



HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK NEWS

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PASSION & BIG PERSONALITIES: 2013 BRINGS TRANSITION AT THE NETWORK

Since our inception 23 years ago, the Network's mission has been to promote democratic values; challenge bigotry and intolerance; and organize communities. It's the people dedicated to this mission, however, who have made the Network thrive.

Our membership keeps us informed about the good and the bad happening around our big state, and our membership funds this important work. Additionally, there are the people who have dedicated their working hours to this mission. The Network has employed some big personalities over the years and been lucky to have a stellar staff working both on the ground and in the office.

In January, the Network's Executive Director for the last four years, Travis McAdam, decided to move on after being with the organization for over 13 years. Travis is now working for the National Center for Appropriate Technology in Butte. In December 2012, our Board of Directors chose to go back to the co-director model that served the Network well for close to 18 years. Rachel Carroll Rivas and Kim Abbott are now serving as the Montana Human Rights Network's Co-Directors.

Travis is already greatly missed. He started at the Network as a student intern from the University of Montana and hit the ground running doing research on white supremacist and anti-government activity. While at the Network, he made the "right" enemies by taking on extremist groups.

As research director, he quickly became an expert on many of the hate groups active in the region, and he even got up close and personal--observing their rallies and attending their meetings. Travis was one of the preeminent authorities in the US on the World Church of the Creator/Creativity Movement, which had a regional headquarters in the state.

As the Constitution Party rose to political power in Montana, Travis helped inform the public about this small, but powerful group of political activists. He did the same with other extreme groups, like the Montana Shooting Sports Association, that interacted with the political mainstream.

He led the Network's important, unique, and timely response to the resurgence
(Transition, continued on page 2)

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Montana Human
Rights Network, a non-
profit organization.
Contributors: Kim
Abbott, Jamee Greer,
Travis McAdam, and
Rachel Carroll Rivas*

Montana Human Rights Network
PO Box 1509
Helena, MT 59624
(406) 442-5506
www.mhrn.org

F F F F

Staff

Kim Abbott
 Director, Outreach and Engagement

Rachel Carroll Rivas
 Director, Organizational Development

Jamee Greer
 Organizing Director

Carissa Spurzem
 Office Manager

F F F F

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of the right that was mobilized and galvanized by the election of a black President in 2008 and saw dramatic activity in Montana. In addition to his role in our historic efforts to fight the right in Montana, Travis oversaw our growing proactive agenda for LGBT equality, abolition of the death penalty, immigrant rights, and economic fairness. Travis contributions to the Network are immense and irreplaceable, and we are so grateful for all he did in the pursuit of justice, equity, and pluralism!

Rachel Carroll Rivas had the pleasure of working hand-in-hand with Travis fighting the right on the research front since she joined the Network in 2007. Rachel has also worked on the Network's efforts to end the death penalty with the Abolition Coalition; facilitated our updated image with a new logo and website; and assisted local communities dealing with white supremacist organizing.

Born and raised in Great Falls, she graduated with degrees from the University of Montana and Utah State. Utilizing her Non-Profit Administration certification, Rachel is now the Director of Organizational Development and will be working in cooperation with the Network's other co-director, Kim Abbott, who is now the Director of Outreach and Engagement.

Kim is a familiar face to our membership in her time as an organizer with the Network beginning in 2006. Kim's work in Montana has included organizing our successful participation in statewide ballot initiative efforts to raise the state's minimum wage and to provide healthcare coverage for 30,000 additional children with the Healthy Montana Kids.

Kim has brought training, education, and expertise to Network members and the Montana public in the areas of reproductive justice, LGBT equality, healthcare as a human right, and immigrant rights. She has helped oversee two successful local LGBT non-discrimination ordinance campaigns in Missoula and Helena (2010, 2012) and fought for gender and sexual orientation equality at the Montana Legislature.

Kim and Rachel are excited to work with the Network board, staff, and membership. They are joined in the Network office by Jamee Greer and Carissa Spurzem who help make up a dedicated and fun team.

Through these transitions, the staff is excited about the opportunities to come and is ready to meet the challenges head on. If you have any questions about this transition or other issues, please feel free contact the Network.

