



THE RIGHTS STUFF

June 2002



THE RIGHTS STUFF is published—occasionally—by the BONNER COUNTY HUMAN RIGHTS TASK FORCE. Helping with this issue were: Hal Hargreaves, Brenda Hammond, Gary Payton & Christine Holbert.

Visit our updated BCHRTF website at www.bchrtf.org! See photos of the Civil Rights Award Banquet, the text of Gary Payton's acceptance speech, and 2002 newspaper articles on human rights issues in north Idaho. Suggestions and new ideas are always welcome.

SANDPOINT'S 4TH OF JULY PARADE

The Bonner County Human Rights Task Force is recognized for doing conscientious, remarkable work in this area. In just the last year, the Task Force has organized a conference, conducted a videotaping session with Senator Mike Crapo, met with human rights leaders from the Central Asian country of Uzbekistan to share ideas on community leadership, conducted a forum on the theme of "Human Rights After September 11," encouraged the Kalispel Tribe to develop a curriculum for school use, provided support to the Lake Pend Oreille School District to promote the "Character Counts" program in elementary schools, organized the annual Martin Luther King celebration, launched the Bob Ward Memorial Fund for Human Rights Literature with the Bonner County Public Library, presented the third annual \$2,000 scholarship to a graduating Bonner County senior and the annual "Stone of Hope" award to a graduating senior for human rights involvement, organized a video teleconference between community leaders of Bonner County and community leaders of Potter County, Pennsylvania to share ideas, approaches, and methods to counter the influence of a growing Aryan Nations presence, and presented a forum featuring a panel of national, regional, and local media experts discussing "The Role of Media in Making or Breaking a Community." Quite a noteworthy and enterprising agenda!

On the 4th of July, the zeal with which Task Force members approach their more serious work will be diverted to festivity and merry-making as they participate—for the fourth year—in the annual Sandpoint 4th of July Parade. The theme of this year's parade is "United We Stand," and the new Task Force float will reflect this concept by promoting the idea of "Uniting Community." Many community organizations have been invited to march under the Task Force banner. Those who accept will carry placards identifying

their organization and defining its contribution to our community. In this way, the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force hopes to honor the contributions each organization has made to help create a community that respects the rights of all its members and its guests. Beyond that, the Task Force wants to honor the various ways each one of us brings together people to make Sandpoint a community, not just a place to reside. As members and supporters of the Task Force, we invite you to join us. This year, a unique float—designed and created especially for the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force by Hope, Idaho metal artist, Ed Lucero—will lead us through the streets of our community. March with us on the 4th of July!

If you'd like to march in the Parade with the members of the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force on July 4, please call the Task Force office at 263.0275 and leave a message, along with a phone number where we can reach you to confirm plans, including a rendezvous on the morning of the Parade.

—Christine Holbert

CREATE! WORKSHOPS FOR YOUTH

CREATE! is a five day intensive training for youth ages 13-18 from across the northwest region, sponsored by the Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity. CREATE! will bring together youth from Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado for a comprehensive training on how to organize effectively for human rights, and how arts and music can, and indeed must, be included in human rights work.

CREATE! is rooted in the conviction that social justice work needs to be fun. Cultural organizing can bring energy, creativity, strength and longevity to our work. CREATE! will open spaces for youth

from all types of backgrounds and experiences with a commitment to social justice to come together, share experiences and gain skills in cultural organizing. CREATE! will provide practical tools that people can use in their art, music, community organizing and human rights work.

CREATE! will be held Wednesday, August 14 through Sunday, August 18, 2002. Workshops and lodging will be at Central Washington University Retreat Center in Ellensburg, Washington. The cost of attending is \$60 per person. The Bonner County Human Rights Task Force will be offering limited partial and full scholarships. If you are interested, leave a message at 263-0275.

Youth and adult facilitators will bring their experience in music, performance, spoken word, as well as extensive knowledge in community organizing and social change. From street theater to music tours, the arts have the power to change lives, mobilize communities and build movements. CREATE! Will help build a culture that is fun and inclusive—one based on the principles of democracy and liberation.

