

HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK NEWS

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WAGING A RACIST CAMPAIGN: THE NATIONAL ALLIANCE TARGETS MONTANA

In June 2004, Bozeman residents found fliers on their driveways featuring a picture of a young girl under the headline “MISSING.” Concerned that a neighborhood child had been abducted, the residents snatched up the fliers to read more. Underneath the picture, they found the words “A Future for White Children.” The flier was a recruiting tool used by the National Alliance, a hate group. About three weeks later, the same flier was distributed throughout Great Falls.

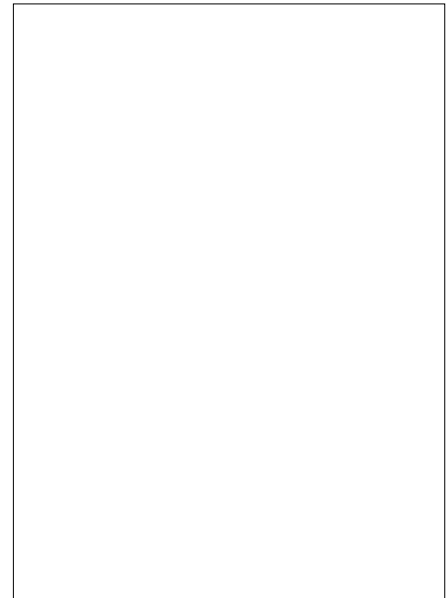
After these initial literature drops, Shaun Walker, a National Alliance spokesperson from West Virginia, told the media that the group historically had not done much in Montana. However, Walker indicated that was going to change. By mid-summer, the National Alliance had established a post office box and e-mail address in Bozeman. Since June, the Alliance has conducted literature drops in Anaconda, Bozeman, Butte, Deer Lodge, Great Falls, Kalispell, Missoula and Whitefish.

William Pierce’s Racist Legacy

Based in Hillsboro, West Virginia, the National Alliance was founded by William Pierce in the 1970s. Pierce held a doctorate in physics and was a former college professor. He left the world of academics to pursue a full-time career promoting white supremacy and anti-Semitism.

Pierce got his start in the hate movement with George Lincoln Rockwell’s American Nazi Party. In the 1960s, Pierce teamed up with Rockwell to try to attract more academics to the racist movement. After Rockwell’s assassination in 1967, Pierce became an executive leader of the American Nazi Party. In the early 1970s, he began the National Youth Alliance,

(Alliance, continued on page 2)



This National Alliance flier was distributed in Bozeman and Great Falls.

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profit organization.
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Scott Nicholson.*

(Alliance, continued from page 1) which later became the National Alliance.

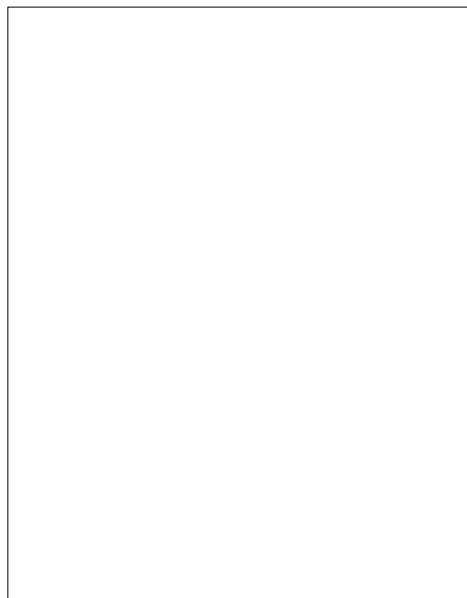
In the late 1970s, Pierce published *The Turner Diaries*, which is arguably his most significant contribution to the hate movement. Writing under the pen name Andrew Macdonald, Pierce's novel describes racist revolutionaries fighting, and eventually winning, a race war. One scene depicts the racists using a fertilizer-based truck bomb to blow up a federal building. Timothy McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber, used *The Turner Diaries* as a guide. The Order, a splinter group composed of National Alliance and Aryan Nations activists, also used the novel as a blueprint for a crime spree in the 1980s that included armored car robberies and the assassination of a Jewish radio host. Another Pierce novel, *Hunter*, tells the story of a drive-by killer who targets interracial couples. The book is dedicated to Joseph Paul Franklin who is serving multiple life sentences for murdering two African-American men.

Before his death in 2002, Pierce expanded his racist holdings to include a racist book publishing company (National Vanguard Books) and a white power music label (Resistance Records). He also hosted a radio program called "American Dissident Voices," which combined current events with his racist and anti-Semitic commentary.

Erich Gliebe became the Alliance's chairman following Pierce's death. Gliebe, a former boxer who fought under the nickname "The Aryan Barbarian," previously served as the editor of Resistance Records' magazine. Pierce had dubbed him "the most effective

activist in the Alliance." His activism, apparently, did not translate into leadership skills.