WHITEFISH HATE GROUP MAKES NATIONAL MEDIA *EMBODIES RACISM OF IMMIGRATION DEBATE*

Montana once again made national news in May for the far right, white supremacist activity that has targeted the state and region. An episode of MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show" featured a critique of the Whitefish-based National Policy Institute (NPI) and its chairman, Richard Spencer. The Network is appalled at the group's hateful message and condemns Spencer for locating the group's headquarters in the state.

For decades, white supremacists have targeted Montana and the Pacific Northwest as a place to create their Aryan homeland. Maddow's show focused on Spencer's recent attempts to push mainstream conservatives toward overt white supremacist ideas.

Spencer joins a cadre of white supremacist and hard-right activists who have moved to the Flathead area in recent years (for more, see the August 2010 and January 2011 editions of *Network News*) and tried to use politics as a way to mainstream their messages and gain credibility. In reality, they are often more interested in trying to create communities that look the way they want--all white.

In response to MSNBC's coverage of NPI, Will Randall, a board member of the Network and active with the local Flathead group Love Lives Here, said, "As a Whitefish native, I remember the ethnic diversity that has helped make Whitefish

what it is today. Whitefish has a long history of including diverse communities. The National Policy Institute's hateful philosophy runs counter to who this community is, and I think the majority of our community continues to stand against this kind of hatred."

Randall is one of many local Flathead residents that has worked to create a positive and accepting vision for the community and has

"White Americans" who possess "the unique heritage of Europe, Christianity, cultural excellence, and the scientific awakening."

Spencer took over the group in 2011 and moved the headquarters from Georgia to Whitefish. Following a stint as the editor of a magazine founded by a self-described anti-Semite, he moved into a similar position with the online "Alternative Right." The publication has been described as a venture of the VDARE
(NPI, continued on page 10)



Richard Spencer (right) leads the National Policy Institute. The website for his hate group features the image above.

taken part in opposing other area hate activities. For example, two years ago, hundreds of people gathered outside of the Kalispell library in support of the local Jewish community and in protest of Holocaust denial films being shown.

NPI is one of many national organizations attempting to make white supremacist ideology more palatable by presenting it in pseudo-academic forms. The group says it represents



NETWORK CONTINUES EFFORT TO EXPAND MEDICAID

During the 2013 Montana Legislature, a broad and diverse coalition of organizations and entities came together in an effort to expand Montana's Medicaid program to cover up to 70,000 Montanans who are uninsured.

The question of expanding Medicaid was an incredible opportunity that would have given Montanans who live at or below 138% of the federal poverty line (about \$24,000 a year for a family of three) access to healthcare that is currently out of reach.

The Montana Legislature could have accepted federal dollars which would have covered the entire cost of coverage for the newly eligible population for the first three years. After that, Montana would have started paying a small portion of the cost, but never more than 10%.

With Montana Women Vote, the Network led an organizing effort that included hundreds of volunteer hours, almost 5,000 supportive calls and emails into legislators, and hundreds of Montanans traveling to the Capitol for rallies, lobby days, and hearings. It was a truly incredible grassroots effort to increase access to healthcare for Montanans.

Conservative leadership in both the House of Representatives and the Senate fought to keep any Medicaid expansion bill from getting to the Governor's desk.

Five different bills were considered over the course of the session,

two of these bills (SB 395 and HB 623) passed the Senate with bipartisan support. Neither of these bills received a full floor vote in the House, despite having majority support from members of the House. The 2013 Montana Legislature adjourned in April without expanding Medicaid

nurses, and medical support staff. Healthcare providers can hire new employees, who will then spend their paychecks in local businesses. Estimates show expanding Medicaid could add 14,000 jobs and generate \$4 billion in labor income in Montana. So, what starts as a small investment in Medicaid expansion actually triggers a chain reaction of economic activity across our state.

Our Work Continues

We understand what is at stake, and Montana has two options for getting expansion done. We believe that the current Montana Legislature should come back together and finish the job without causing a delay.

