

80th Legislative Session



SEEKING JUSTICE

IN TEXAS

TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

WORKING TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY IN TEXAS / SPRING 2007

A Note from the Chair

Rick Halperin, President

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Despite the terrible ongoing pace of executions in this state, there is great room for cautious optimism about the fate of the death penalty within the USA. Following a series of court rulings and decisions by state governors and various legislatures, the death penalty is currently on hold or not used in more than half of U.S. states--which together account for nearly 2/3 of the population.

The total number of executions in the U.S. dropped again last year to 53, a decline of almost 50 % in the past 7 years since the high point of the 1990s surge in executions. The number of death sentences imposed by juries also fell last year, to the lowest level since the death penalty was reinstated in 1976.

Capital punishment has been under scrutiny throughout the decade, but the issue is back at center stage right now--chiefly because of questioning of the lethal injection procedure used in 37 of the 38 states that have the death penalty. Long considered a swift and humane method of execution, evidence has come to light showing that lethal injection may be little more than state-sanctioned torture.

Tennessee has suspended all executions for 3 months, and in recent days legislatures in New Mexico, Montana and Colorado have introduced bills to abolish the death penalty completely, as did New Jersey in January. An independent commission there called for the end of the death penalty because it "is inconsistent with evolving standards of decency." North Carolina has stopped 3 executions after the state Medical Board decided that any participation by a doctor in the execution process violated its ethics policy.

In Maryland, where executions were halted in December because of a lack of public review of the lethal injection procedure, the new governor, Martin O'Malley, has said he, too, will sign a bill abolishing the death penalty if the legislature passes one.

In Illinois, state Sen. Mattie Hunter will unveil legislation to abolish the death penalty later this month. Illinois has had a moratorium on all executions, declared in January 2000 by former Gov. George Ryan.

Indiana just introduced a bill to abolish the death penalty for persons who are mentally ill.

Abolitionist activists should be encouraged that their efforts are beginning to resonate with a growing number of people across the country.

But the struggle for complete abolition is far from over, as at least a half-dozen states are considering broadening the death penalty, countering a national trend toward scaling back its use.

Lawmakers have proposed legislation that would increase the range of crimes eligible for execution. In Texas and Tennessee, for example, legislators want to include certain child molesters who did not murder their victims.

Virginia is considering bills that would make accomplices to murder, as well as killers of judges and court witnesses, eligible for the death penalty.

Missouri Gov. Matt Blunt said in his State of the State address last month that he wants a mandatory death penalty for the murder of law enforcement officers, saying that "this is the type of crime that calls for the death penalty."

A Georgia state representative has introduced a bill to allow a judge to impose the death sentence if at least 9 of 12 jurors - not all 12, as now - voted for it.

Already this year the nation has carried out 5 executions, with 4 of them occurring here in Texas. The legislature has bills pending in committees which, if ultimately passed, would increase the number of crimes for which a death sentence could be given. Nowhere is support for abolition more pressing than in this state. Now, more than ever, your active and financial support of the Texas Coalition is needed to help end this barbaric practice.

Impending Executions

Please note that dates are tentative.

March

- 6 Robert Perez
- 7 Joseph Nichols
- 28 Vincent Gutierrez
- 29 Roy Pippin

April

- 18 Cathy Henderson

May

- 16 Charles Smith

August

- 15 Kenneth Parr



Clemency Campaigns

For various reasons known to most of you on death row, some prisoners elect to petition the Governor of Texas for Clemency and a commutation of their sentence to life in prison, and some do not. In some cases the prisoner and his or her attorney elect to concentrate their energies on other legal challenges that have more likelihood of relief. In others, the prisoner merely makes a personal decision that he or she would prefer death over the possibility of having their sentence commuted from death to life.

Whatever the decision for whatever the reason, we all know the odds of a clemency petition resulting in the Governor commuting the sentence. Since I have been involved in this movement, there has only been one. While governor of Texas, George Bush commuted the death sentence of Henry Lee Lucas when it became crystal clear to the public that Lucas was innocent of the crime for which he was on death row. Lucas was guilty of other offenses that did not result in a death penalty sentence. Upon Governor Bush's request, the

Board of Pardons and Paroles gave him the required recommendation for clemency.

