

HUMAN RIGHTS NETWORK NEWS

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GOOSE-STEPPING NAZIS AT THE CAPITOL?

WHITE SUPREMACIST RUNS FOR LEGISLATURE

The National Socialist Movement (also known as the American Nazi Party) announced in December 2005 that it was starting a Montana chapter. Soon thereafter, the Network identified Butte's Shawn Stuart as the state contact. Born and raised in Bozeman, Stuart served two tours in Iraq with the Marines and is currently a student at Montana Tech. In March 2006, Stuart announced he was running as a Republican for the Montana House of Representatives. The Network contacted the *Montana Standard* about Stuart's Nazi affiliations, and the story broke on April 1.

When filing for office, Stuart announced his opposition to equal rights for gays and lesbians. He also said he was against abortion and enthusiastically supported gun rights. Stuart initially denied his role with the National Socialist Movement. However, when confronted with the facts provided by the Network, he admitted to being a member of both the National Socialist Movement and the Militia of Montana, which he described as an "extreme" version of the National Rifle Association. The founders of the Militia of Montana came from the hardcore white supremacist movement. Stuart says his Nazi activism began in 2004, when he began believing that America's war with Iraq was part of a global Jewish conspiracy.

Carrying on Hitler's Legacy

The National Socialist Movement formed in 1974, evolving from George Lincoln Rockwell's American Nazi Party of the 1960s. Following Rockwell's assassination in 1967, the National Socialist Movement started in an effort to continue Rockwell's message.

The National Socialist Movement openly embraces its racist and anti-Semitic ideology. It proudly proclaims its worship of Adolph Hitler and the Third Reich. It declares that "our logo is the Sacred Swastika," and one of the group's slogans is "Fighting for Race and Nation." The National Socialist Movement believes citizenship should be denied to people of color, Jews,

(NSM, continued on page 2)



Photo by Montana Standard

Shaun Stuart
National Socialist Movement

Human Rights Network News is a publication of the Montana Human Rights Network, a non-profit organization.

*Editor: Travis McAdam
Contributors: Christine Kaufmann, Ken Toole, Kim Abbott, Alison James and Scott Nicholson.*

(NSM, continued from page 1)

and gays and lesbians. At public events, party members frequently wear brown-shirt uniforms replicating Hitler's storm troopers. While its national headquarters are in Minnesota, the group has chapters all across the country.

Jeff Schoep took over leadership of the hate group in 1994, and he frequently speaks at white supremacist events across the country. He believes that Hitler was "definitely right" in carrying out the Holocaust. Schoep proudly says that, during its history, the white race "nearly rid it [the world] of the pestilence of American Indians" and other people of color. He believes white supremacists are the "last vestiges of our Race who have refused to lie down and die in Multi-Racial, Internationalist, Jewish lead [sic] filth." Schoep's personal history is full of criminal activity, including felony theft and burglary.

Another key activist for the National Socialist Movement is Virginia's Bill White. He oversees the group's websites and hosts its online radio program. Like Shawn Stuart, White has a taste for politics. He worked on Pat Buchanan's 2000 presidential campaign, and he also managed a congressional race for a Constitution Party candidate. Currently, White is in trouble with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. He owns multiple rental properties in Roanoke, Virginia, and has a history of evicting people of color. In 2005, HUD

filed a lawsuit against him for violating the Fair Housing Act. It claims White illegally evicted African-American tenants. HUD believes this was done as part of White's so called "ghetto beautification program."

Network's History with Stuart

The Network had come across Shawn Stuart prior to his emergence as the state contact point for the National Socialist Movement. Back in 2004, the Network was actively organizing against the presence of the National Alliance, a white supremacist group, in Bozeman. The National Alliance had an active recruiter, Kevin McGuire, in town. McGuire and his cronies were trying to recruit local youth into the group. A concerned teacher asked a Network staff member to talk to her students about the dangers of hate groups.

The morning after the Network staff member spoke, a young man paid a visit to the teacher, grilling her about why she had allowed the presentation. Still feeling intimidated a few days later, she called the Network. She said the young man who confronted her was Shawn Stuart. She knew his name because Stuart's picture was part of a political advertisement in the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle* for Bill Warden, a Republican legislative candidate. The advertisement featured Stuart in his Marine uniform endorsing Warden.

Goose-Stepping Into the Mainstream

Shawn Stuart isn't the first white supremacist to use the strategy of running for public office. He is following the example pioneered by longtime Louisiana Klansman David Duke. Back in the 1980s, Duke stashed away his Klan robe, bought a business suit, and began calling himself a conservative Republican. Stuart knows a message echoing the Religious Right's contempt of gay rights and abortion will appeal to mainstream Republicans more than hardcore white supremacy and anti-Semitism. This understanding kept him from telling Butte Republicans about his Nazi activism.