At the national level, the Alliance is struggling to find its way without Pierce. However, one thing that hasn't changed is its committed activists on the ground. As an example of their dedication, in June 2002, Alliance members in 20 states distributed over 70,000 leaflets in a five-day period.



This flier was distributed in Helena. It stated that both George W. Bush and John Kerry were pawns of an international Jewish conspiracy.

The National Alliance in Montana

This past summer wasn't the first time National Alliance literature surfaced in Montana. The Network had discovered various Alliance tracts in Helena and Missoula over the years, predominately on public bulletin boards around town. Copies of Resistance Records' magazines have also been left in mailboxes. The Network has identified a few Alliance activists over the years.

Back in 2001, the University of Montana and Hellgate High School campuses were "stickered." A racist slapped fluorescent green and orange National Alliance stickers on garbage cans, light poles and lockers. A person using the name Donovan Jenkins took credit for the distribution on a members-only National Alliance e-mail list. The Network discovered there was a Donovan Jenkins living in Missoula in a neighborhood between the two schools.

In 2003, a Helena newspaper published an anti-Semitic letter by Kevin McGuire. The letter specifically cited National Alliance websites as sources. The Network discovered that McGuire was a recent import to the state. Earlier that year, he had caused controversy at California's Santa Rosa Junior College while studying engineering. The school's newspaper published an anti-Semitic column he wrote. As faculty and fellow students voiced their displeasure, McGuire became a folk hero in the racist movement. He appeared on the National Alliance's radio program "American Dissident Voices,"

where he said he might give up his engineering studies, so he could focus on law. He stated he wanted to "defend the rights and interests of White people," go after Jewish organizations, and work "for the long-term survival of our White race." A publication by racist Tom Metzger's White Aryan Resistance reported that McGuire planned to move to Montana. About two months later, McGuire's letter was published in the newspaper with his address listed as a Helena post office box.

(Alliance, continued on page 7)

FROM THE MARGINS TO THE MAINSTREAM

As with previous elections, the Network monitored the 2004 campaigns with concern that right-wing themes would continue creeping into mainstream politics. There were plenty of candidates on the ballot with histories of right-wing activism, including those who are discussed below.

Fringe Party Wins a Seat

Ronan's Rick Jore, a Constitution Party of Montana candidate, appears to have won a seat in the Montana Legislature. Initial election results have Jore winning a spot in the Montana House by a mere two votes. As we go to press, a recount is being conducted.

Jore was an incumbent Republican legislator going into the 2000 elections. He switched parties, saying the Republican Party was too liberal, and lost his seat. Outpolling the GOP contender, Jore lost to the Democratic candidate in both 2000 and 2002.

The Constitution Party of Montana (CP-MT) combines Christian fundamentalism with the anti-government ideology of the "patriot" movement. The party's founder, Michael Heit, hasn't paid his taxes since 1987 and has tried to get rid of his Social Security Number. Both of these practices are advocated by groups like the Montana Freemen. CP-MT's current chairman, Jonathan Martin, leads a group of anti-choice protestors that regularly picket Planned Parenthood in Great Falls with placards featuring allegedly aborted fetuses. CP-MT has endorsed "unorganized militias," or groups like the Militia of Montana, and also sponsored a presentation by Roy Moore in Great Falls earlier this year. Moore, a

favorite of the Christian Right, was stripped of his judgeship on the Alabama Supreme Court when he refused to remove a Ten Commandments monument he illegally placed in an Alabama judicial building.

CP-MT has fielded legislative candidates since appearing on the scene in 2000. This election cycle the party fielded 13 candidates. In the past, its candidates haven't polled well. While Jore is the only CP-MT candidate to win this cycle, some others did fairly well [see inset box on this page].

Poster Child of Right-Wing Activism Wins

Bozeman's Roger Koopman has a long resumé of right-wing activism. He has been an activist and/or officer for both the NRA and Montana Shooting Sports Association (gun rights); Montanans for Better Government (anti-tax); Montana Trustees of Freedom (anti-public education); and the Fully Informed Jury Association (jury nullification). He's a longtime political ally of Rob Natelson, including hosting Natelson's 2003 conference in Bozeman focused on undermining public education. Koopman also started the

Chamber of Private Enterprise, because he felt the Chamber of Commerce was too liberal.

While running for the Montana House, Koopman took aim at conservationists, whom he called "eco-terrorists," and courted the Christian Right under the banner of "family values." His campaign website said he will sponsor bills to teach biblically-based creationism in public schools, privatize many government functions, and make bills come with a "liberty note" outlining how proposed legislation might impact personal freedom.

