

SPLC REPORT



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PROMOTING TOLERANCE • MONITORING HATE • SEEKING JUSTICE

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Fourth-graders Kechler Orcel, left, and Ben Bell find they have a lot in common during Mix It Up at Lunch Day at Whispering Pines Elementary School in Boca Raton, Florida. The two were among thousands who left their cafeteria comfort zones on November 18.

Students break down barriers on Mix It Up at Lunch Day

From elementary to high school and from California to Alabama, more than 2 million students swapped cafeteria seats on November 18 for the Center's second annual Mix It Up at Lunch Day.

"Social boundaries create divisions and misunderstandings in our schools and communities," said Kelvin Datcher, director of Teaching Tolerance. "National Mix It Up Day challenges students to take the first step in breaking down these barriers by sitting outside their usual circle of friends."

In all, about 7,000 schools nationwide accepted the challenge this year, twice the number of schools participating in last year's Mix It Up Day.

Chika, a high school senior in Georgia, led the charge at her school.

'Peace' in the cafeteria

She described a "visible peace" in the cafeteria as students chatted, joked and ate lunch with classmates they'd never talked to.

"I went home with the smile of victory on my face, with the image of the cafeteria on my mind

and with the phrase 'Where you gonna sit?' on my lips," Chika wrote in an article about the experience at her school.

In newspaper accounts from around the nation, students echoed Chika's enthusiasm about Mix It Up Day.

"People are opening their eyes to different things, and they're seeing people better than just their outside appearance," said Zee, a high school student in North Carolina.

"Every kid in our school was talking about it," said Matt, a high school student in Michigan. "I saw kids sharing stories and ideas with kids they never thought they could relate to. I personally think it would be fun to continue this everyday."

Not all students found it so easy to break the habits of self-segregation, however.

Marcella, a high school sophomore in Oklahoma, was disappointed by the lack of participation among classmates at her school. "I thought it would be interesting to see how people reacted to meeting new people," she said. "But not many people are

going where they are designated. I think a lot of it is because they are shy and scared."

Marcella's experience comes as little surprise, considering a 2002 Mix It Up survey that showed a majority of middle and high school students believed their schools are "quick to put people in categories." In addition, almost half of the survey's respondents admitted they had rejected someone from their own social group.

Center provides tools for students

"Social boundaries among middle and high school students can be persistent. But we must continue working to equip students with the tools they need to overcome the barriers they face on a daily basis," said Jennifer Holladay, director of the Center's activism project, Tolerance.org. "Mix It Up is a great way to begin that process. We look forward to building on its success in 2004."

The Center's Tolerance.org and Teaching Tolerance staffs collaborate with the Connecticut-based Study Circles Resource Center on the Mix It Up at Lunch Day project.

Torrent of hate mail directed toward Center

The Center's role in the removal of former chief justice Roy Moore's Ten Commandments monument from its prominent place in the Alabama Judicial Building unleashed a torrent of hate mail. Many specifically targeted Center co-founder Morris Dees and Center president Richard Cohen, whose televised com-

e-mails began pouring into the Center. The messages' vitriolic tone became exceedingly strident after Moore was removed from office in mid-November. (See related story on page 4.)

Center leaders were called "scumbags," "Christ-killers" and "subhuman." Many other messages labeled the Center staff as "communist," and the tone of a great number was decidedly anti-Semitic.

Some hate mail merely entreated Center staff to "be ashamed," while others called for the Center to "burn in hell." A Portland man wrote Cohen to say that he wanted to witness Cohen's public execution "just for the opportunity to spit in your face beforehand."

All mail with any hint of serious intimidation was forwarded to the Center's (continued on page 5)

"You're the lowest form of human waste..."

ments about the case were viewed across the country.

After the case gained national attention in August, when Moore defied a court order to remove his monument, hundreds of hateful

Suit gets proper care for diabetic inmates

One morning last April, a diabetic inmate in an Alabama prison began having seizure-like convulsions. An officer was immediately called, but the inmate convulsed for another 45 minutes before being taken to the health care unit. Though the inmate had suffered from convulsions many times in the past, he had never been evaluated by a prison doctor to determine the best way to control his blood sugar.

The inmate is just one of the 2,000 Alabama prisoners who will benefit from the November settlement of the Center's *Gaddis vs. Campbell* suit against the Alabama Department of Corrections over substandard medical care provided to diabetic inmates.

"This settlement agreement is groundbreaking because it implements the most recent professional medical standards in the country



Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein poses with Alabama inmate James Taylor after settling the lawsuit on his behalf. "I think you saved my life," the 58-year-old diabetic said.

and is very specific about how to carry them out," said Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein.

Before the lawsuit, medical care provided to Alabama inmates with diabetes was horribly inadequate. The medical contractor hired by the Department of Corrections failed to promptly diagnose inmates with diabetes, adequately monitor blood sugar levels, treat injuries or infections, and administer (continued on page 3)

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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

Donor continues support after studying Moore case

Rev. Kenneth Moody-Arndt, an associate pastor at Faith United Methodist Church in North Canton, Ohio, has been a Center supporter since the late 1970s. He recently wrote this letter to Center chief trial counsel Morris Dees.

A couple of months ago, I wrote to you indicating that I would cease my financial support of the Center because of what I then saw as an unwarranted and irresponsible interference with freedom of religious expression.

I have since researched the situation having to do with Judge Moore and have concluded that he is indeed using his position to force his religious views upon

the public, and that the Southern Poverty Law Center acted responsibly and correctly in challenging his actions. I now intend to continue my support for the Center and all of its work.

I acknowledge that what I have done constitutes "reversing myself;" please feel free to use this against me should I decide to run for President, or for Governor of California.



