

SEEKING JUSTICE

IN TEXAS

TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

WORKING THROUGH EDUCATION AND ACTION

SPRING 2008

2008 Off to a Great Start with More to Come!

Inside This Issue:

From the Chair	2
Mental Health Campaign	3
Music for Life Tour	4
Chapter Updates	5, 6
Member Spotlight	7
Annual Award Winners	8
TCADP Conference	9
New Board Members	10
Ways You Can Help!	11



Music for Life in Beaumont, El Paso, and maybe Denton!

The Sara Hickman concert series continues to roll through Texas cities with concerts in Corpus Christi, and Houston so far this year. Each concert has helped raise awareness of the death penalty, reached new audiences, and provided new contacts to help TCADP generate dialogue on the issue throughout the state. In March, Sara will be in Beaumont at Lamar University working with our Beaumont chapter. El Paso Mayor John Cooke will sing and play guitar with Sara in El Paso at Club 101. We want to be in Denton in May but are looking for a venue. (Let us know if you have a possible location.) Check page 4 for tour locations and dates. Spread the word and come out for some great music with a message!

At the Death House Door Panel Discussion and World Premier

Don't miss **March 5** at the Texas Capitol, a panel discussion with clips from the movie. The panel discussion will include lots of great speakers. The film which features the Carlos Deluna case and the story of Rev. Carroll Pickett will be debuting at the South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW) on Sunday, **March 9** at 4:00pm at The Paramount Theatre in Austin, TX.



Mistaken Identity: Carlos Deluna

Learn more about the panel discussion and the film on page 3.

Impending Executions

It is likely that no executions will occur in Texas until the Supreme Court makes a ruling on the Kentucky case that is considering whether the current lethal injection protocol constitutes cruel and unusual punishment. A ruling is expected by the end of June at the latest.

Anti-Death Penalty Alternative Spring Break is being held at the University of Texas at Austin, March 10 - 14. The event is a program by the Texas Students Against the Death Penalty. There is no cost, but a \$25 housing fee. Register online at www.springbreakalternative.org.



Alternative Spring Breaks are designed to give college and high school students something more meaningful to do during their week off, rather than just spending time at the beach or sitting at home catching up on school work. The specific purpose of this Alternative Spring Break is to bring students to Austin for five days of anti-death penalty activism, education and entertainment.

Workshops are led by experienced, knowledgeable presenters who will teach participants skills that they can use to go back home and set up new anti-death penalty student organizations or improve ones that may already exist.

Students will gain valuable training and experience in grassroots organizing, lobbying, preparing a direct action and media relations. The skills learned can also be used in other issues besides the death penalty.



A Note from the Chair

Rick Halperin, President

Friends--

I would like to thank everyone who helped make our recent annual conference held in Houston on January 26 a big success. The Texas Coalition held a fundraiser hosted by Mike Farrell, President of Death Penalty Focus in California, at the Angelika Theatre in Houston the evening before the conference. The attendees enjoyed watching the classic film "I Want to Live", which is based on the true story of Barbara Graham, who was executed in the California gas chamber in the 1950s. After the film showing, Mike Farrell, who was also our conference keynote speaker, led a brief discussion on the death penalty. Attendees also had the opportunity to chat with Mike individually and purchase a copy of his book, *Call Me Mike*. We are very grateful to Greg Audel for organizing the Houston-based fundraiser.

There was a large turnout for the conference itself. The conference (Seeking Justice in Texas...Educating for Life) included numerous opportunities to become engaged in our work to end the death penalty in Texas. Mike Farrell gave an inspirational and moving keynote address that energized all who were present. See pages 8-9 for details of the conference.

We will be preparing for the convening of the Texas legislature in January 2009, and we will be closely monitoring any/all death penalty legislation, whether it be expansionist or restrictionist in nature.

And of course, we will be awaiting the U.S. Supreme Court decision later this spring which will decide the constitutionality of the protocol for lethal injection. Most legal experts expects the Court to allow lethal injections to resume in some (perhaps slightly) altered format; and sadly, we expect such a decision to have negative consequences for us here in Texas.

We remain committed to conducting educational programs across the state designed to changing people's hearts and minds about the death penalty.

We ask for your (continued) support in this difficult struggle to rid this state and this nation of the scourge of capital punishment.

Thanks!

Rick Halperin, President of TCADP

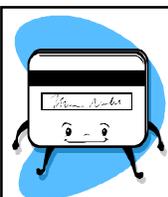
If you have not logged on to the TCADP website in a while, check out the new design. Lots of new features and information are available to you online at www.tcadp.org.



SEEKING JUSTICE IN TEXAS
Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty
2709 S Lamar, Blvd, Suite 109
Austin, TX 78704
(512) 441-1808, www.tcadp.org



Newsletter Editor: Vicki McCuistion, info@tcadp.org,
Spring Issue #21, 2008 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.



