



SEEKING JUSTICE IN TEXAS

TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

WORKING THROUGH EDUCATION AND ACTION

FALL 2009

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Texas Death Penalty News and Alerts

Cameron Todd Willingham: Innocent; Executed

Willingham's case has received renewed attention with an extensive article in the *New Yorker* and a report filed with the Texas Forensic Science Commission. Read about what has happened and what's next for this critical Texas case on page 3. (Cameron Todd Willingham with one of his children pictured above left.)

Exhibit Focuses on Family Members of Death Row Inmates

The McCarty Project reveals the often forgotten side of crime and punishment: the family members of the convicted inmate. Consider the artist's statement and find details about the exhibit on page 4.

Submit Annual Award Nominations

Planning is underway for TCADP's 2010 Annual Conference. Help the TCADP Conference Committee by submitting nominations for the Courage, Appreciation and Media Awards to be presented in Dallas on February 20, 2010. Learn more about the nomination process on page 5.

NCADP 2010 Conference - "Building Bridges to Wider Audiences"

Plan now to attend the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (NCADP) 2010 Annual Conference in Louisville, KY, January 14-17, 2010. Go to www.ncadp.org for details. See page 5 on the "Race to Heal Initiative" and discover how you could have your lodging and conference fee paid by NCADP.

Workplace Giving Campaigns In Progress

October kicks off workplace giving campaigns around the state. Recruit a few of your co-workers to include TCADP among their charitable choices. Find out how to locate TCADP in your workplace giving option on page 2.



Statewide Conference Call - TCADP Annual Report

TCADP is hosting quarterly statewide conference calls which focus on particular aspects of death penalty issues and provide a forum for sharing ideas. We definitely want you on the line! See page 3 for information on the next call and how to participate in the discussion of the Annual Report.

Shop at Randalls?

You can link your Randalls' Remarkable Card to TCADP. Randalls then sends a percentage of your purchases to benefit TCADP. Contact your local Randalls or TCADP for the appropriate form. The TCADP Randalls' number is 9874. Thank you!



Impending Executions

October

27 Reginald Blanton

November

5 Khristian Oliver

10 Yosvanis Valle

17 Gerald Eldridge

18 Danielle Simpson

19 Robert Thompson

Execution Vigils:

<http://www.tcadp.org/index.php?page=vigils>



From the Executive Director

From tabling at the 73rd Annual Texas State NAACP Convention to hosting a chapter kick-off event in Odessa to organizing a speakers' tour in the Rio Grande Valley, the next three months promise to be a busy and productive time for TCADP! Our local chapters will be hard at work organizing public education events and fundraisers, as well as cultivating new leaders. Other ongoing initiatives include outreach to faith communities and civic groups, execution vigils, and preparation for the 2010 Annual Conference, taking place next February in Dallas.

Later this fall we will welcome a powerful new ally in our work to end the death penalty. TCADP partner Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation (MVFR) is hiring an organizer who will be based in Texas. This new staff member should be on board by November 2, 2009. He/She will recruit, train and mobilize victim family members to be effective voices for abolition in Texas.

TCADP also will continue to inform the public and our elected officials about the wrongful execution of Cameron Todd Willingham. As you'll read on page 3 of this newsletter, evidence that the State of Texas executed an innocent person is now stronger than ever. The Willingham case should be a wake-up call to those who still believe the death penalty does not claim innocent lives. We must not let this case just fade into the background.

December 7, 2009 presents abolitionists with an important opportunity to raise awareness of the Texas death penalty's irreversible risk of error. December 7 is the date upon which Texas resumed executions in 1982 (and was the date of the nation's first execution by lethal injection). That date also marks the 20th anniversary of the execution of Carlos De Luna, convicted of the 1983 slaying of Wanda Lopez at a Corpus Christi gas station. According to an in-depth investigation by the *Chicago Tribune*, compelling evidence points to another suspect in the crime (now deceased) for which Mr. De Luna was executed in 1989. De Luna's case was prominently featured in the documentary "At the Death House Door."