Rev. Kenneth Moody-Arndt

Usually I can afford only one contribution to the Center annually, but I realize that your stand on the theocracy that Roy Moore would like to see established in this country is going to cost you some funding. So I have given up some unnecessary pleasures this month to send you the enclosed gift.

R. B.

Salisbury, Maryland

I have been a supporter for a few years and am proud to send my monthly pledge every month. And though I am a pastor and can often be stereotyped because of that, I fully support your efforts to stop "Judge" Moore as well as those whose hate is directed to the non-white or non-heterosexual person. You all keep up the good work, and you can continue to count on my support.

T. R.

Easton, Pennsylvania

Your *Intelligence Report* arrived today. This is the strongest issue of any of your publications that I have ever seen — and I've seen quite a few over the years, since I began contributing to the Center in 1975. I look forward to reading this one from cover to cover. These are things we all need to know about, even if they are things we don't like to hear about, especially as they are still happening in our society. You are performing a valuable service. Keep up the good work!

P. H.

Lexington, Virginia

I have never encountered any forms of racial discrimination, but I have enough sense to know that it is real, apparent and does exist. It is a truly good feeling to know that there are people like you, who put out this SPLC

Report and have a positive and enlightened message to share with everyone. I support your work wholeheartedly.

J.S. F.

Washington, D.C.

I found out about Teaching Tolerance about three years ago when I received your magazine. I have been hooked ever since. I use your publication all the time in my classroom.

R. H.

Independence, Iowa

Thank you for my free copy of *I Will Be Your Friend* CD and songbook. The recordings are real treasures, and I am eager to use the activities with my students.

I am grateful to the Center for the extraordinary *Teaching Tolerance* publication and the fine resources you make available to educators.

M. O.

Eau Claire, Wisconsin

I recently visited the King Center in Atlanta and picked up your *101 Tools for Tolerance* book. This [www.tolerance.org] is such a wonderful site, and I have linked it on my own Web site for my students to use. They are 3rd graders who have really benefited from your resources. I applaud you.

N. S.

Colquitt, Georgia

We currently contribute \$12 a month automatically through our checking account. Please increase our contribution to \$15 a month. You do great work. We support (1,000 percent) your efforts to stop Alabama Chief Justice Moore, and we're grateful for your ongoing efforts.

C. A.

New Paltz, New York

Cohen named Center president

Richard Cohen, formerly the Center's general counsel and vice president for programs, became president and chief executive officer, effective November 1. The announcement was made by Center board chairman James E. McElroy on October 7. He replaces Center co-founder Joseph J. Levin Jr., who now serves as the Center's president emeritus.

"Richard has a rare combination of intellect and passion," said Levin, who served as president and CEO for the past seven years. "We have tremendous confidence in his ability to lead the Center in the 21st Century."

The Center's board of directors chose Cohen as top executive after Levin decided to step down from the presidency. Levin, who co-founded the Center with Morris Dees, will remain with the Center as a senior advisor and as a member of its board of directors. Dees will continue as its chief trial counsel.

A graduate of Columbia University and the University of Virginia School of Law, Cohen came to the Center in 1986 as its legal director. With his guidance, the Center won a series of landmark lawsuits against some of the nation's major hate groups. He

also successfully litigated a wide variety of important civil rights actions — defending the rights of prisoners to be treated humanely, working for equal educational opportunities for all children, and

bringing down the Confederate battle flag from the top of the Alabama State Capitol.

In 1997, the national legal magazine *The American Lawyer* selected Cohen as one of 45 public sector lawyers "whose vision and commitment are changing lives." In 1999, he

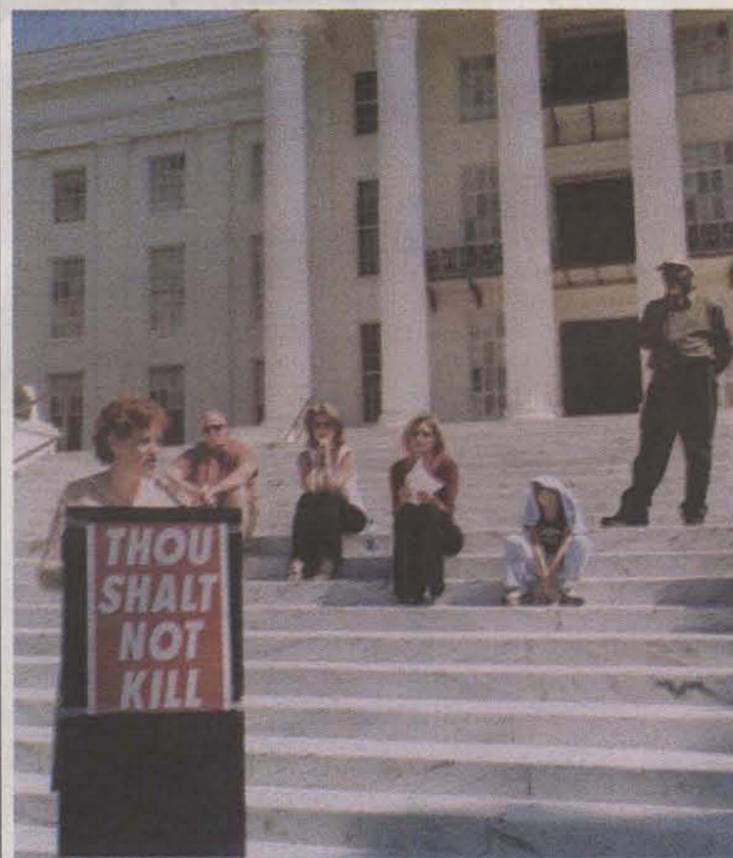
was a finalist for the national Trial Lawyer of the Year Award for his work on *Macedonia Baptist Church vs. Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan*, a lawsuit that ended with a record \$37.8 million judgment against a Klan group for its role in the burning of a South Carolina church.

