



Spring 2011

# Seizing the Momentum

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

## TCADP Lobby Day Supports HB 819

On March 8, 2011 a determined group of members navigated the crowded halls of the State Capitol during the 2011 TCADP Lobby Day. Their advocacy efforts focused on House Bill 819, which calls for the repeal of the death penalty in Texas. In the morning, participants met with State Representative Jessica Farrar, who authored HB 819 (along with Reps. Marisa Marquez and Alma Allen). They also discussed TCADP's strategy for moving the bill forward and the most impactful messages to use when speaking with legislators about this issue.

Lobby Day participants from Austin, Beaumont, Cuero, Dallas, Georgetown, Glenn Heights, Houston, Pearland, and Waxahachie visited more than 30 legislative offices to urge support for HB 819 and to call upon the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee to give it a full and fair hearing. Those who were not able to travel to Austin called their legislators with the same message. In one conversation, a member learned that her representative may co-sponsor HB 819!

In addition to conveying key talking points on HB 819, participants shared several important resources with their legislators, including a fact sheet on the cost of the death penalty and "Voices of Texas", a new publication from TCADP partner Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation. "Voices of Texas" feature the stories of nine murder victim family members who oppose the death penalty (many of whom have appeared as profiles in this newsletter). The one-page documents, published in English and Spanish, provide a powerful, personal witness against the death penalty from those directly impacted by violent crime. TCADP is immensely grateful to MVFR for providing these compelling new resources and to the family members who participated in Lobby Day. (You can download the stories from [http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/victims-outreach/.](http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/victims-outreach/))

Thanks to everyone who travelled to Austin or called their legislators on Lobby Day. Your advocacy makes a huge difference to the legislative process. Stay tuned to TCADP for updates on HB 819 and the 82<sup>nd</sup> Texas Legislature!

### **In this issue:**

*Texas 82nd Legislative Session*  
*Interview with Jan Brown, murder victim family member*  
*Recent Death Penalty Developments*  
*Upcoming Events: April, May, June*  
*TCADP 2011 Volunteer Recognition and Annual Conference*  
*Thank You, Members, Donors, and Partners for Justice!*



Top: Rep. Farrar addressing Lobby Day participants.

Right: Bob Van Steenburg with TCADP member Elizabeth Stein



## Scheduled Executions

### April

5 Cleve Foster

### May

3 Cary Kerr

### June

1 Gayland Bradford

16 Taylor Lee

Execution Vigils: [tcadp.org](http://tcadp.org) under "Get Involved - Stop Executions"



## From the Executive Director

It's hard to put into words our jubilation upon hearing that Illinois Governor Pat Quinn signed into law legislation that repealed the death penalty in his state. On March 9, 2011, Illinois became the 16<sup>th</sup> U.S. state to do away with the death penalty, and the 4th in recent years. As Richard Dieter, the Executive Director of the Death Penalty Information Center, put it, Illinois isn't just any state: "Illinois stands out because it was a state that used it, reconsidered it and now rejected it." ("Illinois abolishes death penalty, clears death row," *Associated Press*, March 10, 2011)



Texas obviously uses the death penalty more than any other state. In many ways, though, it's becoming a state that is reconsidering it. In our conversations in legislative offices this session, we've found countless young staffers who confide their opposition to the death penalty. We've also found more elected officials willing to take a public stand against it, including Rep. Alma Allen of Houston who signed on as a joint author of House Bill 819. Other legislators who haven't quite reached that point seem more open to dialogue and more aware of the human frailties of our capital punishment system, not to mention the exorbitant cost to maintain it.

In January 2000, Illinois became the first state to impose a moratorium on executions, sparking a new national conversation on the death penalty that continued throughout the decade. It also was the first state to shine a spotlight on the risk of wrongful conviction. The flaws and failures of the Illinois death penalty system are not unique, however. Here in Texas, 12 people have been released from death row due to evidence of their wrongful conviction, and doubts about potentially wrongful executions continue to plague the system. The most recent death row survivor is Anthony Graves, who inspired participants in the 2011 TCADP Annual Conference with his grace and dignity after enduring 18 years in prison for a crime he did not commit. (Anthony's story will be the subject of the CBS show "48 Hours" on Saturday, April 16, at 9:00pm Central. Read more about the conference and awards ceremony on page 9.)

The successful effort in Illinois could not have happened without the amazing, steadfast work of the Illinois Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and its army of organizers and grassroots members, the dedication of lawyers and legislators, and the powerful voices of murder victims' family members, law enforcement, and death row exonorees. Some of these individuals devoted decades to the campaign while others joined the effort in its latter phases. Our work here in Texas also requires building a savvy base of supporters throughout the state, diversifying our coalition, and engaging those with unique perspectives on the issue. And like the campaign in Illinois, it requires vision, leadership, and adherence to a strategic plan.