According to Texas law, for a Governor to commute a sentence, the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP) must recommend it. This law was enacted because many years ago, one of our former governors was selling clemency.

A clemency petition is required to be submitted to the BPP no later than twenty-one days prior to a scheduled execution date. The entire package as submitted by the attorney of the prisoner is distributed to the various parole board members by the clemency coordinator. Support letters sent to the BPP Clemency division on behalf of the prisoner are faxed to the board members up to one week prior to execution. Support letters should also be sent directly to the Governor.

When the Board receives a clemency petition, it has the authority to make the following decisions:

1. recommend to the governor a reprieve from execution;
2. not recommend a reprieve from execution; or
3. recess the proceedings without rendering a decision on the merits, if a reprieve has been granted by the governor or if a court of competent jurisdiction has granted a stay of execution.

If the BPP recommends a reprieve, the governor can

then elect to follow the recommendation of the BPP and commute the sentence to life, or he can ignore the recommendation and refuse to halt the execution.

If there is no clemency petition on behalf of a prisoner, there is no need for supporters or opponents to the execution to write letters. At the present time, in an effort to be supportive to prisoners awaiting execution, letters are being solicited and written with no information on whether there is actually a petition. In the case of a prisoner who has elected not to seek clemency, energy would be better spent writing letters of support directly to the prisoner and/or their family offering help if possible.

Here is the problem for those who want to write support letters. We currently do not have a way to know who has a clemency petition being submitted to the parole board and who does not. In order to gener-

ate a campaign for support letters, we need to 1) know as early as possible that there will be a petition, 2) a case summary outlining some of the issues that to be raised in letters, 3) the name of the attorney submitting the petitions, and 4) contact information..

If you are part of someone's personal support team, or you are a prisoner who has an execution date, (or expect a date soon) and you plan to file a clemency petition and you have no support team, please contact us directly. If you want to file a clemency petition requesting commutation of your sentence to life and your attorney is unresponsive, please contact us.

If a clemency petition is being filed to the Governor for a 30-day stay to allow for completion of further legal challenges, please provide us with the same information requested above so that we can campaign for support letters.



SEEKING JUSTICE IN TEXAS
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 Spring Issue #17, 2007 Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall

Mail your name, address, and phone number with annual donation to Austin 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.

TCADP Holds Annual Conference in Austin

By Sherry Coombes

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty members held their annual general membership meeting and conference at the Omni Hotel in Austin on January 27, 2007. Outgoing president, Jim Coombes, presided over the general membership meeting and the election of the 2007 board of directors.

Morning highlights of the conference included keynote speaker, Rob Owen, University of Texas School of Law professor and co-director of the Capital Punishment Center, who explained two death penalty cases he recently argued before the US Supreme Court. In the afternoon, Steve Hall from Texas Standdown, led attendees through a plenary session detailing proposed legislation for the 2007 legislative session.

Four Appreciation Award recipients and the TCADP Courage Award recipient were introduced during the conference luncheon. Appreciation award certificates were presented to: 1) Arianna Ballotta for her work with both the Italian Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and with TCADP, 2) Bill Mefford for his reinstatement of "Methodists Against the Death Penalty" and for his many other efforts to educate people on the death penalty within the Methodist community, 3) Nicole Casarez (and her students) from the University of St. Thomas for their continued efforts to prove the innocence of Anthony Graves, and 4) Professor Roark Reed and Dean John Atanasio of SMU School of Law for successful implementation of the SMU Death Penalty Project, a

program which has been instrumental in saving three men from the execution chamber and has done much to influence the minds of future prosecutors and defense attorneys. Ralph McCloud was presented with the TCADP Courage Award for his introduction of a Moratorium on Executions resolution to the Ft. Worth City Council when he served as a member of that body during the late 1990s. Mr. McCloud has since left the City Council, but has continued his abolition efforts from his position within the Catholic Diocese of Ft. Worth.