In recent years, Cohen has served as the Center's vice president for programs, providing oversight of the Center's programmatic activities, including its tolerance education projects.

"Joe and Morris have created a dynamic organization that has been a force for justice and fairness in this country," Cohen said. "With the dedicated staff at the Center, I hope we can build on their long list of accomplishments."



Richard Cohen



Center opposes death penalty

Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein speaks at Alabama's annual vigil against the death penalty, held October 4 on the Capitol steps in Montgomery. "Remembrance Day" recognizes all those who have been killed by the state and also remembers the other victims of murder and violence and their families. The Center has fought against the death penalty since its earliest days and currently represents inmates on Alabama's death row. It also supports the work of the Equal Justice Initiative, a nonprofit law firm that represents dozens of inmates facing execution.



Members of the Neo-Nazi National Alliance rally on the grounds of the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

Neo-Nazi National Alliance experiences troubled times

The National Alliance, the neo-Nazi organization that has produced and influenced more violent criminals in the last three decades than any other, may soon be facing irrelevancy, thanks in part to the Center's investigative work.

In the last year, membership has plunged from around 1,400 to fewer than 800. The staff has been cut by nearly half. Income from dues and white power music sales, which brought in some \$1 million last year, has dropped to the point where the Alliance spends more than it takes in. Chapters in Boston, Dallas, Georgia, Maryland, Memphis, Phoenix and southern California are falling apart. And there is a pitched battle for control of the group and its 423-acre West Virginia compound.

The trouble began with the appointment of Erich Gliebe as chairman six days after the group's founder, William Pierce, died on July 23, 2002. At that time, the organization was doing better than it had since its founding in 1974, regularly adding staff to Resistance Records and National Vanguard Books. But where Pierce was a former university physics professor capable of bringing in recruits through his writings, Gliebe is hard-edged, humorless, and remarkably clumsy in his dealings with other members.

Three months before Pierce's death, both men spoke at a "leadership conference" Pierce held for

some 80 top members. In speeches that were meant to remain private, both men pilloried members of other hate groups, with Pierce calling them "freaks and weaklings" and Gliebe parroting his words.

In September 2002, the *Intelligence Report* revealed details of those speeches, setting off a storm among racist Skinheads and others who had been attacked by the Alliance leaders. The brouhaha had serious consequences, as Skinheads and white supremacists began boycotting Resistance Records, while more and more Alliance members went public with their own criticisms. The group's deputy membership coordinator, Billy Roper, was fired, largely because he favored alliances with those Pierce and Gliebe insulted.

Members stop paying dues

By December 2002, a net membership decline had begun that has only picked up speed since. Even today, Alliance officials do not know the full extent of their losses because hundreds of members who simply stopped paying their dues have been left on the membership rolls. This fall, the Alliance sent out letters asking members why they had stopped paying.

Meanwhile, financial trouble was becoming obvious inside the Alliance's compound near Mill Point, W.Va. Resistance Records, which had grossed almost \$50,000

in its peak month of March 2002, brought in less than \$7,000 during July. Alliance periodicals were behind schedule, and customers were growing furious at poor service. Gliebe began a round of staff firings.

Increasingly, members of the board that oversees the Alliance — made up of Gliebe, Fred Streed, Kitti Molz and Bob DeMarais — became aware of these problems. DeMarais, a former college business professor, was making little headway in convincing Gliebe that changes had to be made in the group's financing. In June, a frustrated DeMarais privately resigned. In August, Fred Streed — a board member who was widely seen as deeply loyal to the Pierce legacy — publicly resigned, angered that Gliebe refused to act on DeMarais' warnings. In a public letter, Streed described the group's financial problems and DeMarais' resignation, and called on Gliebe to resign.

Gliebe later issued a "legal document" firing the directors of the National Alliance (they included Streed, Molz, and DeMarais), though he has no such power.

Gliebe may yet pull the Alliance back from the brink. But with the animosity he has created, former key activists now leading other groups, and with his own finances flagging, it seems almost impossible that the Alliance can regain the influence it once wielded.

Suit wins proper care for inmates

(continued from page 1) necessary tests to evaluate whether the disease was causing other problems.

Due to this lack of care, some inmates have had toes amputated and experienced loss in vision. They were also at a greater risk for kidney failure, heart attack, stroke, nerve damage, and even death.

"The settlement will literally save lives," said Brownstein. "It's bringing the Department of Corrections into the 21st century in terms of treating diabetes."

Alabama prisons have already begun implementing changes to meet the standards set by the American Diabetes Association. The Center will closely monitor the Department of Corrections' progress in complying with the terms of the settlement agreement.

"Things are truly looking up," one inmate said in a letter thanking Brownstein for her work. "Your help has been invaluable to all of us, and I am eternally grateful."

Intelligence Briefs

tracking extremist activity

Ranch Rescue member arrested

DOUGLAS, ARIZ. — A member of the civilian border patrol group Ranch Rescue was arrested here on November 25 on charges stemming from an illegal imprisonment case in Texas. Casey Nethercott was picked up by FBI agents and local police and charged with unlawful flight to avoid prosecution.

Nethercott is a defendant in a lawsuit brought in May by the Center in connection with his attack on undocumented immigrants crossing a Texas ranch. He is accused of pistol-whipping and holding a Salvadoran man and woman against their will last March.

Ranch Rescue members often wear camouflage and carry weapons. Immigrant-rights groups consider Ranch Rescue the most extreme among several civilian patrols.

University police complete hate crime training

NORMAL, ILL. — Illinois State University's police department has become the first in the nation to have every member complete the Center's online course on hate and bias crimes.

