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SPLC REPORT

PUBLISHED BY THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
PROMOTING TOLERANCE·MONITORING HATE·SEEKING JUSTICE

OCTOBER 2002
VOLUME 32, NUMBER 3

New Rosa Parks teaching kit now available to schools

The spirit of the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and the inspirational role of Rosa Parks are captured in a new Teaching Tolerance film produced by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks is the key component of a new Teaching Tolerance video education kit. The Center will begin sending the kit this month to as many as 50,000 schools across the country, at no cost to educators.

"Mrs. Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott still capture the world's imagination," said Teaching Tolerance director Jim Carnes. "Although it happened nearly a half-century ago, the boycott really is a timeless story."

AP WIDEWORLD

Rosa Parks remains a model for today's young activists.

The new kit presents the birth of the Civil Rights Movement as more than a mere history lesson for the classroom but also as a model for young activists who are looking to make a positive change in their communities. Recommended for middle and upper grades, the 40-minute documentary film is accompanied by a viewer's guide with classroom activities and historical documents.

To make the *Mighty Times* film, Teaching Tolerance once again teamed up with California filmmakers Bobby Houston and Robert Hudson. The two produced last year's Teaching Tolerance film, *A Place at the Table*. Previous Teaching Tolerance videos have received numerous awards, including an Academy Award in 1995 for Best Short Documentary.

The most obvious challenge in creating the film was to capture the excitement of the boycott era and to convey its relevance to today's youth. The new film successfully cuts through the stereotyping that often portrays Mrs. Parks as merely a quiet, middle-aged seamstress who refused to budge from her bus seat out of sheer exhaustion.

Although she was weary, Mrs. Parks was also a committed, well-trained anti-segregation activist. Her actions on the bus were fueled by a widespread feeling among African Americans throughout the Jim Crow South: Enough is enough. As she would write in her 1994 autobiography *My Story*, "The only tired I was, was tired of giving in."

The role Mrs. Parks and the new minister in town, Martin Luther King, had in sparking and leading the movement is incalculable. But behind every great protest movement is a community of citizens whose courage and dedication lead the charge for social change. *Mighty Times* introduces new stories and new heroes.

Film spotlights 'foot soldiers'

"We wanted to spotlight the role of the organizers and participants who followed Mrs. Parks' lead," Carnes said. "They were the foot soldiers of the boycott — the citizens who walked to work every day for more than a year, the teenagers who walked each other to and from school."

For more than a year, the Montgomery Bus Boycott tested the endurance of these peaceful protesters. Their courage and perseverance overturned an unjust law and created a legacy that continues to inspire those who work for freedom and justice today.

AP WIDEWORLD

Rosa Parks' 1955 arrest for refusing to move to the back of a Montgomery bus sparked a boycott and the birth of the modern Civil Rights Movement.

"*Mighty Times* shows Rosa Parks as more than just an icon of passive resistance; she was an active citizen in an active community," Carnes said. "The film demonstrates that ordinary people can have an extraordinary impact."

Filmmakers Houston and Hudson canvassed the community during the pre-production phase of the film in the spring and summer of 2001. They sat down and interviewed dozens of Montgomery residents who remembered Mrs. Parks and how the boycott started.

In the film, boycott participants and witnesses are joined by their sons, daughters, grandchildren, and other relatives to tell the story more vividly than ever before. The presence of young family members enhances the narrative, demonstrates the boycott's contemporary significance, and shows how the story of the bus boycott inspires today's younger generation.

Teaching Tolerance has added a *Mighty Times* page to its Web site (www.teachingtolerance.org). The volume of potential activities associated with Rosa Parks and the early stages of the Civil Rights Movement made it necessary to create another resource for educators. New lesson plans and interactive features will be added to the site throughout the fall.

"The change one person can inspire and how a community can unite to overcome great obstacles — the teaching opportunities on these themes are endless," Carnes said.

The latest film project was made possible by financial support from Center donors, many of whom are listed in the film's credits. All Teaching Tolerance products are distributed at no charge to schools.

Indiana diversity celebration overshadows Klan event

SOUTH BEND, IND. – When Center co-founder Morris Dees spoke at a local Human Rights Commission luncheon here in April, his presentation inspired a community to use Center resources to fight hate and bias in their area.

Dees' speech prompted four local women — Liz Dobbs, Barb Franklin, Nancy Kling and Stacie Sowela — to respond to the growing presence of Ku Klux Klan activity in the region. Through a local organization, United Counties 4 Promoting Equality Among Communities Everywhere, or UC4PEACE, they went to work.

"It was amazing," Franklin said. "There are so many good people out there who just need a little push to get going. Morris helped give them that push."

UC4PEACE began its efforts by organizing a diversity celebration on August 3, the same day as the area's first ever KKK white pride festival. The peace group contacted the Center for assistance and received more help than they ever expected.

"We spoke with Stacie, Barb, people at Indiana University-South Bend, and others leading up to the Diversity Celebration," said Kelvin Datcher, outreach coordinator for the Center's community education program, Tolerance.org. "We spent a lot of time discussing the key elements not only of having a great diversity event, but also capitalizing on that momentum to create long-term community change."

UC4PEACE also benefited from Center publications.

"We passed out hundreds of copies of the Center's booklets, *10 Ways to Fight Hate* and *101 Tools for Tolerance*, as a way to remind people that despite all the work we have done, there is much more to be done ahead," Sowela said.

The hard work and dedication of the women of UC4PEACE, as well as the guidance they received from the Center, helped create a successful event that ultimately drew twice as many participants as the Klan's White Pride Fest. The overwhelming success of the diversity celebration garnered it, and not the White Pride Fest, a front-page story in the *South Bend Tribune*.

