

CLOSING SPEECH on UNITY by Kris Korfanta

What an amazing turnout today! And how about the music and speeches?

How many of you felt nervous coming? It took courage to organize this event, to speak, sing, show up, and bring family. As Nelson Mandela said, “Courage is not the absence of fear, but the triumph over it.” Let’s give a round of applause for everyone here!

Courage is contagious. We grow stronger not through fear or anger, but by coming together with vision and hope. Let’s keep strengthening our community—through music, volunteering, being good neighbors, and especially by talking to others.

We must overcome our fear of talking with people who think differently. To rebuild trust—in each other and our institutions—we need to step outside our echo chambers. We dare not dismiss or demonize anyone—left or right. Meet people with curiosity and kindness. As Lincoln said, “I do not like that man—I must get to know him better.”

Fear and division are used to keep us apart. We can’t let that continue.

Let’s also recognize the **nonpartisan** Big Horn County Concerned Citizens, who’ve united across political lines to make real change. Judge Harrington and others—please wave or stand so people can connect with you afterward.

Finally, **pace yourselves**—this is important work! We can’t do everything, but each of us can do something. Our speakers have offered powerful calls to action. Find joy in what you do—because as Joan Baez reminds us, “Action is the antidote to despair.” Let’s say it together: **“Action is the antidote to despair!”**

We are part of a national wave of nonviolent civic action. As Baez said, “That’s all nonviolence is—organized love.” Let’s organize our love for community and country, resist authoritarianism, and show our children—and the world—what America can be.

Kris Korfanta is a retired teacher and one of our organizers and is a state coordinator of Braver Angels because she is committed to building bridges across the political divide.