"Many people assume that most hate crime is perpetrated by formalized hate crime groups, such as the Ku Klux Klan, but really only 5 percent is done by groups, and 95 percent is done by individuals who hate a certain group of people for whatever reason," said police chief Ronald Swan.

"These courses help our officers to better understand these problems, to become more cognizant of signs and symptoms of hate crimes and to be better at dealing with them," he said.

A new course, co-sponsored by the Center, California State University at San Bernardino, and the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, starts in February.

Dorm note treated as hate crime

SEATTLE — University of Washington police said they are investigating as a hate crime a threatening note scrawled on an African-American student's dorm-room door.

"We're taking this very seriously. This behavior is not going to be tolerated," said Annette Spicuzza, assistant police chief at the campus. "We are going to continue to investigate until we reach a resolution."

University officials said an 18-year-old freshman found the message, "I will kill you — the KKK," written with a blue

marker on a board on her door on December 11. She reported the incident to the residence-hall staff who called campus police. The dormitory room is shared by three female roommates, but authorities think the threat was directed at the freshman. Anthony Rose, president of the UW Black Student Union and a friend of the student's, said the young woman also received two threatening phone calls to her dorm room following a news conference about the incident.

"She's handling it very well. Overall, she's a very strong individual and she's really not worried about it," Rose said.

Vigilantes sentenced for hunting down immigrants

YUMA, ARIZ. — After pleading guilty in September to a felony charge of conspiracy to commit unlawful imprisonment, two men received jail sentences in October for illegally hunting down undocumented immigrants along the southern Arizona border. Armed citizens' groups have patrolled the border in Cochise County for several years, but this was the first time individuals were reported looking for immigrants in Yuma County.

Matthew Paul Hoffman, 23, was given 120 days in jail and Alexander David Dumas, 26, was sentenced to 20 days in jail. Both men were placed on three years of probation and ordered to perform 360 hours of community service. According to the indictment, Hoffman, Dumas and a third man confronted a group of six immigrants in Yuma County on July 31 and at gunpoint handcuffed them until the U.S. Border Patrol arrived. The group of undocumented immigrants, who reportedly crossed the Colorado River, included two women, three children and the smuggler. Charges against the third man are pending.

Former Aryan Nations leader dies

DAYTON, OHIO — Harold Ray "Butch" Redfeairn, 51, who gained notoriety as a local and national leader of the Aryan Nations white supremacist group, died of an apparent heart attack on October 26 at a hospital here.

In September 2001, ailing Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler selected Redfeairn as his successor after a Center lawsuit bankrupted the neo-Nazi group, despite Redfeairn's 1979 conviction for shooting an Ohio police officer five times.

Infighting subsequently split the Aryan Nations, and Redfeairn resigned as heir apparent about a year ago.

'Ten Commandments' judge removed for ethics violation

Roy Moore was removed from office as the Chief Justice of the Alabama Supreme Court just over a year after Center attorneys took him to court for installing a Ten Commandments monument in the rotunda of the state's judicial building.

The Alabama Court of the Judiciary, a nine-member panel composed of judges, attorneys and private citizens, announced its unanimous and unprecedented decision to remove Moore on November 13. The day before, Alabama attorney general Bill Pryor prosecuted him on judicial ethics charges because Moore "placed himself above the law" when he "willfully and publicly" defied a federal court's order to remove his imposing monument from its prominent place in the judicial building.

"Justice was served today," Center president Richard Cohen said of the decision to remove Moore. "We congratulate the Court of the Judiciary members

for their courage. They stood up to a popular political figure to protect the rule of law."

The former chief justice shocked the state in August 2001 when he installed the 5,280-pound monument without consulting his fellow justices. Under the cover of night, he secretly hauled the granite sculpture into the building that houses Alabama's appellate courts and the state law library. A video team from the Florida-based Coral Ridge Ministries, which raised money for Judge Moore's defense in the case, was on hand to film the occasion.

Monument was 'extreme case'

U.S. District Judge Myron Thompson, who presided over the original trial in October 2002, stated that the monument was an "extreme case" that "created a religious sanctuary within the walls of a courthouse" and ordered its removal.

Moore appealed his case, but

was rebuffed by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit, which upheld Judge Thompson's decision in July. When Moore defied the order and refused to remove his monument by its August 20 deadline, state officials moved it from public view. The U. S. Supreme Court refused to hear Moore's appeal.

For several days leading up to the removal of the monument, the state judicial building was the focus of national media attention. A crowd of people, including many right-wing extremists, gathered in front of the building to show their support for Moore and to attempt to stop the monument from being moved.

The Center filed an ethics complaint against Moore shortly after he announced his intention to disobey the court's order, resulting in his suspension from office and the November 12 trial in front of the Court of the Judiciary. Moore is appealing the ethics conviction.

Grant teaches students respect for a 'rainbow' of differences

GLENSIDE, PA. — A recent increase in ethnic diversity at Glenside Elementary School prompted 2nd grade teacher Cindy Goldberg to teach her students about understanding and valuing differences.

With the help of a Teaching Tolerance grant, Goldberg created a program that has made tolerance and respect priorities not just in her own classroom,

than 800 educators in their efforts to teach intercultural understanding and acceptance. In Goldberg's case, the grant provided much-needed help for a comprehensive project that affects everyone at Glenside Elementary, a K-4th grade school.

Staff received diversity training from workshops held at the school. They collaborated to develop thematic lessons plans that raise students' awareness through community service projects, cultural research and hands-on awareness activities.

"Our aim is to have specific ways for children to discuss their differences, and not just race and religion, but also disabilities, family structure and economic status," said Goldberg.