—Brenda Hammond

HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR SPEAKS TO HIGH SCHOOLERS

On May 8th, the Task Force continued its support of human rights awareness among Bonner County students by sponsoring Mr. Vernon Rusheen at Sandpoint High School and Clark Fork High School. Mr. Rusheen spoke to hundreds of students and faculty, telling his personal story of internment and forced labor at the Nazi death camps of Auschwitz and Dachau. The students sat in respectful silence as he described his memories of Crystal Night, family hunger, shipment to and human "sorting" and death at Auschwitz, relocation to Dachau and final liberation by soldiers of the U.S. Army as World War II drew to a close. Throughout his presentations, Mr. Rusheen stressed the importance of respecting human dignity and speaking out against hate and intolerance.

—Gary Payton

Poverty is a human rights violation. Every woman, man, youth and child has the human right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being, to food, clothing, housing, medical care and social services. These fundamental human rights are defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants and other widely adhered to international human rights treaties and Declarations—powerful tools that can empower efforts for social and economic justice worldwide.

CELEBRATE SANDPOINT AGAIN!

PUT AUGUST 17TH ON YOUR CALENDAR!

Remember the *Celebrate Sandpoint!* event held in April 2001 at the Bonner County Fair Grounds? The event was planned to counter the planned (and then canceled) Aryan Nations parade in downtown Sandpoint. Over 400 people turned out on a beautiful spring day to hear speeches, to support the values of the community, and to see the likeness of the “Tolerance” sculpture unveiled.

Now, one year later, the sculpture is finished and it will be received by the Bonner County Commissioners in a *Celebrate Sandpoint Again!* ceremony on Saturday, August 17.

A committee of dedicated citizens is hard at work planning just the right kind of celebration to receive local artist David Kraiser’s statue. Count on a festive midday event on the grounds of the Court House, First Avenue, Sandpoint: Balloons, ice cream on a summer day, music and speeches.

Details are coming together. Read about the final details in the August issues of the Bonner County Daily Bee as *Celebrate Sandpoint Again!* draws near. It will be a wonderful day to salute human rights across the state of Idaho!

—Gary Payton

NOTES ON ECONOMIC JUSTICE: BACK TO THE FUTURE

If my memory serves me well, Martin Luther King, a leader in racial justice, spoke about the relation between race and economics as essential in America’s past. Race and economics, King believed, were bound together to keep the underclass in its place; he put himself on the line to address economic disparities as part of his drive for civil justice. The reaction was varied, but white liberals and many mainline politicians thought King had unnecessarily voiced a connection where there was none. King was turning “radical.” It was a time of turmoil and change, but history has shown us how right he was and how insidious poverty can be in a society that proclaims its passion for equal opportunity. “The poor are always with us,” seems like a hackneyed blessing on the status quo, and we make only such slow progress as to feel we are going backwards. Economic justice doesn’t ring many alarm buttons, but its goal is a

genuine part of a human rights thinking and activity. It is not solely a racial matter, but is a factor in all efforts to further humanize our society, to make it a more humane place to live.

Aren’t we becoming too political? Isn’t economics a “science” that works its own way and we are powerless to tangle with it? These are real questions that deserve our attention. During the next few months leading up to our mini-conference in October, members of the Board and other interested people will address the paths of the relation between human rights and our money and resources. You should expect to see provocative and stimulating articles in this newsletter and in the newspapers of the county. October’s conference will focus on our condition and creative ways to bring increasing justice to our finances. The time should be challenging.