The second option is to take this issue to the November 2014 ballot through the citizen's initiative process. In

**MEDICAID
EXPANSION
IS A GOOD
DEAL FOR
MONTANA**

and leaving 70,000 Montanans with no options for health coverage.

The opportunity to expand Medicaid is simply too important to give up on or wait until the next legislature convenes in 2015. We know that we can't afford to reject the federal dollars available to help Montanans access healthcare. Expanding Medicaid has implications beyond the people who would be able to access healthcare that has been financially out of reach. This issue has implications for our rural hospitals and clinics and our state economy.

As newly insured Montanans seek healthcare, there will be an increase in the demand for doctors,

the coming months, we will be working to make sure that Montana takes advantage of the opportunity to expand Medicaid. We have formed a ballot committee called the "Healthy Montana Initiative." An initiative effort would take an incredible investment of resources and would face well-financed opposition. However, we are confident that Montanans know what's at stake.

Expanding healthcare protects our neighbors, our healthcare providers, and our community hospitals. In Montana, our rural safety-net facilities continue to be pushed toward the breaking point by the ever-growing
(Medicaid, continued on page 10)

NETWORK RELEASES 2013 LEGISLATIVE VOTING RECORD

For over a decade, the Network has released a voting record of the Montana Legislature on human rights issues. Coming out of the 2012 elections, human rights issues faced an uphill battle during the 2013 Montana Legislature. You can find our complete voting record summary as an insert in this newsletter.

Things weren't so different in terms of the makeup of the 2013 legislative body. The 2013 legislative session in Montana had split control of power, with Democrats holding the Governor's office and Republicans continuing to dominate the state House and state Senate. While Republicans held a smaller margin in the Senate (29-21), the House GOP held a super majority (61-39).

The Human Rights Network is a multi-issue organization that lobbied for and against numerous bills during the 2013 legislative session. Many bills on a variety of human rights issues were introduced in the legislature, but very few made it out of the committee in which they were initially heard. Many important bills that deserved a vote by the full legislature were not given the opportunity by committees. Some of these commit-

tees, like House Judiciary, were stacked with conservative legislators that, not only opposed good policy, but refused to allow the issues to undergo the full democratic process.

Important issues for LGBT equality, tax fairness, and abolition of the death penalty were just some of the issues that didn't get a chance to be voted on by both chambers. These same conservative legislators successfully pushed a variety of right-wing bills that would deny Montanan's their human rights and further erode our democracy—from bills that eroded reproductive choice to those that came out of the anti-government movement's playbook. Thanks to the hard work of grassroots organizations, citizen activists, Network members, and legislators who support human rights, some of these bills were defeated or vetoed by the governor.

The voting-record insert displays how Montana legislators voted on numerous bills on which the Montana Human Rights Network advocated for or against during the session. Find out how your legislator voted and how some of the key human rights bills of the session fared.



IMPORTANT! NEW NEWSLETTER FORMAT

**In an effort to be more accessible and reduce paper consumption,
we're going paperless with an e-newsletter!**

**Please see and return the insert to make sure we have your
accurate email address or let us know if you would
still like to receive one of our few printed newsletters.**

RIGHT-WING ROUNDUP

Flathead White Supremacist Continues to Show Holocaust Denial Films

Karl Gharst continues to spread his anti-Semitic message in the Flathead Valley by showing Holocaust denial films at the public library.

Gharst and his lonely “KalisPELL Christian Fellowship” said their June film detailed the six prisons in three countries that had detained “Holocaust questioner, Ernst Zundel.” In reality, Zundel has been a leading international Holocaust denier and white supremacist for more than two decades.

According to the Anti-Defamation League, in the 1970s he ran a large Nazi and neo-Nazi propaganda and memorabilia distribution company called Samisdat Publishing. He has also been a primary provider of Holocaust denial content for the online site Zundelsite.

Zundel has lived in both the US and Canada, but he was deported back to his county of birth, Germany, where he served five years for inciting racial hatred. In Canada, he was convicted of “knowingly publishing false news” about the Holocaust, which he calls historical “revisionism.”

In his advertisements for film screenings, Karl Gharst has included the website address for “Nation of Aryans Against Commie Putrefaction (NAACP).”