Each month the school introduces a different theme at a school-wide assembly and reinforces it daily with a morning message read over the PA system. To celebrate kindness month, children wrote acts of kindness that they observed, pasted them on little paper hearts and strung them in the hallways.

For generosity month, staff demonstrated the importance of sharing with others. Teachers acted out the role of an uncaring community, and then showed children how to behave "The Glenside Way," feeding classmates without snacks and giving pencils and crayons to those in need.

To extend the concept of a caring community, the school participated in several service learning projects. Students collected pet supplies and donated them to local animal shelters. They held a walk-a-thon to raise money for an elementary school in Ecuador. The children collected more than a thousand pounds of food for the local food bank. Thirty-nine baskets of toiletries and baby items were prepared and donated to two women's shelters.

In an evaluation form to determine what the children had gained from the project, one student wrote, "The best pot of gold isn't at the end of the rainbow. It's at Glenside Elementary School."



A Teaching Tolerance grant enabled the "Glenside — A Rainbow of Friends" project to provide a variety of tolerance education activities for students at a Pennsylvania elementary school.

but throughout the school.

"Kids can be cruel and use differences in a negative fashion," said Goldberg. "We want to show them how to appreciate differences."

Goldberg calls her program "Glenside — A Rainbow of Friends," and it has been so successful that the entire school will continue to implement it in coming years. The rainbow theme reappears throughout the school, in selected reading material such as the book *A Rainbow of Friends* and at the school's new biannual diversity festivals.

"I think it is a wonderful approach," said one teacher. "The program teaches children not only the colors of the rainbow, but to be kind to others and be the best they can be."

Teaching Tolerance grants have supported more



Dees inducted into Hall of Fame

Center co-founder Morris Dees (left) was inducted into the Communication Hall of Fame at the University of Alabama during ceremonies on October 2. "This is a proud moment for us," said E. Culpepper Clark (right), dean of Alabama's College of Communication and Information Sciences. The Hall of Fame honors the accomplishments of distinguished individuals who have brought lasting fame to the state of Alabama through one of the disciplines of communication and information. Dees earned both his undergraduate and law degrees from the university.

Mighty Times film will air nationwide

Mighty Times: The Legacy of Rosa Parks gets nationwide television exposure in February when the cable network Home Box Office (HBO) begins airing the popular Center film during primetime hours.

The film will premiere on HBO Family Channel on February 8 and on HBO on February 11. It will be shown on both channels several times during the month.

The fifth video in the Teaching Tolerance series of multimedia curriculum kits, *Mighty Times* captures the spirit of the 1955 Montgomery Bus Boycott and the inspirational role of Rosa Parks. It was nominated for an Academy Award last year. Distribution of the kit, which is free to educators, began in October 2002, and it has been viewed in more than 25,600 schools across the country.

The 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.

"We're delighted that the Center is allowing us to show *Mighty Times*," said Dolores Morris, vice president of HBO Family and documentary programming. "The film brings to life an important story and is a great piece of work."

To make *Mighty Times*, Teaching Tolerance teamed up with California filmmakers Bobby Houston and Robert Hudson. The two also produced the Center film *A Place at the Table*.



MIGHTY TIMES VIEWING SCHEDULE

DAY	TIME	CHANNEL
2/8/04	7:00 pm, 4:50 am	HBO Family
2/11/04	10:15 am, 5:15 am	HBO Main Channel/HBO Latino
2/13/04	11:50 pm	HBO Family
2/14/04	12:15 pm	HBO Main Channel/HBO Latino
2/17/04	9:00 pm	HBO Family
2/19/04	6:30 pm	HBO Main Channel/HBO Latino
2/23/04	2:00 pm	HBO Main Channel/HBO Latino
2/25/04	12:05 am	HBO Family
2/28/04	2:00 pm 10:15 pm	HBO 2 HBO Family

Center works to improve Mississippi juvenile justice

Through a combination of legal action and grassroots community efforts, Center attorneys are working to overhaul Mississippi's brutal juvenile justice system.

A U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) investigation revealed shocking conditions at Mississippi's "training schools" — the misnomer used to describe the state's inhumane paramilitary prisons for youth. The two facilities, Oakley Training School in Raymond and Columbia Training School in Columbia, house about 550 youths.

Abuses outlined in the report included pole-shackling, hog-tying with chains and physical assault by guards. During military exercises, children were sprayed with chemicals to make it more difficult for them to breathe and forced to eat their own vomit if they became sick after hours of exertion and heat exposure.

"What the investigation reported is nothing short of torture," said Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein. "These abuses are the kind of things you would hear about in some torture chamber in a Third World country. This is not how we treat our children in the United States."

In August, a federal court granted the Center's request to represent incarcerated children in *Morgan vs. Sproat*, a decades-old case that resulted in a 1977

court order requiring numerous improvements at Oakley. Though the ruling was considered a model for the nation, its directives went unheeded by the state, and on December 18, DOJ filed a lawsuit to force the mandated improvements.

Working with the Mississippi Center for Justice, the Center is representing the class of children in *Morgan vs. Sproat* in an effort not just to improve conditions at both facilities, but also to overhaul the state's juvenile justice system so that children can avoid incarceration altogether. To ensure comprehensive change, Center lawyers are working to include Columbia, the facility for females, in their case.

Like many of the children held at the facilities, Althea Dixon was a first-time, non-violent offender when she was sent to Columbia at the age of 15.

"I went to training school only for running away, due to the situation I had at home. But by the time I got there, I was treated like I had just robbed a bank or killed somebody," said Dixon. "When you lock up a kid, you're supposed to be giving that kid an

opportunity to change their ways and do better. You can't change and do better in an environment like that. When I came out, I came out a whole lot worse."