Illinois had been under a moratorium for ten years, constituted two study commissions, and passed dozens of reforms aimed at "fixing" the death penalty. Despite these efforts, the system continued to make mistakes while costing millions of dollars and dragging victims' families through an endless ordeal. Today Illinois continues to set the example for the nation in determining that the only truly effective way to address the problems with the death penalty is to get rid of it altogether. Let this addition of one more state to the abolition column invigorate and embolden our efforts here in Texas!

With gratitude for your ongoing support and commitment to this issue,

Kristin



## TCADP Seizing the Momentum

*TCADP Seizing the Momentum* is published quarterly by the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, the only statewide grassroots organization working to end the death penalty in Texas through education, outreach and advocacy.

Subscription Information: *TCADP Seizing the Momentum* is distributed to TCADP members and allies. To find out more about the organization and become a member, visit our website at [www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org).

Issue #33, Spring 2011  
(Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall)

Editor: Vicki McCuiston  
Contributors: Kristin Houlé, Chris Castillo,  
Bob Van Steenburg, Anita Grabowski

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty  
2709 S Lamar, Suite 109  
Austin, TX 78704



### Board of Directors

Bob Van Steenburg, President  
Linda White, PhD, Vice President  
Rich Woodward, PhD, Treasurer  
Angelle Adams, JD, Secretary  
Les Breeding  
Helene Burns  
Curt Crum, JD  
Mary Heartlein  
Pat Monks, JD

### Staff

Kristin Houlé, Executive Director  
Vicki McCuiston, Program Coordinator

### Volunteers

Thank you Jade Herman for volunteering in the TCADP office!

## Calendar of Events

### April

**2–3** Prison Reform Film Festival, Houston  
[www.theprisonshow.org/festival.html](http://www.theprisonshow.org/festival.html)

**3** Odessa Chapter Meeting, 4:00pm, [odessa@tcadp.org](mailto:odessa@tcadp.org)

**5** Scheduled Execution - Cleve Foster

**8-10** Prison Reform Film Festival, Houston  
[www.theprisonshow.org/festival.html](http://www.theprisonshow.org/festival.html)

**10 - 16** National Crime Victims' Rights Week  
<http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ncvrw/>

**16** CBS "48 Hours" Special on Anthony Graves, 9:00pm  
Central

**18** El Paso Chapter Meeting, 6:00pm, [elpaso@tcadp.org](mailto:elpaso@tcadp.org)

**20** Dallas Chapter Meeting, 7:00pm, [dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)

### May

**1** Odessa Chapter Meeting, 4:00pm, [odessa@tcadp.org](mailto:odessa@tcadp.org)

**3** Scheduled Execution - Cary Kerr

**7-8** TCADP Booth at Houston International Festival

**16** El Paso Chapter Meeting, 6:00pm, [elpaso@tcadp.org](mailto:elpaso@tcadp.org)

**18** Dallas Chapter Meeting, 7:00pm, [dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)

**29 - 1** Texas Annual Conference—UMC, Houston

### June

**1** Scheduled Execution - Gayland Bradford

**5** Odessa Chapter Meeting, 4:00pm, [odessa@tcadp.org](mailto:odessa@tcadp.org)

**8 - 11** Southwest Texas Annual Conference, UMC Corpus Christi

**15** Dallas Chapter Meeting, 7:00pm, [dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)

**16** Execution - Taylor Lee

**20** El Paso Chapter Meeting, 6:00pm, [elpaso@tcadp.org](mailto:elpaso@tcadp.org)

**25** TCADP Booth at Pride Houston 2011

*Full event descriptions and monthly chapter meeting dates with active links can be found at [www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org) under "Get Involved - Attend Events"*

## Looking for Interns!

TCADP is seeking bright, energetic, and passionate undergraduate or graduate students to serve as interns this summer. Interested candidates should send a résumé and cover letter to [khoule@tcadp.org](mailto:khoule@tcadp.org). These unpaid internships provide excellent experience with grassroots advocacy! Hours and location can be flexible.

Look for TCADP on Facebook and "Like" today! See photos of activities and links to important news developments.

facebook



## 82nd Texas Legislative Session

The 82<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Texas Legislature is now well underway. The TCADP Legislative Committee has been very active in the Capitol and has had many conversations and meetings with members of the legislature and their staffs. Rep. Jessica Farrar (D-Houston) has filed HB 819 that, if enacted, would repeal the death penalty. Most of our conversations in the legislature have been seeking support for HB 819. As of this writing, two other members of the legislature, Rep. Allen (D-Houston) and Rep. Marquez (D-El Paso), have signed on to the bill as co-authors. We anticipate that at least two or three other representatives are also likely to sign on to the bill.