The site is a nasty collection of Confederate flag images, con-

demnation of the 14th Amendment (which grants equal protection under the law regardless of race or gender and citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the US), and anti-Semitic rants.

For more on Gharst and the white supremacist activity in the Flathead over the past few years, see the August 2010 and January 2011 editions of *Network News* and/or the “Sheets and Advisories” resource section on the Network’s website, www.mhrn.org.

CEO Leaves Failing Right-Wing Think Tank

In late May, the CEO of the Montana Policy Institute (MPI), a right-wing think tank, sent a letter to supporters calling it quits. Carl Graham wrote that, while he believed his organization was effective in being on the offensive as “freedom fighters” against the “Leftist agenda,” he wasn’t able to sustain the

organization’s revenue stream. The letter illustrated MPI’s anti-environmental and regressive tax policy beliefs.

Among the Bozeman-based group’s victories listed in the letter were that they “promoted real education reform,” “highlighted

the trial and environmental lawyer cabal” and “promoted natural resource development and stood up against anti-fracking, anti-public land use policies and propaganda.”

The letter also took a shot at lower-income Montanans and bent facts by claiming MPI “beat the expansion of Medicaid that would have resulted in 70,000 new taxpayer dependents and cost untold

millions of dollars.”

MPI faced criticism for keeping its donors secret and, thus, bringing on speculation of big out-of-state donations. The group is listed as a Franklin Center for Government and Public Integrity “Watchdog Bureau.” The Franklin Center is largely funded by DonorsTrust, which *Mother Jones* calls “the dark-money ATM of the conservative movement.”

MPI is also a member of the State Policy Network (SPN), which has franchised, funded, and fostered a growing number of “mini Heritage Foundations” at the state level. SPN is in turn a member of the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). ALEC is hotly criticized for crafting conservative model legislation for states, including anti-gun regulation, anti-union, and school privatization policies.

While Graham’s resignation letter for MPI didn’t say that the group was shutting its doors, he also didn’t list a successor. MPI’s website still lists him as the CEO.

We can only hope that the group’s lack of funding, not only leads to a reduced impact on policy, *(Roundup, cont. on page 7)*



Carl Graham



Ernst Zundel

(Roundup, from page 6)

but also that their right-wing ties and conservative dark money exit the state.

Former Legislator Found Guilty After Anti-Government Tirade

In May, after hours of deliberation and months of media fury in Livingston, a jury found former state legislator Joel Boniek guilty of three misdemeanors related to running a roadblock during a July 2012 wildfire near his home in the Paradise Valley.

Boniek served as a Republican member of the Montana House during the 2009 legislature, lost his reelection bid in 2010, and finished last in the 2012 Republican primary for governor as the running mate of Bob Fanning.

While in the legislature, he brought bills to reduce gun regulations, limit access to abortion, create a militia “home guard,” and sponsored a resolution challenging the legality of the entire US monetary system.

He has often cited right-wing conspiracy theories as justifications for his policy stances and has garnered national media attention for comparing President Obama to Hitler, Mao, and Stalin.

During Boniek’s trial, he accused the judge of treating him as an “artificial person,” because his name was in all capital letters on the legal documents, which is an argument commonly made by anti-government “patriots.”

He brought up a variety of “pa-

triot” ideas throughout the trial, including one popularized recently by the Oath Keepers. He claimed government officials had not taken appropriate oaths of office and could thus not prosecute him. The courtroom had a heavy law enforcement presence at different stages of the trial as a result of disruptive Boniek supporters who were in attendance. Among other actions, his supporters passed out Tea Party pamphlets until the judge finally ordered them to stop.

Boniek represented himself and attempted to argue for “jury nullification,” an idea that claims a jury can find a defendant not guilty if they don’t like a law regardless of evidence proving guilt.

Boniek also claimed he was not guilty because he was following a “higher power” when ignoring the roadblock. During the interaction with police, Boniek engaged in a high-speed chase and was later taken down by force.

All told, Boniek was fined \$1,105, received 10 days in jail, and had a year in prison time suspended. He will also be assessed jury costs, which are still being calculated. Since the verdict, Boniek has been on radio shows declaring his innocence

and the illegitimacy of the court.

