ-

outlets. There have been several legislative attempts to cap these loans at an annual interest rate of 36%; however, industry lobbyists and their allied legislators have successfully

Some predatory lenders don't even try to put a positive spin on their business activities. According to documents filed with the Montana Secretary of State, Tiki Hut Title Loan in Billings has the same address as a corporation named Loan Shark, Inc.

ations. Since over 70% of these payday and title lenders are owned by out-of-state corporations, they also drain millions of dollars out of local Montana economies each year.

The predatory practices of these lenders are not a new problem in the state. Over the past seven years, the Network has been working in a broad-based coalition of community-based organizations to regulate the dangerous and predatory lending practices of payday and title loan

defeated the proposals. Currently, Montana law allows these lenders to charge annual percentage rates up to 650%, and the average annual interest rate is 400%.

This industry is simply not fair, and these lenders are not being held accountable to the communities in which they operate. Last winter, the Network joined a coalition to bring the issue of regulating predatory lenders to the general election ballot in
(Lenders, cont. on page 15)

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