



Spring 2013

Seizing the Momentum

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty

TCADP Advocates for Repeal of the Death Penalty at the 83rd Texas Legislature

The Texas Legislature is now in the middle of its biennial, 140-day session, which means marathon floor debates and committee hearings (one recent hearing lasted until 4:30 AM!), amendments and deadlines, and increased competition for constituent voices to be heard.

One of the thousands of pieces of legislation that has been filed this session calls for repeal of the death penalty in Texas – House Bill 1703, filed by Representative Jessica Farrar of District 148-Houston. This marks the fourth time that Rep. Farrar has filed such legislation. She is indeed a stalwart supporter for ending the use of capital punishment in our state.

The TCADP Lobby Corps, a group of 15 volunteers, has been present in the Capitol each week since the legislative session began in January to meet and talk with legislators and to urge their support for HB 1703. Lobby Corps members, who hail from Austin, Dallas, Houston, Round Rock, and San Antonio, received special training for this role last fall, and each member is assigned as the TCADP liaison to specific legislative offices. Members are equipped with talking points and resources for these weekly visits, including the all-important [Texas Legislative Handbook](#).

Through the Lobby Corps, TCADP has greatly expanded its capacity to engage in dialogue with the 181 legislators who serve our state and provide them with information about recent death penalty developments in Texas. Some Lobby Corps members are political novices while others have worked on numerous campaigns. All members bring their unique professional and personal backgrounds and experiences to the activity of lobbying and, together, they are sending a strong message to legislators that there is broad and growing support for repeal of the death penalty in Texas. Learn more about what this experience has been like for two Lobby Corps members on pages 6-7.

In addition to Rep. Farrar, two other State Representatives have signed as authors of HB 1703: Rep. Alma Allen (District 131-Houston) and Rep. Lon Burnam (District 90-Fort Worth). Both legislators also supported the bill in 2011. Members of the TCADP Lobby Corps have spoken to several other Representatives who have indicated that they will sign on to the bill, as well, or otherwise support our efforts. We are grateful to everyone who has urged their Representative to co-sponsor 1703 upon receiving an action alert from TCADP!

Our main objective this session is to gain co-sponsors and move the bill to a hearing in the House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. We are still awaiting the announcement of the date for that hearing and are actively preparing witness testimony. Murder victim family members, religious leaders, a man who was wrongfully convicted and released from death row, former District Attorneys, and others with specific areas of expertise have agreed to testify in support of HB 1703. Your participation in this committee hearing is also important! When the bill is scheduled for a hearing, TCADP will alert our membership and encourage your presence at the Capitol that day (or night).

You can also advance TCADP's legislative efforts by thanking the sponsors of House Bill 1703 for taking a public stand in support of ending the death penalty and contacting your own Representative to urge his/her support for this legislation.

Continued on Page 6.

In this issue:

Voices of Texas: Diane Allen
Death Penalty Developments
Conservatives Concerned about the Death Penalty
"The Trial of Jesus" in Austin
News from the Field
Thank You, Members, Donors, and Partners for Justice!

Scheduled Executions

April

9 Rickey Lewis
16 Ronnie Threadgill
24 Elroy Chester
25 Richard Cobb

May

7 Carroll Parr
15 Jeffery Williams
21 Robert Pruett

June

26 Kimberly McCarthy
Execution Vigils: tcadp.org under
"Get Involved - Stop Executions"



From the Executive Director

Dear Friends of TCADP,

There's never a dull moment when it comes to our work to end the death penalty in Texas, but the past two months have been more of a whirlwind than usual. In the midst of our weekly visits to the State Capitol and our ongoing efforts to stop executions, TCADP hosted its largest and most diverse annual conference to date. More than 150 people gathered on February 23, 2013 at St. Edward's University in Austin for a full day of dialogue and engagement, during which we lifted up our collective achievements and confronted our common challenges.

Participants in the conference represented the breadth and depth of our organization and our movement. They included TCADP members from El Paso all the way to Port Arthur and the 800 miles in between, as well as members from Denton down to San Antonio. Numerous colleagues from around the country also joined us that day, as did friends from Canada and Germany. We were particularly honored by the participation of a 20-person delegation from Japan, which included a former Minister of Justice who delivered a touching message of solidarity to the crowd.

The theme of this year's conference, *Changing the Conversation*, reflects our conviction that it is no longer a question of whether we should or will end the death penalty but, rather, what it will take for us to work together and find common ground in order to hasten its demise. Our conversations about the death penalty in Texas are changing both in terms of *who* we are talking to and *how* we are framing our message. We know that to be successful, we must continue to broaden our outreach efforts and put aside pre-conceived notions of who may or may not stand with us on this issue.