Our goal for this session was to move HB 819 to a hearing in front of the full House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. Currently that hearing is expected to take place on Tuesday, March 29. In preparation, TCADP has lined up an exceptional list of individuals to testify in support of the bill. More details on the hearing will be available on the TCADP website.

There are also two pieces of legislation that, if enacted, would expand the use of the death penalty. Currently Texas law provides for capital punishment in the case of the murder of a child under six years of age. Senate Bill (SB) 377 would change that to permit the death penalty for the murder of a child under ten years of age. The sponsors of this bill are Senators Huffman and Patrick. On March 22, 2011, TCADP Executive Director Kristin Houlé testified against this bill in front of the Senate Criminal Justice Committee. TCADP asked members to contact the Senators on the Committee and urge them to vote against this bill. As of this writing, it has been left pending in the committee.

The other expansion bill is HB 566 (Rep. Christian). This bill would add the murder of a person who is under court-ordered protection to the list of categories eligible for the death penalty. No action has been taken on this bill to date.

At this time, we urge you to contact your representative in the Texas House and tell them of your support for HB 819. You should also visit the website for the Texas legislature at [www.capitol.state.tx.us](http://www.capitol.state.tx.us) to follow the status of HB 819 and other legislation as well as to learn more about the legislative process in general. The website is an excellent window into the workings of the Texas legislature. As always, if you have any questions about the TCADP legislative agenda, please contact Kristin Houlé, Executive Director, or any member of the TCADP Legislative Committee (Les Breeding, Pat Monks, or Bob Van Steenburg) through the TCADP website under 'About Us - Board Bios' ([www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org)).



### TCADP Office and Chapters (C)

#### STATE OFFICE—Austin

(512) 441-1808  
[info@tcadp.org](mailto:info@tcadp.org)

#### Austin (C)

Bob Van Steenburg  
[austin@tcadp.org](mailto:austin@tcadp.org)

#### Beaumont (C)

Bob Gazaway  
[beaumont@tcadp.org](mailto:beaumont@tcadp.org)

#### Brazos Valley (C)

Athena Griffith  
[collegestation@tcadp.org](mailto:collegestation@tcadp.org)

#### Brownsville (C)

Joe Kraus  
[brownsville@tcadp.org](mailto:brownsville@tcadp.org)

#### Corpus Christi (C)

Jeanne Adams  
[corpuschristi@tcadp.org](mailto:corpuschristi@tcadp.org)

#### Dallas (C)

Rick Halperin  
Lauren Zielinski  
[dallas@tcadp.org](mailto:dallas@tcadp.org)

#### El Paso (C)

Karen Peissinger  
[elpaso@tcadp.org](mailto:elpaso@tcadp.org)

#### Houston (C)

Nancy Bailey  
[houston@tcadp.org](mailto:houston@tcadp.org)

#### Huntsville (C)

James Moore  
[huntsville@tcadp.org](mailto:huntsville@tcadp.org)

#### Odessa (C)

Father Mark Miller  
[odessa@tcadp.org](mailto:odessa@tcadp.org)

#### Rio Grande Valley (C)

Sylvia Garza  
[riogrande@tcadp.org](mailto:riogrande@tcadp.org)

#### San Antonio (C)

Roger Barnes  
[sanantonio@tcadp.org](mailto:sanantonio@tcadp.org)

#### The Woodlands (C)

Angelle Adams  
[thewoodlands@tcadp.org](mailto:thewoodlands@tcadp.org)

#### Victoria (C)

Rev. Wanda Ritchea  
[victoria@tcadp.org](mailto:victoria@tcadp.org)



## Recent Death Penalty Developments

- ⇒ To date, two executions have taken place this year in Texas (out of nine nationwide).
- ⇒ As of March 23, 2011, there has been at least one resentencing (Brian Edwards Davis in Harris County) and two new death sentences. On March 16, 2011, jurors in the case of Cortne' Mareese Robinson sentenced him to death for the 2009 murder of 82-year-old Frank Zabokrtsky. Robinson was 18 years old at the time of the crime and is the first of three co-defendants to go on trial. This is only the second death sentence imposed in Harrison County since 1976. On March 21, jurors in Galveston County sentenced Travis Mullis to death for the sexual assault and murder of his three-month-old son Alijah. Mullis' attorneys presented evidence of their client's mental disorders and history of childhood sexual abuse.
- ⇒ On March 7, 2011, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Texas death row inmate Hank Skinner can pursue his request for DNA testing through the federal Civil Rights Act. Skinner came within an hour of execution one year ago before the Court granted him a last-minute stay. Key pieces of evidence collected at the crime scene have never been subjected to DNA testing, and officials have refused to release it for analysis.