He also declared that “The Montana Legislature is . . . not about freedom anymore. It is about a socialist system, and the only question is how it is going to be managed. . . we are no longer a free country. And some of us are not taking it lying down, because we feel that our birthright has been stolen from us, and we



Joel Boniek

would like to get it back.”

While making the statement, he also claimed his phone was being interrupted by “them.” Boniek says he plans on appealing the ruling.

For more on Boniek, see the December 2008 and January 2011 editions of *Network News* and the Network’s Briefing Papers on the Oath Keepers and Bozeman Tea Party. p

NETWORK CELEBRATES FIRST LGBT LEGISLATIVE VICTORIES

The Network has worked for many years at the state level to pass policies that advance equality for LGBT members of our community. Despite positive public polling and extensive activism, hard-right opposition amongst the elected members of the legislature has prevented these efforts.

“Deviate Sexual Conduct Code”

In one of the biggest news stories from the 2013 session, the passage of SB 107 (Sen. Tom Facey-Missoula) was a historic moment and a reason for all Montanans to celebrate.

Despite a 1997 ruling by the

cedural motion to revive a tabled bill known as a “blast motion,” which requires 60 votes in the House, succeeded by one vote. The bill was then voted on by the full House and passed 64-35.

Hundreds of supporters gathered in the Capitol Rotunda to mark the signing of the bill by Governor Steve Bullock, which was followed by a celebration in Helena attended by one of the early sponsors of the bill – former Rep. Vivian Brooke of Missoula.

After decades of work, the Network is proud to have coordinated the successful effort to pass what is now the LGBT community’s first ever explicit victory in the Montana Legislature.

Helena Unanimously Passes Non-Discrimination Ordinance

Helena became the second city in the state to pass comprehensive legal protections for members of the LGBT community in December.

The “Helena nondiscrimination ordinance” passed 5-0, and provides protection from discrimination in the areas of housing, employment, and for most public accommodations to members of the Helena community on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. The City of Missoula was the first city to pass similar protections in April 2010.

The campaign involved hundreds of hours of volunteer work gathering over 3,000 signatures of Helena-area supporters, many phone banks, and public education events.

Our efforts were successful
(LGBT, cont. on page 10)



This photo was from the ceremony where Gov. Steve Bullock signed Senate Bill 107 into law.

Photo courtesy of Bobbie Zenker

Since 2009, the Network has led the efforts for LGBT equality at the local level by working to pass non-discrimination ordinances.

The momentum and energy of Network members who had recently engaged in two successful local non-discrimination ordinance campaigns was carried into the 2013 Montana Legislature, and Montana passed the first two LGBT legislative victories in 2013.

The last few months have surely been a time to celebrate equality in Montana, but work is yet to be done on securing statewide protections for LGBT people against discrimination.

SB 107: The End of Montana’s Unconstitutional and Offensive

Montana Supreme Court that said a law making gay and lesbian relationships a felony in Montana was unconstitutional, the unenforceable language remained on state law books.

Titled the “deviate sexual conduct code,” the law called for fines of up to \$50,000 and up to ten years in prison for people engaged in “same-sex sexual contact.”

The Network has led the effort to pass a “repeal bill” for many legislative sessions, with the 2011 session seeing the first-ever passage through the Senate. During the 2013 session, a hostile House Judiciary Committee tabled the bill in late March on a party-line vote after it had passed the Senate.

With the help of allied organizations and legislators, a special pro-

NETWORK ADVOCATES FOR COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

This spring, Network volunteers and staff made hundreds of calls to rally support for federal immigration reform. Because our members are always ready to act, this call to action generated hundreds of calls and emails to our Montana Senators urging them to support fair immigration reform that respects human rights and the dignity of all families.

In late June, the US Senate passed Senate Bill 744 by 68-32, including the key “yes” votes of Montana Senators Max Baucus and Jon Tester.

This bill is not perfect, but the country is closer than it’s been in 30 years to a legalization program for undocumented immigrants. We must continue to organize and will not forget about the hurtful provisions in this bill. We are disappointed with the unnecessary concessions that have bent to the fears of xenophobes and weakened the reform, but the bill is an important step that offers a path to citizenship for millions.