We must talk with people whose political or religious beliefs differ from ours.

We must continue to reach out to people impacted directly by violent crime or employed by the criminal justice system.

We must discuss what local communities receive through pursuit of the death penalty and what they sacrifice in return.

We must talk about our shared concerns and desires for public safety.

We must have a conversation about the message we send to murder victims' family members when we don't seek the death penalty in the vast majority of cases yet promise a select few that this will constitute justice for them.

We must address the fact that individuals with intellectual disabilities and severe mental illnesses continue to be sentenced to death and executed in this state.

And we must talk about the geographically arbitrary and racially biased imposition of the death penalty in Texas.

In strategic alignment with our national, state, and local partners, TCADP works every day to expose the flaws and failures of the death penalty system and advance our mission. In myriad ways and at every level, we are changing the conversation on this issue. And by we, I mean all of us.

Thank you for everything you do to engage in constructive conversations about the death penalty and hasten the day that Texas ends this practice, once and for all.

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 dedicated solely to ending 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.

Issue #40, Spring 2013
(Winter, Spring, Summer, Fall)

Editor/Contributor: Vicki McCuiston
Contributors: Kate Allen, Les Breeding, Chris Castillo, Jan Heinrichs, Kristin Houlié, Pat Monks, Bob Van Steenburg, Jean Van Steenburg

Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty
2709 S Lamar, Suite 109
Austin, TX 78704
512.441.1808, info@tcadp.org



Board of Directors

Angelle Adams, President
Estrus Tucker, Vice President
Rich Woodward, Treasurer
Les Breeding, Secretary
Helene Burns
Kay Duffy-Taylor
Mary Heartlein
Rev. Bernard Kern
Pat Monks, JD
Mike Renquist

Staff

Kristin Houlé, Executive Director
Vicki McCuiston, Program Coordinator

TCADP Advisory Board

Dave Atwood, TCADP Founder
Dr. Roger C. Barnes, University of the Incarnate Word
Gary Bledsoe, President NAACP Texas
Duane Bradley, Manager KPFT Radio
Rep. Lon Burnam, Texas State Representative
Thomas Cahill, author
Joan M. Cheever, author
Jim Coombes, Retired Colonel US Air Force
Brother Richard Daly, St Edward's University
Frances T. "Sissy" Farenthold, Former Texas State Representative
Rep. Jessica Farrar, Texas State Representative
Mike Farrell, actor, author
Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza, Bishop Emeritus,
Diocese of Galveston-Houston
Anthony Graves, Motivational Speaker and Legal Consultant
Sylvia Gonzales, LULAC/Hispanic Women in Leadership
Steve Hall, StandDown Texas Project
Dr. Rick Halperin, Southern Methodist University
Jim Harrington, Director Texas Civil Rights Project
Sara Hickman, singer, musician, songwriter
Sam Millsap, Former District Attorney
Rev. Carroll L. "Bud" Pickett, Former Death House Chaplain
Sr. Helen Prejean, author
Rabbi Samuel M. Stahl, Rabbi Emeritus Temple Beth-El
Bob Van Steenburg, Past President, TCADP Board of Directors
Linda White, Murder Victim Family Member
Bishop Joe A. Wilson, Retired Methodist Bishop
(Affiliation listed for identification purposes only.)

Volunteers

Thanks so much to the following individuals who have volunteered in the TCADP Office or provided administrative support in recent months: Herb and Angela Diener, Christina Dunigan, David Mitschlen, and Jean Van Steenburg. We are immensely grateful for your assistance!



Calendar of Events

April

2-4: National Catholic Leadership Conference, Houston
6: Texas Pax Christi Conference, Houston; Texas Junior State Conference, Houston
7: Odessa Chapter meeting, 4:00pm odessa@tcadp.org
9: Scheduled Execution - Rickey Lewis
11: Sister Helen Prejean, Texas Wesleyan Univ. 7:00pm
13: Amnesty International Texas Meeting, Austin
15: El Paso Chapter Meeting 7:00pm, elpaso@tcadp.org
16: Scheduled Execution - Ronnie Threadgill
17: Dallas Religious Organizing Committee 6:00pm, Chapter meeting 7:00pm, dallas@tcadp.org
24: Scheduled Execution - Elroy Chester
25: Scheduled Execution - Richard Cobb
29: Faithful Conversation on the Death Penalty, University of North Texas, Denton 7:00-9:00pm