Become a member online,
at www.tcadp.org

Thank you!

Have you signed a MIDP Postcard?

We are still a long way from reaching our goal of collecting 1,000 signed postcards by September 1, 2008. We need your help! If you have blank postcards in your possession, please distribute them at your meetings, community events, and other gatherings and urge people to sign and return them to the TCADP office as soon as possible! Better yet, you can collect signatures on the spot and return postcards to us in a batch.

Thanks to everyone who has signed or distributed cards – please keep them coming!

Upcoming Presentations:

- "Prevention, Not Punishment: Prohibiting the Death Penalty for Offenders with Severe Mental Illness" on Thursday, March 13, 2008, 6:00 PM at the Montrose Library, 4100 Montrose, Houston, Texas. Contact Nancy Bailey at 281-933-4925 for more information.
- Sunday, March 16, 2008 at 11:00 AM at the Unitarian Fellowship in Houston, 1504 Wirt Rd. Contact Sarah Berel-Harrop at sbh930@sbcglobal.net for details.

Texas ranks 47th nationally in per capita spending on mental healthcare. Lacking adequate access to treatment or services, thousands of Texans with mental illness have been caught in the revolving door of the criminal justice system. Some have even been sentenced to death, despite the fact that their persistent, severe mental illness impaired their capacity to assist in their own defense.

The state has spent millions of dollars on expensive death penalty trials for mentally ill defendants while its mental health system remains chronically underfunded. At least 25 individuals with documented severe mental illnesses have been executed by the State of Texas; many had sought treatment before the commission of their crimes. Still others with mental illness continue to languish on death row, waiting to be found "competent to be executed."

I support efforts to end the death penalty for offenders with severe mental illness and call for increased funding for the mental health system in Texas. Please add my name to the list of concerned citizens!

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:
Email Address:

Please sign and return bottom half of postcard to TCADP, 2709 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78704

If you would like to schedule a presentation with your group or would like to discuss other ideas for activities/programs on this issue, please contact Kristin at khoule@tcadp.org or 512-441-1808.

At the Death House Door Debuts in Austin, TX

In production for The Independent Film Channel...*At the Death House Door* is the story of the wrongful execution of



Mistaken Identity - L: Carlos Deluna R: Carlos Rodriguez

Carlos DeLuna as a result of mistaken identity and of the Death House Chaplain, Pastor Carroll Pickett, who spent the last day of DeLuna's life with him. The feature docu-



Rev. Carroll Pickett

mentary, follows the remarkable career journey of Pickett, culminating in the story of DeLuna, a convict whose execution bothered Pickett more than any other. He firmly believed the man was innocent, and the film will track the investigative efforts of a team of *Chicago Tribune* reporters who have turned up evidence that strongly suggests he was. The documentary takes a very personal and intimate look at the death penalty in Texas, the first state to use lethal injection. Pickett was present for the first lethal injection in 1982. *At the Death House Door* is a Kartemquin Films Production in association with the *Chicago Tribune*.

A panel discussion showing clips of the documentary will be hosted at the Texas Capitol on Wednesday, March 5, 1:00 pm to 2:45 pm in Senate Hearing Room E2.016. All are welcome. Panelists will include: Texas State Senator Rodney Ellis; Craig Watkins, Dallas County District Attorney; Rev. Carroll Pickett, award winning filmmakers, Steve James and Peter Gilbert; award winning Chicago Tribune Journalists, Maurice Possley and Steve Mills; Ginger Anders, Co-Counsel in the Supreme Court case addressing the legality of lethal injection; David Oshinsky, Pulitzer-Prize winning author and UT Professor; and Rob Owen, Clinical Professor, UT School of Law, and Counsel in Supreme Court cases *Tennard, Cole, & Brewer*. **Don't Miss It!**

The Film will debut at the South by Southwest Film Festival on Sunday, March 9 at 4:00pm at The Paramount Theatre. Details on how to see the film can be found online at www.tcadp.org. TCADP will also have access to the film prior to its debut on the Independent Film Channel at the end of May. We are planning to host showings in cities across Texas. Our members will also be able to download the movie and host house party viewings as well. Contact us at info@tcadp.org or (512) 441-1808 to let us know how you want to be involved in this unique opportunity.

P.S. Our own Dave Atwood and the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty are featured in this movie!!