The Justices heard arguments in the case of *Skinner vs. Switzer* on October 13, 2010. Their narrow ruling, by a vote of 6-3, means that Skinner can pursue his claim, though it does not guarantee that he will succeed in securing DNA testing. Skinner's attorney Rob Owens issued the following response to the ruling:

"The Court's action corrects the Fifth Circuit's fundamental misunderstanding of this important principle. As Justice Ginsberg states in her majority opinion, there is no reason to fear that lawsuits like Mr. Skinner's will overwhelm the federal courts. The high court's ruling will simply make it possible for Mr. Skinner to vindicate his due process rights in federal court, a right long enjoyed by prisoners in other parts of the country.

"We look forward to making our case in federal court that Texas's inexplicable refusal to grant Mr. Skinner access to evidence for DNA testing is fundamentally unfair and cannot stand."

- ⇒ On March 16, 2011, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) announced that it is changing the way executions are carried out in Texas by substituting the drug sodium thiopental with pentobarbital. The sole U.S.-based manufacturer of sodium thiopental, Hospira, announced earlier this year that it would no longer produce it, and TDCJ's supply of the drug expired on March 1. The announcement from Hospira prompted numerous states to look for a different anesthetic to use as the first of three drugs in the lethal injection protocol. Oklahoma was the first state to approve and use it for an execution, followed shortly by Ohio, which only uses one drug for executions. Veterinarians use pentobarbital to euthanize animals.

An attorney for Cleve Foster, scheduled to be executed by the State of Texas on April 5, 2011, condemned the change in protocol, stating that "The timing of the decision and disclosure raises serious concerns about the haste with which they [TDCJ] are seeking to implement this new process, and a lack of transparency by state officials." Texas' prison director has the authority to tweak the state's execution process without oversight by the legislature.

## New Death Penalty Resources

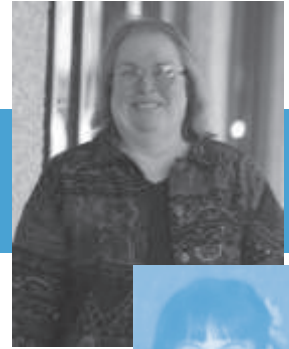
**New Book** - *God's Feet are in My Sandbox: Faith Chronicles of a Texas Death Row Chaplain* is the concise memoir of Rev. Rick Anderson, a United Methodist pastor, who details very passionately God's presence in his life and the faithful response he offers. Readers will journey with Rick through love and loss, uncertainty and fear, the value of forgiveness, and, at the heart of it, great trust in God's care and attention. Rick shares several experiences from his work as a death row chaplain at the Polunsky Unit in Livingston, giving readers an inside view of the unit from his position. Please note: the TDCJ Chaplaincy program is being targeted by current legislative budget cuts. The book is available through Barnes and Noble online.

**New PDF Profiles** - Murder Victims' Families For Reconciliation—Voices of Texas share the stories of murder victim family members who oppose the death penalty. A copy of each story was provided to Texas Representatives during the TCADP Lobby Day. The PDFs (in English and Spanish) are available for download on the TCADP website under the resource section on the Victims Outreach page. <http://tcadp.org/what-we-do/victims-outreach/>. Storytellers include: Steve Bishop, Chris Castillo, Helene Burns, Jan Brown, Joanna Rankin, Joy Strickland, Linda White, Ron Carlson and Elizabeth Stein.



**““If they thought having him executed would relieve any of my pain or that of my family members, they were certainly mistaken.”**

**- Jan Brown**



Jan Brown ignored the ringing phone as she walked into her house after a long day of work on May 12, 1987. It had been her ex-husband. When she returned his call, he told her that their 9 1/2-year-old daughter Kandy was missing and “police suspect foul play.”

While speaking to Kandy’s father, Jan said she wanted to drive right over to his house in Bryan where their daughter was living. But her ex-husband relayed that the police said she had to stay at home in case Kandy called her. “She never called,” Jan said. Adding to Jan’s anguish, she was later considered a prime suspect in her child’s disappearance, since she was the non-custodial parent. “However, if we ever find her body, we will know that you had nothing to do with it,” authorities told her.

On the day Kandy was first missing, neighbors had seen her getting off her school bus and talking to a man who was at their house. As it turned out, she had been kidnapped and murdered by him.