"I'm glad we were able to help," Datcher said. "Still, the citizens of South Bend deserve the credit; they did the work."

GREG SWIERCZ / SOUTH BEND TRIBUNE

Participants in a South Bend, Indiana, diversity celebration outnumbered those attending a Klan White Pride Fest held the same day.

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The Southern Poverty Law Center is a nonprofit organization that combats hate, intolerance, and discrimination through education and litigation. Its programs include Teaching Tolerance, Tolerance.org and the Intelligence Project. The Center also sponsors the Civil Rights Memorial, which celebrates the memory of individuals who died during the Civil Rights Movement.

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MAILBOX

Center inspires activist to continue her work

Lani Silver is a women's studies teacher and a Holocaust oral historian in San Francisco who has coordinated 1,700 oral histories with Holocaust survivors and witnesses over the past 20 years. She is also the director of the James Byrd Jr. Racism Oral History Project, which is a project of the James Byrd Jr. Foundation for Racial Healing. She wrote the following letter to the Center in August.

I know you'll think I'm exaggerating, but I'm not.

Every time I get down in the dumps — from the stress and exhaustion of my years of working to make a better world — I think of the Southern Poverty Law Center.

SPECIAL
Lani Silver

Sometimes it seems just too hard to be an activist. There's so much suffering in the world, and I can only work on one little tiny piece of it. The racism and genocide that continues in the 21st century makes me ill. There's not much money in our progressive causes, and that is frustrating.

So after a difficult fight or working hard all night to meet a deadline, I think: Are those Center people complaining? No. Are they letting stress get to them? Clearly not, they keep going and going. You go step by step, with a steady kind of rhythm.

I've been a writer for change for 30 years and greatly admire Morris Dees and each one of you who work at the Center. I am so grateful to you for holding the line. What extraordinary people you must be.

Your wisdom and determination give me hope and quiet me down when I feel hopeless and frustrated. I think of you, and I go back to the work refreshed and calm. Thank you so much for three decades of brilliant work. Thank you so much for your activism and intelligence. If you can keep going, day after day, then I can, too.

When the church burnings were occurring, I wished I could do something. When hate crimes take place, I yearn to defend the victims. I read with dismay about the INS's incarceration of children [page 1 in the July *SPLC Report*], and I wanted to help. I read your newsletter, and I see that by supporting the Center's work, I am helping in all these areas and more. Thank you for being my "plowshare" of peace and justice.

D. R.
Malibu, California

In an age of so much bad news and sadness, Kirk Fairfield's story [page 7 in the July *SPLC Report*] gave me inspiration and hope. The fact that he chose to forgo the all-important practice of American self-promotion to create awareness about the vital work of the Southern Poverty Law Center inspires me.

I felt heartened to read about his choice. I, too, am a supporter, and I commend Kirk on the decision he made to teach others in his community about the Center's existence and mission. He has also provided the youth he coaches with a wonderful example of living values. I thank him for demonstrating his values through his actions.

A. Z. M.
Mountain View, California

I read the *Intelligence Report* from cover to cover every time we receive it at the sheriff's office. My special investigative interest is compiling intelligence on extremist groups and combating their growth and existence. Congratulations, the *Intelligence Report* is the very best periodical in the field.

M. S.
Larned, Kansas

I greet you. You are doing a very nice job. To teach tolerance to intolerant people is indeed a job worth praising.

G. M. L.
Karachi, Pakistan

I am part of a group of teachers who have begun teaching a "world cultures"/understanding diversity enrichment program for all 9th graders in our district. I saw the public service announcement — with students and Alanis Morrisette — for your Web site [www.tolerance.org] and want a copy of that ad. It is fantastic and exactly what we are trying to do with our curriculum. Your Web site is an inspiration to me and to all of us in teaching this program. Thanks!

P. R.
Waverly, Minnesota

Thank you for publishing such a remarkable magazine [*Teaching Tolerance*]. I teach in one of the most affluent areas in Utah. Every single one of our students is white, and 92 percent are Mormons. I will use your magazine for years to come because it will help me introduce diversity into the classroom and will teach my students to honor differences of all types.

A. W.
Salt Lake City, Utah

Donor brings Brazilian visitors to Center

J. R. Dreyer (center), a Center donor since 1983, speaks fluent Portuguese and serves as a contract interpreter for the U. S. Department of State. He recently accompanied two Afro-Brazilian vistors to the Civil Rights Memorial. The women, who are actively seeking equal rights for blacks in their country, came to the U.S. to learn more about this country's civil rights movement. Under the auspices of the State Department's International Visitor Program, Ruth Lopes Costa (left), vice president of the Afro-Brazilian Society for Social and Cultural Diversity, and Maria Aparecida Antero Correia, director of socio-economic studies for the Bank Employees' Union of São Paulo, visited the United States to learn about the African-American struggle, challenges and triumphs.

Ex-priest led fight against hate groups in Northwest

ELLENSBURG, WASH. – Bill Wassmuth, an active opponent of white supremacist groups in the Northwest, died at home here on August 27 from complications of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gherig's Disease. He was 61.

SPECIAL
Bill Wassmuth

Wassmuth, a native of Idaho and former Catholic priest, became pastor of St. Pius X Church in Coeur d'Alene in 1979, shortly before the Aryan Nations and its leader Richard Butler established headquarters in nearby Hayden Lake. From the beginning, the priest was an outspoken critic of the group and its presence in the area. Appointed to lead the Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations in 1984, he helped mobilize local residents against growing hate activity in the area. He was also a strong supporter of the Center's lawsuit against Butler and the Aryan Nations, attending the September 2000 trial each day and encouraging community backing for the Center's efforts.