Music for Life Concert Series

Sara Hickman is currently touring the state of Texas on behalf of TCADP. Sara is an Austin-based singer, songwriter and musician who generously gives of her time and talent in support of several progressive issues. Over a twelve month period that began this past October, Sara is visiting a different city in Texas each month. Sara is also inviting other entertainers to join her at various locations. Sara agreed to make this tour when in the spring of 07 we approached her about the possibility of doing a benefit performance for us. Sara immediately agreed, but then expanded the concept and vision to the tour as described here. As Sara says, she "...wants to start a dialogue on the issue of the death penalty across the state." Each concert also includes remarks by speakers followed by a short dialogue with the audience on the issue of capital punishment. Speakers have included some names that are familiar to most of you: Dave Atwood, Roger Barnes, Professor Denis Longmire, Rev. Carroll Pickett, Sam Millsap, Jr., and Linda White. Music For Life concerts have already taken place in Austin, Huntsville, San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Houston. Below is the schedule for upcoming concerts. You can visit the TCADP web site for more information on the venue and the performers who will be joining Sara at the concerts. For further information contact info@tcadp.org



Trish Murphy on Guitar and Linda White speaking at Music for Life - Houston.

*How does killing anyone ever solve anything...for anyone?
Murdered, or put to death. Left behind are the grieving family members, the children without parents, the loved ones and the friends caught in the heartache of, "What was solved?"
I'm someone who wants to start a dialogue. That's all. I want to get Texas talking about the death penalty because we are the state with the greatest number of executions, and yet, no one wants to talk about what it means.*

I hope you will come out and join me, to ask questions, to meet family members of murder victims, to meet family members of those executed on death row.

Come hear music and get involved at the same time. This isn't easy. In fact, it's scary. But the conversation must begin, and I hope it begins with you and me.

*In Grace,
Sara Hickman*



MUSIC FOR LIFE TOUR

Featuring

Sara Hickman & Friends

Raising the Dialogue on the Death Penalty in Texas

www.tcadp.org/musictour.php

KICKOFF: October 3, 7:00pm First United Methodist Church, Austin w/ Barbara K ✓

November 7: Olson Auditorium Sam Houston State Univ., Huntsville ✓

December 8: First Unitarian Universalist Church - San Antonio w/Shelley King ✓

January 14: Burning Bush Coffeehouse, Corpus Christi w/Stacey Earle & Mark Stuart ✓

February 6: Station Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston w/Trish Murphy ✓

March 3: Lamar University - John Gray Auditorium, **Beaumont**

April 9: Club 101, **El Paso** w/ Mayor John Cooke

May: TBA—Denton?? Any Ideas?

June 25: **San Angelo**

July 20: Cathedral of Hope, **Dallas**

August 23: Jefferson Freedom Café, **Ft. Worth**

September 18: **Waco** w/ Austin Lounge Lizards

FINALE: October 8 - **Austin - State Theatre**



12 CITIES - 12 MONTHS

LISTEN, LEARN, AND HAVE FUN!

Organized by and benefiting the
Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

The **Beaumont** chapter has new leaders, Bob Gazaway and Michael Stewart. If you would like to support their efforts to reorganize and energize TCADP in the Beaumont area, please contact Bob at beaumont@tcadp.org and Michael at lamarstudents@tcadp.org.

We will be sponsoring the next Music for Life Concert on the Lamar University campus in the John Gray Auditorium on March 3 at 7:00pm, come on out and participate in raising the dialogue on the death penalty!

Groundwork for a **Bell County - Killeen** TCADP chapter was launched at the Killeen Pershing Park Baptist Church on the evening of February 4, 2008. With approximately 30 people in attendance, chapter founder and chair, Adele Mark, prepared and presided over a presentation focused on death penalty issues to the Women's Missionary Union and the Baptist Men's Group.

Following an introduction and respective bios by WMU Chair, Elva Chase, TCADP Soros Fellow, Kristin Houlé and TCADP treasurer, Sherry Coombes each spoke on various perspectives of capital punishment. Kristin summarized recent state and national developments and the state of the death penalty at the beginning of 2008, while Sherry recounted her own personal journey to abolition commitment and the current programs and activities sponsored by TCADP. Adele Mark, as the evening's final speaker, shared her powerful faith-based testimony as she implored her fellow church members not to turn their heads from the reality of capital punishment. She pointed to a display board featuring Death Row inmates, and asked, "At what point do we value and at what point do we de-value life?"

A fellowship period, featuring a fund-raising silent auction, distribution of TCADP information materials, survey material for chapter formation and development, a lottery, and artfully arranged refreshments, topped off the event.



Although most of the people in attendance were unsure of their views on the death penalty, several remarked that the presentations and materials had given them much to think about and reconsider. Four people expressed an interest in working with the new chapter, and they became dues paying members of TCADP on the site. TCADP welcomes new members, Cleo Owens, Jewell Shelton, and Reverend James and Debra Wallace.

Adele's immediate plans for continued organization and membership growth of the Killeen chapter feature an initial small dinner party for the new members with a focus on board strategies and governing by-laws. Secondly, she plans to host three back-to-back events which include an informal screening and follow up discussion of "The Empty Chair" in her home, a showing and discussion of "The Exonerated" in her church, and a "Dominos Game Night" for men only on February 29. TCADP vice-president, Bob Van Steenburg and TCADP secretary, Jim Coombes will be feature speakers at some of the events.