According to Stuart and Bill White, local Republicans allowed Stuart to announce his candidacy at the Butte Pachyderm Club's annual Lincoln-Reagan Dinner and offered their support. White specifically singled out Pachyderm President Rachel Roberts, saying she was very supportive. Along with her Republican activism,

(NSM, continued on page 10)

Nazis Target the Network

Since the Network revealed Shawn Stuart's hidden ideology and took away his "stealth" strategy, the National Socialist Movement targeted the Network with its anger. Bill White called Network staff members at home to "interview" them for his racist radio show. He also posted the names, home addresses, and phone numbers of three Network employees on one of his websites.

White also used his websites to post libelous allegations about the Network, declaring that it engaged in "terrorist bombings and arson." He claimed the Network was "part of a network of violent criminals and terrorists" under investigation by the FBI. He said the Network was linked to "organized crime and violence" and promoted a "radical anti-white, anti-Montana agenda."

RIGHT-WING ROUNDUP: NEWS OF “PATRIOTS” RELATED TO MONTANA

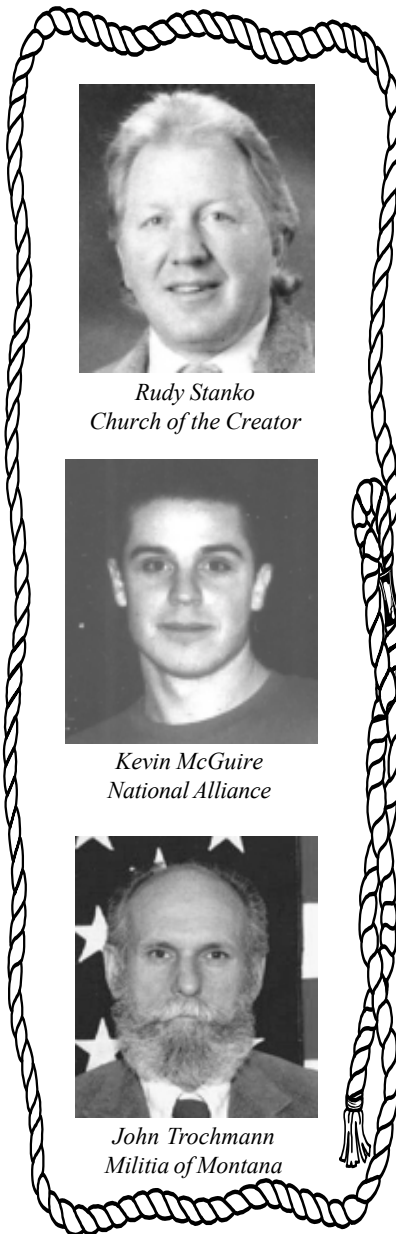
During the past several months, new developments occurred regarding racists, anti-government “patriots,” and Montana. Some of the individuals and groups mentioned below are still active in Montana. Some are moving to the state. Others have relocated and set up shop elsewhere.

Stanko Guilty of Weapons Violations

Rudy Stanko, a white supremacist formerly of the Billings area, ran afoul of authorities in Nebraska. For over 20 years, he has been active with the Church of the Creator, a hate group also known as The Creativity Movement. Stanko’s affiliation with the group began in the 1980s, while he was serving prison time for selling tainted meat to school lunch programs.

Since moving to Nebraska, Stanko had kept a rather low profile while selling Church of the Creator books through ads in racist and anti-Semitic publications. That changed in March, when he was arrested and charged with being a felon possessing firearms, a violation of federal law.

Stanko’s physical abuse of his wife served as the catalyst for his arrest. Stanko’s stepdaughter, Crystal Lemaster, feared for her mother’s safety and contacted law enforcement. She turned over eight firearms belonging to Stanko. Lemaster told police that Stanko hid the firearms in a cabinet behind a wall panel in their home’s basement. The criminal complaint filed against Stanko reported other people confirmed both his use of firearms and the abuse of



*Rudy Stanko
Church of the Creator*



*Kevin McGuire
National Alliance*



*John Trochmann
Militia of Montana*

his wife.

In late April, a Nebraska jury found him guilty of violating federal law. Stanko argued that the law banning firearm ownership by felons didn’t apply to him, saying his felony

for selling tainted meat to lunch programs was a white-collar crime. The jury wasn’t persuaded. Stanko said he will appeal the ruling to a higher court.

Racist Recruiter Gets Slap on the Wrist

In late February, Kevin McGuire, the National Alliance’s recruiter in Bozeman, finally resolved his legal problems in Belgrade. He faced charges of disorderly conduct and criminal trespass for barging into an apartment, demanding to speak to a woman who lived there, and refusing to leave (for more background, see the October 2005 *Network News* at the Network’s website). He was arrested in August 2005; however, it took the city prosecutor and McGuire’s public defender until February to resolve the case.