(Elections, continued on page 4)

Constitution Party of Montana Candidates

Town	Name	Votes	%
Libby	Russell Brown	146	4%
Kalispell	Timothy Martin	217	5%
Ronan	Rick Jore	1,556	37%
Plains	Renn Bodeker	214	5%
Great Falls	Kent Holtz	259	6%
Great Falls	Terry Poupa	756	22%
Great Falls	Jonathan Martin	215	7%
Great Falls	Christopher Gregory	548	19%
Black Eagle	Philip DuPaul	615	45%
Emigrant	Joel Boniek	404	8%
Manhattan	Mark DeGroot	1,606	37%
Lolo	Lou Hatch	136	3%
Big Arm	Kurtis Oliverson	462	5%

Source: Secretary of State website

(Elections, continued from page 3)
Koopman won his race with 60% of the vote.

Gun Rights Leader Loses

Gary Marbut, head of the Missoula-based Montana Shooting Sports Association (MSSA), made another run for the Montana House as a Republican. He lost to the incumbent Democrat, receiving 36% of the vote.

Over the years, Marbut's writings have appeared in Militia of Montana (MOM) publications, and he has even suggested organizational tips to the militia. In return, MOM has circulated MSSA fundraising appeals

semi-automatic rifle into an automatic machine gun. While out on bond, Puckett pried off his ankle tracking device and escaped for a month before turning himself in. Shamaya's article portrayed Puckett as a helpless victim.

Wells Back in the House

During previous tenures in both the Montana House and Senate, Bozeman's Jack Wells helped bring "patriot" issues to the Montana Legislature. After losing his Senate seat in 2002, Wells ran for the House this cycle and won with 69% of the vote.

Back in 1995, Wells co-sponsored a resolution that would have

Following the Freeman standoff, Wells attended a meeting of Citizens for a Free America, a Bozeman-area militia group. The group discussed its strategy for supporting the incarcerated Freeman who were on trial in Billings.

GOP PAC Supports Democrat

Denise Cofer no doubt expected a hard-fought battle with her Democratic opponent in the race for Flathead County Commissioner. However, it may well have been fellow Republicans that led to her defeat.

During the Republican primary, her GOP opponent claimed Cofer was part of an "extreme" group of local Republicans who were acting as the "self-appointed ideological police" attacking moderates in the party. The group in question is the Flathead County Republican Assembly, which is comprised of people who think the Montana Republican Party is too liberal. Along with being part of the Assembly, Cofer is a longtime Christian Coalition and anti-choice activist in the Flathead Valley. While acting as the Flathead County Coordinator for the Christian Coalition in the late 1990s, Cofer worked for neo-Nazi Chris Temple's financial consulting business.

The criticisms of Cofer and the Republican Assembly reappeared during the general election. Moderate Republicans started a political action committee (PAC) called Republicans for the Flathead. The PAC stated the Republican Assembly was "the most extreme of the Christian Coalition with a new name." In order to try and take the local GOP back, the PAC endorsed Cofer's Democratic opponent. In the end, Cofer lost the race by less than 140 votes. □

Angel Shamaya, gun rights activist and contributor to Gary Marbut's campaign, wrote the following in an e-mail to the Network.

"In my opinion, if anyone is hateful, it's you gun bigots. You seem to hate freedom and hate people who stand for freedom. Seething, vile hatred spews out of everything I've ever seen from you pack of crybabies... You people take your lead straight out of the Nazi playbook, like the good little despicable communists you so obviously are."

and notices for upcoming events. MOM is also currently selling copies of Marbut's book, *Gun Laws of Montana*, and it circulated Marbut's announcements that he was running for office and needed contributions.

Marbut enlisted Angel Shamaya, who runs a national gun rights website, to help with his campaign website. In 2001, Shamaya co-authored an article detailing the ATF raiding the home of Kentucky State Militia Commander Charlie Puckett. Puckett was later charged with being a felon in possession of firearms, pipe bombs, 35,000 rounds of ammunition and equipment to turn a

required citizens to own firearms and ammunition in order to serve in the "unorganized militia." The term is frequently used by groups like the Militia of Montana to justify their supposed constitutional existence.