Having arranged the aforementioned events for her home church members, Adele hopes to follow a similar pattern with a sister church. In the spring, she and her new board plan to focus on fundraisers, with the goal of raising at least \$3000 for the Coalition. Her next step will be to approach other religious and civic groups to host presentations from members of the TCADP Speakers' Bureau, thus building momentum within, and gathering new members for, the growing Killeen chapter. Good luck to you, Adele, and congratulations to your fellow Killeen abolitionists on a very well planned endeavor!

If you are in Bell County and would like to be involved in this chapter contact Adele at killeen@tcadp.org.

The in-formation **Huntsville** chapter will meet the third Monday of March, March 17 at 7pm until about 8pm. The location is Wesley Methodist Church at 700 Hwy 30 E in Huntsville, TX. Please attend this meeting so you can play a role in the development of this chapter. If you live close to Huntsville or in Huntsville take this opportunity to participate in your chapter! If you are interested or have questions please contact James Moore at huntsville@tcadp.org and get involved. We need your help in working to end the death penalty in Texas.

TCADP Chapter News cont...

The **Houston** Chapter of TCADP held its quarterly meeting December 6 at the Montrose Library. Attendees numbering more than forty listened to the riveting account of Rev. Carroll Pickett's experiences as the chaplain who accompanied 95 men and women to their deaths in the Texas death house in Huntsville.

Rev. Pickett described his ambivalence about capital punishment as his journey began with the first execution of Charlie Brooks in 1982. Because lethal injections had never been done up to that time, there was a degree of uncertainty on this first occasion. His experiences during his 16 years as the death house chaplain contributed to his current position that capital punishment is wrong. He has become one of the strongest voices for abolition.

The next Houston chapter meeting will feature Kristin Houlé, who is currently researching mental illness and the death penalty under a Soros fellowship. She has studied case histories of prisoners currently on death row who suffer from severe mental illness as well as case histories of some who have already been executed.

The title of her topic will be "Prevention, Not Punishment: Prohibiting the Death Penalty for Offenders with Severe Mental Illness." The meeting will be Thursday, March 13 at 6 PM at the Freed-Montrose Library, 4100 Montrose. A Parking garage is located behind the library. Contact information: Nancy Bailey 281-933-4925.

Stay up to date on our activities across the state by logging on to our online Calendar!

If you have upcoming events you want to help publicize, submit the details to info@tcadp.org.

Be sure to include full description: date, time and location.



Chapters (C), Regional Reps (RR), and Affiliates (A)

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

INTERNATIONAL Sandrine Ageorges international@tcadp.org

Amarillo (RR) Eileen Dolan amarillo@tcadp.org

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

Beaumont (C) Bob Gazaway beaumont@tcadp.org

Lamar University Students (C) lamarstudents@tcadp.org

Killeen (C) Adele Mark killeen@tcadp.org

Brazos Valley (C) collegestation@tcadp.org

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

Dallas/Ft. Worth (C) Curt Crum dallas@tcadp.org

El Pasoans Against the DP (A) el Paso@tcadp.org

Houston (C) Nancy Bailey houston@tcadp.org

Huntsville (C to be) James Moore huntsville@tcadp.org

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

Lubbock (C) Vince Gonzales lubbock@tcadp.org

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

San Angelo (RR) Robert Leibrecht sanangelo@tcadp.org

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

Southwest Chapter MFSA (A) mfsa@tcadp.org

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

(please call the state office if you need a contact phone number)

Thank You for Your Generous Support

Page 7, Spring 2008

TCADP thanks the following members and donors who have contributed generously from **Nov 13, 2007 – Feb 12, 2007**. Your financial assistance is essential for TCADP to continue to GROW its advocacy and education efforts to end the death penalty in Texas. Forgive us if we have missed you and please let us know. In some instances we do not have spouses names.