It took two weeks for Kandy's body to be found. The smart little girl who had loved everyone was found with her hands tied behind her back. She had been shot in the head at close range. The FBI called Jan with this information ten minutes before she would have seen it on the news. “This was literally the first and only kindness I had been accorded by them. However there had been and would continue to be too many victim-unfriendly moments before the process ended with his execution.”

Having a child violently murdered is unthinkable, Jan says, and she still lacks the words to explain it. But then to be dragged through years of pain by the judicial system was unimaginable, too.

Though she felt fortunate that the man responsible for Kandy’s death was quickly apprehended and taken off the streets, so he couldn’t hurt any other little girls or families, the pain for Jan had just begun. “We were locked in to the judicial system with this man for 12 years as his case wound its way through the system. “Though I’m not a proponent of the death penalty and never have been, my opinion wasn’t solicited or even considered,” she said. “I was never officially notified of any of the proceedings until receiving official notification of his execution date.”

Over the long years of the process during which she assumed Texas spent huge sums of money on prosecuting the killer, and then paying for his appeals, Jan grew more and more disgusted with how this system wasn’t victim friendly. Many questions arose in her mind: “When did Kandy’s family get the kind of attention, care and financial support afforded to the perpetrator? Who cared what it must have been like for Kandy as her hands were tied behind her back and she was shot in the head? Who cared how that affected me? How was I supposed to take care of myself when I could barely get out of bed in the morning, much less function as before? Who told the media what it was like for me to spend a month in a mental hospital just so I would not commit suicide to relieve the unspeakable pain I was feeling?” Nobody, she supposed.

“If they thought having him executed would relieve any of my pain or that of my family members, they were certainly mistaken.” From the time he was arrested, it was all about him. After the trial and conviction, Jan lived in fear that his conviction might at some time be overturned as appeal after appeal was filed on his behalf, all paid for by the state of Texas. The trial had been very difficult for Jan and her family.

“On the day he was executed, it only meant that the legal process was finally over. It didn’t bring Kandy back or erase any of the pain. However, it was only then that I was really able to begin to heal my losses. I could focus on myself instead of him and what might happen to him.”

If he instead had been sentenced to life without the possibility of parole, Jan believes she could have more easily and readily been allowed to focus her attention on herself and her family and get to the hard work of grieving and healing sooner. “The purgatory of being held in suspense through the legal processes is devastating for the victim’s family and for the offender’s family as well. To me the death penalty is just legalized murder by the state.”

Jan Brown is a paralegal and a consultant who is self employed. She has been a Bridges to Life volunteer for 11 years, a restorative justice program aimed at reducing the recidivism rate of inmates. Jan has participated in over 50 Bridges to Life projects.



Submitted by Chris Castillo, the National Outreach Coordinator for Murder Victims’ Families for Reconciliation, [ccastillo@mvfr.org](mailto:ccastillo@mvfr.org).



## Dallas Chapter Hosts Legislative Training

On Saturday, March 5, Dallas-area TCADP members gathered for a four-hour Legislative Grassroots Advocacy workshop facilitated by TCADP Board member, Les Breeding, and NCADP Texas State Campaign Coordinator, Anita Grabowski. The goals of the workshop were to learn about the legislative process and how to be effective and strategic grassroots advocates. Participants worked to create an action plan for how Dallas-area members will diversify their membership, build relationships with their elected officials and increase the visibility of TCADP's efforts through their work.

A diverse group of twenty people attended the workshop, including several people who were new to TCADP!

The Dallas Chapter is moving in the direction of creating working groups or committees, and as part of the planning process participants broke out into five committees:

- (1) legislative outreach;
- (2) strategic communications;
- (3) religious outreach;
- (4) public education and membership development; and
- (5) building diverse alliances (including relationships with conservatives and moderates, law enforcement and murder victim family members).

Each group brainstormed ways to apply the skills they learned about effective grassroots advocacy.

A big shout out to Lauren Zielinski and the Dallas Chapter members for their excellent support with the planning, outreach, and logistics for the day which made it a huge success!

## Helene Burns Joins TCADP Board of Directors

Helene Burns is a Registered Nurse with a certification in Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing. She is a Murder Victim Family Member. After her father brutally murdered her mother in 1985, she worked with the local District Attorney's office (in Los Angeles, CA) in preparing the case and in testifying at the trial. Although it was a capital case, Helene did not wish death for her father. As a Christian Jew, she also does not think it is for us to decide *that* fate for any human in a court of law. Helene's father was convicted and is currently a "lifer" in the California prison system. Helene has worked with the Travis County Sheriff's Office as a volunteer with Victim Services for 10 years and is currently a member of the Sheriff's Department Critical Incident Stress Management Team, where she debriefs first responders following traumatic events. Helene authored an op-ed about the death penalty, which was recently published in the *Austin American Statesman* and her story was recently highlighted in both the MVFR and TCADP newsletters. Helene considers herself to be a political conservative and so approaches legislators with a conservative to moderate point of view. She was elected to the TCADP Board during the general membership meeting on February 19, 2011.