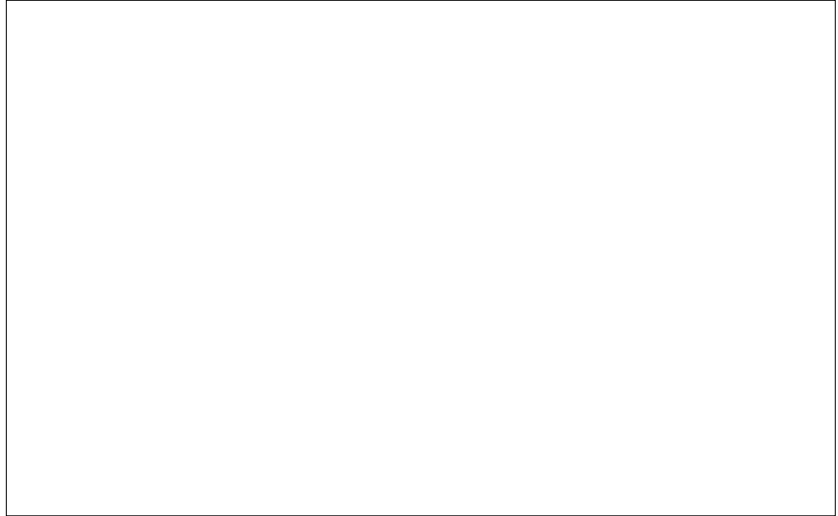
Also in 1995, Wells signed the "militia petition." The petition called on then-Governor Marc Racicot to grant "patriots" amnesty so they could attend a forum to air their grievances against the government. The petition resurfaced during the Montana Freeman Standoff in 1996, when MOM's John Trochmann used it to insist that the Freeman had support in the Montana Legislature.

ARYAN CONGRESS: RACIST LEADER'S LAST HURRAH

This past July, Aryan Nations held its annual parade in downtown Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, during its Aryan World Congress. Influential racist leaders like White Aryan Resistance's Tom Metzger and White Revolution's Billy Roper were among the 30 activists participating in the march. The World Congress itself was held at a campground near Cataldo, Idaho. This World Congress proved to be the last public appearance by Aryan Nations leader Richard Butler.

In early September, Richard Butler died at age 86. Following years of poor health, Butler died at his Coeur d'Alene home. He had been living in the house since a civil judgment forced him to sell the group's longtime, northern Idaho compound in 2000. Butler's legacy includes a history of violence by his followers since Aryan Nations moved to Idaho in the 1970s.

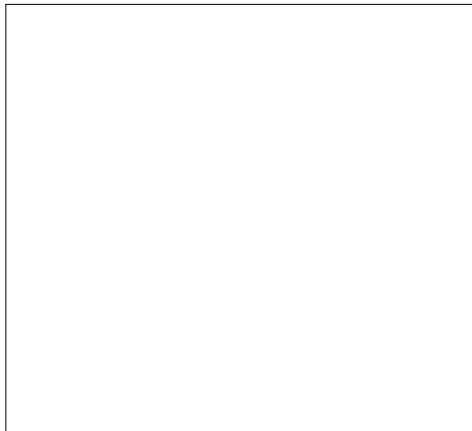
Butler's death also resulted in Aryan Nations' headquarters moving from Idaho. In early October, Aryan activists moved the group's base of operations to Lincoln, Alabama. They announced that a four-person leadership council would manage the hate group, saying one person could not fill Butler's shoes. □



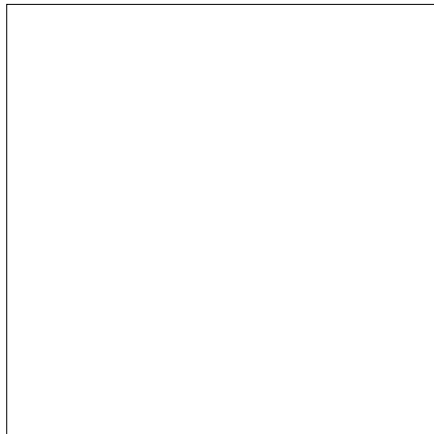
Richard Butler (seated in truck) led the Aryan Nations parade. Michael McQueeny (front left) is Aryan Nations' Wisconsin state leader.



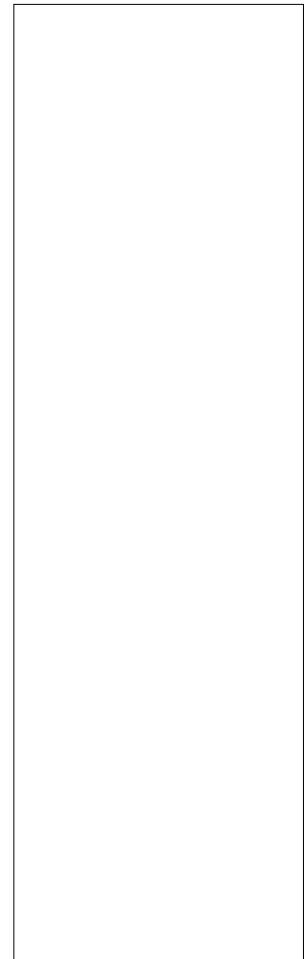
Tom Metzger, WAR



Billy Roper, White Revolution



Kenneth Gregg, Tennessee KKK



DISCRIMINATION WRITTEN IN MONTANA'S CONSTITUTION

This year's election cycle found the Christian Right's anti-gay crusade in full swing. The Religious Right mobilized its forces across the country, especially in the 11 states considering bans on gay marriage. When the dust settled on the elections, all 11 states, including Montana, adopted the measures. Montana's CI-96 passed with 67% of the vote.