May

1: Webinar: Addressing the Needs of Victims in Death Penalty Cases: The Role and Responsibility of the Defense <http://bit.ly/11JSJFO>
7: Scheduled Execution - Carroll Parr
14: The New Jim Crow in Texas w/ Michelle Alexander, King of Glory Lutheran Church, Dallas 1:00pm www.ntnl.org
15: Scheduled Execution - Jeffery Williams; Dallas Religious Organizing Committee 6:00pm, Chapter meeting 7:00pm, dallas@tcadp.org
20: El Paso Chapter Meeting, 7:00pm, elpaso@tcadp.org
21: Scheduled execution - Robert Pruett
25: Dallas International Festival
31—June 2: United Church of Christ Conference, Dallas

June

2-4: North Texas Annual Conference UMC, Richardson
17: El Paso Chapter Meeting, 7:00pm, elpaso@tcadp.org
19: Dallas Religious Organizing committee 6:00pm, Chapter meeting 7:00pm, dallas@tcadp.org
26: Scheduled execution - Kimberly McCarthy

Are you aware of regional or local civic and religious conferences/festivals that allow exhibitors? Share these opportunities with TCADP so we can continue to reach new people! info@tcadp.org or 512-441-1808

Follow TCADP on TWITTER!

@TCADPdotORG

Breaking news, coming events, things you should know! RETWEET!





Voices of Texas: Diane Allen

"I don't think the death penalty keeps people from killing or doing harm to other people. I think there is a lot of mental illness in this world. More money should be spent on making people healthy. It (mental illness) plagues this country – we should focus on that. If people love themselves it is difficult to hurt someone else."

- Diane Allen



HOUSTON, TX - Diane Allen was in the hospital comforting her daughter when she got the call on her cell phone that her cousin, Jimmy, had been murdered.

They found his body near his parents' house, not far from an elementary school. He was hit in the head with a brick and left on the side of the road to die. His killer was located, and he is still in prison for murder. Jimmy was in his mid- to late-20s when he was killed.

Diane, a former peace officer, was going through a divorce when Jimmy was murdered. "There was a lot of pain in my life. There were a lot of mental and physical challenges. It just added extra pain and pressure. I became more open to things that had happened in my life."

Diane suggests that friends call family members who have had a loved one taken. Many people who have been through murder just need to hear "I love you." It's good to check up on them instead of waiting for them to call you for help, she said.

"If you can't handle the pain, pray for them. Put your arms around them and say you love them and God loves them." Even after the funeral, it's a good idea to bring family members food and offer to help with chores around the house. "Sometimes during that situation people forget to eat." Washing their dishes or taking them for a walk is a good way to help a hurting friend or family member. "Just be there," Diane said. "Just show up. People honor that."

Despite everything Diane has been through, she is against the death penalty and believes the state should work harder to rehabilitate inmates.

For her, the death penalty would not bring closure. "I can't speak for people who are proponents of the death penalty, but I believe it just prolongs the pain. It would not bring closure for me." Bringing the end to another person's life would not give her peace.

"I have always felt that the death penalty in this country was not fair. I believe that innocent people have died. Even the guilty – I don't think that killing them is the answer," Diane said. "The process is so long and tedious and it costs so much to put a person to death. It would be cheaper to put that person in prison for life (without parole)."

Like many police chiefs and law enforcement officials, Diane doesn't believe the death penalty deters crime.

"I don't think the death penalty keeps people from killing or doing harm to other people. I think there is a lot of mental illness in this world. More money should be spent on making people healthy. It (mental illness) plagues this country – we should focus on that. If people love themselves it is difficult to hurt someone else," she said.

Now, Diane is a more compassionate person. "I have compassion for others whether they are the victim or the perpetrator. I feel like the perpetrator is also a victim. So I have compassion for everybody involved. I believe that there are lessons to be learned in every situation."

In the end, no two experiences are alike.

"Everybody's path is different. I suggest that people who have experienced murder be gentle to themselves. The sooner you can let go of the vengeance the better. Also, develop a relationship with God. Feast on the love and compassion that God has for you. Be gentle to yourself and others."

Diane Allen is a former peace officer. She has a bachelor's degree in business and a master's in radio, television and film. She is the mother of four and the grandmother of five. She published the book "Surround Yourself with Love" and is working on several other manuscripts. She attends Trinity Gardens Church of Christ in Houston.



Submitted by Chris Castillo.



Executions

To date this year, the State of Texas has carried out one execution, out of five nationwide. There currently are 12 executions scheduled to take place in Texas between now and the end of July. The state accounts for 493 executions since 1982.