TCADP will address the cases of Willingham, De Luna, and other wrongful convictions when it releases its Annual Report on death penalty developments for 2009. We'll brief TCADP members and supporters on the annual report and how you can help publicize the issues it raises on our next statewide conference call, tentatively scheduled for the evening of December 7. Information will be available on the TCADP website and by email.

We must channel our outrage about the cases of Cameron Todd Willingham and many others into a positive and effective force for change. Stay tuned, stay informed, stay involved!

In solidarity,

Kristin Houli

WELCOME

Jessica Dillon,
TCADP's Intern
from St Edward's University!

Workplace Giving Campaign Time Again!



State and city employees can easily support TCADP through workplace giving programs simply by entering the appropriate code on the workplace giving form. It's probably the easiest way to give and it means so much to our organization!

Some TCADP campaign codes:

- State Employee Charitable Campaign #074577
- City of Austin Campaign #1559
- City of Houston Campaign #1142
- Houston ISD Campaign #1150

Look for the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty in the campaign booklets under "Community Shares of Texas." Thank you!

PS. If your campaign booklet does not include Community Shares of Texas, please let your campaign director know of your interest in this federation; www.communitysharestx.org.



SEEKING JUSTICE IN TEXAS
Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty
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Newsletter Editor: Vicki McCuistion, info@tcadp.org
Issue #27, Fall 2009 (Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall)

Contributors: Pat Doyle, Kristin Houli, Paula Keeth, Jane Lindsay, Vicki McCuistion, John Reiser

Send your name, address, and phone number with your annual membership dues to the TCADP office to receive quarterly newsletters. All donations are tax-deductible. Thank you! If you are already a member and would like to receive the TCADP newsletter via email, send your name and email address to info@tcadp.org.

"There can no longer be any doubt that an innocent person has been executed. The question now turns to how we can stop it from happening again."

- *Innocence Project Co-Director Barry Scheck*

In the last month, there have been two important developments in the case of Cameron Todd Willingham, who was executed by the State of Texas on February 17, 2004. Willingham had been convicted and sentenced to death for setting a fire to his Corsicana home in 1991 that killed his three young daughters. A new investigative report by David Grann that appears in the September 7 issue of the *New Yorker* exhaustively deconstructs every aspect of the case and persuasively illustrates that none of the evidence used to convict Willingham was valid. It goes beyond the forensic science that has been the focus of investigations for the last five years and debunks every other piece of evidence, including the jailhouse snitch testimony, witness testimony, and circumstantial evidence. The results of Grann's investigation strongly point to Cameron Todd Willingham's innocence and wrongful execution.

The *New Yorker* piece came on the heels of a report filed with the Texas Forensic Science Commission by fire scientist Craig L. Beyler. The commission was created in 2005 by the state legislature to investigate allegations of professional negligence or misconduct in forensic analysis. Last year it agreed to a request from the Innocence Project to examine the possibility of forensic misconduct in the cases of Willingham and Ernest Ray Willis. In his report, Beyler found that the investigators in Willingham's case had a "poor understanding of fire science" and relied on outdated theories to justify their determination that the fire had been set deliberately. Beyler's report confirmed what every fire expert who has examined the case since the time of conviction has found: *there was no evidence to support the finding of arson*. The tragic deaths of Willingham's children likely were the result of a terrible accident, not a crime.



TCADP's website now features a comprehensive section dedicated to the Cameron Todd Willingham case; go to www.tcadp.org for links to reports, investigations, media coverage, and op-eds and editorials related to the case.

Since Willingham's execution, **21 individuals** – including 2 Texans – have been released from death rows nationwide due to evidence of their wrongful conviction (135 people have been released from death rows nationwide since 1973). This includes Ernest Ray Willis, who was exonerated from death row in Texas on October 6, 2004 and whose case also was addressed by the Beyler report. Willis had been sentenced to death for the 1986 deaths of two women who died in a house fire that was ruled arson. Seventeen years later, Pecos County District Attorney Ori T. White revisited the case after a federal judge overturned Willis' conviction. White hired an arson specialist to review the original evidence, and the specialist concluded that there was no evidence of arson. In 2004, prosecutors dropped all charges against Willis.