"This is a very dirty place," one incarcerated youth wrote in a letter to the Center. "Since I have been here, I have seen staff assault cadets for no reason. There's roaches in our food sometimes. ... Please do something about this terrible place."

In addition to meeting with children incarcerated at the facilities, Center attorneys have joined with a wide variety of legal and grassroots organizations to form a coalition called "Derailing the Mississippi Schoolhouse to Jailhouse Train." The Center hopes to replicate in Mississippi its work with the Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana, which successfully used legal action and community awareness to force positive im-

provements in Louisiana, including shutting down the notorious Tallulah facility.

"In Mississippi, we are working with the Schoolhouse to Jailhouse coalition in the hope of launching a multi-layered attack against this abuse," said Center attorney Grace Graham. "In addition to the litigation, we are partnering with the community to force a change in the way Mississippi deals with juvenile justice."



Center attorneys are working with community activists in an effort to close Oakley Training School, one of Mississippi's brutal juvenile prisons, and replace it with more appropriate rehabilitative services in local settings.

Equal education is Center's goal

Working to improve educational opportunities for minority students has convinced new staff attorney Courtney Bowie that she made the right decision when she chose to leave a lucrative career at a large law firm to pursue civil rights work at the Center.

"For the first time in my career, I really care about the issues I'm addressing," said Bowie, who joined the Center's legal team in September.

Bowie is trying to correct the inferior education system in Jefferson Parish, just outside of New Orleans. Poor and minority public school students there are consistently over-identified as learning disabled or emotionally disturbed, and then placed in poorly run special education classes or expelled from school in violation of federal law. Jefferson Parish fails to provide these at-risk children with appropriate specialized instruction, treatment, parent training, and other services mandated by law for children with special needs.

"Federal law is very specific in

regards to special education, and the Jefferson Parish public schools aren't coming close to complying," Bowie said. "The result is that most minority students in that school system are not getting an adequate education."

Statistics released by the state in 2002 clearly showed that poor and minority students in Jefferson Parish lagged far behind their white, more affluent counterparts in academic achievement. The unequal conditions were so blatant that they prompted a federal investigation by the U. S. Department of Education.

Center collaborates with parents

Attorneys from the Center and the Southern Disability Law Center in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, are collaborating on the case. They are working with dozens of Jefferson Parish parents in an effort to obtain their children's school records. After gathering and analyzing the information and exhausting administrative proceedings, a lawsuit may be

considered to force the needed improvements.

"The parents of these students are incredibly concerned," Bowie said. "What's especially moving is that they have really low expectations — they want their children to have a very basic education and to make progress, and their kids aren't getting even that. The district has treated these parents so badly that it's going to make them even more willing to pursue a lawsuit, if necessary."

Before coming to the Center, Bowie, a graduate of Wellesley College and the University of Texas School of Law, spent four years as an attorney at a law firm in Boston. "She possesses not only the top-notch legal skills needed to effectively pursue the case, but also a true dedication to ensuring equal education opportunities," said Center legal director Rhonda Brownstein.

"Working on education issues is key," Bowie said. "If kids aren't well educated, they lack opportunity, they lack the ability to get a good job and unfortunately, a lot of times they end up in jail. Being well educated is the key to participating in our democracy, and it's something that all children deserve."



Courtney Bowie



Newlywed donors visit Center

Longtime donors Tewanna and Floyd Brown (left), who married on July 31, stopped by the Center in September to show Morris Dees their wedding photographs. The Pensacola, Florida, couple, Center supporters since 1993, asked their friends to make contributions to the Center in lieu of giving them wedding gifts.

Center receives hate messages

(continued from page 1) security department for its threat assessment.

Following are excerpts:

- "Dees and Cohen are a pair of chickenhawk jackals who never tell the truth."
- "Dees is a godless s.o.b. jew and deserves to burn in hell."
- You're the lowest form of human waste — just human maggots! Enough is enough! Quit your ongoing battle against Christians and religion in American society. We true American citizens are going to be watching you and your organization closely now. Many Christians are just now realizing who the real enemy is, and there is no doubt — whatsoever — our #1 enemy in America is Morris Dees and his Southern Poverty Law Center. We Christians are watching you closely now."
- "May the wrath of God be delivered upon you."
- "I hope all of you who had anything to do with removing the Ten Commandments die in a car accident with a fuel tanker along with the rest of your filthy, stinking, traitorous families!"

TRIBUTE GIFTS RECEIVED BY THE CENTER FROM SEPTEMBER THROUGH NOVEMBER 2003

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Center's landmark lawsuit opened door for trooper

MONTGOMERY, ALA. — Glenda Deese made history on November 1 when she was named assistant director of the Alabama Department of Public Safety, becoming the first woman to hold the second highest position in the state troopers.

It wasn't the first time the Selma native entered the record book. In 1980, after a Center legal victory opened the door to blacks wanting to become state troopers, Deese became the first African-American woman to complete the trooper cadet program. She was promoted to trooper in 1981 and has had a distinguished career for the past two decades.

"I didn't feel like I was a pioneer at the time," said Deese, who was 20 when she became a cadet. "I was the fifth child in a family of 10, and I was used to hard work. Nothing about the training was difficult. I was athletic, and it came naturally to me."

Encouraging her throughout those early days was Harold Thompson, a career trooper officer who has served as the Center's deputy director of security since his retirement in 1997. "He got me started on the right track," Deese said.

Deese leads a trooper force vastly different from the one she joined more than two decades ago. When the Center filed its pioneering lawsuit against the Alabama Department of Public Safety, no blacks were allowed to apply to be state troopers. Today, with African-Americans composing nearly 26 percent of its total number of arresting officers, the

Alabama State Trooper force reflects the general population of the state and has one of the highest representations of minorities of any state police agency in the nation. It is an affirmative action success story, and Deese is a symbol of what affirmative action can achieve.