Jury Rejections

On February 27, 2013, after more than 21 hours of deliberation, a Brazos County jury determined that Stanley Wayne Robertson should spend the rest of his life in prison for the 2010 murder of Annie Mae Toliver. The District Attorney's office had sought the death penalty for Robertson, but the jury decided that there was mitigating evidence in his case that warranted a life sentence. During the punishment phase of his trial, Robertson's attorneys presented evidence of his impoverished childhood, as well as expert testimony as to his intellectual disabilities.

No new death sentences have been imposed to date in Texas this year.

Other Case Updates

- State District Judge Larry Mitchell halted the January 29, 2013 execution of Kimberly McCarthy in order to give her attorneys more time to pursue an appeal based on racial discrimination in the jury selection process. McCarthy was sentenced to death for the 1997 murder of Dorothy Booth in Dallas County. According to her attorney, of the twelve jurors seated at trial, all were white except one, and eligible non-white jurors were excluded from serving by the State.

McCarthy's execution was rescheduled for April 3, 2013, but that date too was withdrawn and rescheduled for June 26. Dallas County District Attorney Craig Watkins agreed with both motions to modify the execution date. On March 29, 2013, he asked for the delay while state legislators consider several pending bills that could impact the application of the death penalty in Texas.

- On January 30, 2013, State District Judge Kelly Case withdrew the February 27 execution date of Larry Swearingen in order to give his attorneys more time to pursue DNA testing. Swearingen was convicted of the 1998 rape and murder of 19-year-old Melissa Trotter, a student at Montgomery Community College. Her body was discovered in the Sam Houston National Forest on January 2, 1999, nearly a month after she disappeared from campus. Prosecutors originally theorized that Trotter had been dead for 25 days when her body was found, but further examinations by pathologists suggest this is timeframe is impossible based on the preservation of her body. Swearingen was in police custody on unrelated charges for the three weeks preceding the discovery of Trotter's body and has maintained his innocence of her murder.

This is the fourth stay of execution for Swearingen in recent years. In 2011, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals stayed his execution and later ordered a hearing to consider the forensic evidence.

- On March 20, 2013, more than 100 prominent individuals from Texas and throughout the country – including civil rights leaders, elected officials, former prosecutors and judges, and clergy representing seven faith denominations – released a statement urging the Harris County District Attorney to provide a new, fair sentencing hearing for Texas death row inmate Duane Buck. The jury was told that Buck was more likely to pose a future danger to society because he is African American. Former Texas Governor Mark White, one of the signatories, delivered the statement to the Harris County District Attorney's Office in Houston.
- On April 2, 2013, State District Judge Anna Perez granted Rigoberto Avila, Jr.'s attorney more time to explore new scientific evidence that might prove his innocence. Judge Perez halted his execution, which had been scheduled to take place on April 10; a new date has been set for July 10. Avila was sentenced to death for the 2000 murder of 19-month-old Nicolas Macias in El Paso, who he was babysitting along with his four-year-old brother, Dylan Salinas. He has consistently maintained his innocence.

New Book: Fighting for Their Lives: Inside the Experience of Capital Defense Attorneys by Susannah Sheffer. Through conversations with twenty of the most experienced and dedicated post-conviction capital defenders in the United States, the book explores how those who represent clients facing the death penalty cope with the stress and trauma of their work. Susannah is on staff with the international organization, Murder Victim's Families for Human Rights. Read more - <http://www.susannahsheffer.com/fighting-for-their-lives.html>



Here is contact information for the bill authors:

State Representative Alma Allen
Alma.allen@house.state.tx.us

State Representative Jessica Farrar
Jessica.farrar@house.state.tx.us

State Representative Lon Burnam
Lon.burnam@house.state.tx.us

Contact information for your Representative is available at the Texas Legislature Online: www.capitol.state.tx.us. (On the bottom right of the homepage, where it reads "Who Represents Me?", type in the requested information.) The postal address for all Members of the Texas House of Representatives is:

The Honorable [First and Last Name]
Texas House of Representatives
PO Box 2910
Austin TX 78768-2910

Stay tuned to TCADP for updates and additional action opportunities, and thank you for communicating your concerns about the death penalty to your state legislators!

In addition to filing House Bill 1703, Representative Jessica Farrar also introduced **House Resolution 478**, which congratulates Bob Van Steenburg of Austin on his recent retirement as President of the TCADP Board of Directors. The resolution, which was presented on the floor of the Texas House of Representatives on March 13, 2013, noted that "one of his principal roles with the organization has been to communicate concerns about the death penalty to members of the legislature."

It goes on to acknowledge that "Bob Van Steenburg has worked tirelessly to engage and educate the public about an issue of great importance, and it is fitting to recognize his efforts in behalf of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty and the people of the Lone Star State." An official copy of this resolution will be prepared for him "as an expression of high regard by the Texas House of Representatives."