Wassmuth was 'brave soldier'

"Bill was a brave soldier in the fight against hate," said Morris Dees, Center co-founder and lead counsel in the Aryan Nations case.

Though Wassmuth's actions made him a target of hate activity, including the 1986 bombing of his home, he continued to fight separatist groups and promote human rights up until his death. In recent years, he expressed regret at not having taken legal action against those who attacked his home, saying that he later came to realize the importance court decisions have in destroying the power of hate groups.

In the late 1980s, he left the priesthood to marry and moved to Seattle, where he became director of the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment, now known as the Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity. Throughout the years, Wassmuth often collaborated with Center staff to counter the menacing influence of the Aryan Nations in the Northwest. He also chaired a state advisory committee for the U.S. Civil Rights Commission, served on the board of the Institute for Action against Hate at Spokane's Gonzaga University and helped found Idaho's Cult Awareness Center and the Hospice of North Idaho.

"We're a better world because of Bill Wassmuth," said Tony Stewart, a founder of the Kootenai human relations task force. "I've never known anyone so committed to humanity. His work changed North Idaho, and Bill became the spiritual leader of the Northwest."

The Northwest Coalition, which Wassmuth directed until 1999, continues to thrive today and is an active presence in Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. His family asked that donations be made in his memory to a human rights organization.

Neo-Nazi leader William Pierce dies; future of National Alliance uncertain

HILLSBORO, W.VA. — At the end, he called in his inner circle one by one, dispensing orders from his deathbed as the darkness closed in around him. For 10 days this July, William Luther Pierce instructed his subordinates, working feverishly to try to ensure the survival of his National Alliance, America's leading neo-Nazi group.

JENNIFER WARBURG

William Pierce

But it remains to be seen if the Alliance can hold together, both as a profitable business operation and as a political entity.

Pierce's death on July 23 came at a critical moment. A quarter-century after creating the Alliance out of the rubble of a George Wallace youth support group, Pierce, 68, had finally remade his outfit into a remarkably professional organization. Much of the previous two years was spent building up a talented staff, learning how to run a profitable business, and intensifying recruiting and propaganda. By this spring, the Alliance was bringing in more than $1 million a year, had a paid national staff of 17 full-time officials, and was better known than at any time in its history.

Six days after Pierce's unforeseen death from cancer, a committee of his key staffers announced that the Alliance had found a new leader. Erich Gliebe, the hard-edged former boxer who fought professionally as the "Aryan Barbarian," would be the new chairman, although all agreed that no one could replace Pierce, who was memorialized as "Our Eternal Chairman," comparable to Hitler himself.

Although Gliebe is not expected to have the kind of total authority that Pierce enjoyed — the inner core of the Alliance's national staff is likely to act as a kind of collective leadership — his ascension was unsurprising. Gliebe was intensely loyal to Pierce, who viewed him as a son. He is considered smart and ruthless, even if humorless and without charisma. More importantly, he is the well-established manager of Resistance Records, the white power music label that has brought the National Alliance financial success and political attention.

Pierce's group was organized to be a self-perpetuating growth machine — members were recruited in order to bring in monthly dues that could then be used to hire national staff members. The danger of such a set-up is that it depends on the loyalty of men and women who belong to the Alliance's far-flung chapters — a loyalty that has long been directed personally to Pierce, a man who may not have been charismatic but who did provide a comprehensive vision of the world to his followers. If Gliebe fails to win the same kind of personal loyalty — if he cannot make sense of the world for his members — he could soon start to lose them and their dues. That in turn could spark layoffs of staff members and, eventually, the group's collapse.

If such a collapse were to occur, it would mean the end of one of the best-functioning white supremacist organizations. The group has become the world's largest distributor of white power music through Resistance Records, which is a major profit center. Sales of white power music have quadrupled since spring 2001, and hits on the Resistance Records Web site are up almost threefold. A serious multimedia operation has been built up that has recently produced a new recruiting video, a racist but highly successful computer game called "Ethnic Cleansing," and a series of shortwave, AM, FM and Internet broadcasts.

SPECIAL

Erich Gliebe

The 17 members of the Alliance's national staff include experts in computers, Web site design, video game technology, shortwave broadcasting and film production, and even a man who falsely claims he taught space chemistry at Harvard. The group's publishing operation is about to start up again in earnest. It has acquired expensive office and printing machinery, its own diesel power plant, a flatbed dump truck, a log-splitting machine and more. And a major new building with seating capacity for 400 people is nearing completion.

Whether Gliebe can run the operation and maintain the loyalty of the Alliance's members is an open question.

Hate crime training expands, thanks to activist advisory board

Late into their last night together, after two marathon days of panel discussions and brainstorming, members of the Center's hate crime training advisory board were firing ideas back and forth across the dinner table, building a bigger dream.

A Canadian police officer stressed the importance of exploring an international perspective. A former pro football tackle advocated mandatory cadet training. The younger brother of a Tuskegee Airman talked about New Jersey officers' response to a film history of hate.

In its first year of operation, the Center's Web-based training course [see April 2002 *SPLC Report*] has already reached more than 300 law enforcement officers in the U.S. and Canada – including local, state and federal officers, district attorneys, campus police, and military personnel. But the advisory board members — law enforcement officers themselves — are not nearly satisfied.

Seven of the nine board members convened at the Center in August to videotape panel discussions for the next phase of the online curriculum currently offered through Auburn University at Montgomery (AUM).