Constitutionally-Protected Homophobia

Groups like the Montana Family Foundation framed the need for CI-96 with rhetoric of family values and protecting "traditional families" from "activist judges." CI-96 did nothing to address the real issues facing families today, such as divorce rates, domestic violence and economic issues. That's because CI-96 was never about helping families. Instead, CI-96 was a carefully crafted political strategy of the Republican Party, aligned with the Christian Right's latest assault in its homophobic crusade.

From school board meetings to legislative hallways, the Montana Family Foundation and its counterparts have fought against equal protection under the law for gays and lesbians for decades. CI-96 was the latest weapon.

One of its tactics was stating that CI-96 would help keep churches from having to perform gay weddings. Gay marriage is about legal, civil rights and whether the state should be allowed to discriminate against couples seeking to marry. It is not about religious ceremony, which is entirely up to churches. The rights of civil marriage shouldn't be

based on any particular religious doctrine. Instead, the Montana Constitution should strive to grant and equally protect the rights of all citizens.

The Network was part of a coalition that formed against CI-96 called Montanans for Families and Fairness. It argued that CI-96 establishes a dangerous precedent—using the Montana Constitution to discriminate against part of the population. Using the constitution to deny rights to gays and lesbians opens Pandora's Box. The Montana Constitution could just as logically be used to take rights away from people based on ethnicity, class, gender, religion, etc. Historically, amendments to both state constitutions and the U.S. Constitution have secured the rights of citizens, not taken them away.

Anti-Gay Voter Mobilization

It wasn't a coincidence that the Christian Right picked this campaign season to push banning gay marriage. Throughout 2004, Americans watched as various states, counties and cities cleared the way for gay marriage. Conservatives knew that President George W. Bush needed the votes of fundamentalist and evangelical Christians to be re-elected. With the help of the Christian Right, the Republican Party used gay marriage as a way to motivate conservative Christians to go to the polls and support its candidates. The GOP also hoped to keep gay marriage a central campaign issue, so potential voters would not focus on the party's bad economic record, the war in Iraq, or its anti-environmental policies.

The Montana Family Foundation

urged churches to support CI-96. It encouraged individuals and churches to buy yard signs and to place ads in local newspapers. It made both available through its website. The Family Foundation encouraged individuals and churches to foot the bill for running the advertisements.

Democrats March to the Right

Given the way conservatives framed the gay marriage debate, it was not surprising that Republicans supported both CI-96 and the Federal Marriage Amendment. A case in point is U.S. Rep. Dennis Rehberg (R-MT). When filing for re-election, the media quoted him as saying, "I morally, spiritually and philosophically believe the foundation of our country is based on the marriage of a husband and a wife - a man and a woman."

However, it wasn't just Republicans. Buying into the GOP-created framework, Democrats running for statewide office in Montana adopted a stance similar to Rehberg. Just days before the election, John Morrison, the Democratic candidate for Auditor, stated he supported CI-96. "I believe marriage is a cultural institution that was created by and for the purpose of heterosexual couples," he told the press.

Other Democrats for statewide office that supported CI-96 included: Linda McCulloch (Office of Public Instruction), Bill Kennedy (Secretary of State) and Brian Schweitzer, Montana's incoming governor. These candidates refused to challenge the propaganda of the Christian Right and Republican Party, even though some said they didn't support CI-96

(CI-96, continued on page 7)

(CI-96, continued from page 6)
 on a personal level. They apparently believed the conservatives who said it was political suicide to oppose CI-96. They also took a position directly contradicting the Democratic Party platform which states the party's opposition to CI-96. Also, many Democratic legislative candidates refused to even return the Family Foundation's pledge form.

Where to From Here

Following his re-election, President Bush declared that he would push for the adoption of the Federal Marriage Amendment. With Republican gains, he feels he has the votes to get it passed, unlike earlier in 2004 when the Amendment didn't receive enough votes in either the Senate or

House.

For all the Montanans and Americans who support equal rights for gays and lesbians, it is not time to give up. The Civil Rights Movement demonstrated that the road to freedom is filled with setbacks and perseverance is the key. Just as amendments are added to constitutions, they can also be repealed. Just as society is now ashamed that it used to ban interracial marriage, people will look back and be embarrassed by CI-96's passage. Exit polling for CI-96 provides a glimpse of that future. Young voters provided the highest numbers of opposition to CI-96 and the other anti-gay measures nationwide.

In the more immediate future, strategies for lawsuits are being discussed across the nation to challenge

the passage of the amendments. In Montana, legislation has been proposed for the 2005 Montana Legislature to address concerns about discrimination. Bills are being drafted that would recognize civil unions, include sexual orientation in both the Montana's Human Rights Act and hate crimes law, and create next-of-kin benefits.