Rick Halperin, Roger Barnes, and Nancy Bailey, long-time TCADP board members, completed their terms on the TCADP Board in February. TCADP is very grateful for their years of service in working to end the death penalty in Texas.

### Excerpt from a letter to the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles and Governor Rick Perry from 91 faith leaders across the state of Texas, urging clemency for Timothy Adams

"As faith leaders, we believe that our justice system should be directed toward the improvement of life, not its destruction. We advocate for a system that is rehabilitative and humane, while still taking every measure possible to support and facilitate the healing of victims.

In this case, the victim's family, who is also the family of Mr. Adams, have had their wishes ignored. Mr. Adams' mother, father, brother, sister, and son have already tragically lost a loved one. They are pleading with the State of Texas not to execute Mr. Adams and force them to endure more pain from the loss of another.

We join the victim's family in asking that you spare Mr. Adams from death. You have an extraordinary opportunity to show mercy to a family that has already suffered greatly and to uphold the sacredness of human life. We pray that you grant life to Timothy Adams." (Adams was executed on February 22, 2011)

To stay up to date on all developments with the death penalty in Texas, visit the TCADP blog --

[tcadp.org/blog](http://tcadp.org/blog)

-- or become a fan of TCADP on Facebook!

Search for TCADP!



## Member Spotlight

Gay Wright, San Antonio



- How did you come to be against the death penalty?  
**I feel that it is unfair to minorities and often kills innocent people.**
- How did you learn about the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty?  
**I think it was through the Care2 newsletter.**
- What are your expectations in becoming a member of TCADP for yourself? for the organization?  
**I expect that we will be successful in abolishing the death penalty.**
- Where do you see the most progress in the movement to end the death penalty in Texas?  
**In the religious community**
- What is the most compelling argument for you that the death penalty should be repealed?  
**As I said, it is used often on minorities.**
- What other societal issues concern you?  
**immigration, environmental issues**
- What other organizations are you a member of?  
**Sierra Club, Beautify San Antonio Association**
- What are your gifts, hobbies, and areas of expertise?  
**Writing, editing**

## YES, I want to help TCADP continue the momentum toward abolition!

Name/Organization \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (Help us verify that we have your current email address!) \_\_\_\_\_

### Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation:

- \$100 Annual Organization Membership
  - \$60 Annual Household Membership
  - \$40 Annual Individual Membership
  - \$15 Annual Student/Restricted Income Membership
  - Sustaining Membership (Renews Annually)\*
  - \$\_\_\_\_\_ Additional donation for TCADP
- \$\_\_\_\_\_ Total

- I want to be a Partner for Justice\* (learn more on Page 11)!
- Make my donation of \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum \$10) recur on a
- monthly     quarterly     annual basis.

\*Credit/Debit Cards only

Credit/Debit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card -     VISA                       MasterCard                       American Express



Please make checks out to TCADP. All donations are tax deductible and should be mailed to: TCADP; 2709 S. Lamar; Suite 109; Austin, TX 78704. A secure online donation can be made through the TCADP website: [www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org) (click on "Donate"). **THANK YOU!**





## TCADP Annual Conference Great Success

The 2011 conference, held February 19 at the Schmidt-Jones Family Life Center of the First United Methodist Church in downtown Austin was a great success with close to 140 people attending the conference and awards luncheon.

The morning panel - which featured Dennis Reeves, Assistant Public Defender of the Regional Public Defender Office for Capital Cases, Sam Millsap, former District Attorney for Bexar County, Karen Peissinger, Coordinator of El Pasoans Against the Death Penalty and Sachin Chheda, NCADP Deputy Director as moderator - addressed the impact of the death penalty on Texas counties, particularly the financial impact.

For the first time, the annual conference featured legislative workshops tailored to attendees' specific legislative district. Conference participants were assigned to one of four legislative workshops which then provided strategies for working with their particular legislator. Additional workshops focused on restorative justice, hot topics, best practices, and the death penalty from a county perspective.

The annual awards luncheon inspired all in attendance and left many in tears. TCADP presented the following awards:

- ⇒ Appreciation Awards: Marj Loehlin, Jim and Sherry Coombes, and Dennis Longmire;
- ⇒ Media: Pam Colloff;
- ⇒ Founder's Award: Rev. Carrol Pickett;
- ⇒ Courage: Anthony Graves and his family.