The eerily similar cases of Willingham and Willis - and the radically different outcomes in each – serve to highlight the arbitrariness of the Texas death penalty system and lend increased urgency to calls for abolition.

What's Next

The Texas Forensic Science Commission was set to meet on October 2, 2009 to hear from fire expert Craig Beyler. It had planned to issue its own findings with regard to the allegations of forensic misconduct in the Willingham case in 2010. Two days before the meeting, however, Texas Governor Rick Perry abruptly moved to replace three commission members, including the chair. The newly-appointed chair cancelled the meeting so that the new members could get up to speed on the case and other issues that the commission is addressing. The meeting has not been rescheduled and the future direction of the commission is now unclear and uncertain, as is the search for the truth in case of Cameron Todd Willingham.

Read more at <http://tcadp.org/index.php?page=cameron-todd-willingham-case>.

TCADP Statewide Conference Calls



Mark your calendar!

The next TCADP Statewide Conference Call is tentatively scheduled for Monday, December 7, 2009 at 7:00 PM. This call will focus on Texas death penalty developments in 2009 (TCADP's Annual Report) and the likely wrongful execution of Carlos De Luna. Check the TCADP website or call the office for details.

Calls are open to all TCADP members and supporters. If you would like to suggest a topic or speaker for future calls, please contact Kristin at khoule@tcadp.org or 512-441-1808. We look forward to talking with you!

Links to recordings of previous calls can be found at <http://tcadp.org/index.php?page=conference-calls>.

Artist Statement By Jane Lindsay

The McCarty Project documents the effects of capital punishment on family members of people on death row. The project is about human rights, accountability, and forgiveness. It is told by the families of those living on death row, those executed, and those exonerated. The project is a continuation of a four-year commitment to photograph fifty families. The work is a collaboration between me, as the photographer, and the family members I photograph. Although the subject of capital punishment has long been controversial, family members of the executed have been overlooked as victims. This project is important because it reveals another side to crime and punishment; it allows a rare look at what it is like to be a family member of someone sentenced to die by the state.



Shirley and Joe, parents of Curtis Edward McCarty - exonerated from the Oklahoma death row in May 2007. Photo by Jane Lindsay

My perspective has evolved on this issue as a result of being both a counselor to criminals and a victim of crime. I have learned too much from my experience to trust the current approach to justice. Frankly, it disturbs me deeply to know that more than 63 men have been executed in Texas alone since I began this project in March of 2006. I am unable to understand the contradiction of the state's desire to punish a murderer with murder. ...

Family members of people convicted of capital crimes become victims of the criminal justice system, with no means of justice for their loss. Often they are ridiculed by society, friends, and colleagues. Many feel deep shame and remorse for the crime their loved one committed.

The McCarty Project asks the viewer to consider how the "victims" of crime include more than those normally labeled as victims. The project is not about minimizing the violent acts of individuals convicted of capital crimes. Instead, this project is about the human rights of any individual, regardless of who they are and what they have done. The work will record human spirit, courage, hope and hopelessness in response to the contradictions of our own attempts to deal with crime.

You Are Invited!

Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts

www.lhuca.org

511 Ave. K Lubbock, TX 79401 (806) 762-8606

Exhibit:

The McCarty Project -
Family Members of People on Death Row

Opening Night:

November 6, 2009 from 6-9 pm

The exhibit will be on display
October 28 to December 16, 2009.

October 10 is World Day Against the Death Penalty. The Houston Chapter will sponsor its second annual Teach-In at the University of St. Thomas from 10am to 4pm.

At the Teach-In:

1. A basic educational program on the death penalty will be shared that can be used by TCADP members in their congregations, civic clubs and educational institutions. This is a follow-up to the discussion on outreach at the last local TCADP meeting.
2. An attorney will explain how serious mistakes in the criminal justice system can lead to people being wrongfully convicted and executed. The case of Cameron Todd Willingham is a good example of the mistakes the system can make and a powerful argument for the abolition of the death penalty.

This will be a most informative day, so please plan to attend. Contact David Atwood (atwood@tcadp.org) or Nancy Bailey (houston@tcadp.org), 281-933- 4925 to register or if you have questions.