Board members 'truly dedicated'

Intelligence Project research director Laurie Wood, who helped design the curriculum and oversees the Center's hate crime training effort, was impressed with their enthusiasm. "These guys are truly dedicated," she said. "If it were up to them, every active duty officer and every new cadet in every jurisdiction would be thoroughly trained in how to recognize and respond to bias crimes."

In addition to their participation in the online course, each of the board members is actively involved in bias crime training in their own jurisdiction, and many have incorporated Center materials into their work.

During their August session, the board members discussed future expansion. Next on their agenda: a plan to seek certification for the course from the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards & Training, a CD-ROM to accompany the online materials for the second module of the course, and a videotape previewing the course for police commanders.

Intelligence Briefs

tracking extremist activity

Aryan Nations leadership in dispute

TWO WOULD-BE FÜHRERS OF ONE of America's oldest neo-Nazi groups are squabbling over whether the Aryan Nations is headquartered in Idaho or in Pennsylvania. Founder Richard Butler, who was forced to sell the Idaho compound he'd run for a quarter-century after losing a civil lawsuit brought by the Center in 2000, insists the outfit is located in the Hayden, Idaho, house where he now lives. Rival August Kreis says it's really found on the piece of Pennsylvania scrubland where his mobile home sits.

Initially, Butler appointed Kreis and pal Ray Redfeairn as his successors last fall. But this January, the pair kicked their own former leader out of the Aryan Nations, saying the organization Butler founded had turned into a group of "weirdos, winos and clowns." Butler retorted that it was actually Kreis and Redfeairn who had been ejected. But then, in May, Redfeairn had an apparent revelation, accusing Kreis of thievery, dropping out of Aryan Nations and acknowledging Butler as boss.

Since then, Kreis and Butler have run dueling Web sites, each claiming to be the genuine leader. Kreis' site is especially optimistic, calling on followers to "hail the new dawn" that presumably will accompany his victory in the Aryan Nations succession battle.

Police: Florida doctor planned to bomb mosques

ST. PETERSBURG — PODIATRIST Robert J. Goldstein was arrested on August 23 after authorities found guns and explosives in his home. Court documents allege that he planned to use them to destroy an Islamic education center and dozens of mosques.

In Goldstein's home, which was rigged with trip wires and surveillance cameras, police found explosive devices including hand grenades and a five-gallon gasoline bomb with a timer and a wire attached. Deputies also found up to 40 weapons, 20 explosive devices, a list of about 50 Islamic worship centers in Florida and detailed plans to bomb an Islamic education center.

According to the court filing, a three-page document found in Goldstein's home laid out his plans.

The template for the bombing included what Goldstein would wear, how he could get rid of fingerprints and how he would engage in hand-to-hand combat if necessary. There was also a schematic design for placing bombs in the document which said the the objective was to "kill all" at an "Islamic education center."

Speech by Hale triggers angry protest

WAKEFIELD, MASS. — ANGRY protesters clashed with police outside the public library here September 14 as Matthew Hale, leader of the white supremacist World Church of the Creator, spoke to about 40 followers inside. Anticipating trouble, police had shut down streets, closed the library and adjacent post office to the public, and brought in about 200 police officers from 70 area communities as backup.

Wakefield police said four people were arrested on disorderly conduct charges, and onlookers reported scattered fights and several minor injuries.

About 100 people gathered a quarter-mile away at a local church to sing songs at a rally called "Love Lives Here."

The World Church of the Creator gained notoriety in 1999 when member Benjamin Smith shot two people dead and injured nine others in the Midwest. Hale is scheduled to speak in Fayetteville, West Virginia, on October 26.

Hate groups rally on Capitol Mall

WASHINGTON, D.C. — ON AUGUST 24, just over 450 neo-Nazis and white supremacists marched on the U.S. Capitol to protest American support of Israel. They chanted anti-Semitic and anti-Israel slogans, burned an Israeli flag, and traded insults with counter-demonstrators.

Neo-Nazi National Alliance members were joined by those from Skinhead groups, the Aryan Nations and the World Church of the Creator.

A slightly smaller group of counter-demonstrators included students who said they had come to preach peace; militants chanting, "Death, death, death to the Nazis!"; and anarchists dressed in black. They were joined by others, including Palestinians who said they had come to reject the white supremacists' support for Palestinian independence.

Before the march, several white supremacists on their way to the rally were attacked at their Baltimore hotel. The attackers had gas grenades, tire irons, baseball bats and hockey sticks. It took more than 50 police officers almost a half-hour to bring the fighting under control.

Following Center exposé, group rejects key racist

MEMPHIS — According to members of several Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV) camps, a spring *Intelligence Report* exposé on the infiltration of hate group members into leadership positions in the organization helped stop the election of white supremacist lawyer Kirk Lyons to a top position.

Elections were held during the annual SCV convention here in July.

Lyons is the leading lawyer for the nonprofit Southern Legal Resource Center of Black Mountain, N.C., an organization devoted to fighting what he and many neo-Confederates call "heritage violations" — attacks on the culture and symbols of the old South.

JENNIFER WARBURG

Kirk Lyons

Lyons' priority was not always defending the South. He has a long history of participation in extremist causes, including a 2000 speech to the neo-fascist American Friends of the British National Party, where he discussed his hopes that a European nation will rise again in the South. On the panel with Lyons was former Klansman and current neo-Nazi David Duke.

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, based in Columbia, Tenn., has more than 30,000 members and is the oldest and most influential organization of its kind, with prominent senators like Trent Lott, R-Miss., and Jesse Helms, R-N.C., as members. The SCV has an annual budget of more than $1 million and $5 million in the bank — funds that make it a tempting prize for extremists like Lyons.