In the end, McGuire pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct. He was fined \$185 and given a 10-day suspended jail sentence. In exchange for pleading guilty to the one charge, the offense of criminal trespass was dropped. McGuire was also ordered to only engage in “nonviolent and non-harassing” contact with the woman and stay 500 feet away from her apartment.

Militia of Montana Continues Downward Spiral

In early May, John Trochmann, founder of the Militia Montana (MOM), was scheduled to go to trial (*Roundup, continued on page 8*)

NETWORK VICTORIES: INSURANCE, PULPIT POLITICKING, AND SCHOOL BULLIES

In recent months, the Network's efforts produced positive results in various areas. The following briefs summarize these new developments. For more background on the issues, please see past issues of *Network News*, which can be accessed through the Network's website at www.mhrn.org.

Blue Cross Covers Domestic Partners

In March, Montana's largest health-insurance provider reversed its course and scrapped a discriminatory policy in favor of an inclusive one. Blue Cross Blue Shield of Montana announced its insurance policies for small businesses would begin covering same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners on July 1, 2006. By making this coverage available, Blue Cross reversed the discriminatory course it pursued in 2005.

In June 2005, Blue Cross announced it was eliminating coverage for domestic partners from its policies for small businesses. The Network held a press conference in front of Blue Cross headquarters in September 2005, announcing it was switching its health insurance to New West Health Services because of Blue Cross' policy. It also filed a complaint with Montana's Commissioner of Insurance and Securities, John Morrison, asking him to investigate the legality of Blue Cross' policy change. The Network believed the policy change might constitute illegal discrimination against same-sex and opposite-sex domestic partners.

The Network commends Blue

Cross for recognizing the error of its ways and deciding to cover domestic partners. The Network's Christine Kaufmann told the media, "For those of us who care that we live in a society that is attempting to rid itself of discrimination, this is a victory."

Churches Must Follow Campaign Law

In March, the Montana Commissioner of Political Practices issued a ruling against Helena's Canyon Ferry Road Baptist Church for violating the state's campaign finance disclosure laws. The ruling stemmed from the church's activities supporting the constitutional amendment banning gay marriage (CI-96) that was on the ballot in 2004. The Network was part of Montanans for Families and Fairness, the coalition that opposed CI-96, which filed the initial complaint against the church.

The complaint focused on an event sponsored by Canyon Ferry Road Baptist Church in May 2004. The church carried a national telecast produced by the Family Research Council, a national Religious Right group. The program featured many leading Religious Right figures speaking against gay marriage and in support of the Federal Marriage Amendment, which would ban gay marriage in America. At the conclusion of the telecast, the Helena church's Rev. BG Stumberg told people in attendance to sign petitions to put Montana's CI-96 on the November ballot. He announced petitions were set up in the foyer, and people were herded to those tables

as they exited the sanctuary.

Montanans for Families and Fairness filed the complaint, believing the church had become an incidental ballot committee and should be required to file the same reports as any other group working on initiative campaigns. The complaint stated that the church expended institutional resources to carry the simulcast, including the building and pastor's time. In March 2006, the Commissioner of Political Practices ruled in favor of Montanans for Families and Fairness.

In his ruling, Commissioner Gordon Higgins found that the church violated campaign laws by not disclosing its expenses in support of CI-96. Higgins reported that it cost the church between \$3,000 and \$5,000 "just to open the door" for any event. The Commissioner also reported that the church engaged in other activities to qualify CI-96 for the ballot, including having petitions available at the church from May 9, 2004 through June 13, 2004. Higgins declared that the church "never made any effort to consult the Commissioner's office or Montana campaign finance and practices law." The Commissioner noted that several other churches had campaigned for passage of CI-96, but they correctly reported their contributions. Higgins concluded that "when the Church and Pastor Stumberg chose to engage in activities supporting the effort to place CI-96 on the ballot, the Church became an incidental political committee under Montana law, with corresponding reporting obligations." The ruling established
(Victories, continued on page 5)

(Victories, cont. from page 4)

that, if churches engage in campaign initiatives, they must follow the same rules as everyone else.

Higgins' ruling did not stipulate any punishment for the church. When the complaint was filed in 2004, Canyon Ferry Road Baptist Church filed a lawsuit against the state of Montana, claiming its campaign laws infringed on the church's freedom of speech. The church is represented by the Alliance Defense Fund, a national Religious Right law firm, and the case is still active in the court system.