Join the Race to Heal Initiative!

Are you looking for a fast and easy way to raise money for TCADP? Would you like to share the reasons for your opposition to the death penalty with your friends, family members, coworkers, and neighbors? Then the *Race to Heal Initiative* is the campaign for you!



If you don't have the time or capacity to create your own online fundraising page, please consider supporting one of the participants in TCADP's Race to Heal Initiative. Go to <http://www.firstgiving.com/racetoheal22> for a full list of people who are raising money for TCADP!

Beginning October 7 and continuing through December 7, TCADP will participate in the *Race to Heal Initiative*, an online fundraising drive that has been developed by the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (NCADP) and is supported by Firstgiving. Through this initiative, you will be able to share your personal story about your work against the death penalty and encourage your friends and family members to contribute funds to TCADP. Donations generated by the *Race to Heal Initiative* will support TCADP's efforts to build bridges to communities that have been impacted by violence.

To participate in the *Race to Heal Initiative* by creating your own online fundraising page, please contact TCADP Program Coordinator Vicki McCuiston at info@tcadp.org or go to <http://www.firstgiving.com/racetoheal22> to get started.

TCADP will provide you with step-by-step instructions, a sample email to send to your friends and family, and other helpful materials. To create your page, you'll need a fundraising goal, a photo, a personal story about why you support TCADP (2-3 paragraphs), and a contact list of names and email addresses. All donations will be processed securely and automatically through <http://www.firstgiving.com>.

The TCADP member who raises the most money through the *Race to Heal Initiative* (minimum \$500) will receive a generous reward from the NCADP - free registration for the [NCADP 2010 Annual Conference](#) (January 14-17, 2010 in Louisville, Kentucky) and two nights lodging at the Seelbach Hilton Louisville Hotel. We encourage you all to compete as we pursue the finish line of abolition!

TCADP Seeks Annual Award Nominations

TCADP annually honors individuals and groups that have made contributions and sacrifices to abolishing the death penalty in Texas.

The TCADP Conference Committee welcomes nominations for the awards that will be presented at the annual conference on Saturday, February 20 in Dallas. As in the past, one Courage Award, two Appreciation Awards, and one Media Award may be presented.

Nominations will be accepted from any member of TCADP for the each of the awards. Nominations should be sent to TCADP Board Secretary, Rich Woodward (r-woodward@tcadp-bv.org) and must include:

- Type of Award (Courage, Appreciation, Media)
- Name of Nominee (include title, if any)
- Address, Phone, and Email of Nominee
- Narrative Describing Reason for Nomination. Please be specific about the act(s) that justify the nomination. Information from this section will be used in the conference program and on the award certificate.

Incomplete nominations cannot be accepted, so be sure to follow the outline provided. The deadline for nominations is **NOVEMBER 1, 2009**.

In solidarity with faith groups all across the state, the Criminal Justice Ministry of El Paso's Saint Patrick Cathedral has begun holding a prayer vigil on the evening of each Texas execution. These bilingual vigils are publicized in local newspapers, in our churches, at our university (UTEP), and in the newsletter of El Pasoans Against the Death Penalty.

In a spirit of prayer and reflection, people gather at Saint Patrick Cathedral at 6 PM. The vigil begins with a hymn, followed by a brief reading from the official record of the condemned as well as the name(s) of the victim(s). This is followed by a responsive reading of an appropriate psalm, and then Matthew 6: 43-45. There is no sermon but instead two brief reflections are read and time is allowed after each for a minute of silent reflection. The reflections change at each vigil and are taken from a variety of sources, e.g. final statements from prisoners on death row, Sr. Helen Prejean, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, David Atwood, and others. Reflections are followed by intercessions in which there is prayer for the victim(s) and for the condemned (by name), for Governor Rick Perry, for the executioners, journalists and witnesses to the executions and for the families of all. This is followed by the "Our Father" and a blessing from the leader (usually Fr. Rick Matty). All depart the half-hour vigil in silence to an instrumental rendition of "Amazing Grace."