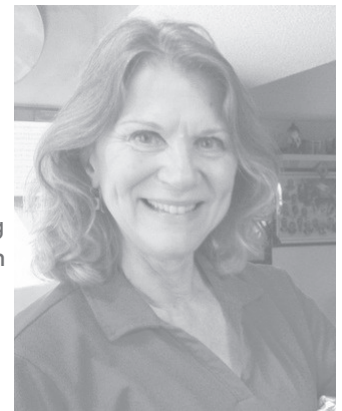
Congratulations, and thank you, Bob!

Views from the Capitol

Initial impressions from two members of the TCADP Lobby Corps

"The TCADP Lobby Corps has provided me with an opportunity to become actively involved in the movement to repeal capital punishment in Texas in a way that I believe will be more effective than writing letters to the editor or marching on the Capitol in Austin. Since January I have several times visited the offices of three Senators and approximately a dozen Representatives, with a focus on those from San Antonio and Bexar County. While the staffers whom I've met have been unfailingly attentive and courteous (and young!), I look forward to having face-to-face meetings with some of the legislators themselves in order to try to address their concerns about or even opposition to HB 1703 and HB 164 and, I hope, to begin to develop a working relationship with them. At this stage, I see my role as being an information resource for legislators and their staffs regarding the use of the death penalty in Texas — as presented in the TCADP Annual Report — and as being a voter who shows up on a regular basis in their offices to remind them that there are others like me in Texas who support the abolition of capital punishment as a sentencing option for any crime."

- Jan Heinrichs, San Antonio



Born and reared in Ft. Worth, Jan began to realize the injustice of the death penalty in junior high when she drew the "short straw" in a debate and had to research and argue against its use, a particularly unpopular position in the early 1960's in Texas. After practicing law in Massachusetts for 18 years, Jan was appointed a Trial Court Judge, a position she held for almost 12 years before moving back to Texas. Although licensed to practice law in Texas, she has chosen instead to pursue other interests, including volunteering part of her time, through TCADP, toward the goal of repealing the death penalty in her home state.



"I found that I wanted to take action against the death penalty and when the call went out for Lobby Corps members, I felt the call. When I started, getting used to the layout of the Capitol and to hunting for legislators' offices was my biggest challenge. Thankfully, it got easier and easier. I have been impressed with how polite and engaged I found officials and their staffs. Something I have seen over and over again is that most staff members are unaware of the issues or their boss's opinions. The consistent issue that interests legislators is the cost issue. I have found that lobbying is really an easy and important action to take when we feel strongly on an issue."

-Dr. Kate Allen, Austin



Kate Allen is a retired professor who taught at Cal State, Sacramento in the Social Work Department. She ended her career as an expert witness for the defense in capital punishment trials. Her job was to convince the jury not to give the defendant the death penalty.

TCADP Members Elect New Board Member, and Re-Elect Four

During the TCADP 2013 Annual Conference, members elected new Board Member Mike Renquist and re-elected Pat Monks, Angelle Adams, Mary Heartlein, and Kay Duffy-Taylor for another term on the Board.



Dr. Mike Renquist is an author, keynoter and change agent, serving in the areas of training and human and organization development. Originally educated as a Presbyterian minister, he has a degree in Speech and Theatre from Austin College, in Sherman, Texas, and a Master of Divinity and Doctorate of Ministry from Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, in Austin, Texas. After serving numerous churches in Texas and Missouri, he successfully transitioned to business consulting and training, both as an internal and external consultant. In 25 years, he has served as consultant or trainer in over 165 different corporations. Mike's emphasis in leadership development with upper and middle management is on the "whole molecule of change", a systemic approach supported by Emotional Intelligence that leads to greater accountability, innovation and sustainability. He is a certified practitioner in Neuro Linguistic Programming, and his specialty in training is presentation and communication skills. Married to the Rev. Dr. Georjean Blanton, Associate Pastor of St. John's United Methodist in Austin, they have three adult children and immensely enjoy their two grandsons.

Congratulations to the newly elected officers of TCADP's Board of Directors! Angelle Adams (President), Estrus Tucker (Vice President), Les Breeding (Secretary) and Rich Woodward (Treasurer) were elected in February and will serve two-year terms. Read the bios of all Board Members at <http://tcadp.org/about/board-of-directors/>.

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*

Make my donation of _____ (minimum \$10) recur on a

☐ monthly ☐ quarterly ☐ annual basis.