Jeanne Adams Sandrine Ageorges Stephen & Myrna Aldrich Tom Allen Kay Arnold David Atwood Ryan Avery
Nancy Bailey William Barkhouse Les Breeding Art Browning Sr. Margaret Bulmer Jean Bybee Ray Campion
Nancy C. Chamberlain Rita W. Clarke Bozera Cloutier Gregory Dunkel & Eileen Colligan Rachel Consorte
Jim & Sherry Coombes Barbara Cowan Gail Cronauer Curt Crum Gayle Deguerin Jesse Doiron Jimmy Dunne
Martha & Robert Eberle Kelly Epstein Gwendoline Essinger Shirley Farrell Archbishop Joseph Fiorenza Marion B & Jeff Fort
Lynn Furay Dorothy Garza Joseph & Mia Buchwald Gelles Susybelle Gosslee Aaron Graham Marty Graham
Constance Gray Pearson Grimes, III Elin Albertina Hakansson Brenda Hardt Dr. Henry Hare John Hellsten J. Scott Hickey
Rachel Hubbard Carol Ann Hunt Elizabeth Jeter Marilyn John Jessie Johnson Eva-Maria Kaifenheim Megan Kemp
Helen Hill Kempner Ike Kennedy Ellie Kondogianis Mary Anne Kramer Marjorie Loehlin Janet L. Lowery Alexandra Lupin
Arthur Maisel Bonnie Mallott Father John Manahan Michelle Maxwell Ruth McClendon Tom Biddle & Patricia Mullen
Ursula Nowicki Alan Northcutt MD Lori Contella & Amy O'Sullivan Cleo Ovens Scott Partridge Elizabeth Pease
Fr Robert Pena, OMI George and Extela Phillips Richard Reyna George Ricker Rolf Ryham Gordon Sanford
Robert Schuwert Larry Skwarezynski Ann Smith Douglas & Marilyn Soltau Margaret Speidel Rita Taubenfeld
Nancy Taylor Joan & Burnham Terrell Aurelie Van De Wiele Elizabeth & Jeff Van Pelt Bob & Jean Van Steenburg
Rev. James & Debra Wallace Christine West Daesene Willmann Leo & Emma Wood Richard & Rosie Woodward
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Archdiocese of San Antonio Commune Di Reggio Emilia

TCADP urges all members to keep their dues current. Maintaining your membership is important for a variety of reasons. We need to be able to count the number of people against the death penalty, particularly those who are willing to back it up with a financial investment to make it possible for us to fund our outreach and educational programs. **Thank you for your generous support!**

Member Spotlight...

How did you come to be against the death penalty?

Have always been against it! 1) State should not be in the killing business; 2) It does not deter murder but only legitimizes it; 3) It substitutes killing for redemption; 4) It costs much more than life imprisonment; etc. etc.

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

From newspapers and internet

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

To eliminate the death penalty in Texas, the USA. Only our country, among the "Western nations" has a death penalty and yet has the highest murder rate!

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

Conservative politicians and the theme of revenge.

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

It legalizes killing by the state.

What other societal issues concern you?

Environmental protection; global warming

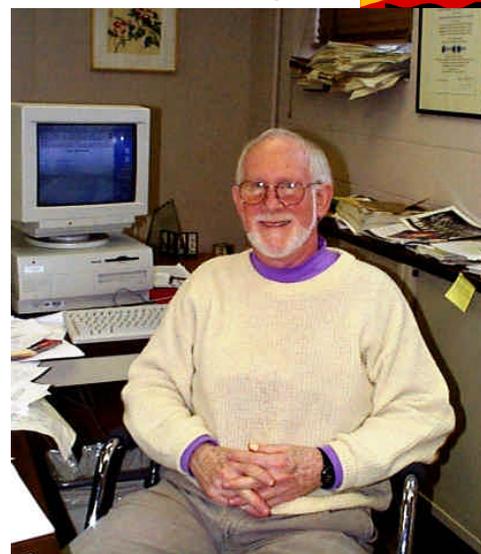
What other organizations are you a member of?

ACLU, Medecins Sans Frontiere, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Southern Poverty Law Center, UNICEF

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

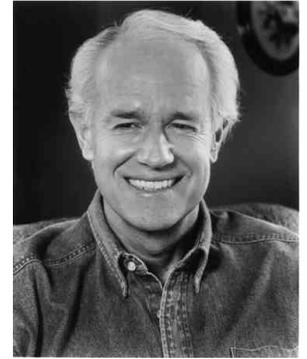
Charity, music and art, literature and contemporary social writings, physics (Professor at University of Houston)

Dr. Simon Moss
Bellaire, TX



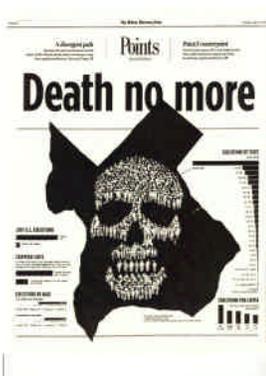
TCADP Annual Conference Highlights!

Keynote Speaker: Mike Farrell had just received the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty (NCADP) Lifetime Achievement Award, recognizing more than 30 years of passionate advocacy (including a term on NCADP's board) before attending the TCADP conference in Houston. Over the years his commitment to eradicating the death penalty has included organizing and supporting campaigns to save specific individuals, educating the public through television and radio interviews and debates, addressing forums, writing essays and newspaper op-eds, meeting with state governors and other officials, coordinating and organizing meetings, and maintaining contact with other activists and organizations. He is as hands-on an activist as there is in the movement - all while maintaining a successful acting career and involving himself in a host of other political issues and charitable causes.