At the time of this writing, three vigils have been held and 30-50 people have attended each. Eventually we hope to invite other faith groups to join us and in so doing to encourage others to join us in our journey to abolish the death penalty.

For more information, please contact El Pasoans Against the Death Penalty at elpaso@tcadp.org.

Membership Alert!

Please check the date on the address label of this newsletter. If the date shown on your mailing label is prior to October 1, 2009, your membership has expired.

For lapsed members: You can make a secure online donation with your credit card at <http://www.tcadp.org/index.php?page=top-donate>, or send a check or money order (made out to "TCADP"), along with your [membership form](#) (on the back page of this newsletter), to: TCADP; 2709 S. Lamar; Austin, Texas 78704. Thank you!

Check with your chapter leader for dates and times of meetings!

Chapters also have pages on the website listing vigil and meeting times and locations:

www.tcadp.org

Chapters (C) and Regional Reps (RR)

STATE OFFICE—Austin (512) 441-1808 info@tcadp.org

Amarillo (RR) Eileen Dolan amarillo@tcadp.org

Austin (C) Bob Van Steenburg austin@tcadp.org

Beaumont (C) Bob Gazaway beaumont@tcadp.org

Brazos Valley (C) Carole Johnson collegestation@tcadp.org

Corpus Christi (C) Jeanne Adams corpuschristi@tcadp.org

Dallas (C) Rick Halperin dallas@tcadp.org

El Paso (C) Wayne Daniel elpaso@tcadp.org

Ft. Worth (RR) Curt Crum ftworth@tcadp.org

Houston (C) Nancy Bailey houston@tcadp.org

Huntsville (C) James Moore huntsville@tcadp.org

Laredo (RR) Sr. Rose Marie Tresp laredo@tcadp.org

Killeen (RR) Adele Mark killeen@tcadp.org

Lubbock (C) Vince Gonzales lubbock@tcadp.org

Odessa (RR) Father Mark Miller odessa@tcadp.org

Rio Grande Valley (C) Sylvia Garza riogrande@tcadp.org

San Angelo (RR) sanangelo@tcadp.org

San Antonio (C) Roger Barnes sanantonio@tcadp.org

The Woodlands (RR) Angelle Adams thewoodlands@tcadp.org

Victoria (C) Rev. Wanda Ritchea victoria@tcadp.org

Waco (RR) Russell Doncouse waco@tcadp.org

INTERNATIONAL Sandrine Ageorges international@tcadp.org

(Please call the state office if you need a contact phone number or check the chapter page on the TCADP website.)

October (Links indicate more information at www.tcadp.org)

Non-Violence Awareness Month

Respect Life Month—Catholic Church

4-10 Mental Illness Awareness Week

10 [NAMI Walk—Austin](#) Join the TCADP Austin Chapter in sending a team to walk in the Austin NAMI Walk to help draw attention to the issue of mental illness and the death penalty. More info at www.nami.org/walk and search for Anne Mund and the TCADP Walkers.

[World Day Against the Death Penalty Teach-In](#)—Houston, 10:00 to 4:00pm, University of St Thomas (page 5 for more info)

11 Odessa Chapter Meeting

20 [TCADP Speakers Bureau](#) at the Washington County Democrat Meeting, Brenham 5:30pm

El Paso Chapter Meeting <http://tcadp.org/index.php?page=el-paso>

21 Austin Chapter Meeting 11:30am, Dallas Chapter Meeting 7:00pm

27 Execution—Reginald Blanton

San Antonio Chapter Meeting 7:00pm

28 Houston Fundraiser

November

1 Deadline for Annual Award nominations; please email to r-woodward@tcadp-bv.org

5 Execution—Khristian Oliver

8-12 TCADP Speakers' Tour in the Rio Grande Valley, featuring death row exonerate Juan Melendez. Mr. Melendez spent nearly 18 years on death row in Florida for a crime he did not commit. This tour will visit several cities in Starr, Hidalgo, and Cameron Counties. It aims to raise awareness of issues related to the death penalty and build support for TCADP. More details will be available at www.tcadp.org. If you would like to help with the tour, please contact Kristin at khoule@tcadp.org or 512-441-1808