*Credit/Debit Cards only—www.tcadp.org/donate/partners-for-justice/

Credit/Debit Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____

Credit Card - ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Make a difference.
DONATE

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 (click on "Donate"). **THANK YOU!**



New Group Questions the Alignment of the Death Penalty with Conservative Principles

TCADP Board Member Pat Monks participated in the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington, DC from March 14-16, 2013. He submitted the following account of his experience.

[Participating in CPAC] was a great experience for me and our movement. CPAC is the largest Conservative group by far. It's larger than the Republican National Convention. The staff of Equal Justice USA invited several state representatives to join them and represent the "Conservatives Concerned about the Death Penalty" booth at CPAC. Altogether, nine people on our team attended CPAC, including folks from Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Connecticut, and Montana. We were also able to represent our group at many of the panels held at the event. Almost every Conservative speaker in the country was present to speak on various national issues.

It took a real Conservative to handle speaking about the issues of the death penalty with the crowd in attendance. Unless you agreed with 80% of the Conservative issues, it would have been very difficult to staff the booth. However, we were very pleased with the results and with the response to our booth. We had over 100 attendees sign up with Conservatives Concerned about the Death Penalty. The soft sell approach works with Conservatives. As "Conservatives Concerned" we were able to open a dialogue with Conservatives better than a "Coalition to Abolish." It was great luck that the Maryland bill to end the death penalty was passed while CPAC was going on.

This momentum [message] was a constant topic in our discussion with attendees. Our booth was visited by media people throughout the event because of the unusual nature of our group's attendance. We felt that we accomplished our goals by noon the first day. EJUSA is planning another trip to CPAC, and we hope to be included in panel discussions next year.

Furthermore, EJUSA is appearing in Kansas and Tennessee this month. There is also a Conservative event in Austin that needs our participation. The Republican Liberty Caucus is meeting the second weekend in May. We need Conservative members to attend the meeting and help staff the booth in Austin that weekend. We have a tremendous opportunity to make some headway in Texas at this event. Our movement will never take root unless we have some support from the Conservative faction in Texas.

Our intention is not to tie our wagon to a [political] party, but to expand the conversation to reach the Conservative middle. We can succeed. But we need your help and support to reach the Conservative voice in Texas. Conservatives can be reached and need a voice on this issue. And that's us -- the Conservatives Concerned about the Death Penalty.

Pat Monks, a native Houstonian, has practiced law as a criminal defense attorney for 28 years in Houston and Dallas, Texas and is the founding member of the Municipal Justice Bar Association of Texas. He is a long-time Republican Precinct Chair in Harris County.



Pat Monks being interviewed at CPAC.

Learn more about this initiative at <http://conservativesconcerned.org/>.

If you would like to become involved in conservative outreach efforts in Texas, or volunteer at the Republican Liberty Caucus, please contact TCADP Program Coordinator Vicki McCuiston at info@tcadp.org.

“Jurors” in Austin Debate the Sentence of Jesus Christ

On Maundy Thursday, March 28, 2013, First Baptist Church of Austin sponsored a program entitled, “The Trial of Jesus: Will a jury sentence Jesus to death under Texas Law?”

This program was a compelling re-enactment of the sentencing of Jesus Christ. The evening began with the announcement that Jesus had already been convicted of blasphemy, a capital crime. A trial judge then swore in the jury, which consisted of all audience members, and the sentencing phase of the trial began.

Professor Mark Osler, a former federal prosecutor who taught law at Baylor Law School in Waco, Texas before joining the University of St. Thomas Law School in Minneapolis (and the author of Jesus on Death Row), played the prosecutor and argued that Jesus

should be put to death. Jeanne Bishop, a Chicago public defender and Adjunct Professor in the Trial Advocacy



Program at Northwestern University School of Law, played the defense attorney and ask that Jesus' life be spared.

The trial was not scripted, but witnesses were given an outline of questions that could be asked. Witnesses included Simon Peter, a Rich Young Man, a Centurion and a Woman. Each was examined and cross-examined by the attorneys based on the facts of the trial. After hearing the case, the jury was set for deliberation. Audience members were divided into groups of 12 and asked to select a jury foreperson. Jurors were directed to answer two questions, the same questions that every “death qualified” jury in Texas must answer: (1) Do you find that there is a probability that, if not executed, the defendant would commit acts that would constitute a continuing threat to society? (2) In light of all mitigation, is a death sentence warranted? A unanimous decision to each question was necessary to sentence Jesus to death. Jurors only answered the second question if they responded affirmatively to the first question regarding future dangerousness.