When the likes of the Family Foundation show up and testify against the proposed bills, which they will almost certainly do, the real purpose of CI-96 will be revealed. The Montana Family Foundation and its counterparts want gays and lesbians to go back into the closet. If gays and lesbians refuse, the Christian Right is determined to see them live as second-class citizens. That was the real reason for CI-96. □

(Alliance, continued from page 2)

We Need Your Help

The Network is trying to track the distribution of National Alliance literature around Montana. If there is a literature drop in your community, please mail to the Network a copy of the flier, a description of where you found it, and any pertinent information about the person distributing it. If you would like to sponsor an educational presentation on the National Alliance and/or hate groups in your community, also give us a call.

Montana Human Rights Network
 PO Box 1222
 Helena, MT 59624
 (406) 442-5506

Finally, a longtime racist in the state has switched affiliations. Missoula's Dan Hassett was active with the Montana chapter of the World Church of the Creator for decades [see related article on page 12]. He is now affiliated with the National Alliance, according to a former Church of the Creator activist.

It's Just Literature...So What?

Law enforcement's response to the recent literature drops across the state is that they are protected under the First Amendment. That's true, as long as they don't violate local littering ordinances. Since no crime has been committed, authorities say they are unable to do anything. That means it's up to the community.

"Over the years, we have watched how literature drops like this are only a first step," Travis McAdam of the Network says. "Communities need to unite and send a resounding message that the National Alliance's views do not represent Montana values. A vocal response can help keep racists from escalating their activities from literature drops to violence."

Great Falls and Cascade County have taken proactive steps. Both governments passed a "Hate Free Zone" proclamation in October. The proclamation states that "intolerance divides our community and perpetuates fear and misunderstandings." Therefore, the city and county governments call on "the community-at-large to oppose and condemn all acts of malice, bullying, intimidation, or threats as actions contrary to the integrity, the spirit, and the general well-being of our community...." The Network hopes other communities will follow suit. □

COMMUNITY

Compiled by
MHRN Organizers

CORNER



Flathead Reservation Human Rights Coalition

FRHRC held a summer camp on Flathead Lake at Blue Bay in early August. Eighteen kids from grades 6-8 came out just to have a good time. This event was organized by Dana Grant and other members of the FRHRC board and volunteers. Financial support was given by the SKC foundation.

In September, FRHRC hosted a presentation by Travis McAdam of the Network on the militia and white supremacist movements in Montana. Along with discussing the groups that are currently active, McAdam talked about how these movements try, and sometimes do, tap into the political mainstream through "hot button" issues.

On November 17, FRHRC sponsored a community discussion on gangs and gang-related activity in the Mission Valley. Detective Jay Doyle of the Lake County Sheriff's Department gave a presentation and discussed the current situation of youth gangs.

Upcoming Event: FRHRC's 13th Annual Culture Fair will happen on Saturday, December 4, 2004, at Ronan Elementary School. Vendors, performers, and people wanting to share information about their cultural background are encouraged to participate. There is no charge for admission, and everyone is welcome. The Culture Fair will happen from

NEWS FROM AROUND

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. FRHRC hopes to have various children's activities, food booths, craft tables, etc. Plans are being made for the Last Chance Dixieland Jazz Band to perform from noon to 2:00 p.m. For more information, call 676-8444.

FRHRC received a \$1,000 donation from the Kellogg Leadership for Community Change project. These funds will help sponsor this year's Culture Fair and Martin Luther King Day art and essay contest.

Great Falls Human Rights Task Force

In October, the Task Force sponsored a presentation by the Network's Travis McAdam about the militia and white supremacist movements in Montana.

Upcoming Event: Network staff and people in Great Falls are currently planning the Network's Second Annual Dinner for Martin Luther King Day. The event will feature remarks from U.S. Rep. Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), a silent auction and other entertainment. If you are interested in helping out, please call Alison at (406) 442-5506 or e-mail her at Alison@mhrn.org.

Gallatin Valley Human Rights Task Force

The Task Force has been busy responding to the National Alliance, a white supremacist group, that is setting up shop in Bozeman and conducting literature drops in the community [see related article on page

1]. It has hosted many meetings around the topic. The first featured Travis McAdam of the Network giving a presentation on hate groups in Montana. Margaret MacDonald of the Montana Association of Churches was the presenter at the second meeting. She discussed how Billings has responded to hate activity over the years. The third meeting was a general community meeting with school administrators, business leaders and representatives from various faith communities. The meeting was geared toward setting up a community response against the National Alliance. The Task Force has also appeared on two local radio shows and attended several civic group meetings to discuss white supremacist activity in the community.

In early November, the Task Force sponsored a presentation by the Network's Scott Nicholson. Nicholson told of his experiences in Colombia this past summer [see related story on page 9].