10 Execution—Yosvanis Valle, El Paso vigil with Bishop Ochoa

14 TCADP Board Meeting

15 [Inter-Faith Prayer Service](#) 2:00pm, Walls Unit, Huntsville

16-17 Texas Conference of Churches Assembly, Austin

17 Execution—Gerald Eldridge

18 Execution—Danielle Simpson

Austin Chapter Meeting 11:30am, Dallas Chapter Meeting 7:00pm

19 Execution—Robert Thompson

December

7 Resumption of Texas Executions (1982)

Release of TCADP 2009 Annual Report

[Statewide Conference Call](#) 7:00pm

10 International Human Rights Day

16 Austin Chapter Meeting 11:30am, Dallas Chapter Meeting 7:00pm

Vigil Locations <http://tcadp.org/index.php?page=vigils>

Huntsville (Location of Executions) Corner of 12th and Ave. I (in front of Walls Unit) at 5:15 p.m.

Austin (Site 1) - On Congress at 11 St., 5:30 - 6:30 pm, **(Site 2)** - Prayer vigil at St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic Church on Oltorf and Congress at 6:00pm (approx 20 minutes)

Beaumont Diocese of Beaumont, Diocesan Pastoral Office, 703 Archie St. @ 4:00 p.m. on the day of an execution.

College Station 5:30 to 6 PM, east of Texas A&M campus at the corner of Walton and Texas Ave. across the street from the main entrance.

Corpus Christi Sisters Of Incarnate Word Convent, 2930 Alameda, 6:00 pm

Cuero At Gazebo on Main Street, next to Library, 5:45 PM. Public Invited. For information call 361-676-2921

Dallas SMU Catholic Center at the corner of University Blvd. and Airline Rd., starting at 6 p.m.

Edinburg 5:30pm in front of the Hidalgo County Courthouse

El Paso 6:00pm Saint Patrick Cathedral, 1118 N Mesa St

Ganado At Assumption Catholic Church Pro-Life Monument, 5:45 PM. Public invited. For information call 361-771-3325.

Houston Rotating Locations...October through December, execution vigils will be held (5:30 to 6:20 PM) at the Dominican Sisters Community at the corner of Alameda Rd. and Holcombe Blvd.

Lubbock St. John's United Methodist Church, 1501 University Ave., 5:30 to 6:30PM

McKinney St. Gabriel the Archangel Catholic Community located at 110 St. Gabriel Way, the last Sunday of the month, following the 11:00 mass to remember those scheduled for execution in the following month, as well as the victims of their crimes and family members on both sides.

Odessa Public vigil takes place from 5:00 to 5:30 PM in front of St. Joseph Catholic Parish, 907 S. Dixie, Odessa 79761. Prayer takes place inside the church from 5:30 to 6:00 PM. All are welcome. The church phone number is 432-337-2213.

San Antonio (Site 1) - Archdiocese of San Antonio, in the St. Joseph Chapel at the Chancery, 2718 W. Woodlawn Ave. (1 mile east of Bandera Rd.) at 11:30 a.m. on the day of execution. Broadcast on Catholic Television of San Antonio (Time-Warner cable channel 15) at 12:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. on the day of execution. **(Site 2)** - Main Plaza across from Bexar County Courthouse and San Fernando Cathedral - Noon Spring - Prayer Vigil at 6 PM on evenings of executions at St Edward Catholic Community, 2601 Spring Stuebner Rd, Spring, TX 77389 for the murder victim, for family and friends of the murder victim, the prison guards and correctional officers, for the family of the condemned man/woman, for the man/woman to be executed and to an end to the death penalty. **(Site 3)** - Join the Sisters of Divine Providence and friends in vigil and prayer from 6:00 - 6:30 pm on Texas execution days in front of Our Lady of the Lake Convent by the large crucifix. 515 S.W. 24th Street.

Spring Prayer Vigil at 6 PM on evenings of executions at St Edward Catholic Community, 2601 Spring Stuebner Rd, Spring, TX 77389 for the murder victim, for family and friends of the murder victim, the prison guards and correctional officers, for the family of the condemned man/woman, for the man/woman to be executed and to an end to the death penalty.