As the bill moves to the House of Representatives, we will continue to reach out to our membership and decision makers in support of fair and just immigration policies. Some important things to know about the immigration reform debate:

- ◆ We need to ensure that families can stay together. Separating children and parents is wrong and fixing our system can make sure that woman and children are treated fairly!



- ◆ Everyone deserves access to critical programs and services, such as crime victims’ services and programs for survivors of domestic violence. Immigrant women are often denied these services.

◆ Our healthcare system works best when all people have access to quality care when they need it without huge medical bills. Right now, many immigrants have no access to healthcare, including reproductive healthcare.

◆ Currently LGBT immigrants and their families are treated unfairly in a confusing system that does not recognize or protect them. We need to make sure that all families have the same opportunities for protection and the ability to stay together.

- ◆ Immigration reform needs to strengthen protections for all workers and restore fundamentally-American principles like due process and basic civil rights for immigrant families. Immigration reform has to promote clarity and transparency so families know what to expect during the process. p

(LGBT, from page 8)

with the help of key partners like the ACLU of Montana, the Montana Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, Montana Women Vote, and local volunteer steering committee members like Bobbie Zenker and Amy Ophus.

During the final hearings, Commissioner Dick Thweatt moved an amendment, seconded by Commissioner Matt Elsaesser, that eliminated legal protections on the basis of gender identity and expression in certain public accommodations where “users ordinarily appear in the nude” – such as locker rooms.

The offensive amendment passed, 4-1, with Commissioner Dan Ellison and Mayor Jim Smith supporting Elsaesser and Thweatt. The amendment hurt members of the LGBT community who trusted the commission to do the right thing and not eliminate trans and gender non-conforming Helenans from the policy. Ultimately, opponents to the ordinance didn’t even view it as an appropriate concession, since they stood against any legal recognition of LGBT people in any way. They op-

posed passage of the ordinance even as amended.

Commissioner Katherine Haque-Hausrath, the newest member of the body, ran with a nondiscrimination ordinance as a campaign priority. Her strength, compassion, and intelligence helped save the ordinance from *(LGBT, continued on page 11)*

(Medicaid, from page 4)

ing costs of caring for Montanans who can’t afford insurance.

By accepting federal dollars to expand access to healthcare to over 70,000 Montanans, we can improve the health of our communities, give financial security to rural hospitals and clinics, and create a major boost for Montana’s economy.

No matter what happens next, we know we’ll need the help and commitment of our members and supporters to make sure we get this done. Expect to hear from us about volunteer opportunities no matter where you live in the state. Our work to expand Medicaid will continue until we get the job done. p

(NPI, from page 3)

Foundation. A virulent anti-immigrant hate group, VDARE is named after Virginia Dare, said to be the first English (white) child born in the New World in 1587.

At an American Renaissance conference in April 2013 Spencer called for a “peaceful ethnic cleansing” that would clear parts of North America for only white people. “It is perfectly feasible for a white state to be established on the North American continent,” he said, “I have a dream.” NPI also prominently features the essay *What the Founders Really Thought About Race* on its website. Its overall purpose is discussing how America was better when:

“They (the founders) believed that only people of European stock could maintain a society in which they would wish to live, and they strongly opposed miscegenation. [History reflects] a clear conception of the United States as a nation ruled by and for Whites.”

In 2011, NPI held an event at the National Press Club on the *Majority Strategy: Why the GOP Must Win White America*. The report urged the Republican Party to “reach in” to its base of white voters instead of “reaching out” to minorities. The report told the GOP to em-

brace immigration restrictions, end civil rights laws, and stop all forms of affirmative action. When answering a question from a person of color at the event, fellow “white nationalist” Jared Taylor said, “All we want is the freedom to associate only with our own kind, to not be forced to deal with you.”

NPI recently critiqued the conservative Heritage Foundation for focusing its opposition to comprehensive immigration reform legislation on economic issues. NPI would rather base its opposition on xenophobic ideas that Hispanics have inferior values and IQs.