Afternoon breakout sessions included: 1) Developing and Maintaining a relationship with members of the legislature, led by Les Breeding, former legislative staff member, 2) Faith communities and

the death penalty, led by Jennifer Carr from the Austin Catholic Diocese, 3) The African-American community and the death penalty, led by Nelson Linder, president of the Austin chapter of the NAACP, and 4) Tips for organizing and running a grassroots organization, led by Kristen Houle' from Amnesty International.

The newly elected board of directors met on Sunday, January 28, and chose the following from among their members to serve as officers: Rick Halperin, president, Bob Van Steenburg, vice-president, and Christina Lawson, secretary. Sherry Coombes will continue to serve in a non-elected position as treasurer, and Vicki McCuiston will remain in the staff position of program coordinator.



L: Keynote: Rob Owen
R: Registration



↑ L to R: Bill Mefford, Arianna Balotta, Ralph McCloud, and Nicole Casarez




↑ Steve Hall with Media
R: Lunch
L: Kristin Houle' in Workshop



TCADP Board Restructured to Increase Effectiveness

In December, the TCADP Board of Directors met by conference call and voted on a recommendation from President Jim Coombes to restructure the board to create a more manageable and focused organization. The Board at that point in time consisted of one member from each affiliate, two members from each chapter, and several at large members. The new structure which was approved by the Board and the general membership at the Annual Conference provides for a board of 9-12 members who are elected without consideration for geographical location or affiliation status. Following the Annual Conference the new members of the board met and elected the officers of the organization. The names of the board members and the officers are listed in the box on the right. January, approved, and is listed to the right.

Stanley Allridge		Dallas	stanleyallridge@yahoo.com
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Jean Van Steenburg		Austin	jeanvans@austin.rr.com
Non-voting....			
Sherry Coombes	Treasurer	Austin	scoombes@austin.rr.com
Vicki McCuistion	Program Coordinator	Austin	info@tcadp.org



The Journey of Hope will be back in Texas October 2007! The Journey will start in Houston on the 12th and end in Austin on the 28th. In 17 days this amazing group of people will visit Houston, Huntsville, Dallas, El Paso, San Antonio, Austin and every town in between. The Journey is led by murder victim family members', joined by the exonerated, those who have lost someone to an execution, and families who have someone currently on death row. All of them come together with the support of passionate activists to tell their stories of pain, anger and their personal paths to healing and forgiveness.

The Journey is always looking for venues and volunteers. If you are interested in helping the "stakeholders" of Capital punishment spread their message of abolition in the state of Texas or just want more info, please contact Christina, 512.369.2220, texasjourney2007@aol.com

TCADP develops International Committee

The Coalition is in the process of establishing an International Committee as one of the standing committees of the organization. The purpose of the International Committee is to provide a TCADP presence overseas. The objectives will be to bring the story of the death penalty in Texas to other countries and to provide a means by which citizens of those countries can be involved in abolition of the death penalty in our state. The specific plans and steps for the committee are currently under development, but will essentially plant the TCADP flag in other countries. The initial list of countries in which this will happen are yet to be finalized, but the effort will most likely begin in Western Europe. The

goal would be to eventually have a TCADP presence in several nations both in Europe as well as in the other nations in North America.

The goals would be to provide an educational component so that more citizens of other nations are made aware of the situation in Texas, as well as opportunities by which they and their governments can make known their objections to the capital punishment system here in our state. More specific information about the International Committee will be presented to the Board of Directors at the next quarterly meeting of the Board, scheduled for April 14th. We will include this information in the next newsletter.

TCADP Chapter News

Check with your chapter for dates and times of meetings!

Austin Chapter... met on Feb 8th and identified several actions that the group intends to take. These include the following:

- A discussion with an individual who supports the use of capital punishment. This will give the members the opportunity to hear a non-emotional defense of capital punishment so that we may be better armed and prepared in our opposition. A specific individual has been identified and a member of the chapter will approach him and ask him to attend one of our meetings.
- The chapter agreed to sponsor a play at the First Unitarian Universalist Church in June. The church offers this opportunity to groups as a fund raiser for them. The play that we will sponsor is "Our Town". The church has already scheduled a run of the play and we will be the sponsor on June 19th. The Austin chapter is looking for volunteers for all aspects of this event: tickets sales, silent auction, refreshments, publicity, printing, etc. Your time and talents are needed.
- The chapter also discussed other ways in which we can work to educate members of the local community about the death penalty. We agreed that we will make a concerted effort to schedule appearances before church communities and other organizations to discuss the issue.

