



## **Press Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Helena Attorney Ron Waterman Wins Rankin Award**

Waterman's work for criminal justice reform and to end the death penalty exemplifies spirit of Montana legislator and ACLU co-founder Jeannette Rankin

HELENA, MT – The American Civil Liberties Union of Montana will present Helena attorney Ron Waterman its Jeannette Rankin Civil Liberties Award this Saturday in honor of his work to reform the criminal justice system and end the state death penalty.

Ron is an outspoken opponent of the death penalty. As an ACLU cooperating attorney he is engaged in challenging the state's lethal injection protocol and has provided superb testimony before the Montana House and Senate judiciary committees on how the state's apparatus for state sanctioned murder is fatally flawed beyond repair.

Ron led the legal team challenging Montana's inadequate delivery of legal services for indigent defendants (*White v. Martz*) and lobbied for legislation to create the Office of Public Defender. Ron also represented Jimmy Ray Bromgard, a Billings man wrongfully convicted of raping a girl, who served 15 years in prison before genetic evidence exonerated him.

The award is named for Jeannette Rankin (R-Mont.), the first woman to be elected to the U.S. Congress and the first vice-president of the ACLU when it was founded in 1920. The ACLU of Montana presents awards in Rankin's name to those who best model her devotion to civil liberties and her spirited defense of Constitutional rights.

The event is from 5-7 p.m. Saturday at the home of Alan and Nancy Nicholson. RSVP to 443-8590.

Previous recipients of the Jeannette Rankin Civil Liberties Award:

1991 Hon. John C. "Skeff" Sheehy  
1992 Francis Bardanoue, Montana Library Association  
1993 Janine Pease Pretty On Top, Pat Williams  
1994 Pat Regan, Chet Blaylock, Cathy Carlson  
1995 Steve Powell, Diane Benjamin, Dr. Jim Armstrong  
1996 Vivian Brooke, Clyde Jarvis  
1997 Neil Haight, Gordon Bennett  
1998 Earl Old Person  
1999 Linda Gryczan, Bob Campbell  
2000 Dorothy Eck, Sue Bartlett, The Montana Freedom Of Information Hotline and John Kuglin

2001 Eve Malo, Claire Sinclair, The Montana Youth Leadership Forum and June Hermanson  
2002 Carol Williams, Polly Holmes  
2003 Joe Mcdowell  
2004-05 No Awards Were Presented  
2006 Ken Freemont Smith, Charles Caughlan, Vern Klingman, Marvin Granger  
2007 Jeff Renz, Clem Work  
2008 Rosemary Boschert, Tom Towe, Elsie Fox  
2009 Justice William Hunt, Marietta Jaeger Lane  
2010 Stacy Rye, Dave Strohmaier, National Coalition Building Institute - Missoula

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