But success came only after a protracted legal battle. The state trooper case, which ultimately reached the U.S. Supreme Court, is typical of landmark Center cases that extend over long periods of time and result in benefits for years after judgment.

Troopers symbolized oppression

"The all-white Alabama State Troopers long symbolized the system of oppression that existed in the South," said Center president Richard Cohen. "They stood with George Wallace in 1963 when he promised 'segregation forever,' and in 1965, they beat civil rights activists who tried to march from Selma to Montgomery to protest the denial of their right to vote. In the early 1970s, little had changed."

Center attorneys filed a class action in 1972 to force the Alabama Department of Public Safety to hire blacks as more than just janitors. A federal judge subsequently ordered the agency to hire one black trooper for every white trooper hired until blacks made up 25 percent of the trooper force.

After the ruling, state officials

resisted in every way possible. At first they imposed a virtual ban on hiring to preserve the all-white force. Then they tried to force newly hired blacks off the force by making it difficult for them to complete their training and by subjecting them to unfair disciplinary practices. To keep black officers who persevered at the bottom rung of the trooper force, officials refused to implement fair promotions.

"There were some tough times back then," said former Lt. Johnny Issac, one of the first black troopers. "I went through a lot that I've never told anyone."

Center attorneys continued to fight on behalf of the black troopers, taking the state to court time and time again. In 1987, the Supreme Court upheld an order that one black trooper be promoted for every white trooper — as long as qualified applicants were available — until the state developed a fair promotion plan. It was the first time the high court approved a race-conscious promotion plan.

State worked with Center

After the Center's victory in the Supreme Court, state officials ended their resistance and worked with the Center to make the trooper force a model for the nation. "In some employment discrimination suits, everyone wins," said Cohen, who handled the lawsuit for many years. "This



Glenda Deese

case opened opportunities for white as well as black troopers because it created a promotion system based on merit rather than favoritism." The case finally ended in 1995.

Deese first served in the highway patrol division. Upon her promotion to corporal in 1988, she transferred to the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center, where she served as assistant basic training coordinator. As sergeant, she assumed responsibility for basic training and later was promoted to lieutenant, serving as assistant commander of the training center.

In 1997, Deese was promoted to captain and appointed as the state's chief driver license examiner. Two years later, she was

promoted to major and named chief of DPS's administrative division, where she managed the department's budget, personnel, payroll, grants, public information, planning and research and executive security functions.

Over the years, Deese worked hard, always remaining upbeat and earning the respect of her colleagues. A fellow female trooper wrote a congratulatory note upon Deese's latest accomplishment. "I have a job I love, and I have you to thank for that," she said. "Because you encouraged me to hang in there and not quit. Many who travel up the ladder of success don't stop long enough to encourage others, but you did, and I'm grateful."

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 November 1, 2002, through November 30, 2003.

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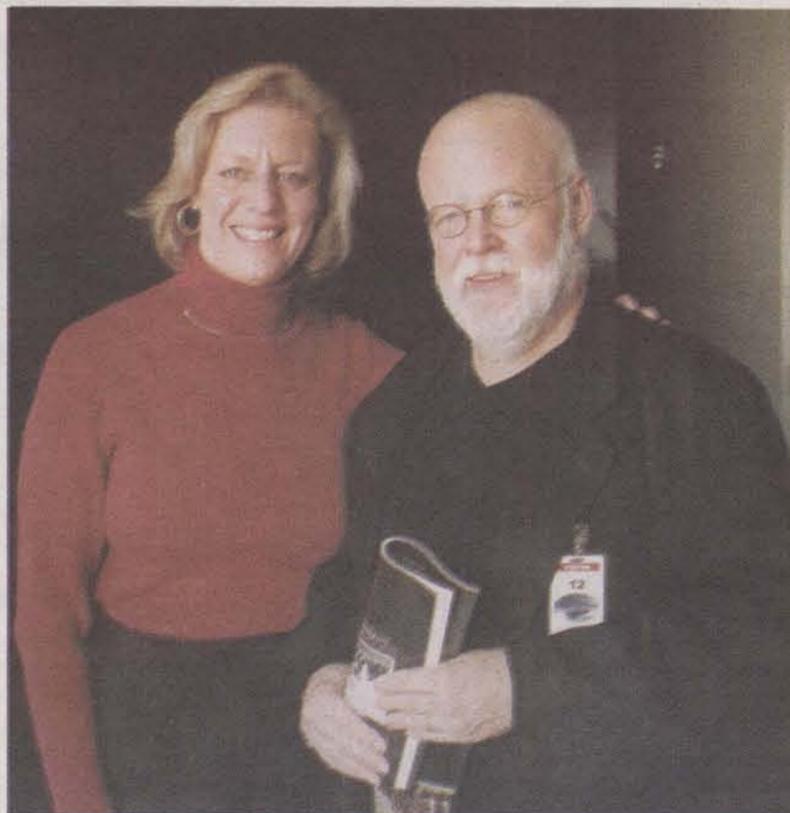
Supporter makes special gift to Center

Marlene Stein Wortman recently made a generous donation to the Center in memory of her father, Leo Stein, who died in Buchenwald Concentration Camp on January 2, 1939, and

in memory of her mother, Paula Stein, and her brother, Bruno Stein, who taught her the importance of civil rights and liberties for all, regardless of religion, ethnicity or race.

Acclaimed illustrator visits Center

Center employee Esther Labovitz (left) greeted donor Barry Moser when he visited the Center on November 20. Renowned for his children's illustrations, wood engravings, watercolors and reinterpretations of the classics, including the Pennyroyal Press editions of *Alice in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking Glass*, *Frankenstein*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Wizard of Oz*, and the Pennyroyal Caxton Edition of the Holy Bible, Moser's art is represented in numerous library and museum collections. His work has been published in more than two 200 books for children and adults. Moser, who lives in North Hartfield, Massachusetts, began supporting the Center's work in 1983. He gives monthly and is also a Partner for the Future.