The Austin chapter of TCADP was a co-sponsor with the Catholic Diocese of Austin and its Office of Social Concerns for a visit to central Texas by Sr. Helen Prejean. On Feb. 13th Linda White of Texas Murder Victims Families for Reconciliation (MVFRTexas) and Stanley Allridge of TCADP traveled to Waco to tell their stories and express their opposition to the death penalty. Their powerful presentation was well-received by those present. On the 14th, Sr. Helen and Linda teamed for an interview with KUT (local public radio) which was then aired Feb 15th. Sr. Helen and Linda spoke at the UT Catholic Student Center to a large, enthusiastic group. Valentine's evening concluded with a presentation to a group at San Jose Catholic Church who engaged in a productive dialogue with the two ladies. Because of these events many people have been encouraged to talk with and write to their legislators in support of a bill for abolition of the death penalty and other related bills that may come before the Texas Legislature this current session.



L to R: Jean Van Steenburg, Sr. Helen Prejean, Linda White, Bob Van Steenburg

El Pasoans Against the Death Penalty... displayed Posters with red hearts and messages inspired by St. Valentine at the El Paso County Courthouse as St. Valentine was killed under the Reign of Claudius II, on February 14, 269 CE. He was beaten, stoned, and beheaded. EPADP used this very treasured holiday to point out another victim of the death penalty.

San Antonio... hosted a TCADP dinner in December at Roger Barnes' house. The event brought 10 new San Antonio members into TCADP. Among the attendees were the wife of a current Death Row prisoner and the wife of an executed prisoner.

Christina Lawson, TCADP board member and member of the Journey of Hope, spoke to a gathering of students at the University of the Incarnate Word on Tuesday, February 6 about the upcoming Journey of Hope visit to San Antonio and other Texas cities in October. Students were very interested in what Christina had to say and many voiced an interest in participating in Journey activities in October.

Chapter news cont. pg 7

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Victoria (Agape Chapter)

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TCADP Chapter Info cont. from pg 4

Houston Chapter... was involved with a photo exhibit by photographer Barbara Sloan and journalist Kelly Prew that opened on February 1 at the Prison Museum in Huntsville, Texas. The exhibit features photos of family members of both victims of crime and executed death row prisoners. Attending the opening were Dave and Peggy Atwood, Stan and Darren Allridge, Guy and Ursula Landrum and Arianna Ballotta and Biagio Santoro from Italy. TCADP helped to arrange photo sessions for families of executed prisoners.

On February 27, a panel discussion titled "Is Texas Executing Innocent People?" was held at Rice University in Houston. Participants included former San Antonio District Attorney Sam Millsap, Professor Nicole Casarez of the Texas Innocence Network at the University of St. Thomas, Deloyd Parker of the SHAPE Community Center, exonerated death row prisoner Clarence Brandley and Brandon Dudley, Chief of Staff for Senator Rodney Ellis. The event was sponsored by KPFT Radio, the Houston Peace and Justice Center and the SHAPE Community Center. TCADP was instrumental in organizing the event.

Rio Grande Valley... was invited to an event on Jan.27th where several civil right organizations met, and it was a great event. TCADP was not the focus and towards the end, the people that had not heard about us here in the Valley were very interested in learning what they could do to help.

One of the things that was so great is that many organization leaders are interested in having TCADP join them for other events that will be coming up. The one thing that really surprised me was how the group of people that I talked to changed their minds about the death penalty. I was able to get them to sign the petition and also get their email addresses for any upcoming events.



Donate online, at
www.tcadp.org/donate.php
Thank you!

