



# NORTHWEST COALITION FOR HUMAN DIGNITY

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## NORTHWEST UPDATE

NOVEMBER 15, 1999

**1. WHITE SUPREMACIST LOSES ELECTION IN A LANDSLIDE:** Despite a million dollar war chest and a racist mailing that went to 6,000 Sandpoint residences, Vincent Bertollini was only able to win 2 percent of the vote in the race for mayor of Sandpoint, Idaho. Bertollini, who runs the 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Remnant Messenger, a racist group that believes Jews are Satanic and people of color are inferior, was soundly defeated by Paul Graves. Graves, who walked away with 86 percent of the votes, is a founding member of the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force.

Aryan Nation's attorney Edgar Steele lost in his bid to join the Fire Commission in the town of Sagle, Idaho. Skip Pucci who ran as a write-in candidate defeated Steele. Both Steele and Bertollini seemed to galvanize the electorate in a negative manner. Many who turned out to vote noted that they did not want to perpetuate Idaho's image as a haven for racists. (*Spokesman Review*, November 4)

**2. CHURCH OF THE CREATOR TRIES TO ORGANIZE IN PUYALLUP, WASHINGTON:** Amid racial tensions at the local high school, the racist and anti-Semitic Church of the Creator blanketed the city of Puyallup with racist literature in the early morning of Sunday October 17. The literature distributed in Puyallup has been used by the COTC in King and Snohomish Counties in an attempt to attract recruits. The COTC targeted Puyallup after several racial incidents including a fight between white students and a black student, and an anonymous phone call to the school where the caller threatened to kill black students. The Church of the Creator is based out of East Peoria, Illinois and has been most recently linked to the deadly shooting spree over the Fourth of July weekend that targeted African Americans, Jews, and Asians. Benjamin Smith, a COTC leader in Illinois, carried out that shooting rampage.

There are several active COTC chapters in western Washington. One of the leaders in Washington State is Jason Larue, a.k.a. Reverend Jason. Larue was charged with fourth degree assault in 1995 for attacking an African American man and an Asian man near Western Washington University in Bellingham. Larue's wife, Melody, runs Sisterhood, a COTC women's organization based out of Lynnwood, Washington.

**3. NWCHD V. ANTI-INDIAN ALLIANCE:** NWCHD researcher Robert Crawford and board member Leah Slaney presented on the North Central Idaho Jurisdictional Alliance (NCIJA) at the Lewis-Clark State College International Exchange Conference November 5 in Lewiston, Idaho. In the week before the conference NCIJA executive director Dan Johnson wrote letters and made phone calls to the college seeking the withdrawal of Crawford and Slaney's panel. Unsuccessful in his effort, Johnson and a dozen-plus Alliance supporters joined the more than one hundred attendees to hear Crawford give an overview of the anti-Indian movement and Slaney describe the Jurisdictional Alliance's three year effort to overturn Nez Perce tribal government. Over half of the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Council was on hand as were many tribal members, giving the audience an opportunity to hear tribal perspectives on the NCIJA's anti-Indian crusade.

**4. ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROVISION VOTED DOWN IN ROSEBURG, OREGON:** Business signs written in a foreign language are still permitted in Roseburg. Mayor Larry Rich cast the deciding vote to strike down a proposed city ordinance that would have prohibited signs in downtown businesses where more than one third of the sign was in a foreign language. The city council was looking at a series of ordinances for a proposed downtown business district. (*Douglas County News-Review*, October 26)

**5. AMERICAN HERITAGE PARTY ORGANIZING IN OREGON, LAUNCHES WEBSITE:** The American Heritage Party continues its informational meetings around Oregon in an effort to create support for a third party on the state ballot. The most recent meeting was held in Silverton, Oregon on October 20. The Party's new web address is: [americanheritageoregon.org](http://americanheritageoregon.org).

The American Heritage Party platform calls upon the government to protect "human life from conception until natural death," and "oppose child adoption by homosexuals." The party also opposes "Government sponsored promotion of multiculturalism" and believes that "the Voting Rights Act should be repealed." (See the *Dignity Report*, Spring 1999)

**6. TEEN ACCUSED OF THREATENING SCHOOL MASSACRE:** In Snohomish County, Washington a 15 year old boy was arrested in late October for allegedly making pipe bombs and threatening to stage a massacre at his high school. Police reportedly found a Confederate flag and a swastika on the boy's wall, and a collection of weapons including an SKS assault rifle and 2 operable pipe bombs. According to police records, the teen had recently began showing an interest in white supremacy. (*The Herald*, November 5)

**7. SOUTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR OFFERS COMPROMISE OVER CONFEDERATE FLAG:** Democratic Governor Jim Hodges offered to support a Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday if leaders of the NAACP ended their boycott of South Carolina for continuing to fly the Confederate flag over the Statehouse. Reverend Joe Darby, pastor of the state's largest AME congregation, said such a swap would be "wholly unacceptable, and I consider it an insult." J.T. McLawhorn Jr., president of the Urban League, commented, "King's legacy to the South deserves a holiday. It's long overdue." (Associated Press, November 11)

**8. BENJAMIN WILLIAMS ADMITS TO KILLING GAY COUPLE:** Ben Williams told the press that he alone had killed a gay couple as they slept. He said that his brother, James Williams, is innocent. Ben Williams, a follower of Christian Identity, claims that he killed the men because their homosexuality violated God's laws. Said Williams, "You obey a government of man until there is a conflict. Then you obey a higher law. I'm not guilty of murder, I'm guilty of obeying the laws of the Creator." According to Williams the punishment for homosexuality is death. In addition to the murders, the Williams brothers are being investigated for causing \$1 million in damages to three Sacramento area synagogues. (Associated Press, November 5)

**9. BEND, OREGON WELCOME CENTER REFUSES MEXICAN FLAG:** When a local human rights group and Latino leaders noticed that the Welcome Center in Bend, Oregon had a Canadian flag outside their building they offered the Center a gift: the money to buy another flag pole and a Mexican flag. The gift was refused and Canadian flag was brought down after flying without incident for the past ten years. According to local human rights activists, it seems the Welcome Center would rather fly no international flags than to raise the Mexican flag.

••• The NWCHD Research Department prefers incident reports, newspaper clippings, event write-ups, questions and comments to be e-mailed to [chdpdx@aol.com](mailto:chdpdx@aol.com). Alternatively you can mail such items to the address below or call us either in Bellingham or Seattle at the numbers listed. NWCHD Research staff rely upon such information to fill out much of the Northwest Update and we appreciate your contributions. •••

The next Northwest Update will come out on December 15, 1999