Although the SCV's constitution states that it is "non-political" and devoted exclusively to heritage and remembrance of defeated Confederate forebears, the *Intelligence Report* article made clear that radicals from hate groups, particularly the League of the South and the Council of Conservative Citizens, had been eroding that principle by injecting political activism into the organization. Lyons is the most notorious of these extremists.

At the July convention, Lyons ran for the position of Commander of the Army of Northern Virginia, one of the three main divisions in the SCV. In the past, many commanders from the Army of Northern Virginia, the largest of the three armies, have been elevated to the top post as Commander in Chief. The three regional commanders also sit on a national board that sets the policy and budget for the SCV.

Some 1,200 SCV members attended the convention, and more than half voted in the Lyons election. Lyons garnered more votes than the other two candidates in the first round, but not the required majority. Another candidate, Randy Burbage of Columbia, S.C., was eliminated when Charles Hawks of Raleigh, N.C., a retired government worker, received three more votes than Burbage. In the end, Hawks defeated Lyons 325-308 in a nail-biter of an election. A recount was required because of the closeness of the vote.

According to members of several SCV camps opposed to Lyons, the *Intelligence Report* exposé on the SCV helped to turn the tide against Lyons. "Your story probably made the difference in getting people informed about Lyons and what has been happening in our organization," said Gilbert Jones of Greensboro, N.C.

Others have decided to leave the organization altogether. After reading the same report, Tommy Allen, formerly of Lyons' camp, resigned the SCV and now has plans to create a historical group combining both Union and Confederate descendants. One North Carolina SCV chapter made a special financial contribution to the Center because of its SCV exposé.

Lyons was not cowed by his loss and one of his associates, Ron G. Wilson, captured the top spot of Commander in Chief.

"There will be another race, another day, another time," Lyons said after the vote.

Memorial lettering repainted

Chlorine and other chemicals in the water flowing over the Civil Rights Memorial erode the paint in its lettering, requiring repainting from time to time. Although completely refurbished in April, the Center again had to shut down the water in late September so that Ron Garrett of H & H Commercial Waterproofing and Restoration could apply a coat of silver paint to the wall bearing Martin Luther King's well-known paraphrase of Amos 5:24 — "We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream." Dedicated in November 1989, the Maya Lin-designed memorial is across the street from the Center's office building.

Grace Graham

New law fellow works to bring inmates relief

New Center law fellow Grace Graham is working to see that Alabama inmates confined to virtual sweatboxes get some relief soon.

Graham's research underpinned a Center federal court lawsuit, filed in August, charging prison officials with failure to alleviate dangerously hot conditions at the Holman Correctional Facility. The facility's stifling heat leaves inmates at risk of serious illness or death, in violation of the Eighth Amendment's protections against cruel and unusual punishment. A motion for a preliminary injunction, filed along with the complaint in *Maxwell vs. Haley*, requests that inmates be allowed to purchase fans for their cells at their own expense.

"Because the ventilation and cooling system no longer works, there is absolutely no air circulation in the 6-by-9 foot cells," said Graham. "Our south Alabama summers are brutal, and the cell temperatures often climb into the mid-90s and higher."

Inmates are desperate

Desperate for relief, some inmates have taken to putting their heads and feet in the toilet to feel the cool water. "Instead of sleeping in their beds, many inmates brave the ants and rats for the miserable benefits that sleeping on the cooler concrete floor provides," Graham said. "Even so, they wake frequently, drenched in sweat. Plaintiffs spend virtually 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in cells that feel like sweatboxes."

Graham said that the men are allowed to shower only three times each week and are given two cups of ice each day, an inadequate attempt to compensate for the excessive heat. Graham noted that some inmates have already succumbed to stifling conditions. Plaintiff Michael Maxwell blacked out and was taken to the air-conditioned infirmary for medical treatment. Others have complained of dizziness, headaches, nausea, weight-loss and other symptoms.

"We are fortunate that, so far, no one has died," Graham said. There is no justification for not allowing inmates to purchase their own fans, Graham notes. "There is virtually no cost to the state, and any electricity that is used will be much cheaper than the costs of medically treating inmates who have succumbed to heat-related illnesses." Prison officials adopted a policy in 1995 that prohibits inmates from buying fans for their cells.

Dembitz gift funds fellowship

Graham, who joined the Center in July, is litigating the case along with Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein. Graham will serve two years in a fellowship position funded by a gift from Grace R. Dembitz of Washington, D.C., in memory of her late husband, Lewis N. Dembitz, a former economist and consultant. Lewis Dembitz died in 1985 at the age of 75 after having served in the Federal Reserve System for 30 years and as a consultant to the U. S. Department of State and the Agency for International Development. He was an authority on securities markets, pension funds and related trust matters.

Graham graduated *magna cum laude* from Boston College Law School in May 2000 after finishing *summa cum laude* at Birmingham-Southern College with a degree in political science. Before joining the Center, she helped litigate patent infringement, breach of contract and ADA discrimination cases as an associate with a Washington, D.C., law firm. Graham also interned at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute where she helped develop the groundbreaking exhibit "Alabamians with Disabilities."

"I am thrilled to play a role in the important work of the Center," Graham said. "The Holman case is providing a wonderful opportunity to try to make an important difference in the lives of these inmates."

Law clerks experience civil rights law firsthand

Three law students got just what they bargained for this summer working "in the trenches" with the Center's legal staff. Engaged in everything from visiting prisons to drafting pleadings for federal court, the students learned firsthand about civil rights litigation and advocacy.

"I expected to be working at the forefront of social justice issues, and I was," said David Pressman, a second year law student from New York University School of Law. "One week after arriving in Montgomery, I started drafting an 11th Circuit *habeas corpus* brief on behalf of a man who served over 18 years in prison for a crime he did not commit."

