

Community rallies for unity

BY T.W. BURGER
For the Gettysburg Times

A little after the Adams Unity Coalition Voices of Unity gathering began Saturday, a young man with a guitar belted out the song, "Blowing in the Wind."

The Bob Dylan song came out in 1963, and was touted as a protest song, though it really posed a series of questions about peace, war and freedom.

The song immediately became an anthem in the realms of anti-war protest and civil rights.

The notable thing might be that 50 years later, it's still being sung, for many of the same reasons.

Saturday's rally, held on the grounds of the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, featured live music by local artists, their sets punctuated by remarks from representatives of the various faith communities in the area and by figures from local government.

The coalition's statement of purposes states that its member organizations "...share an interest in building a commu-

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JOHN ARMSTRONG/GETTYSBURG TIMES

HONK FOR PEACE – A large group of demonstrators gathered Saturday afternoon at the intersection of Buford Ave. and N. Hay St. on the grounds of the Gettysburg Lutheran Theological Seminary to counter the KKK rally on the other side of Gettysburg. Passing vehicles sounded their horns in support of the attendees message of inclusiveness and unity.

Unity

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nity of respect for all peoples, regardless of age, gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, or ability."

Ashley Andyshak Hayes of the YWCA Gettysburg & Adams County and wife of *Gettysburg Times* Managing Editor Alex Hayes, said the Unity organization first came into existence in response to a 2006 appearance by the KKK and neo-Nazis at the Gettysburg National Military Park.

Saturday's rally was a response to another planned white supremacist rally at the GNMP, but the shutdown of the U.S. Government because of a squabble in the U.S. Congress closed the park and rescinded the KKK permit. The group instead gathered in the Gettysburg Borough Office parking lot.

Christine Kellett, a retired professor of law at Dickinson School of Law in Carlisle, has called Gettysburg home since 1968. She and husband Charles attended the Unity Rally.

"I am so glad that those who

can get out to celebrate here," said Kellett. "This is not a protest against the KKK. This is a celebration of our community."

Standing at the curb on Buford Avenue, a woman dressed head-to-toe in stark black robes held a sign inviting passers-by to the rally.

The woman, a British nun of the Russian Orthodox Church, preferred not to give her name, but said she was visiting the seminary as part of a broader mission of study.

"I'm just taking part in the rally," she said. "When I got

here, I was appalled to learn that the KKK still existed. I thought they had been abolished long ago."

She said she was very pleased to see the number of people attending the rally, at least 75 by then.

"Thank God there are still plenty of people who believe in love," she said. "We all need to love and respect one another."

Adams County Commissioner Randy Phiel also visited the event and proclaimed Oct. 5, 2013 "Adams County Voices of Unity Day."