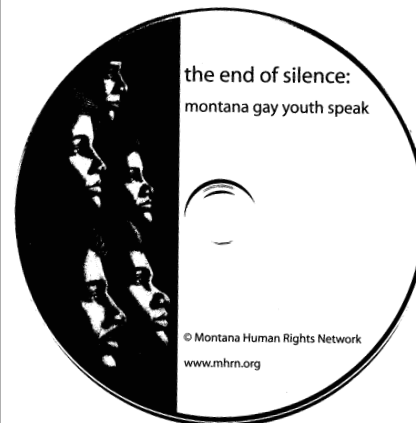
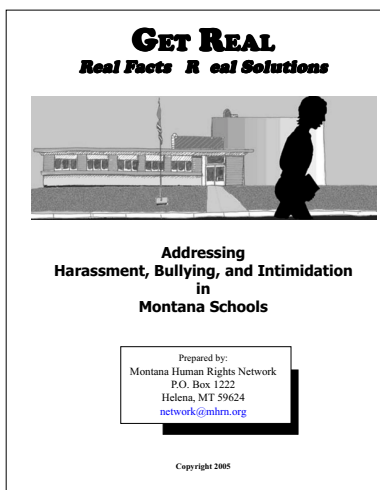
Accreditation Standards Require Anti-Bullying Policies

The Network began a campaign during the 2003 Montana Legislature to make schools safer for both students and staff. The hard work of the Network and its allies produced significant results in March, when the Montana Board of Public Education mandated that all schools create anti-bullying policies in order to meet accreditation standards.

Following the introduction of bills in two legislative sessions that mandated schools create bullying-prevention policies, the Board of Public Education took up the issue following the 2005 Montana Legislature. It opposed the legislative approaches, saying that it was unconstitutional for the Montana Legislature to dictate policy to schools. Instead, the Board of Public Education was the only entity constitutionally allowed to craft school policy. On the Board's promise to address the issue, the 2005 bill died with a 50-50 tie vote on the House floor.

The Board of Public Education began the process of implementing anti-bullying policies right after the 2005 Montana Legislature, holding public hearings and crafting policy proposals. The only opposition came from various anti-gay groups. At one of the public hearings, Hamilton's Harris Himes spoke on behalf of the Montana Family Coalition, Montana Help Our Moral Environment, and the Alliance Defense Fund. He said anti-bullying policies create "whispering indictments" like the ones used to kill Jews during the Holocaust. He also

Network Resources on Bullying Prevention



If you are interested in obtaining copies of the Network's report *Get Real: Addressing Harassment, Bullying, and Intimidation in Montana Schools* and/or its documentary *The End of Silence: Montana Gay Youth Speak*, call us at (406) 442-5506.

stated the Montana Legislature defeated the proposed legislation, because the entire goal of preventing bullying was to advance the gay agenda. Barbara Rush, an ultra-conservative activist from Helena, told the Board of Public Education that anti-bullying programs are "witch hunts" that "fly in the face of American" values. In a letter to a local newspaper, the Bitterroot's Dallas Erickson said the Board of Public Education was "arrogantly thumbing their noses at the people's will" to discriminate against gays and anti-bullying policies would result in the harassment of anti-gay students.

On March 10, the Board of Public Education saw past the rhetoric of the anti-gay lobby and unanimously approved a mandate making Montana schools safer places. The Board decided all schools must have anti-bullying policies to meet accreditation standards. The policies must be "designed to address bullying, intimidation and harassment of students and school personnel." The Board left it up to local school districts to draft their own policies. It will issue a model policy to help local districts comply with its ruling. The Board recommended that sexual orientation be included in the model policy, along with other characteristics such as race and religion, as reasons why students are targeted by bullying and harassment. □

INDIAN TRUST CASE HEADS INTO 10TH YEAR

The class-action lawsuit against the Interior Department for mismanaging the Individual Indian Money Trust is nearly a decade into litigation. However, recent court rulings and proposed legislation may impact how long the case stays in the judicial system.



Elouise Cobell

Elouise Cobell, a member of Montana's Blackfeet Tribe, filed *Cobell v. Norton* in 1996. It seeks to force the government to account for billions of dollars that belong to 500,000 Native Americans. The money, which comes from extractive-industry royalties on Indian land, has

been held in the trust since 1887. Along with accounting for the money, *Cobell* wants to reform how the trust is administered. U.S. District Court Judge Royce Lamberth has consistently ruled in favor of the Indian plaintiffs during litigation. He has called the government's conduct "fiscal and governmental irresponsibility in its purest form."

Court Rulings and Proposed Legislation

In November 2005, the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals struck down Judge Lamberth's order for the Interior Department to conduct a detailed historical accounting of the trust's money. The Circuit Court of Appeals ruled Judge Lamberth's order "unreasonable," citing the Interior Department's estimate that such an accounting would take 200 years and cost \$13 billion. The Court of Appeals' ruling still requires an accounting of the trust. However, it allows the Interior Department to use methods already discredited by the plaintiffs.

Cobell plaintiffs' luck changed for the better in December 2005. Judge Lamberth ordered the government to pay the plaintiffs' lawyers and accountants \$7.1 million to cover their litigation expenses. In response, the Bureau of Indian Affairs announced in February 2006 that it was cutting \$3 million out of Indian programs to pay the fees. Cobell noted that the government knew it would be asked to pay attorney fees and should have set

the money aside ahead of time.