Dafina Copper

David Pressman

Kathy Wyer

Pressman and fellow interns Dafina Cooper, a third year student at Temple University Beasley School of Law, and Kathy Wyer, a third year student at S.J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah, left their legal research and writing projects behind when they traveled to rural areas of the South to talk face-to-face with victims of civil rights violations.

"I enjoyed the time spent speaking with clients the most," said Cooper. "The opportunity to actually meet with people who need help is invaluable." Cooper also worked on a case the Center filed to secure legal representation for immigrant children seeking asylum in the United States.

Cooper graduated *cum laude* from Clark Atlanta University in 1999 with a bachelor's degree in mass media arts. Last summer she worked for a Birmingham law firm and as a research consultant at the Birmingham Museum of Art, compiling research for an exhibit on the media's perception of the Civil Rights Movement.

In rural Lowndes County, Cooper and Wyer talked to low-income residents about their excessively high electric bills. In Russell County, they spoke with county jail inmates about their medical problems and conditions. In Escambia County, Wyer gathered evidence for a case on behalf of state prison inmates suffering from long-term exposure to excessive heat.

"The stories I heard on these trips made me realize that although 'fighting injustice' sounds like a lofty goal, it often simply means trying to get those in charge to act reasonably when the way things are doesn't make sense," Wyer said. "My time at the Center has helped me understand the role that attorneys can play in making sure that people are treated fairly."

Wyer holds a bachelor's degree in classical studies from Pomona College and a master of arts in Middle East studies from the University of Utah. She is an editor of the *Utah Law Review* and has received numerous awards, scholarships and fellowships, including one this year to study legal issues around the provision of special educational programs for immigrant children. Fluent in Arabic, Hebrew, German, French and Italian, Wyer has traveled extensively in Europe, the Middle East, China and South Africa.

Pressman, now in his second year of law school, spent much of the summer working with Center co-founder Morris Dees and staff attorney Danielle Lipow on the Center's lawsuit seeking removal of a huge Ten Commandments monument from Alabama's judicial building. He also investigated a brutal gay-bashing incident.

"Without question," he said, "the most fulfilling moment came when, as a result of my investigation, and, naturally, a little help from Morris Dees, we were able to secure representation for two scared men who had been beaten bloody by bigots, lacked resources, lacked support, and had, quite literally, nowhere to turn. If I accomplished nothing else over the last few months, this was worth it."

Clerk brought wide range of experience

Pressman studied European intellectual and cultural history and theatre, speech, and dance at Brown University before going to law school. In between college and law school, he was involved in a variety of endeavors — from political activism and international politics to acting and directing.

Pressman served as a White House advance lead to former President Bill Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, helping to design and manage summits and conferences in Germany, New Zealand, Greece and Northern Ireland. He was later appointed by Clinton to serve as the special assistant and adviser to former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine K. Albright.

"We were fortunate again this year to have three talented, able and committed students to work with us and help us with our cases," said Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein. "While they are from diverse backgrounds, it is clear that they share a desire to use the law to bring about positive social change."

Resources for parents expanded on Web site

In August, the Center's Tolerance.org Web site rolled out its new "Parenting for Tolerance" program, designed to help parents and guardians negotiate the challenges of raising open-minded, empathetic children.

"As the new school year began, it was important to remember that parents are children's first teachers," said Jennifer Holladay, director of Tolerance.org. "Our new parenting section offers exciting information and resources for parents of toddlers, teens and every child in between."

VALERIE DONNES

Dana Williams

Site visitors can learn 10 ways to nurture tolerance in children, find recommended books to help them fine-tune their skills, locate reviews of recently-released children's books and utilize fun, interactive online storybooks and games to entertain children and teach respect for differences, too.

Column offers practical advice

Tolerance.org staff writer and working mom, Dana Williams, also introduced a new monthly column, "Talk to Kids About ..." that provides practical advice on discussing tough issues with children. The first installment tackled size bias, which inspired longtime Center supporter Lisbeth B. Ornstein to write a note of praise.

"Hooray for you — leading off your 'Parenting for Tolerance' column with a feature on size acceptance!" she said. "Size bias is probably the last socially acceptable bias based solely on appearance, and it takes real courage to speak out against it. I am a psychologist who specializes in treating eating, weight, and body image issues, and copies of this column will be available in my office."

"Parenting for Tolerance" also garnered huge interest from the corporate world. Toys 'R Us, TJ Maxx and the Guidance Channel have promoted "Parenting for Tolerance" materials in their own publications, awakening even more parents to the need to teach tolerance.

A recent profile in the Toys 'R Us newsletter, for example, prompted one parent to write with thanks: "I picked up your parenting tips at Toys 'R Us while shopping for my two children. It is very insightful information for both my children and myself."

To learn more, visit the Web site (www.tolerance.org/parents).

Mix It Up Web site uses bold graphics to engage teens.

Mix It Up is new initiative to encourage youth activism

The Center this month unveiled Mix It Up, a new network for youth activists and their allies. A joint project of Teaching Tolerance and Tolerance.org, Mix It Up provides resources and support for people nationwide who are seeking to bridge the boundaries that separate us in our daily lives.

The campaign, which will kick off with the first annual Mix It Up at Lunch Day on November 21, begins with a simple action. Students all over the country will make the commitment to step out of their cafeteria comfort zones, take a new seat, and see what happens.

"Despite the gains of the last 50 years, many unspoken rules continue to divide people by color, religion, class, ability, sexual orientation and other factors," said Jim Carnes, director of Teaching Tolerance. "Nowhere are those boundaries more evident than in the average lunchroom."

