

EXHIBIT U

X RavalliRepublic.com

## Spreadbury files \$3.6 million lawsuit

by SEPP JANNOTTA - Staff Reporter | Posted: Wednesday, June 9, 2010 12:00 am

Citing wrongdoing by everyone from Ravalli County Sheriff Chris Hoffman to Ravalli County Attorney George Corn to "unknown deputies," failed Hamilton mayoral candidate Michael Spreadbury has filed a 49-page civil complaint in federal district court.

The suit, brought against 18 separate "natural citizens" of the state of Montana, alleges the group "conspired to deprive the Constitutional rights of Plaintiff," Michael Spreadbury. In addition to the mostly Ravalli County-employed defendants, Spreadbury's complaint includes the Ravalli Republic and Supporters of Abuse Free Environments, a Ravalli County advocacy group for abused women and families known as SAFE.

Spreadbury is asking for \$2.6 million in damages, \$1 million for pain and suffering, \$6,660, and \$750 in storage fees, for all stemming from a dispute between Spreadbury and his neighbors on Cooper Lane in Hamilton during the latter portions of 2006.

Spreadbury has three additional suits pending, one against Ravalli County, one against the City of Hamilton and another against a Hamilton librarian, two of which are related to incidents at or near the Bitterroot Public Library that led to Spreadbury's being banned from the facility, trespassing in violation of that ban and subsequently being charged with felony intimidation of the library staff member. He is seeking damages of \$1.2 million in those complaints.

The suit describes how, in 2006, Spreadbury had a national security clearance as a decorated employee of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA.

Spreadbury alleges that all involved conspired to bring charges of misdemeanor assault - he claims he was defending his property against a drunken neighbor - subsequent trials and newspaper publicity of his troubles. SAFE was named for having written a letter on behalf of the neighbor, a woman who according to charging documents sustained a cut as a result of Spreadbury throwing a glass jar at her - he claims the wound was self-inflicted.

As a result - Spreadbury's suit particularly blames the newspaper - he was fired from FEMA and lost out on what would have been a lucrative career, hence the \$2.6 million in lost earnings.

Among a slew of charges ranging from negligence to abuse of process to violation of equal protection, Spreadbury is asking the federal court to grant permanent injunctive relief to protect him from the abuses of the Ravalli County Attorney's Office, the Ravalli County Sheriff's Office and Ravalli County Justice of the Peace Jim Bailey.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Jeremiah Lynch has yet to rule on whether the jury trial Spreadbury has requested can proceed.

Reporter Sepp Jannotta can be reached at 363-3000 or [sjannotta@ravallirepublic.com](mailto:sjannotta@ravallirepublic.com).