Mike revealed himself to us in his keynote as he does in his book, *Just Call Me Mike*, published last year. He shared a sage perspective from a friend who recently passed away but left his mark on Mike and many others, "He reminded us that we are people of privilege and said that 'the duty of privilege is absolute integrity.'"

Video and text of Mike Farrell's keynote address can be found on the TCADP website under the programs button.



Annual Courage Award Recipient: The Dallas Morning News Editorial Board announced in its Sunday, April 15, 2007, edition that it was reversing its 100-year old policy of supporting the death penalty, with a series entitled "Death No More". The newspaper became the first major city paper in Texas, and only the 3rd in the entire nation, to change its previous pro-death penalty position by calling for the abolition of capital punishment. Since that time the newspaper has remained persistent, through numerous editorials and commentaries, in calling for the end of the death penalty in all cases.

Michael Landauer, accepted the award on behalf of Keven Ann Willey, *The Dallas Morning News'* editorial page editor, and all the editorial staff who worked on the series. Michael said that, while he was accepting the award, it should be noted that it took many months of dedicated investigative research and work from all staff members to compile the information and data before the newspaper announced its opposition to the death penalty. Michael also shared during the award ceremony that the DMN Publisher also supported the "Death No More" series despite the potential loss of subscriptions. (Ed's Note: We should all subscribe to the *Dallas Morning News* for their integrity.)

Annual Appreciation Award: Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza was named Bishop of Galveston-Houston in 1984; in 2004 he was named Archbishop of Galveston-Houston by Pope John Paul II. In 2006, he became Archbishop Emeritus. He actively spoke out against the death penalty in the 1990s when the Catholic Church and all churches in Texas were silent on the issue. He received a lot of criticism for doing this, but stuck to his convictions. He has also been a big support to the Texas Coalition over the years and has come to numerous public events to speak out for life and against the death penalty.



Archbishop Fiorenza has written against the death penalty numerous times in the *Texas Catholic Herald*. He co-authored with Senator Rodney Ellis an article in the *Houston Chronicle* on why we should not execute people with mental retardation.

He has written numerous letters to the Governor and the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles asking that mercy be shown to people on death row.



Annual Appreciation Award: Genevieve Tarlton Hearon has served on the Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center's Board of Trustees since 1993. She is the founder and president of *Capacity FOR JUSTICE (C4J)*, a non-profit organization which promotes the fair, just, and humane treatment of people with mental disabilities and mental disorders in the criminal justice system.

In the mid-1990s, Genevieve began to research the issue of competency to stand trial as it related to death penalty cases and conducted an exhaustive study of cases involving offenders with severe mental illness. She was integrally involved in the clemency campaigns of Emile Duhamel, Larry Robison, Kenneth Granviel, Kelsey Patterson, Robert Madden, and Lonnie Johnson. Her organization of a "commutation petition project" for Larry Robison generated hundreds of signatures (including those of many faith leaders), as well as support from various organizations.

Genevieve continues to monitor death penalty cases and has helped to raise awareness of individuals such as Scott Panetti. The trainings she provides through C4J have led to more informed, competent forensic experts. Genevieve has played a large role in securing legislative reforms in these areas - for example, in setting forth qualifications for expert testimony and standards for written evaluations as well as reforming the process governing competency to stand trial. C4J also submits amicus briefs on occasion, challenging the validity of "future dangerousness" arguments in death penalty cases.

Genevieve Tarlton Hearon is a tireless advocate who uses her powers of persuasion (backed by thorough research) to effect change in the criminal justice system and to improve its treatment of defendants with mental illness or mental retardation.

Workshop: How To Answer Tough Questions. The workshop presented by Dave Atwood, Linda White and Bob Van Steenburg focused on both techniques for answering tough questions as well as how to address specific questions. The suggested technique included understanding how to use the question and answer cycle to the speaker's benefit. When answering questions there are several imperatives to be followed. These include listening carefully, answering all questions and providing succinct answers. One of the key concepts was the idea of a "buffer" following the question to ensure that the key point is addressed. Emphasis was also placed on the necessity of adequate preparation. The techniques that were presented were based on the book "In the Line of Fire: How to Handle Tough Questions When It Really Counts" by Jerry Weisman. Several specific questions were also addressed. A listing of some of the tough questions and possible responses can be found in the [resource section](#) of the TCADP website.