The story of Anthony Graves' wrongful conviction and the support he received from his family and numerous advocates took center stage. Pamela Colloff, the journalist who authored "Innocence Lost", an exhaustive article on Anthony Graves published in the October 2010 issue of *Texas Monthly*, spoke of the the full access he provided to her and many letters and conversations they shared in learning about his case. Rev. Pickett, former death house chaplain and 2011 Dave Atwood Founder's Award recipient, spoke of Anthony Graves avoiding an execution date that would have brought them together at the Walls Unit. Anthony's legal team and extensive family were in attendance to celebrate and lift up the difficult journey they had finally completed with his release from prison last fall. Anthony Graves' courage and fortitude in the face of such adversity brought home to all conference attendees the importance of ending the death penalty in Texas: real people and their families are caught up in this failed public policy and the trail of unintended victims cannot be overlooked.

**Save the Date: TCADP 2012 Annual Conference, San Antonio—Saturday, February 18, 2012.**



Top: The morning panel discussion (L to R) Dennis Reeves, Sam Millsap, Karen Peissinger, and Sachin Chheda. Middle: Conference attendees. Bottom: Kristin Houlé, Anthony Graves, and Bob Van Steenburg



## 2011 Chapter Volunteer Recognition

The following chapter volunteers were recognized during the 2011 TCADP Annual Conference.

**Anne Mund** (Austin). Anne has been a member of the Austin chapter for the past four years. She is a tireless worker for the chapter and for the state organization. Anne has organized the chapter's quarterly meetings, including locating a venue for the meetings. Anne supports all of the chapter's events and is a person who can be counted on. Her energy, enthusiasm and dependability reflect most favorably upon her and upon the organization.

**Burnham and Joan Terrell** (Houston). Burnham and Joan keep everyone informed of each vigil and location by their emails urging participation and encouraging us to believe that our activism is clearly making progress towards our goals. Burnham communicates with clergy at each location to publicize vigil dates in an effort to maximize participation and to build relationships in the faith community. The Terrells supply all the signs for our vigils and create many of them personally. It is essential to Joan that each executed person has a sign with his name. This reminds us that it is a real person being executed, and that we are not just demonstrating an abstract principle. Burnham also maintains a steady barrage of letter writing and phone contact with public officials urging careful consideration in capital case decision-making.

**Father Armand Mathew** (Brownsville) is an elderly Oblate priest who has been involved in social action all his life. He is the guiding light of Pax Christi Brownsville, which has abolition of the death penalty as one of its primary foci. In 2010 the Pax Christi group of Brownsville became an official chapter of TCADP, supporting and encouraging the work of abolition among residents of the Rio Grande Valley.

**Nancy Hyde** (Dallas). Nancy has been a Dallas chapter member for at least four years now. She has a son on death row, but despite the extra physical and emotional strain that she must have with a family member facing the consequences of the death penalty, she is a steadfast supporter. She runs the Dallas area list serve and is at every meeting, every vigil and every special event that we host in the Dallas area. She is a true "trooper" for justice.

**Leticia Moreno** (El Paso). Lety attends every monthly meeting, arranged for our current long-term meeting space at St. Pius Catholic Church, brings new people to our monthly meetings, invites EPADP to meetings with like-minded organizations, promotes EPADP/TCADP along with her Prison Ministry at fairs and other events, and does whatever else she can to support both EPADP and TCADP. She is dedicated, tenacious, and positive. EPADP is grateful for Lety's presence, support, and generosity.

## Vigil Locations [tcadp.org](http://tcadp.org) under "Get Involved"

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

**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 pm on the day of an execution.

**Brownsville** 802 and Paredes Lane from 4:30 -5:30pm

**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 pm

**El Paso** 6:00 pm 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... April—June - St. Anne's Catholic Community, 2140 Westheimer, corner of Greenbriar St. Vigils are scheduled from 5:30 to 6:20.

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

**McAllen** In front of The Monitor, corner of Nolana and Jackson at 5:30 pm

**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 am on the day of execution. Broadcast on Catholic Television of San Antonio (Time-Warner cable channel 15) at 12:30 pm and 6:30 pm on the day of execution. **(Site 2)** - Main Plaza across from Bexar County Courthouse and San Fernando Cathedral - Noon **(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.



## Thank You for Your Generous Support

TCADP thanks the following individuals & organizations for their generous contributions in the past quarter (January 5 through March 17, 2011). Your financial assistance is critical to all of the activities and events described in this newsletter! Please let us know if we have inadvertently left you (or your spouse) off of this list. We apologize in advance if we missed anyone.