Spencer wrote, “I’d much rather live in an impoverished backwater where my friends and neighbors would be White than in a super-rich metropolis of aliens. Immigration isn’t all about money.”

The Network believes that Spencer makes clear what we’ve been saying about the immigration debate--it is about race. When Montana passed the anti-immigrant referendum LR-121 in the fall of 2011, Montana opened the floodgates for xenophobia like that of the National Policy Institute. Like the community of Whitefish and the state of Montana, our nation is made of immigrants. Counter to Spencer’s ideas, the Network believes that racism shouldn’t get in the way of an important policy like comprehensive immigration reform. p

(LGBT, from page 10) being tabled or forgotten many times over the campaign. Haque-Hausrath was honored with the Network's Walt Brown Award on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in appreciation for her efforts and leadership in support of LGBT equality.

Next steps

We are in the initial steps of a campaign for expanding legal protections for LGBT people in Bozeman. Bozeman is in a unique position, as it currently provides legal protection to city employees on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. It passed the first ever trans-inclusive policy by a government body in Montana back in January 2010. Now it is time for the city to expand those protections to all members of the LGBT community, and into the areas of housing and public accommodations. To sign the petition calling for the City of Bozeman to protect all LGBT from discrimination, visit mhrn.org/Bozeman. To volunteer,



Photo from Independent Record

People waiting to testify in support of the Helena Non-Discrimination Ordinance raise their hands at a Helena City Commission meeting.

contact jamee@mhrn.org.

If you are interested in hearing about opportunities for similar protections to move forward in your community, contact jamee@mhrn.org or call 406-442-5506 ext. 12.p

MHRN'S MERCHANDISE LIST

PLEASE CALL (406) 442-5506 TO ORDER ANY ITEMS:

<i>The Constitution Party of Montana: The Right-Wing Collides with Mainstream Politics</i>	\$5.00
<i>Shooting for Respectability: Firearms, False Patriots, and Politics in Montana</i>	\$8.00
<i>School Yard Bullies: The Harassment of Conservationists in the Flathead</i>	\$5.00
<i>The Montana Provocateur: A Progressive Journal on Progressive Politics (Issue #2)</i>	\$5.00
<i>Voting Records</i>	\$2.00
<i>Human Rights Network News (back issues)</i>	\$2.00

Yes, *I want to join the Montana Human Rights Network!*

- \$100 Patron
- \$75 Supporter
- \$50 Defender of Democracy
- \$35 Household
- \$30 Individual

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Please send membership contributions to **MHRN, P.O. Box 1509, Helena, MT 59624.**

MONTANA HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK

P.O. Box 1509
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(406) 442-5506
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Web: <http://www.mhrn.org>

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MONTANA HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK BOARD MEMBER PROFILE



Network board members find their way to us in many different ways. In 1996, Wilmot Collins reached out to the Network when he and his family were being harassed with racist threats. Ken Toole, Program Director at the time, suggested Wilmot contact the news media and, from that point, Wilmot decided that, “I had to be a part of the Network.” Wilmot soon joined the Network Board of Directors and currently serves as Treasurer.

Wilmot was raised in Liberia, West Africa, but fled with his wife due to a bloody civil war. Wilmot and his wife, Maddie, became US citizens in 2002. They both work at Veterans Affairs Montana, and they both serve in the US Military, Maddie in the Army Reserves and Wilmot in the Naval Reserves. In addition, they both teach at the local colleges in Helena, and Wilmot hopes to obtain his doctorate in Forensic Psychology in 2014. They have two beautiful children, Jaymie and Bliss.



Wilmot Collins, Network board member, speaks at World Refugee Day in Washington DC in June (top). Collins with Secretary of State John Kerry at World Refugee Day (left).

Wilmot is a tireless advocate and volunteer. In early June this year, Wilmot spoke at the World Refugee Day event hosted by Secretary of State John Kerry and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. He advocated for the US to keep its doors open to refugees and asylum seekers.

In addition to his board service, he has often been found collecting signatures for Network campaigns, testifying at the legislature, or making calls to members from the Network offices. When asked what his motivation is to serve on the Network board, Wilmot responded, “It’s hands on and results are clear.” p