

Tacos and Tony in Millwood

Human rights activist Tony Stewart discusses region's efforts to combat hate

May 19, 2011

Immediate release

A longtime anti-hate activist will discuss the ongoing challenge of racism in the Inland Northwest during the second event in the *Culture, Race and Understanding* community speakers' series in Millwood, Wash.

Before they hear Tony Stewart speak, attendees at Tuesday's event can stand in solidarity with vendors whose

taco stands were the recent targets of racist acts. Tacos from two of the Coeur d'Alene stands are available to the first 125 people through the door. The suggested donation is \$6 per person.

According to press reports, Taco Los

Panchos, Taco Works and El Chiludo's Mexican Food recently have been targeted for racially-motivated protests and vandalism. Some of the Coeur d'Alene picketing occurred on Martin Luther King Day, the same day authorities discovered a potentially lethal bomb along the planned route of a peaceful parade in Spokane.

The incidents in Spokane and Coeur d'Alene prompted Millwood Community Presbyterian Church to launch the speakers' series for the community. The first speaker, on April 19, was Ryan Crocker, former U.S. ambassador to Iraq, whom President Obama recently nominated to be ambassador to Afghanistan.

For the second event, with help from the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, the Millwood church contacted Francisco Ramieres, Alejandro Ramieres and Ignacio Sanabria, owners of Taco Los Panchos, along with Taco Works owner Omar Raynoso Magdalena. They will provide the food for Tuesday's dinner.

Tuesday, May 24

- 6 p.m. -- **Authentic Mexican taco dinner** (limited to the first 125 persons). \$6 suggested donation.
- 7 p.m. -- **Tony Stewart: The challenge of racism in the Inland Northwest and the United States** (A search for a world beyond hate)

Hosted by: Millwood Community Presbyterian Church, 3223 N. Marguerite.

Info: (509) 924-2350

Stewart will discuss the activities involving the taco vendors and the community's positive response, along with other recent events and the history of the region's racial activity.

There will also be opportunities for audience questions.

About Tony Stewart

Coeur d'Alene resident Tony Stewart speaks nationwide on human rights and racism, and advises communities challenged by hate organizations. He was a founding member in 1981 of the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, where he has served as president and remains on the board. The task force is recognized nationwide for helping victims and offering peaceful alternatives to hate.

In addition, Stewart was a founding board member in 1998 of the Human Rights Education Institute; a founding board member of the five-state Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment (1986-2003); and for 18 years was faculty adviser for the North Idaho College Human Equality Club.

Stewart taught political science and advised pre-law students during a 38-year career at NIC, where he chaired the school's division of social sciences from 1974 to 1988. He founded the NIC Popcorn Forum lecture series and chaired it for 38 years, hosting such notable guests as former Vice President Hubert Humphrey and former U.S. Senator Howard Baker. Among his other credits in documentary television, Stewart produced and moderated the *North Idaho College TV-Public Forum* for 36 years, bringing more than 1,800 weekly programs to air on six PBS stations.

Among Stewart's many honors: The 2010 H. Councill Trenholm Memorial Civil Rights Award from the National Education Association; the 2008 Carl Maxey Racial Justice Award from the Spokane YMCA; and the 2000 Human Rights Award from the Northwest Communication Association.

In March 2009, NIC launched an annual concert in Stewart's honor, called "In the T.S. Spirit." The concert "aims to celebrate the human spirit and recognize the power of collaboration toward a common good," in the words of NIC Musical Director Terry Jones.

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