Upcoming Events: On December 10, 2004, there will be an interfaith service at Holy Rosary Church sponsored by the Interfaith Association. Also, the Sunday before Martin Luther King Day, the Task Force will have a community rally in response to the National Alliance's presence in the community.

Missoula Advocates for Human Rights

Members of the Advocates, along with Network board members
(*News, continued on page 10*)

COLOMBIA: POLITICAL ACTIVISM TURNS DEADLY

By
Scott Nicholson,
MHRN Organizer

Editor's Note: Scott spent two months this summer accompanying human rights activists in Colombia.

Two "sicarios" (hired killers) murdered Rito Hernandez on September 26, 2003. Rito was a leader of the Saravena Community Water Company – an amazing, community-owned and managed company providing clean drinking water to the people of Saravena. The government accused the company of being connected with the left-wing guerrillas, and the police had threatened Rito that he would be killed unless he stopped working for the company.

Rito's story is a prime example of how Saravena's progressive community is targeted because of its activism. The town of Saravena is the center of an extensive social justice movement in the department of Arauca, located in northeastern Colombia. Arauca is one of the most militarized regions in the country and a primary focus of the government's repression of human rights activists. The department is the site of Occidental Petroleum's Caño Limón oil complex and the starting point for a pipeline that transports oil 480 miles to the Caribbean coast. Last year, the U.S. government provided \$93 million to create a special military brigade to protect the pipeline, and there are dozens of U.S. military "advisors" in Arauca. Amnesty International, in a report issued in April, described Arauca as a "war laboratory"

for the Colombian and U.S. governments.

I met Rito Hernandez's children the last day that I was in Saravena – Jeydi (2 years old), Jeferson (3 years old), Fainori (7 years old), Yurliana (8 years old), and Jessica (9 years old). I also met his brothers, Jairo and José, who described what happened the evening Rito was murdered. Rito and a friend were having a beer in front of the local store – across the street from Rito's home. Two men rode up on bicycles. One of them called Rito a "dog," with



Rito Hernandez's children

other expletives thrown in, and drew a gun. Rito tried to defend himself with a chair, but that wasn't enough to protect him from the killer's bullets.

Jairo and José saw their brother being shot and followed Rito's killers back to the "security zone," which is several blocks cordoned off with police checkpoints in the center of the town. The two assassins passed through one of the checkpoints without a problem. When Jairo came to that checkpoint, he was told that no one had passed by and was warned not to enter. He ignored those threats and continued on to the

entrance of the police station – where he saw the two killers inside with their bicycles. The next morning, Jairo and José filed a complaint with the prosecutor's office. As they were leaving, they saw the police captain talking with the leader of the assassins.

Like Rito, people associated with other community projects are targeted. In addition to the community water company, the people of Saravena have also created: a health cooperative with 30,000 members in Arauca; an agricultural cooperative with 42 stores throughout the department; transportation cooperatives (taxi, bus, and cargo); an agrarian high school; a technical high school for adults; and an alternative university. All of these community projects challenge the unjust distribution of wealth and power in Colombia, and the government and military have labeled them as "guerrilla projects."

On November 12, 2002, the military and police rounded up more than 2,000 people in Saravena and took them to the local sports stadium. They were lined up and forced to walk past a car with tinted windows. Inside the car were two paid informants who pointed out people to be detained. Eighty five people were taken to the local military base, and 51 of them were imprisoned for 15 months in Bogotá on charges of rebellion. The people imprisoned included members of the teachers and healthcare workers unions, peasant leaders, and leaders of the Saravena Community Water Company.

(Colombia, continued on page 10)

(Colombia, continued from page 9)

Early in the morning of August 5 (just three weeks after I left Arauca), the military entered Caño Seco – a rural community outside Saravena. Three soldiers and a paid informant went to the house of Jorge Prieto, the president of Arauca’s healthcare workers’ union. There had been a meeting at Jorge’s home the night before and Leonel Goyeneche (director of Saravena’s technical school) and Alirio Martínez (former president of the peasant association in Arauca) were still inside. Jorge, Leonel, and Alirio were taken out of the house and executed by the soldiers.

Since 2000, the U.S. government has given more than \$2.5 billion to the Colombian military and police. Please contact your congressional representatives and tell them that you don’t want your tax dollars used to support this type of terrorism in Colombia. □

(News, continued from page 8)

from other local groups, helped in planning the Network’s 2004 Annual Conference that was held in Missoula on November 13, 2004.

Upcoming Event: The Advocates have been busy helping with the upcoming Martin Luther King celebration in January 2005. Godfrey Saunders, Bozeman High School’s principal, is going to be the featured speaker. There will also be an essay and art contest open to students in Missoula schools. Stay tuned for more details in the upcoming months. □

(COTC, continued from page 12)

Smith’s shooting spree. He called Smith a “good man” and said the shootings would give WCOTC wonderful publicity.