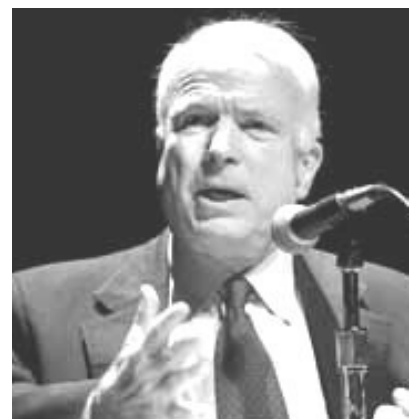
"It is another of the devious and deceptive acts by the Interior Department to make Indians—some of the poorest people in the nation—pay for having the courage to demand that the government give them a full accounting of what it has done with their lands and their monies since 1887," Cobell said. "This is a cruel effort to inflict even more pain on the victims of the government's long-acknowledged misbehavior."

Outside the courtroom battle, U.S. Rep. Richard Pombo (R-CA) and U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) are among the lawmakers who have proposed bills calling for a lump-sum settlement and a revamping of how the Indian Trust is administered. The *Cobell* plaintiffs have stated they would settle the lawsuit for \$27.5 billion. Sen. McCain says that figure is too high, and Cobell criticizes the senator's bill for not addressing the plaintiffs' concerns. The bill proposes an accounting system resembling the flawed practices already used by the Interior Department.

"They [*Cobell* plaintiffs] do not want to be sacrificed on the altar of political expediency as they have been so many times before," Cobell said. She said the bill is exactly what the Interior Department wants.

Government Abuses

The Interior Department and federal government have fought *Cobell* the entire way, sometimes using shady tactics outside the courtroom. Shortly after *Cobell* was filed, the government began shredding and dumping documents related to the case. Three



U.S. Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) has proposed legislation to settle the Cobell lawsuit.

years into the trial, it had destroyed 162 boxes of materials. The Interior Department was fined \$600,000.

In 2005, documents of interest to the case from the (*Cobell*, continued on page 7)

(Cobell, continued from page 6)

National Archives were discarded in trash bins. Some of these materials were Bureau of Indian Affairs records going back to the 1950s. The plaintiffs' attorney said this trashing of records was the "same repugnant, desperate action we've come to expect" from the government during the lawsuit.

Finally, the federal government wants Judge Lamberth removed from *Cobell*. In August 2005, the Justice Department asked the D.C. Court of Appeals to assign a new judge, claiming that Judge Lamberth demonstrated bias by consistently ruling for the plaintiffs.

There has yet to be a ruling on this motion.

Began with Government Land Grabs

The need for *Cobell* goes all the way back to the 1880s and the Dawes Act (also known as The General Allotment Act). The law was President Chester Arthur's attempt to deal with what he called "the Indian problem." After the federal government confined Indians to reservations, the Dawes Act facilitated turning much of that land over to whites. Each Indian household received 160 acres of farmland or 320 acres of grazing land. Many times these acres were split up and disconnected. The federal government eventually took legal title to this land and began leasing it to corporations. It pledged to collect revenues from the companies

and disburse it to the Indian landowners. Remaining tribal lands were declared "surplus" and opened up to white settlers.

The Dawes Act facilitated the stealing of more Indian land. It also deemed Indian landowners incompetent to manage money generated from their own property. The *Cobell*

retary was controversial. He once referred to his staff as a "black woman, two Jews and a cripple." He also gave congressional testimony declaring the protection of natural resources unnecessary, because "after the last tree is felled, Christ will return."

The Legal Foundation defends

Gale Norton (right) got her start with Mountain States Legal Foundation, a major player in the anti-environmental "wise use" movement.



case outlines the government's mismanagement of this revenue since the beginning.

Norton's Department of Interior

Judge Lamberth has held two Interior Secretaries in contempt of court for the agency's actions during the case, including President Bush-appointed Gale Norton. Norton resigned her post at the end of March 2006. Under her leadership, the agency fought every Lamberth ruling. Norton's previous history with Mountain States Legal Foundation may help explain why.

Before becoming Interior Secretary, Norton cut her political teeth with the Mountain States Legal Foundation. James Watt, who served as President Ronald Reagan's Interior Secretary, founded the group in the 1970s. Watt's tenure as Interior Sec-

"at-large" voting districts that minimize the impact of Indian voters. One such case took place in Montana's Blaine County. In 1999, the Justice Department filed a lawsuit against the county, saying that its "at-large" voting districts discriminated against Indian voters. Mountain States jumped to Blaine County's defense. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals declared the voting districts discriminatory. That ruling stood, as the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the case.