—Hal Hargreaves

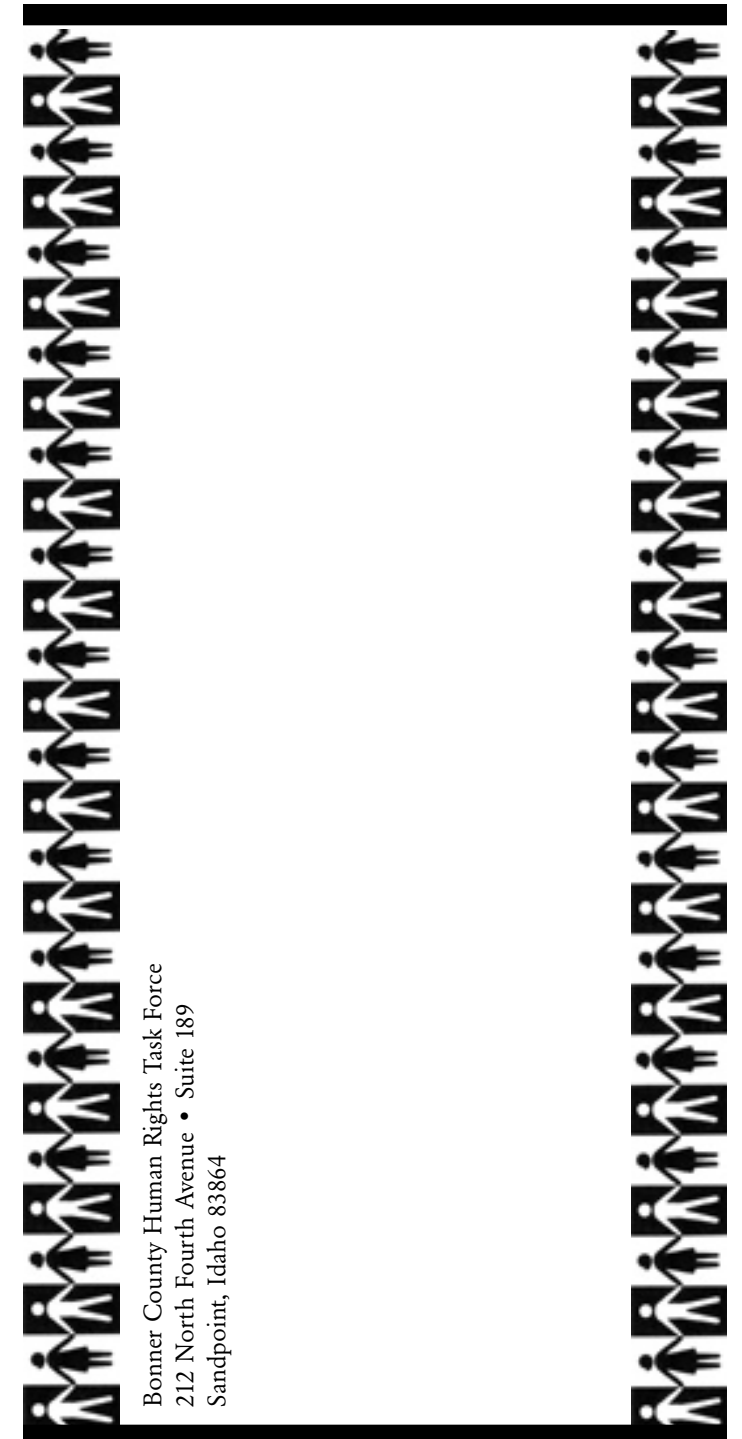
!UPCOMING BCHRTF EVENTS!

Look for complete news about upcoming BCHRTF events in the August issue of *THE RIGHTS STUFF!* Many exciting programs are in the planning stages for this fall. Among them are:

The Foundation for Human Rights Action and Advocacy (FHRAA) is pleased to announce its first fundraiser. On three consecutive Sundays, September 8th, 15th and 22nd, there will be *Hauz-musik* concerts at the home of Leanne Bittner beginning at 1:30 in the afternoon and including a champagne reception/high tea. Noted local and regional musicians will be performing. Further details will be announced soon.

On October 4 & 5, the BCHRTF will present its second annual “Making a Difference” conference. The theme of this year’s program will focus on economic justice and building an equitable, sustainable community. Many inspiring speakers have been invited to participate, and various seminars are now in the development stage. Look for more information about the conference in the next issue of *THE RIGHTS STUFF!*, coming in August.

Don’t forget to visit the BCHRTF Booth at the Bonner County Fair this August 21-25! Members of the Task Force will be available to answer questions and sign up new members.



Bonner County Human Rights Task Force
212 North Fourth Avenue • Suite 189
Sandpoint, Idaho 83864