This one-day experiment will lead into a year-long exploration and questioning of the boundaries — both visible and invisible — that ordinarily separate students and communities.

Activities will range from classroom discussions and local community projects to a nationwide dialogue that crosses the lines of race, age, gender, income, ethnicity, language, ability, interests, and sexual orientation.

A new area for teens at Tolerance.org — at www.mixitup.org — is the online gathering place for all of these activities. At the site, students can share their experiences, answer polls, read current news on group boundaries and bridge building, order free resources and win national recognition for their work.

The site also provides resources for teachers and other adult allies, including questionnaires, lesson plans and funding opportunities. Teaching Tolerance also sent more than 600,000 Mix It Up starter packs to educators across the country with the Fall 2002 issue of its *Teaching Tolerance* magazine.

"The Mix It Up initiative is made possible through the generosity of our Tolerance.org corporate partners — Cisco, Imagistic and Thompson Becker International — and the individual supporters of the Southern Poverty Law Center," said Jennifer Holladay, director of Tolerance.org "We — and the thousands of students we will reach this year — are very grateful."

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Course teaches students value of philanthropy

ATLANTA – The Center participated in a festive luncheon July 3 with students from The Westminster Schools celebrating the completion of a unique academic summer program aimed at teaching young people the value of philanthropy. At the conclusion of the luncheon, each student became an official philanthropist by presenting a personal check to the nonprofit organization of his or her choice.

Seventeen-year-old Darcy Pottle presented former Teaching Tolerance associate director Glenda Valentine, serving as the Center's representative at the luncheon, with a check made out to the Center for $500.

SPECIAL

Darcy Pottle (left) presents her donation to the Center to Glenda Valentine, former Teaching Tolerance associate director.

Darcy's donation marked the completion of her final assignment for the Philanthropy 101 course. Sponsored by an anonymous benefactor, the four-week course gave each student a $1,200 stipend, with the requirement that a minimum of $500 had to be donated to a charity. The philanthropist who started the novel program said he wanted to get young people in the habit of giving their time, energy, effort, and money to a worthy cause.

Students in the course studied and embraced a wide variety of charitable causes – both inside and outside of the classroom – such as teaching disabled children therapeutic horseback riding, serving as peer mentors, working with the homeless and participating in charity walks and runs.

"We really want the students to give to a cause that they are passionate about," said course director Sally Finch. "We try to help them to each find one charity that just touches their heart. That's how Darcy said that she felt about the Center."

The Center was one of several local and national nonprofit organizations that the students studied during the course. The students studied the history of philanthropy, examined the motives for giving, learned how to assess charitable organizations, and read books by well-known philanthropists ranging from Andrew Carnegie to Robert Bellah.

At the close of the luncheon, Darcy summed up what many of the students had learned from the program with words from her final course essay:

"No matter how independent we may think we are, none of us could thrive without the help of others. … Acknowledgement of this fact is not recognition of individual weakness but celebration of collective strength. To understand that we each need help sometimes is to understand philanthropy, the beauty of sharing time, talent, or resources to help improve the life of another. … Philanthropy is not just a part of our community, it is its foundation. … To deny our need for philanthropy is to deny our natural human connection to one another."

Gifts from donors make film possible

Without the financial support of thousands of Center donors, there would not be a *Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks*. Two years ago, when Teaching Tolerance staff proposed a new film on Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott, nearly 3,000 donors stepped up and made their contribution to underwrite the film's production cost. All of their names are included in the film's credits.

Taking a leadership role in creating the film were 25 donors whose major gifts made them National Sponsors:

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In addition, Jane Gross of Miami made a donation in memory of her late husband, Warren D. Samet.

The new Mighty Times *teaching kit contains a film and a viewer's guide.*

SEATTLE PHOTOGRAPHY

Legal staff attend awards event

Several of the Center's legal staff were in Atlanta on July 23 for the Trial Lawyers for Public Justice annual awards banquet and reception. Joining Center chief trial counsel Morris Dees (second from right)— who was the group's Trial Lawyer of the Year in 1987 — were law fellow Grace Graham (from left), summer law clerks David Pressman and Dafina Cooper, law fellow Rohit Nepal, law clerk Kathy Wyer, and legal director Rhonda Brownstein.

Bequests

The Southern Poverty Law Center pays tribute to the memory of supporters who included the Center in their wills and other planned gifts. The Center gratefully acknowledges the bequests received from August 1, 2001, through August 31, 2002.

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NYC town hall meeting is profound experience

VALERIE DOWNES

Kelvin Datcher

Kelvin Datcher, outreach coordinator for Tolerance.org, served as a facilitator for "Listening to the City." Held in New York City on July 20, the unprecedented high-tech, town hall meeting was an opportunity for New Yorkers to voice their opinions about what should happen at Ground Zero. Here is Datcher's firsthand account.

The anger was real. Ten months later, time had passed, but the pain had not.

Five thousand New Yorkers were set to gather in Jacob Javits Arena, to share, to cry, to shout, and, hopefully to heal. But just as importantly, they would gather to voice their opinions about what should happen in lower Manhattan — formerly home to the World Trade Center, now known as Ground Zero.

Listening to the City was an amazingly ambitious idea: 500 tables, each with 10 New York residents, one facilitator, a laptop computer and eight hours of questioning, debating and voting about what should happen in the area forever changed by the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Although the votes were not binding, they would send a strong message to the agencies charged with rebuilding Ground Zero.

I spent the day before the meeting in a training session for the facilitators. Originally scheduled for two hours, the training swelled to four hours and then to six and then, we quit counting.

Late in the evening, one of the coordinators cut off the questioning. "You are ready," he said. "You have the information and the skills you need. Now go make a difference."