Many jurors seemed to find the deliberation process taxing as they had strong feelings about the death penalty and had difficulty basing their votes solely on the evidence presented in the case. However, when each jury foreperson presented the results of the deliberations, about half of the 18 jury panels decided that Jesus would constitute a continuing threat to society. All of the panels that deemed him a threat still refused to sentence him to death in light of mitigating circumstances.

The program concluded with a question and answer session during which the audience queried the lawyers about the development of the program and the prosecution of death penalty cases in Texas. Professor Osler and Ms. Bishop have staged about a dozen mock trials throughout the country.

This event presented the opportunity to debate a tough issue and provided a venue for vigorous conversation to take place. It was a fast-paced, thought-provoking evening that challenged people in various ways by asking the participants internal questions such as these: How do I reconcile my faith and the use of the death penalty? How do political issues and faith fit together? These questions were left for the individual to answer.

Submitted by Jean Van Steenburg, a long-time TCADP member and past Board Member.



STATE OFFICE—Austin

(512) 441-1808

info@tcadp.org

Austin

Bob Van Steenburg

austin@tcadp.org

Brazos Valley

Rich Woodward

collegestation@tcadp.org

Brownsville

Joe Krause

brownsville@tcadp.org

Corpus Christi

Jeanne Adams

corpuschristi@tcadp.org

Dallas

Rick Halperin

Laura Seipp

dallas@tcadp.org

El Paso

Lety Moreno

elpaso@tcadp.org

Houston

Nancy Bailey

houston@tcadp.org

Odessa

Lorina Martinez

odessa@tcadp.org

San Antonio

Roger Barnes

sanantonio@tcadp.org

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

facebook®



News from the Field

While the 83rd Texas Legislature has been the focus of much attention over the past three months, local outreach and educational activities continue to take place throughout Texas. Here's a snapshot of activities that TCADP staff and local members have sponsored or participated in since the start of 2013:

- On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on January 21, 2013, TCADP staff and local members distributed information on the death penalty at the MLK Day Festival in Austin, while Houston members participated in their city's Martin Luther King Day Parade.
- On January 28, 2013, TCADP Executive Director Kristin Houlié delivered a presentation on the death penalty at the monthly meeting of the Cattle Country Clerics, an interfaith group in Fort Worth.
- TCADP and our national colleagues with Equal Justice USA sponsored an information table at the 2013 Samuel DeWitt Proctor Clergy and Lay Leadership Conference, which took place in Dallas from February 18-12, 2013. The Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc. (SDPC) represents a cross section of progressive African American faith leaders and their congregations in the United States.
- Three screenings of "48 Hours Mystery: Grave Injustice" have taken place in El Paso in the last two months. "Grave Injustice," which received an Emmy Award, presents the story of Anthony Graves, who spent 18 years in prison, including 12.5 years on death row, for a crime he did not commit. He was exonerated in October 2010 and now serves as a motivational speaker and legal consultant. Members of El Pasoans Against the Death Penalty (EPADP), a chapter of TCADP, and the Criminal Justice Ministry group at St. Patrick's Cathedral participated in screenings as part of their regular meetings. EPADP also co-hosted an event with the Religious Studies Program at the University of Texas-El Paso featuring the film.
- San Antonio members Brian Halderman and Katherine Hess hosted a workshop for 40 area social workers on February 2, 2013 at St. Mary's University. They screened the documentary "Juan Melendez – 6446", which tells the story of Florida death row exonerate Juan Melendez (Juan visited San Antonio last year for a series of speaking events). This was followed by remarks from TCADP Advisory Board Members Sam Millsap and Roger Barnes and a period of Q & A. The National Association of Social Workers has a justice statement for abolition of the death penalty and this was highlighted as part of the workshop. The organizers encouraged folks to join TCADP and displayed a table with TCADP resource materials.

Vigil Locations 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 – 6:00 p.m. at the Cathedral of Hope – PeaceHouse Dallas Lobby (5910 Cedar Springs Rd). If the door is closed, ring the bell!

El Paso (Site 1) 6:00 pm Saint Patrick Cathedral, 1118 N Mesa St, **(Site 2)** Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 131 S Zaragosa Rd, **(Site 3)** Our Lady of Guadalupe 2709 Alabama, and **(Site 4)** St. Pius X Hope Chapel, 1050 N Clark.

