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**Annual Report, October 1, 2023-September 2024**

**I. Our events and support for other groups**

**October 9-10, 2023:** We provided some financial support and had a literature table on October 10 at the WVU Native American Studies Program entitled “The Land Was Already Loved” at the WVU Mountainlair.

**November 5, 2023:** we had a pot-luck celebration at First Presbyterian Church, Morgantown, of all that we have achieved in social and environmental justice over the years followed by a panel discussion of how we can work together so that our achievements are not nullified by the legislature and others in the future. Panelists were Judy Ball (Morgantown-Monongalia County League of Women Voters) John Bolt (West Virginia Coalition for Truth in History), Jim Kotcon (West Virginia Sierra Club), Nicole Lauffer (Morgantown/Kingwood Branch of the NAACP), and Zac Morton (Greater Morgantown Interfaith Association).

**January 14, 2024:** Susan Brown wrote a letter to the editor of the *Dominion Post* published on this day for Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The letter draws attention to work of Dr. King and celebrates his accomplishments. It also reminds us of the 60th anniversary of the Civil Rights Act and King's actions that led to the passing of the act in 1964.

**February 7, 2024:** Eve Faulkes represented us at Black Policy Day in Charleston. She used this opportunity to promote our planned exhibit on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and met people to be included in the graphic novel she compiled and illustrated.

**April 21, 2024:** We hosted another potluck dinner at First Presbyterian Church, Morgantown, for social and environmental justice groups to discuss the ramifications of the West Virginia legislative session. Two graduate students from Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism who were in West Virginia to look at why West Virginia has the lowest percentage young people who vote.

**June 15, 2024:** We were a bronze-level sponsor of Morgantown PRIDE’s block party but did not attend this year.

**June 26, 2024:** We signed on to the press release from West Virginia Housing Justice on the anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s Obergefell decision and as a response to the Grants Pass decision, which dealt with the unsheltered.

**July 23, 2024:** Rich Cohen represented us at a meeting of the Morgantown Civilian Police Review and Advisory Board to represent our concerns for a survey that the board is conducting.

**September 8, 2024:** We held our CCSJ annual meeting, triennial election for steering committee members and officers, and potluck picnic at Marilla Park, with invitations to other community social justice and environmental justice groups.

## II. “Celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964”

**July 2, 2024:** We hosted the opening of our exhibit “Celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964” with a reception for about 50 people at the Morgantown Public Library on Spruce Street. Eve Faulkes designed this exhibit with assistance from Susan Brown, Don Spencer, Joan Browning, and Barb Howe. Mike Attfield introduced the program, and Eve Faulkes then introduced the speakers and musicians. John Gaddis, Reita Marks, and Dayna Pratt were storytellers who spoke. The Osage Soul & Gospel Choir, under the leadership of Al Anderson and Aristotle Jones, performed, and Al also sang. Attendees enjoyed reviewing the graphic novel entitled *West Virginians’ Experiences in the Civil Rights Movement* which features 22 story tellers who mentioned about 80 other people.

The City of Morgantown and First Presbyterian Church, Morgantown, provided funding with support from the Morgantown/Kingwood Branch of the NAACP and the Morgantown Human Rights Commission. We also appreciated the support of Sarah Palfrey, director of the Morgantown Public Library, and her staff while the exhibit was at the library during the month of July.

**July 13, 2024:** CCSJ had a table at a listening session that Eve Faulkes organized with funding from First Presbyterian Church at the Morgantown Farmers Market. Approximately 30 people reviewed the posters that are smaller versions of the six exhibit panels and the graphic novel and then sat down to talk to each other – and to listen to each other.

**August 1-4, 2024:** Eve Faulkes hosted the exhibit at MultiFest in Charleston. Joan Browning, one of the story tellers, joined her for a day.

**August 10, 2024:** Eve Faulkes took the exhibit to Morgantown’s Arts Walk and had voter registration information available from the Morgantown/Kingwood Branch of the NAACP.

**August 16-30, 2024:** Eve Faulkes took the exhibit to Suncrest United Methodist Church in Morgantown.

**September 3-6, 2024:** Eve Faulkes is taking the exhibit to the Kelly Miller Center in Clarksburg in advance of the Black History Festival there.

**September 6-13, 2024:** Eve Faulkes is taking the exhibit to Fairmont.

**September 12, 2024:** Eve Faulkes will have the exhibit posters and voter registration information at the Morgantown Mutual Aid Fair at the First Presbyterian Church, Morgantown.

## III. Graphic Novel: *West Virginians’ Experiences in the Civil Rights Movement: How We Have Been Connected All Along*

This project started in the spring of 2024 as a way to collect the stories of West Virginians involved in the civil rights movement. Eve Faulkes conceived of the idea and is the compiler and

illustrator, with Joan Browning and Barb Howe as editors. We are working with West Virginia State University's printing office and the staff of Populore Publishing Co. in Morgantown to produce the book.

FirstEnergy Foundation provided \$2000 so we could distribute copies free. The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation promised Eve \$2000 to pay for copies to be distributed in the Charleston West Side area with the assistance of Mavery Davis, who is included in the book. We are now applying for a mini-grant of \$2000 from the West Virginia Humanities Council to be able to distribute more free copies through the WVU Center for Black Culture and WVU LGBTQ+ Center (both confirmed) with other outlets like public libraries and other university centers to be explored. The grant application is due October 1.

We also plan to sell the book through amazon in paperback and Kindle versions and through IngramSpark to reach bookstores.

#### **IV: Communications and cooperation**

**Monthly Zoom meetings:** We meet monthly, usually on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. All are welcome to attend. Duane Nichols shared his experiences with the civil rights movement at our January meeting, while Don Spencer shared his career promoting social justice at our February meeting. Both of those presentations are available on our website. Barb Howe shared information about some famous West Virginia women at the March meeting.

**Update:** We have a monthly e-newsletter that is distributed to 266 people that includes information about social justice organizations in the Morgantown area and elsewhere in the state.

**Website and Facebook page:** We have a website at [www.ccsjwv.org](http://www.ccsjwv.org) that includes an extensive list of resources related to social justice issues and regularly get requests from around the country to add their links to our site. We also have a Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/groups/108240242119](https://www.facebook.com/groups/108240242119). Mike Attfield manages our website, and Mike Sharley is the administrator of our Facebook page.

**Cooperation with other groups:** CCSJ members are active members of the Morgantown and West Virginia Human Rights Commissions, Morgantown/Kingwood Branch of the NAACP, West Virginia Coalition for Truth in History, Dismantling Racism Together, and West Virginia Sierra Club. The Morgantown-Monongalia County League of Women Voters, Morgantown Church of the Brethren (and Sistern), and First Presbyterian Church are organizational members of CCSJ.