Check out the TCADP website! www.tcadp.org
 Want to receive email alerts or the newsletter via email?
 Send your name and email address to info@tcadp.org

Legislative Update

As of February 9, there have been 16 bills introduced into the current session of the Texas legislature that deal with the issue of capital punishment. Fifteen of these are considered as positive from the viewpoint of those of us who oppose the use of capital punishment. One piece of legislation, HB 8 is viewed as particularly negative.. More on this bill and other bills can be found on page 8 and 9.

House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee
 Chair: Aaron Pena (D-Edinburg; Dist 40 [Hildago-part])
 Vice Chair: Allen Vaught (D-Dallas; Dist 107 [Dallas-part])
 Budget & Oversight Chair: Debbie Riddle (R-Tomball; Dist 150 [Harris-part])
 Members:
 Juan Escobar (D-Kingsville; Dist 43 [Jim Hogg, Brooks, Kenedy, Willacy, Cameron-part])
 Terri Hodge (D-Dallas; Dist 100 [Dallas-part])
 Barbara Mallory Caraway (D-Dallas; Dist 110 [Dallas-part])
 Paul Moreno (D-El Paso; Dist 77 [El Paso-part])
 Paula Hightower Pierson (D-Arlington; Dist 93 [Tarrant-part])

Senate Criminal Justice Committee
 Chair: John Whitmire (D-Houston; Dist 15 [Harris-part])
 Vice Chair: Kel Seliger (R-Amarillo; Dist 31 [Andrews, Bailey, Cochran, Crane, Dallam, Deaf Smith, Ector, Gaines, Glasscock, Hansford, Hartley, Hemphill, Howard, Hutchinson, Lipscomb, Martin, Midland, Moore, Ochiltree, Oldham, Parmer, Potter, Randall, Roberts, Sherman, Yoakum])
 Members:
 John Carona (R-Dallas;; Dist 16 [Dallas-part])
 Bob Duell (R-Greenville; Dist 2 [Dallas-part, Delta, Fannin, Hopkins, Hunt, Kaufman, Rains, Rockwall, Smith-part, Van Zandt])
 Rodney Ellis (D-Houston; Dist 13 [Fort Bend-part, Harris-part])
 Glenn Hegar (R-Katy; Dist 18 [Aransas, Austin, Bastrop, Caldwell, Calhoun, Colorado, DeWitt, Fayette, Fort Bend-part, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda, Refugio, Victoria, Waller, Washington, Wharton])
 Juan Hinojosa (D-McAllen; Dist 20 [Brooks, Hidalgo-part, Jim Wells, Nueces])

Death Penalty Related Bills 80th General Session of the Texas Legislature (2/15/07)

Bill	Author	Summary	Last Action
HB 8	Riddle	Provides for the death penalty for individuals convicted a second time of sexual abuse of a child	2/28: Slated for House vote
HB 339	Leibowitz	Relating to requiring DNA records of persons who are arrested under certain circumstances, who are indicted, or who waive indictment for certain felonies	1/31: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 745	Dutton	Calls for abolition of the death penalty effective Sep 1, 2007	1/24: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 802	Dutton	Requires video recording of statements made by individuals charged in capital cases	1/24: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 804	Dutton	Relating to standards for judicial review of certain writs of habeas corpus in capital cases	1/24: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 806	Dutton	Prescribes standards for the admissibility of pre-trial photographic identification evidence in capital cases	1/24: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 809	Dutton	Creates a Capital Punishment Committee to study capital punishment and establishes a moratorium on executions until Sep 2009	1/24: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 810	Dutton	Prohibits testimony in a capital case by an informant in exchange for a grant or promise by the attorney representing the state; requires electronic corroboration of "jailhouse snitch" testimony	1/24: Referred to House Criminal Jurisprudence
HB 1160	Gallego	Would prohibit the use of pancuronium bromide in the execution of an individual	2/06: Filed
HB 1266	Pena	Establishes standards for attorneys appointed to represent indigent defenders	2/08: Filed
HJR 23	Naishtat	Provides authority for the Governor to enact a moratorium on executions	11/13: Introduced
SB 5	Deuell	Provides for a sentence of 25 years for the first conviction of sexual molestation of a child and the death penalty for a second such conviction.	2/14: Filed
SB 208	Ellis	Requires the Board of Pardons and Paroles to meet in person, telephonically or by video teleconference in clemency hearings	1/30: Referred to Criminal Justice
SB 249	Ellis	In capital cases where defense attorney raises the issue of mental retardation, provides for jury trial to determine this prior to the criminal trial	1/30: Introduced
SB 263	Ellis	Establish a Texas Innocence Commission to investigate post-conviction exonerations to prevent wrongful convictions	1/30: Referred to Criminal Jurisprudence
SB 301	Ellis	Grants authority to the Governor to grant more than 1 30-day reprieve	1/24: Introduced
SB 306	Harris	Establishes standards for counsel representing indigent defendants	1/24: Introduced
SB 498	Duncan	Relating to the competency to be executed in a capital case	2/07: Introduced
SB 528	Seliger	Relating to the standards for attorneys representing indigent defendants in capital cases.	2/08: Introduced
SJR 12	Ellis	Grants authority to the Governor to grant more than 1 30-day reprieve subject to voter approval in Nov 2007	1/24: Introduced
SJR 21	Shapleigh	Grants power to the Governor to establish a moratorium on executions, subject to voter approval in Nov 2007	2/02: Introduced