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

Houston Rotating Locations... April-May, corner of Main and Binz streets by St. Paul's United Methodist Church from 5:30 to 6:20 pm

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 and organizations for their generous contributions in the past quarter (January 8 – April 1, 2013). 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*
Caitlin Adams^
Janice Ahmad
Dr. Kate Allen^
Rev. Rick Anderson^
Stacy Anderson^
David Atwood*
Kathleen Bailey
W.A. Barnebey
Kathy Barrett*
Scott Bass^
Kendra Beach^
Niki Bergin*^
Kay Birdwell
Dr. Whitney Bodman^
LeAnn Boyce
D. Clark Boykin^
Les Breeding*^
Peggy Brown^
Barbara Budde^
Sr. Margaret Bulmer
Sarah and Allen Burke^
Carrie Campbell^
Rev. David Campbell
Karen Casey^
Chris Castillo
Maria Castillo^
Andee Chamberlain^
Barry D. Clar
Karen Clifton*
Jim and Sherry Coombes*^
Rev. Robert O. Cooper
Elisabetta Corona^
Sr. Mary Francis Cortinas
Phillip J Crabill
Patsy Cravens
Janice Curry^
Wayne Daniel^
Mary Alice Davis
Patricia Delgado
Simi Denson^
Angela and Herb Diener
Arthur L. Dietz*
Timothy Dubbs
Deborah Due*
Kay Duffy-Taylor*^
Fr. Bob Duggan
Tom and Jean Egan*^
Jean Eastlake^

Martha Eberle*
Kelly Epstein*
Shirley Farrell*
Robert Folz
Ellen Flood^
Eliseo Garcia
James Grant^
Joe Grant^
Karen Hall^
Steve Hall
Bert Hargraves^
Harriett Harrow^
Sheva Hart^
Scott Hayden
Shannon Haynes*
Chuck and Sue Heaberlin
Mary Heartlein*^
Jan Heinrichs*
Maggie Herdeg^
Judy Holloway*^
Winnie Honeywell
John Houlé*^
Kristin Houlé^
Lisa C. Huston
Kathryn M. Kase
Paula Keeth*^
Nancy and Jerry Kelly^
Rev. Bernard and Carol Kern^
Elliot Kralj^
Michele Kuxhausen
John Liles
Kathy Mace*
David Mack
Fr. John Manahan*
Jesse Mansfield
Lorina Martinez*
Bruce and Ellen McCormick^
Jed McCuiston^
Vicki McCuiston^
Brenda and Ralph McGahagin^
Barbara McGuirk^
William Mefford*
Steven Mendenhall
Sarah and Craig Miley
John Mimbela
Sr. Miriam Mitchell
Beatrice Mladenka-Fowler

Pat Monks, Esq.*
Anne Mund*^
Karen Neeley^
Mary and Paul Nugent^
Fr. Roberto Pena OMI
Rev. Carroll and Jane Pickett
Arthur Preisinger^
Nancy Price^
Marie L.A. Racine
Erin Randall^
Bob Rankin^
Marilyn Rawlins^
Kelly Reid
John Willis Reiser^
Mike Renquist^
Fr Maurice Restivo
Ham and Joanne Richards
Sr. Elizabeth Riebschlaeger
Chalandra Robinson^
Karl H. Rodenberg
Lily Rosenman^
Gordon Sanford
Catherine J. Schneider*
Marilyn Schramm^
Scott Shafer
Kate Shannon^
Amy Sharp^
Betsy L. Siegel^
Jennifer Simmons*^
Chris Sisto^
Catherine Spain^
Annette Spanhel*
Bob and Jean Van Steenburg*^
Dr. Beatrice Ting
Tina Trimble
Jared Tyler
Brenda Vela
Matthew Venhaus
Sigrid Walsh
Lynn Walters*^
Steven Warach*
Kevin Werner
Linda White*
Bishop Joe Wilson^
Tom Windberg
Brian Wood^
Paul Woodruff^
Rich Woodward*^

Rev. John F. Yeaman^

Pax Christi Texas
School Sisters of Notre Dame

* signifies Partner for Justice,
TCADP's recurring donation
program [www.tcadp.org/
donate/partners-for-justice/](http://www.tcadp.org/donate/partners-for-justice/)

^ signifies donor to Amplify
Austin



**Thank you to all
of our
Amplify Austin donors!**

Amplify Austin was a 24-hour
online giving festival held in
March that raised close to
\$3 million for 300 Austin
non-profits. Due to the
generosity of donors and perks
associated with the campaign,
TCADP raised over \$5,000!

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 **4/1/2013**, please take the time to renew your membership or become a new member. See tcadp.org/join-tcadp/ for membership form. Thank you!

Changing the Conversation

TCADP 2013 Annual Conference
February 23, 2013
St. Edward's University, Austin
Photos by Mo McMorrow and Jan Anderson

Thank you for making the conference such a great success!



Save the Date: 2014 Annual Conference
February - Fort Worth, Texas