Workshop: How to Engage Faith Communities. The workshop presented by Vicki McCuiston focused on the tools needed to work in different denominations on the issue of the death penalty. Personal experiences were shared along with specific resource information useful in working in multiple denominations. Assessments of the structure, decision making bodies, lingo, death penalty statements, and resources specific to the denomination were shared for the Catholic, United Methodist, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and Unitarian denominations. Resource information can be found in the [Programs section](#) of the TCADP website. Keys to working within faith communities include the following:

1. Always be respectful
2. Respect their process
3. Feeling Safe is important
4. Progress can be very slow and incremental
5. Be creative, if talking about the bigger issue of the death penalty is not working, try considering another approach.
6. Compelling storytellers are always more convincing than an activist (a murder victim family member or a family member of an executed inmate). People seem to more easily change their minds when they meet someone touched by the process. Activists are important in setting the scene with statistical information and the facts.

Workshop: How to Develop a New or Existing Chapter. Both emerging and established TCADP chapter leaders participated in the workshop on Local Chapter Development, which provided ideas and suggestions for engaging and activating members throughout the state. The first half of the workshop focused on successful techniques for starting or rejuvenating a chapter - for example, determining the centers of interest in an area, such as faith communities, colleges/universities, or peace & justice organizations; using the arts as a medium for attracting members; and holding a productive first meeting. In the second half of the workshop, participants discussed strategies for sustaining, consolidating, and growing the membership of existing chapters. Suggestions included providing members with a realistic, appropriate role to play in chapter meetings and holding them accountable for any tasks for which they volunteer; developing activities and events together as a chapter, using TCADP's strategic plan as a guide; and incorporating recruitment goals into all possible activities. The workshop facilitators, Jim Coombes and Kristin Houlé, emphasized the advantages and benefits of TCADP's chapter structure and urged all participants to use the organization's Board of Directors and staff as they moved forward in their own communities.

Workshop: Private Session for Death Row Families. This gathering was led in discussion and sharing by Sandrine Ageorges and Nancy Bailey. Jared Tyler, an attorney from Texas Defender Service, and Mary Ellen Felps, an attorney who has assisted many inmates with legal issues not related to their capital case were kind enough to make themselves available as sources of information and to answer questions.

Among the topics discussed were difficulties in communicating with attorneys, distress over inability to effectively deal with problems related to conditions at Polunsky and medical problems. One major topic was the importance of encouraging prisoners to develop support systems for themselves by contacting available advocacy groups both in Texas and abroad where large anti-death penalty organizations are reaching out to prisoners on death row in Texas.

There was a spirited discussion about the clemency process, including reviewing lessons learned from the recent success in the case of Kenneth Foster. One of the chief aspects of that success was the large support system Kenneth had personally developed, consisting of his family and network of friends. This core group was able to work with Texas anti-death penalty organizations as well as international organizations in effectively publicizing his issues well ahead of the deadline for his clemency application.

Early recognition of potential clemency issues prisoners who want to seek clemency might have is important. In most cases, when a prisoner receives an execution date, there is not a pathway for those issues to come to light soon enough to be useful in a campaign. Personal support groups can help fill this gap.

Everyone who attended received a packet of helpful contact information and a Capital Defense Handbook provided by Equal Justice USA. A conclusion that was reached by the group was that anti-death penalty and advocacy organizations should develop a booklet of helpful information including contact information to be given to families, if possible, at the pre-trial stage of a capital case.

TCADP welcomes 4 new board members to the TCADP Board

Dr. Roger C. Barnes is a professor of sociology at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas. He teaches criminology, criminal justice, sociological theory, and the sociology of the death penalty, among other courses.

Dr. Barnes has specialized as both a scholar and social activist on the death penalty. His writings on the death penalty and crime and justice issues have appeared in the *National Social Science Journal*, *the Journal of Interdisciplinary Education*, *the Journal of South Texas Studies*, *the Criminal Justice Journal*, *Police Studies*, *Verbum Incarnatum*, in edited books, and in newspapers.

Dr. Barnes taught for three years at the United States Penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas. He was also present (as a young college student in 1970) visiting prisoners on Arkansas' death row when the Arkansas governor announced that he had commuted all fifteen death sentences.

Dr. Barnes is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Kansas, where he also received his doctoral degree. His wife, Karin, is on the occupational therapy faculty of the UT Health Science Center – San Antonio. Their daughter, Ingrid, is a Tulane University graduate and will be starting law school this fall.



L to R: Ingrid Barnes, Sister Helen Prejean, and Roger Barnes

Susybelle Gosslee, a long time resident of Dallas, TX, has been an active volunteer for community services for many years.



Susybelle has been active with the Dallas and Texas League of Women Voters and currently serves on the Texas board as well. Due to the depth of her involvement in children's advocacy work and care for the mentally ill she has received many awards recognizing her years of service, including Public Citizen of the Year in 2004 by the Dallas Branch of the National Association of Social Workers.

Susybelle is a member of the Episcopal Church and has served in a variety of ways within her denomination. Much of her service stems from great concern for others. This concern has taken her overseas as well with her involvement in the International Women's Peace Movement. TCADP is blessed to have a board member with such varied expertise and a strong commitment to service.

