

Scores of Billings, Montana citizens assembled holding menorahs in solidarity.



**NOT IN  
OUR TOWN**

Why do some people  
stand up to help  
people in need while  
others stand by?

"Hate crimes are not a police problem. They're a community problem. Hate crimes and hate activity flourish only in communities that allow them to flourish."

*Former Police Chief Wayne Smart, Billings, Montana*

# » CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE

Hate-filled fliers marked the start of a campaign to make Montana and other western states a "white homeland." Then came intimidation—racial slurs, death threats, and the harassment of Jews, Hispanic Americans, Native Americans, and African Americans. And then, on December 2, 1993, the hatred turned into violence. Someone hurled a cinderblock through a child's bedroom window decorated with Star of David decals and a menorah, the symbol of Chanukah. As the attacks escalated, people in Billings began to take a new look at their community and themselves. As an act of solidarity, people across Billings displayed menorahs in their windows, kicking off a powerful campaign that forced the hate groups to back off. The story was documented in a film *Not In Our Town* (niot.org) and soon inspired an international movement against hate.

Members of the local printers' union volunteered to repaint a neighbor's home defaced by racist graffiti.



The *Choosing to Participate* posters were created by Facing History and Ourselves and the Smithsonian Institution Treering Exhibition Service to encourage dialogue, engagement, respect, and participation in our communities. For program resources,