Updates on these bills and other applicable legislation can be found on the TCADP web site (www.tcadp.org/lawmakers.php). You can follow bills through the legislative process yourself by visiting the web site of the Texas legislature, www.capitol.state.tx.us, and inserting the bill number in the space provided under the banner Search Legislation. For additional information or if you have questions, contact austin@tcadp.org.

Jessica's Law Talking Points

HB 8/SB 5 would provide for the death penalty as a sentencing option for individuals who have been convicted a second time of the sexual abuse of a child.

There are several reasons why this bill is viewed as bad legislation are :

- It is being touted as a warning or deterrent for sex offenders (no deterrent effect associated with the death penalty)
- Since many instances of child molestation involve a family member, having the death penalty as a sentencing option could potentially dissuade the reporting of such an event
- Children's advocates fear this bill would further endanger the life of a child, as a perpetrator may decide to kill the child rather than leave a witness to the crime
- This legislation crosses a line by offering the death penalty for a crime in which no murder occurred, and as a result Legal experts expect it to be ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court

The following issues must be considered when creating or amending policies related to sex offenders:

- In 90 percent of child sexual abuse, the offender is a family member or family friend.
- Offenders are not a homogeneous group.
- The vast majority of sex offenders are never detected or prosecuted.
- Services for victims of sexual violence continue to be under-funded in Texas.

The reality is that children can be protected from this type of abuse by education, treatment and long prison sentences. The death penalty aspect of HB 8/ SB 68 is excessive and all about politics. Several large political offices ran on this premise, so they see themselves as having more to lose if this bill doesn't pass.

The fiscal note posted by the Legislative Budget Board says there will be "No significant fiscal impact for the next 5 years from this bill." Fiscal notes from other states disagree with this assessment.

Please follow the progress of this bill and contact your Senator NOW, and tell him/her that you are against the death penalty aspect of Jessica's Law



Write/Call your State Senator against this expansion of the death penalty!

We cannot loose this battle!

www.capitol.state.tx.us
512-463-0063
"Who represents me?"

Kristen Houle' is Awarded SOROS Fellowship

Kristen Houle', long time Amnesty International



activist, has been awarded an eighteen month Soros Fellowship which will entail educating the public and policymakers in Texas about the intersection of the death penalty and severe mental illness. Kristen, who has served as Program Associate for Amnesty International USA's Program to Abolish the Death Penalty in Washington DC since 2002, will be hosted by TCADP during her fellowship tenure and will be based in Austin.

With a goal of sparing the lives of mentally ill inmates currently on death row and curtailing the imposition of new death sentences on those with mental illness, Kristen plans to concentrate her efforts in Austin, Dallas/ Ft. Worth, Houston, and San Antonio. Bringing together an array of involved parties, from mental health professionals to members of the criminal justice system, Kristen will produce literature and recruit speak-

ers for a speakers' bureau to educate her audiences on the injustice of imposing capital punishment on persons with this particular type of diminished capacity.

