

Grant County Says 'Keep Out'

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(<http://www.opb.org/thinkoutloud/media/uploads/shows/images>

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Residents of John Day are trying to keep an Aryan Nations group from [establishing](http://www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2010/02/aryan_nations_considers_john_d.html) their headquarters in the eastern Oregon town. The community quickly rallied to show their opposition to the white supremacist group after their self-proclaimed leader showed up at the office of the local newspaper, the *Blue Mountain Eagle*, announcing [his intentions](http://www.bluemountaineagle.com/main.asp?SectionID=1&SubSectionID=12&ArticleID=23111&TM=55326.66) to purchase property in John Day.

People from John Day and surrounding Grant County gathered at two [packed meetings](http://www.dailyastorian.com/main.asp?SectionID=2&SubSectionID=398&ArticleID=68250) last Friday in Canyon City to educate themselves about these white supremacists. The main speakers at the meeting were two Idaho activists who were part of a successful effort to sue the Aryan Nations group in 2000. Many residents wanted to know what legal rights they have to [refuse to sell](http://news.opb.org/article/6812-can-you-refuse-sell-property-based-political-views/) property to the group leader or decline to serve him in their businesses.

One of the most concrete results of the Friday meetings was the formation of the Grant County Human Rights Coalition, a group of community leaders, law enforcement and business owners who are committed to continued resistance to the Aryan Nations group. They began by encouraging residents and business owners to display [green ribbons](http://www.bluemountaineagle.com/main.asp?FromHome=1&TypeID=1&ArticleID=23218&SectionID=1&SubSectionID=12) in order to demonstrate their support for diversity and human rights. According to John Day Mayor Bob Quinton, the coalition is also looking into the legal limitations of refusing service to someone because of his political views.

Do you live in Grant County? Have ideologically extreme groups ever tried to take up residence near you? What's the most effective way to respond as an individual and as a community?

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