In April 2004, a jury found Hale guilty of soliciting the murder of Judge Lefkow and on the charges of obstructing justice. He was supposed to be sentenced in early November; however, U.S. District Judge James Moody postponed it. Judge Moody said he wanted to wait and see what happened with a lawsuit moving through the judiciary system that might impact how federal judges impose sentences. Under current guidelines, Hale faces 20 years for the murder charge and up to 30 years on the obstruction charges.



Matt Hale

ance, about taking over leadership of WCOTC. Hassett and Deardorff formed their own Church of the Creator group, which they called Church of the Creator Northwest. California’s Dane Hall was named the leader. Subsequently, Hall forced Hassett to leave the Montana group.

Hall, Deardorff and other members had little success in building their organization. This situation got worse in 2003 when one of the group’s officers called the Network and said he was leaving the group. He wanted to sell the Network over 4,000 of the group’s books, which the group used to raise money and recruit new members. The Network acquired the books and has been disseminating sets of them, which have titles like *The White Man’s Bible* and *On the Brink of a Bloody Racial War*, to other organizations and aca-

demics that study and monitor the racist movement. The Network is also working with Montana artists to turn the remaining books into art pieces that will be used to educate people about the dangers of hate groups and racism.

The defection and loss of books hit the group hard, and they have continued to have internal problems. In July 2004, Deardorff announced he had assumed leadership, because Hall didn’t have the time to “handle it properly.” Deardorff said Hall would stay with the group in another capacity. The Church of the Creator Northwest finds itself with hardly any members and no way to raise money. □

Montana Chapter Down and Out

Throughout the 1990s, Missoula’s Dan Hassett and Superior’s Slim Deardorff served as “Reverends” for WCOTC. WCOTC had annual meetings at Deardorff’s shack outside Superior, and Hassett received the group’s “Creator of the Year” award for his activism. Like the national organization, the Montana chapter faces a rapid decline.

In February 2002, Hale expelled Hassett and Deardorff from the national group. He claimed Hassett had stolen over \$8,000 from the group and that Deardorff had contacted William Pierce, leader of the National Alli-

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MURDER PLOT LEADS TO PRISON FOR RACIST LEADER:

LOCAL CHAPTER CONTINUES RAPID DECLINE

Matt Hale was regarded as one of the up-and-coming leaders in the white supremacist movement. Along with heading up the World Church of the Creator (WCOTC), he was a law school graduate and frequently featured in media coverage. He was building WCOTC into one of the most visible and influential hate groups in the country. This momentum came crashing to a halt when he was arrested and convicted of trying to arrange the assassination of a federal judge.

Hale's downfall began in 2002. U.S. District Court Judge Joan Lefkow ruled that WCOTC had unlawfully used the phrase "Church of the Creator," which was a registered trademark by Oregon's Te-Ta-Ma Truth Foundation. She told WCOTC that it could no longer use the words or acronyms like WCOTC or COTC. Part of her judgment included ordering WCOTC to turn over all printed

materials bearing the words. In response, Hale moved the group's headquarters to Riverton, Wyoming, and it started operating under a different name, The Creativity Movement. Hale said Lefkow's ruling placed "our Church in a state of war with this federal judge." According to authorities, this wasn't just rhetoric.

On January 8, 2003, the FBI arrested Hale as he entered an Illinois courthouse to attend a contempt-of-court hearing. He was charged with soliciting the murder of Judge Lefkow and obstruction of justice. The indictment stated Hale tried to find an assassin to carry out the plan between November 29, 2002, and December 17, 2002. It was during this time that Hale moved the group's headquarters to Wyoming.

During Hale's trial, the most damaging testimony came from WCOTC members. One such Creator was Tony Evola. In 2000, Hale approached Evola about distributing WCOTC literature. Evola reported the encounter to authorities and was asked to become an informant. Hale

eventually promoted Evola to the head of the White Berets, the group's security force. All along, Evola taped conversations with Hale. He testified that Hale ordered him to get the physical addresses for Lefkow and the Truth Foundation's attorneys. One tape played during the trial was Hale discussing with Evola the need to "exterminate the rat [Lefkow]."

Another Creator, Jon Fox, also testified against Hale. Fox, a former militia member and leader of WCOTC's Kentucky chapter, testified that Hale had asked him to commit the murders. "He shouted how he wanted them dead – the judge and the attorneys, they had to die," he testified. Hale also wanted the Truth Foundation's "church burned down." When Fox declined the job, Hale approached Evola.

The trial also examined Hale's relationship to Creator Benjamin Smith, who went on a shooting spree in 1999 that left two people dead and nine others wounded. Jurors heard an audio tape of Hale laughing and imitating gunfire as he talked about
(COTC, continued on page 10)

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