Angelle Adams\*  
 Jeanne Adams  
 John Adcock and Charles Spain  
 Janice Ahmad  
 Patsy Alenik  
 Rudy Apodaca  
 John Barringer  
 Marvin Bartsch  
 David Berkshire  
 Carrie Campbell  
 Maria Castillo  
 Erica Collin  
 Jim and Sherry Coombes  
 Sr. Germaine Corbin CCVI  
 Cathryn Crawford  
 Barbara Creighton  
 Cheryl Crosier  
 Jan Dawes  
 Arthur L Dietz  
 Kathleen and Timothy Dubbs  
 Fr. Bob Duggan  
 Jimmy Dunne  
 Martha Eberle\*  
 Kelly Epstein\*  
 Frances Escobar  
 Shirley Farrell\*  
 Susan Fernbach  
 Vanessa Fillman  
 Matthew Goldsby  
 Anita Grabowski  
 Judith Harris\*  
 Scott and Cordelia Hayden  
 Genevieve Tarlton Hearon  
 Leila Hileman  
 John Houlé\*  
 Mr. and Mrs. Bill James  
 Eva-Maria Kaifenheim  
 Paula Keeth\*  
 Christel Kollmann  
 Donna Kruszezwska  
 Marjorie Loehlin  
 Iliana Lubman  
 Fr. John Manahan\*  
 Lorina Martinez\*  
 Milton Martiz  
 Vicki McCuiston\*  
 William R Mefford  
 Beatrice Mladenka-Fowler

Deborah and Arnold Michalewicz  
 Pat Monks Esq\*  
 Joan and Bill Mueller  
 Anne Mund\*  
 Ursula Nowicki  
 Fr. Roberto Pena OMI  
 Julie Perales  
 Rev. Carroll and Jane Pickett  
 Shannon Pringle  
 Sr. Esperanza Razura  
 Kelly Reid  
 Patricia and Morris Roberts  
 Ken and Lois Robison  
 Maureen and George Samuels  
 Jim Sharp  
 Jennifer Simmons\*  
 Rev. L. Charles Stovall  
 Matthew Sulanke  
 Dr. Jill Uecker  
 Ellen Valentine  
 Bob and Jean Van Steenburg\*  
 Bill Vaught  
 Craig Vollmers  
 Peter Wagner  
 Sigrid Walsh  
 Lynn Walters\*  
 Linda White  
 Dale and Corinna Whiteaker-Lewis  
 Daesene Willmann  
 Rich Woodward  
 Luis and Beverly Zervigon

Comune Di Reggio Emilia  
 Congregation of the Sisters of  
 Charity of the Incarnate Word,  
 San Antonio  
 Dominican Sisters of Houston  
 Marianist Province of the U.S.

\*signifies Partner for Justice

### In Memoriam

Long-time TCADP member James Donovan passed away on February 17, 2011. We express our condolences to his family and his close friends in the San Antonio community and we remember Jim for all of his contributions to this organization.

### Become a Partner for Justice Today!

Looking for a quick and easy way to contribute to TCADP? Become a **Partner for Justice** today!

Through TCADP's secure online donation system, you can set up recurring donations to be repeated every month, quarter, or year and linked automatically to a credit card or checking account. Anyone who signs up for a recurring donation (minimum \$10 on a quarterly basis) will be considered a Partner for Justice and will be acknowledged in TCADP's annual conference program and quarterly newsletter.

Avoid those annoying dues renewal notices, save a stamp, and support TCADP - all in five minutes! Just go to [www.tcadp.org](http://www.tcadp.org) and click on Donate to get started.



TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

2709 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78704  
(512) 441-1808



Non-Profit Org.  
US Postage  
PAID  
Permit # 215  
Austin, TX

Return Service Requested

If there is **no date** on your address label or a date prior to **4/1/2011** please take the time to renew your membership or become a new member. See [tcadp.org/join-tcadp/](http://tcadp.org/join-tcadp/) for membership form. Thank you!

**RESHAPING THE FUTURE**  
**HONORING THE PAST**

**NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**  
— APRIL 10-16, 2011 —

**If you or someone you know is a victim of crime, help is available.**

*Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past* is this year's theme for National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 10-16, 2011. Each year the Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, prepares a National Crime Victims' Rights Resource Guide to assist communities across the country in planning events. The resource guide is available at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ncvrw/>. The guide provides theme-inspired, camera-ready artwork, tips on working with the media, statistical resources, history of the landmarks in victim rights, etc.

The voices of families of homicide victims have been a strong and eloquent part of our past and continue to shape our future. It is important for us to take a moment this year and participate in events marking National Crime Victims' Rights Week in our local communities.