Please stop by and welcome Kristen to our city and to our local activist community on March 14, 2:00 to 7:00 pm when TCADP hosts an Open House at our new office location at 2709 S. Lamar, suite 109.



Monday, March 12

4:00 - 5:00 PM "The Death Penalty in Texas", a question and answer open discussion with an expert on the topic.

5:30-7:00 PM Workshop: "Influencing the Texas Legislature" w/ Les Breeding, former legislative director for a member of the Texas Legislature and (possibly other panelists).

Tuesday, March 13 Death Penalty Issues Lobby Day

9:30 AM - 11 AM, Lobby Training Workshop Location: Conference room 1-104 in the W.B. Travis State Office Building, 17th and Congress.

9:00 AM - 11 AM Possible morning lobbying appointments for people who attended the lobby training workshop on Monday.

Noon: "Day of Innocence" Rally on South Steps of Capitol Speakers include **Kerry Max Cook**, an innocent man who spent 22 years on Texas Death Row and recently wrote a book, "**Chasing Justice**", state legislators, **Shujaa Graham**, Renny Cushing, Martha Cotera, whose 25-year-old son Juan Javier was murdered in a carjacking and drowning in Austin in 1997, a student speaker from the alternative spring break, and others TBA.

6 PM "Art and Activism" Talk with Scott Cobb, who organized the art show "**Justice for All?: Artists Reflect on the Death Penalty**" and Scott Langley, a photographer whose death penalty documentary project has been exhibited by Amnesty International in Germany, Denmark, at Harvard University in Massachusetts, and in Washington DC.

Wednesday, March 14

11:00 AM - 1 PM: Murder Victim Family Member and Former Death Row Inmate Panel. Location for morning and afternoon workshops: Conference room 1-104 in the W.B. Travis State Office Building, 17th and Congress.

Panelists include:

Renny Cushing: Founder and Executive Director of **Murder Victims' Families for Human Rights**. His father's murder in 1988 has shaped his work as an advocate for crime victims and as an opponent of capital punishment. As a victim-abolitionist Renny has been a pioneer in the effort to bridge death penalty abolition groups and the victims' rights movement.

Shujaa Graham, an exonerated former death row inmate.

Moreese "Pops" Bickham, who was on death row when the *Furman v Georgia* decision was announced in 1972 abolishing the death penalty. He is now the oldest living survivor of the *Furman v Georgia* decision.

Christina Lawson, who has suffered the loss of her father and her husband. Her father was murdered when she was a child and her husband, David Martinez, was executed this past summer, July 28, 2005. She has witnessed the pain from both sides: the loss of her father, the anger and hate felt towards his killer, the loss of her husband, the sorrow for his victim's family and loved ones, the loss of a Daddy for their child. She has realized through her pain, that the death penalty does not bring anyone back, it does not heal anyone... it brings back the pain of losing a loved one and destroys another innocent family.

2 - 3:30 PM Workshop: "Youth Media Workshop" led by Campus Progress.

3:30 - 4:30 Workshop "Organizing a Direct Action". We will discuss ideas for the next day's Direct Action. Workshop led by Campaign to End the Death Penalty.

3:00 to 7:00 pm Open House at TCADP office, all invited!

7 PM Book Signing and Reading/Discussion with Joan Cheever at a local bookstore. Cheever's book **Back From The Dead** is the story of 589 former death row inmates who, through a lottery of fate, were given a second chance at life in 1972 when the death penalty was abolished; it returned to the United States four years later.

Thursday, March 15: Direct Action Day

10AM-Noon: Skills Building Workshop: "Winning Step-By-Step: How to Organize and Win Moratorium and Abolition Resolutions at the Grassroots Level" led by Everett Catilla of Equal Justice USA (www.ejusa.org).

1:00 - 1:50 "How to Organize and Run a Non-profit Organization", led by Kristin Houlé,

2:00 - 3:00 Mental Illness and the Death Penalty led by Kristin Houlé.

3:00 - 6 PM Organize and Carry out a direct action (possibly at the Governor's Mansion). The type, location and message of the direct action will be decided on by the students.



TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

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