In what seemed a planned afterthought, he added, "Folks, if you haven't been there, visit Ground Zero."

I was one of the few who had not. I'd been to New York several times, but I'd never visited the WTC site. I jumped on the #1 train, heading south.

As I walked off the train and toward the site, I took my place in what seemed a parade of mourners, every one of us, even the smallest of children, silent.

As we emerged from a makeshift tunnel, we saw what the millions who have pilgrimaged to Ground Zero have seen — nothing.

And it was here, dripping wet with rain, at 9:30 at night, that I felt, like no other moment in my life, what it meant to be an American. There were people of all colors, the religious diversity obvious as people sought solace from places beyond themselves.

It is amazing what the site of nothingness can do to your heart.

I walked into the arena the next morning and looked at the mosaic of faces before me. Each represented the 3,000 lives lost at Ground Zero.

The crowd settled in, I got an even better sense of what seemed an impossible job.

"My name is Jim, and I have an agenda," said the first man to plop down at the table next to me. He was clutching a copy of a New York travel guide featuring the now fallen World Trade Center. "I want the towers back, exactly like they were. We'll send the message to the terrorists they didn't win."

Of course, his opinion didn't go unchallenged.

"I lost five friends," a woman said. "Nothing, nothing should ever be built on where those towers stood. People are buried there; it is holy ground. How can we put another office building over a cemetery?"

At another table, "This is my son — a New York firefighter," a woman said, fighting back tears. "Please look at this picture of him and never forget."

Five thousand more stories, each fighting to be heard, fighting for a place in New York's new future, were shared in that room. The only moment of consensus came when the lead facilitator announced that all 500 tables had firmly rejected the six architectural proposals for Ground Zero.

As people trudged out of the arena, relief and exhaustion were palpable. And as I walked back to my hotel, I tried to figure out what had just happened.

I think it was part therapy, part democracy and part family reunion. All of these strangers, carrying all of their pain, trusted each other enough to share this moment. People cried, some shouted, and, hopefully, a few healed.

September 11th is an opportunity for us to do more than remember. It is a chance for us to rebuild and renew our commitment to make our nation what it should be, to lay down our flags and pick up shovels, rakes and paintbrushes.

And that's what I will do.

Today, I have no idea what will happen at Ground Zero. I have no control over it. But each of us can control what we give to rebuilding and renewing our small part of America, no matter if we live in New York or in Montgomery, Alabama, or somewhere in between.

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Civil Rights Memorial

Dedicated supporters of the Southern Poverty Law Center who include the Center in their wills or estate plans are our "Partners for the Future." These special donors have decided to extend their support beyond their lifetimes and leave a legacy of tolerance and justice.

Writing a will and including a bequest to the Center allows you to choose where your estate will go and, in most cases, helps you to reduce taxes on your estate. Your bequest or planned gift — regardless of size — is a meaningful way to honor the Center's work and assure its future.

If you are interested in receiving information about wills, charitable gift annuities or other planned giving opportunities available at the Center — with no obligation — please contact the Center's planned giving department toll-free at 1-888-414-7752 or complete and mail the form below. You can also send an e-mail to plannedgiving@splcenter.org.

If you have already included the Center in your will or estate plans, please contact us so we can update our records. We want to welcome you as a Partner for the Future.

❑ The Center is already included in my will or estate plans. Please welcome me as a Partner for the Future.

❑ I'm interested in receiving general information about wills and planned giving.

Please send me information on the following specific planned giving opportunities:

❑ Wills ❑ Retirement Plans ❑ Charitable Gift Annuities
❑ Securities ❑ Insurance Policies ❑ Trusts

My date(s) of birth is: _____

❑ Yes, please contact me. My phone is: ( ) _____

Name _____

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City/State/Zip _____

E-mail address _____

Mail to: Partners for the Future · Southern Poverty Law Center · P.O. Box 548 · Montgomery AL 36101-0548

IN MEMORIAM

Robert L. Sears (1913-2001)

Robert L. "Bob" Sears died December 30, 2001, at age 88. His family requested that friends wishing to make a donation in his memory contribute to the Center.

In the early 1930s, Sears was among those aspiring children of immigrants who helped establish City College of New York as the "Harvard of the Proletariat." He played basketball there at a time when a young man standing only 5 feet 5 inches tall, if sufficiently skilled and spirited, could play on a championship college team.

SPECIAL

Robert L. Sears

He graduated from Brooklyn Law School into the thick of the Depression. Finding little work in the law, Sears dedicated himself to teaching and coaching in the public schools of New York City, including John Jay High School, which served a polyglot neighborhood in downtown Brooklyn. Sears often characterized this high school, with gratification and pride, as the best naturally integrated school in the city — in comparison to the many schools requiring busing to attain some semblance of integration.

Sears created a high school law course, authoring its textbook, to educate his racially diverse classes about their legal rights. He relished conversational exchanges that crystallized for his students the relevance of the Constitution in their daily lives.

The neighborhood surrounding John Jay was poor, and Sears' basketball squads — racially mixed and close-knit — often played their games in hand-me-down uniforms. But schooled both in scrappiness and sportsmanship, his teams won the distinction of playing city championship final round games in the basketball arena of high school dreams, Madison Square Garden.

For Sears, it was a natural extension of his role as teacher, coach and mentor to help his students move toward productive lives after high school. To this end, he energetically sought and obtained for them scholarships to colleges they never imagined accessible. Because of his efforts, young men — black, Hispanic and white — moved beyond limitations imposed by poverty.

Sears was the beloved husband of the late Joan Sears, and the devoted father of Andrew and Eric.