Mountain States downplays the role of race in taking these "at-large" cases, saying they are about "state's rights." "State's rights" connected to issues of race has a sordid past. Southerners used the term to oppose desegregation. Mountain States is currently pursuing another "at-large" case on behalf of Wyoming's Fremont County. □

(Roundup, cont. from page 3)

in Spokane, Washington, on charges of kidnapping and assault (for the background, see the October 2005 *Network News* at the Network's website). However, just days before the trial, the charges were dropped. This is one of the only positive developments for MOM recently.

In late 2005, MOM announced it was no longer going to publish its newsletter *Taking Aim*. A notice from the group said that Trochmann had eye surgery, and that made it "very difficult" for him to "study the numerous pages of material" necessary to put together the newsletter. MOM's once active e-mail alert system is also practically non-existent. The notice about *Taking Aim* also stated that MOM's office personnel would be taking "outside" jobs for the summer.

More recently, MOM's website reported that, due to financial problems, the group had to "PARE OUR LIVLIHOOD DOWN [emphasis in original]." MOM would be eliminating all but one phone line, and its office would not be regularly staffed. These recent developments demonstrate the continued decline of a group recognized as a pioneer and leader of the militia movement.

MOM's only new activism was running classified advertisements in *American Free Press*. *American Free*

Press is the latest incarnation of the anti-Semitic tabloid *The Spotlight*. In late 2005 and early 2006, *Free Press* featured the MOM ads under the title "**Border Alert** [emphasis in original]." The ads stated, "3 out of every 4 illegals crossing borders are...Chinese men...carrying potassium iodate [sic]...to protect them from radiation fallout."

Gun Rights Guru Heads for Montana

In March, a longtime colleague of Gary Marbut and the Montana Shooting Sports Association was arrested in Michigan. Marbut announced this friend, Angel Shamaya, intended to move to Montana and take over membership recruitment for Marbut's group once his legal problems were resolved.

Angel Shamaya's girlfriend told police that he had threatened her over the phone. While conducting an investigation, authorities discovered that Shamaya had 15 illegal handguns, 10 long guns, and 17,000 rounds of ammunition in his home. The handguns had not undergone safety inspections required by Michigan law. This resulted in four misdemeanor charges filed against Shamaya.

Gary Marbut immediately started an online campaign to help Shamaya.

He asked gun rights activists for letters supporting Shamaya. Marbut encouraged people to "downplay gun-rights and gun-related comments" in the letters. He provided a sample letter for people to follow.

In mid-April, Shamaya had his day in court. The judge gave him his guns back, but he must have them inspected according to Michigan law. Shamaya received a year and half of probation, and the misdemeanors go on his criminal record. He also received three days of community service. Marbut said Shamaya got off easy, because prosecutors knew they could not "spin him [Shamaya] as a dangerous nut case."

Like Marbut, Shamaya sympathizes with the militia movement. In 2001, he co-wrote an article about 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 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.

Militia Leader Loses Civil Suit

Dave Burgert's longtime hatred of law enforcement led him to file a civil lawsuit against Missoula and Kalispell authorities. In March, it took a Missoula jury four hours to unanimously rule against him.

Leader of the militia group Project 7, Burgert disappeared while out on bail in 2001. When found, he engaged in standoff with law enforcement. While investigating

(Roundup, continued on page 9)

Angel Shamaya in an e-mail to the Network:

"You [the Network] 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."

(Roundup, continued from page 8)

where Burgert was during his disappearance, authorities discovered Project 7. The group had amassed an arsenal of 25,000 rounds of ammunition, machine guns, and explosives. It also had intelligence sheets on local criminal justice employees, which authorities called a hit list. Burgert reportedly told fellow Project 7 members that the objective with these employees was to “Kill them all. Kill them all, even their wives and children.”

In his civil suit, Burgert sought \$7 million for what he called police brutality and civil rights violations committed against him between 2001 and 2003. Burgert, currently serving a 10-year sentence for being a felon in possession of an illegal machine gun, claimed to suffer from post traumatic stress disorder because of the alleged abuse by law enforcement.

Representing himself, Burgert relied on testimony from fellow inmates, an attorney who cannot legally practice law in Montana, and his wife. He could not provide any proof that he was subjected to excessive force. On the other hand, the law officers documented Burgert’s previous disputes with the police, including physically assaulting an officer. The jury found that the law officers used the necessary force to deal with a combative person in ruling against Burgert. Burgert said he plans to appeal the decision.

Constitution Party Fields Record Number of Candidates

The Constitution Party of Montana combines right-wing Christian fundamentalism with the anti-government conspiracy theories of the “patriot” movement. It supports creating militias and basing civil law on Old Testament biblical law. Since qualifying for the ballot for the first time in 2000, the Constitution Party of Montana has fielded slates of candidates for the Montana Legislature in every election cycle.