Adele Mark hails from Honolulu, Hawaii, and has



lived in Texas for the past 25 years. Adele considers herself a "jack of all trades and master of none; talented and gifted in the Lord." She has been married to Godfrey Mark for 33 years and together they have four grown children and two granddaughters. Adele has been interested in Prison Ministry most of her life; and

began writing to a Death Row Inmate back in 1962. Adele came to TCADP four years ago and was moved to further educate herself with the organization. A year and a half ago Adele felt a calling to lead the charge in Bell County and establish a chapter. And so, today we have a faith-based Killeen Chapter. Adele notes, "I am extremely blessed to be a part of an organization that is working to unite in one voice, touching hearts and saving lives."

Dr. Linda White is a member of Murder Victims' Families for Reconciliation. After her daughter, Cathy, was murdered, she traveled the journey of grief looking for the promised closure. Linda has shared her experiences to help others realize that more violence does not bring closure. Linda taught psychology and criminal justice classes at Sam Houston State University before retiring. Linda speaks nationwide on her struggles, her healing and her work for a system of restorative justice.



MVFR is reaching out to all state moratorium and abolition groups and offering aid based on the needs of each group. Some examples follow:

- A Training Manual, primarily for victim family members and also for activists working with family members. Wherever desired and feasible, MVFR personnel will help conduct the training. The Manual will soon be completed.
- A Not In Our Name (NION) booklet featuring the tragedies that brought family members into the movement, with photos of these survivors. This will consist of only those members from the specific state. Funding will need to be located to publish and distribute this booklet.
- Helping state activists be in contact with victim family members and helping to aid these relationships. In certain circumstances, MVFR can participate in meetings.
- Providing technical assistance to state activists with their Study Commission hearings and in meetings with legislators.

Contact information:

To determine whether MVFR can help in a particular situation, contact Lorry W. Post at 877-896-4702 or lpost@mvfr.org



SIGN UP FOR A TCADP VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE!

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Do you prefer to be contacted by ___ phone or ___ email?

Please check any/all of the committees on which you would be interested in serving in 2008 :

___ **Religious Outreach Committee:** This committee will recruit faith communities statewide to participate this fall in the Weekend of Faith in Action or the Catholic Campaign to End the Use of the Death Penalty and will assist congregations with organizing activities/events. The bulk of the committee's work will take place in May/June and September/October and will involve contacting individual faith communities, as well as interreligious organizations.

___ **Rotary Outreach Committee:** This committee will reach out to Rotary Clubs (and possibly other civic organizations) around the state, seeking to schedule presentations about the death penalty. It will entail identifying the appropriate contacts and following up with them by phone and/or email, as well as helping to coordinate the presentations.

___ **Educational Outreach Committee:** This committee will work to negotiate with five major school districts in Texas to establish a death penalty education program in high schools. It will involve identifying and working with the appropriate person or program within each district; developing a curriculum (or adapting curriculums already in existence); and finding opportunities to develop relationships with educators (for example, through attending conferences).

___ **International Committee:** This entails reaching out to friends, family members, and acquaintances abroad to engage them in the work of TCADP.

___ **Fundraising Committee:** This committee will offer ideas and support to TCADP chapters and other members on organizing local fundraisers.

___ **Membership Development Committee:** This committee will work to identify opportunities for TCADP to enhance its presence around the state and recruit new members – for example, at conferences, community festivals, coalition meetings, and other events. Volunteers also will assist with data entry from time to time in order to keep the membership database up to date.

Please mail this form to the TCADP office: 2709 S. Lamar Blvd.; Austin, TX 78704. TCADP Program Coordinator Vicki McCuistion or a member of the board will contact you shortly to follow up. **Thank you!**

TEXAS COALITION TO ABOLISH THE DEATH PENALTY

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

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage PAID
Permit # 882
Austin, TX



If there is **no date** on your address label or a date prior to **3/01/2008**, please take the time to renew your membership or become a new member. See below for membership form.

JOIN TODAY!

Donations are tax deductible and support our advocacy efforts in Texas.

I want to be counted as a member of TCADP and as actively working to end the death penalty in Texas.

_____ \$15.00 Student/Fixed Income Annual Member

_____ \$30.00 Annual Member

_____ \$50.00 Annual Joint Member

_____ \$100.00 Sustaining Member

_____ \$250.00 Business Member

_____ \$ Enclosed is an additional contribution to support TCADP.

Please make checks payable to TCADP. Mail to TCADP, 2709 S Lamar, Austin, TX 78704. Secure online contributions can be made at www.tcadp.org.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

TCADP Quarterly Newsletter: _____ Print and/or _____ email

_____ I would like to host a program in my faith community, civic organization, or school.

_____ I want to host a new member party in my area with support from TCADP.