Victoria At Incarnate Word Convent, 5:45 PM. Public Invited. For information call 361-575-7111.

Saturday, February 20, 2010

Save the Date!

Dallas, TX

**HIGHLAND PARK
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

**CO-SPONSORED BY THE
SMU HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Registration and conference agenda
will be in the Winter Newsletter.

Look for exciting changes in the program and a discounted
registration rate for TCADP members.

Conference Hotel



Radisson Hotel Central Dallas

\$89 nightly, February 19, 20, 2010.

Call (800) 333-3333 and ask for the Radisson Hotel Central Dallas. It will be necessary for each individual to identify themselves as being part of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty for the appropriate date(s), to obtain the special rate.

Reservations must be made by **January 29, 2009**. Reservations cancelled within 24 hours of arrival are non-refundable.

A shuttle is available to provide transportation to and from the conference site for \$1 each way.



Member Spotlight... Paula Keeth - Glenn Heights, TX



How did you come to be against the death penalty? The son of a family friend, Spencer Goodman, was sent to death row in 1992 and executed in 2000. I was in favor of or at least ambivalent toward the death penalty at that time. In researching Spencer's story, I came across such resources as the Death Penalty Information Center and Amnesty International and started studying the facts about the death penalty. After educating myself, I changed my mind on the death penalty.

How did you learn about the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty?

Dallas Peace Times, the publication of the Dallas Peace Center

What are your expectations in becoming a member of TCADP for yourself? For the organization?

Starting in 2000, I worked on my own writing my legislators, the governor, and the Board of Pardons and Paroles on specific inmates and legislation. I was also a frequent visitor to the TCADP's website for information, but never a member. Now that I am a member, I hope to contribute by bringing in more members and educating people in my area, especially in my religious community. My expectation for the organization is that we can capitalize on current events and subtle changes in public opinion to build momentum toward abolishing the death penalty in this state.

What do you think is standing in the way of ending the death penalty in Texas?

I think that many Texans have deeply held religious beliefs that support the execution of people. When discussing the morality of the death penalty, some proponents believe that morality is on their side. I think this underscores the need to start a real dialogue among religious people. The religious bodies that support abolition now did not always take that position. I think that through education and dialogue we can start changing the hearts of the people in the pews to match the religious statements.

What is the most compelling argument for you that the death penalty is wrong?

As a member of the Society of Friends (Quakers), I believe in the principle of "that of God in everyone." Taking the life of another human being denies the sacredness of life and the God-assisted capacity for change.

What other societal issues concern you?

Poverty, peace, and racism

What other organizations are you a member of?

Dallas Friends Meeting, Dallas Peace Center, Texas Democratic Women (Ellis County)

What are your gifts, hobbies, and areas of expertise?

I work in a library and am an avid reader. I also like speaking gently with people.

Thank You for Your Generous Support

Page 9, Fall 2009

TCADP thanks the following individuals & organizations for their generous contributions in the past quarter (June 17, 2009 - September 17, 2009). Your financial assistance is critical to our outreach, education, and advocacy efforts. Please let us know if we have inadvertently left you off of this list. We apologize in advance if we have missed anyone. * Signifies New Donors/Members!

Ann Adams *
Robert Arndt
David Atwood
Maria Augustejn
Nancy Bailey
Angela Baker
Roger & Karin Barnes
Christiane Bastian-Engelbert
William Bolin
Elizabeth Bourgeois *
Marian Breen
Kim Brewster *
Ron & Sharon Brown *
Sr. Margaret Bulmer
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Rick Halperin
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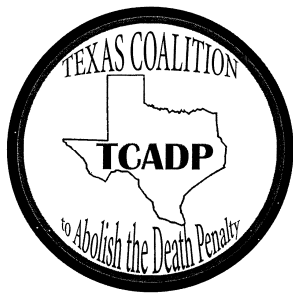
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Join the *Race to Heal Initiative* Launching on October 7 (see Page 5)!

JOIN TODAY!

Yes, I want to help TCADP increase the strength of the abolition movement in Texas!

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