On the last day to file for the 2006 Elections, 20 of the party’s candidates jumped into contention for the legislature. Ten of these candidates have run for the legislature before on the party’s ticket. Even if the party fails to win a seat in the legislature (which has been the case in all previous election cycles), it may still have a significant impact on some races. It may help Demo-

Constitution Party Impacts Legislative Elections

Election	Party	Candidate	Votes
2000 Missoula	Constitution	Pascal Redfern	198
	Democrat	Holly Raser	2110
	Republican	AG Deschamps	2101
Democrat won by 9 votes			
2002 Great Falls	Constitution	Kent Holtz	122
	Democrat	Brennan Ryan	518
	Republican	Jim Whitaker	495
Democrat won by 23 votes			
2004 Trout Creek	Constitution	Renn Bodeker	214
	Democrat	Paul Clark	2288
	Republican	Steve Simonson	2112
Democrat won by 176 votes			

crats win in certain districts by stealing enough conservative votes from Republicans, as it has in three previous legislative races [see inset box on this page].

The Network is currently updating the report it issued in 2000 on the Constitution Party of Montana. It should be available later this summer.

Church of the Creator Leader Relocates

In January, Slim Deardorff, the current leader of the Church of the Creator Northwest, announced he had left Superior, Montana, and moved in with his son in Plains. Deardorff’s post office box for the group in Superior remains open.

The Church of the Creator Northwest has basically existed in name only since 2003, when one of its officials left the white supremacist movement and sold the group’s stash of racist books to the Network. This financially bankrupted the group, as it relied on book sales to generate revenue. A decline in dedicated activists resulted in Deardorff appointing himself the group’s leader. Deardorff lacks even rudimentary organizing skills, and all but three of the group’s contact points are in prison.

For more information on how the Church of the Creator Northwest formed, see the briefing paper on the Church of Creator posted at the Network’s website. □

(Brokeback, cont. from page 12)

However, he told the media he believed most people shared his opinion, and some people in the community told him not to “back peddle or apologize” for his remarks.

Freedom of Speech Crosses a Line

With Professor Ray on the frontlines of defending tolerance, he became the focal point of the anti-gay backlash. He was accused of

promoting sin, bestiality and child molestation. Anonymous adversaries subscribed him to gay, lesbian, and transsexual pornographic websites. This harassment escalated to a threat of physical violence.

On April 11, a female student sent an e-mail to Professor Ray reading, “**ISWEAR TO GOD...I WILL FIND WHERE YOU LIVE AND BEAT YOU IF YOU KEEPSENDING THESE DUMB EMAILS...**[emphasis in original].”

Professor Ray filed a report with the Silver Bow County Sheriff. Two days later, he said a detective met with the student, who admitted to sending the threatening e-mail. However, according to Professor Ray, the detective blamed him for the situation, saying he shouldn’t have sent out e-mails extolling tolerance. Professor Ray told the press he believes law enforcement is trying to sweep the matter under the rug. Sheriff *(Brokeback, continued on page 11)*

(NSM, continued from page 2)

Roberts is the lobbyist for the Montana Family Foundation.

Any support Stuart received from Republicans vanished after the *Montana Standard* published its article. Montana GOP Chairman Karl Ohs announced his party had not recruited Stuart. Republicans at all levels condemned Stuart’s candidacy. The party also announced it would support the Democrat facing Stuart in the General Election. Bill White blasted the GOP for only supporting candidates who “toe the Jewish line of cultural destruction...or want to pollute our country with another round of mud invaders...”

After the GOP outcry, Stuart tried to get off the ballot. When campaign law blocked that attempt, he tried to change his party affiliation to “National Socialist” or “American Nazi.” When Stuart was unable to do that, the National Socialist Movement declared, “Stuart now says that National Socialist and Republican values are not incompatible.”

Libby and the Rest of Montana

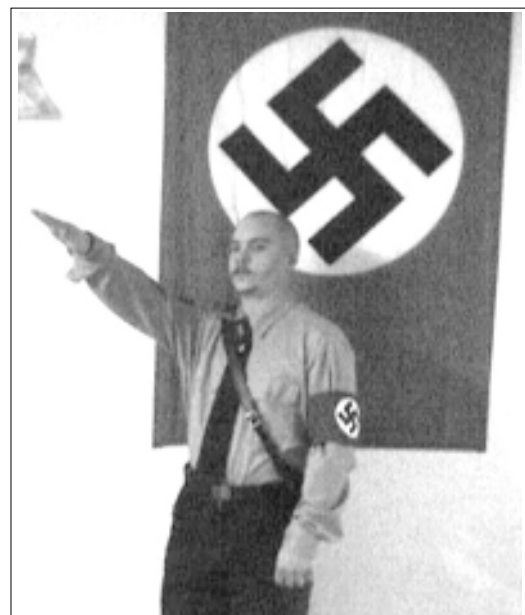
The Network recently learned the National Socialist Movement has another contact point in Montana—Dan Benson, who lives in Libby with his wife and children. Benson’s personal website features him in a Nazi uniform giving “Heil Hitler” salutes in front of a swastika flag [see photo on this page]. Stuart has also announced the group is setting up a chapter in Billings.

The National Socialist Movement and its Montana activists are the latest white supremacists to target Montana. Hate groups and their members have long dreamed of an “Aryan Homeland” in the Pacific Northwest. Places like Montana have assumed an almost mythical

quality, and our state’s overwhelmingly white population makes us an enticing option.

The National Socialist Movement’s desire to have a Montana presence makes sense. Because of the factors mentioned above, an informal racist infrastructure exists in the state. As the hate groups that have tapped into the structure fall away, others move in and fill the void.

The Network has worked with many communities that have publicly condemned the existence of hate groups in their areas. It has also watched communities try to ignore the problem and hope it goes away. The second approach allows the problem to increase, while the first produces positive results. The Network hopes Montana will continue taking hate groups seriously. □



This photo is featured on Dan Benson’s website

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John Walsh hasn't commented on that assertion, only saying that the case is still being investigated.

The Network Asks Tech to Respond

Throughout the controversy, Butte residents called the Network and wondered why Montana Tech's administration had not taken a strong stance for tolerance and against physical threats. The administration's primary response was its announcement of a change in Tech's policy for sending mass e-mails. Before this change, a user could send a message to all faculty, staff, and students with a single click of the mouse. Montana Tech announced it was changing its e-mail policy to require faculty and staff to receive permission from the Student Union's Program Assistant to send an e-mail to all students. Press reports linked this policy change to the e-mails Professor Ray had sent out regarding the *Brokeback Mountain* controversy.

The Network wrote to Tech Chancellor Franklin Gilmore to convey both the Network's and community members' concerns regarding the administration's lack of response. It encouraged the Tech administration to make a strong public statement for tolerance and diver-

sity. Continuing its silence sent a message to gay and lesbian students, along with their campus allies, that they are not welcome or safe.

Chancellor Gilmore responded to the Network's letter. In a lengthy letter with many attachments, Chancellor Gilmore demonstrated there had been a long-running debate over how to structure Tech's e-mail system. While he did mention administration attempts to promote a general idea of civil discourse, there was not a strong condemnation of the anti-gay threats and harassment related to the showing of *Brokeback Mountain*.

Lights, Camera, Action

The actual showing of *Brokeback Mountain* was a huge success. The crowd was so large it had to be moved to a different venue. Over 150 people attended the screening, and 40 people stayed for a follow-up discussion led by Liberal Studies Professor Henry Gonshak. Some of the people who spoke during the discussion said *Brokeback* resonated with them because they are gay.

"This is a movie relevant to Butte," Professor Gonshak said, "because there are gay people living here in a small, rural town." □

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BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN STIRS TECH CONTROVERSY

In April, Montana Tech's Director of Student Activities announced the Butte campus would hold a screening of the critically-acclaimed film *Brokeback Mountain*. It didn't take long for the anti-gay backlash to begin.

"This seems to be Hollywood's attempt to push the gay and lesbian agenda on the public," wrote Geological Engineering Professor Willis Weight in an e-mail distributed around campus about the film's love story of two cowboys. "The rest of us quietly live wincing every time this kind of thing is thrown in front of us."

Supporters of the film and gay community immediately denounced Professor Weight's e-mail. The "very proud [emphasis in original]" mother of a gay son circulated an e-mail stating that there was already "too much hatred" of gays and lesbians. She said the type of negative stereotyping Professor Weight engaged in has "caused wanton violence against innocent people simply because they are 'gay'." A lesbian student told Professor Weight to embrace *Brokeback Mountain* as an "opportunity to see the diversity in our society and yes, even to our very own small community."

Liberal Studies Professor John Ray told the media that Professor Weight's remarks represented a larger



intolerance of gays and lesbians on the Montana Tech campus. He responded to Professor Weight's e-mail by stating it was time to decide whether Tech represented "tolerance and love or hatred and bigotry." Professor Ray defended the halls of academia as places where issues should be debated with "unfettered discussion," not by preventing ideas (in this case the movie) from being expressed. "Too much of the suffering in world history has been caused by intolerance and hatred," Professor Ray concluded.

While some people voiced their support for both showing the film and the gay community, others readily jumped to anti-gay diatribes. One man wrote he

was "not ignorant of how the fags act" and that is why he hates them. His hatred came from not wanting "these fags to degrade our society and drag everyone else down with them." He looked forward to "when God returns with his wrath to cleanse this infection." Another comment on the controversy came from people who were "sick and tired of having gay, lesbian lifestyles portrayed in the media, as normal."

After the initial outburst, Professor Weight claimed he was "shocked" by the response to his original e-mail. He stated that "all of the things said in my original email came across with less sensitivity than I intended...."

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