October mourning: Remembering Matthew Shepard

This is an abridged version of an essay by Brian Willoughby, a senior writer/editor at the Southern Poverty Law Center, originally published October 7 on Tolerance.org.

On a cold morning in October, down a road I'd never traveled, I held an unexpected vigil for someone I never knew.

One year ago this month, I drove cross-country for the first time in my life. Five days on the road, from Washington to Alabama, I left behind 18 years of West Coast daily newspaper journalism for a new career at the Southern Poverty Law Center. I thought of it as the American dream, the ability to reinvent one's life.

I knew I'd have moments of awe as I crossed the Continental Divide, the Great Plains, the mighty Mississippi.

But I didn't expect this.

I arrived in Laramie at dusk, snow blowing sideways across I-80. I'd dropped out of Rock Springs, passed the Continental Divide sign, watched the sun set in my rear-view mirror.

After a night in a Laramie mo-

tel, I gassed up and took Highway 287 south to Fort Collins.

The snow had stopped falling overnight. Dawn broke, a golden light bathing the white hills. Clouds arched overhead like a temple. It would have been beautiful, had I not been crying.

When I plotted the trip on paper and knew I'd likely be overnight in Laramie, I thought of Matthew Shepard. Because I always think of Matthew Shepard when I think of Laramie. It's Oklahoma City. It's Skokie. It's Selma and Birmingham. Hate becomes a map, and some landmarks stand out longer, stronger than others.

But I wasn't thinking of Matthew Shepard the night before, hadn't given him a second thought.

It was the fence posts. They haunted me, moving by the car in metronome precision, carefully spaced, the edge of life for livestock, the end of life for Matthew.

It was not Snowy Mountain View Road, the road on which Matthew was found; I've never been on that road. But it was the same landscape, the same barren beauty, the same kind of fence-line where he had been tied and beaten. He would die in a hospital five days later, never regaining consciousness.

So I watched the posts that morning, one after another, marking the distance I traveled, stretching into miles yet to come.

Bonnie Raitt was on the tape deck, singing about an angel from Montgomery. A good friend had made the tape, to help pass the hours on the trip. Bonnie's voice was raw, with ragged edges, and I kept hitting rewind, playing it over and over, singing along.

*Just give me one thing one thing I can hold on to
To believe in this livin' is
just a hard way to go*

I drove until just after dusk, through Denver, down the eastern

slope of the Rockies, into Kansas, all the way to Topeka.

I stayed in a second-rate motel, ate greasy pizza from a nearby gas station and wondered about the nation's continental divide.

Not the one I'd driven across just a day earlier.

The other one, the one that starts with Matthew Shepard and ends with Topeka's own Fred Phelps.

You know Fred, founder of godhatesfags.com. A guy who spews venom and calls it Bible verse. A guy who makes a mockery of true faith. A guy whose Web site has a so-called "Gospel Memorial to Matthew Shepard" that reads, "Matthew Shepard has been in hell for 1,821 days."

It took me just a moment, at 65 miles per hour, to sweep past the Rocky Mountain Continental Divide.

We, as a nation, can't muster the same speed when it comes to eliminating the divide that makes gay, lesbian and transgender people the object of hate and scorn, the divide that relegates them to second-class citizenry, the divide that tacitly allows homophobic

thugs to beat a young man to death.

It's been five years since Matthew Shepard was murdered, a year since I held an unexpected memorial service for him in my car, passing by. How much longer must we wait to heal that divide?

That road was a lonely place for me. But I had a new job waiting at the far end, a loving family who would join me, a world of hope to get me down that snowy road. And I had Bonnie Raitt, singing about an angel from the place I would soon be living.

Matthew had the loving family, the hope, a future unfolding against a horizon as wide as the Rockies. But he also had a sexual identity that some find reason to hate. So he perished against that fencepost, abandoned and alone.

I hope — after the beating, after the hate had been spent, during those 18 hours before he was discovered — I hope Matthew Shepard found music in his head, some voice, like Bonnie's, that helps you down the toughest roads. And I hope that voice was singing about a different angel, one just being born, from Laramie.



Brian Willoughby

Leave a legacy through Partners for the Future

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.



Civil Rights Memorial

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IN MEMORIAM

William D. Phears, Sr. (1917-2003)

William D. Phears Sr., a Tuskegee Airman and ardent supporter of the Southern Poverty Law Center since 1988, died at age 85 on February 24.

Raised in extreme poverty, Phears was taught to do his best to make things fair for all people. His grandfather, a runaway slave,



William D. Phears

and his grandmother, who was half-Indian and half-African, instilled in Phears the importance of treating people the way they wished to be treated.

Phears practiced this golden rule in everything he did — using his career, his community activities, and even his avid love of golf to break down racial and cultural barriers. His son, David, described him as an "ambassador for tolerance."

During World War II, Phears was a member of the 477th Medium Bombardment Group of the renowned Tuskegee Airmen. There, Phears experienced racism firsthand, but joined with his comrades to work for achievement in spite of a racially divided society.

Phears retired from the U.S. Air Force in 1964 as a lieutenant colonel. He moved to New York to work as a realtor and as the deputy commissioner of

the Hempstead Public Works Department. He was very active in his community and spent much of his time helping fraternities, civic organizations and political parties develop tools for people to maximize their opportunities in the United States.

Phears was deeply against anything that singled out individuals because of certain characteristics, said his daughter, Jo Addy. He worried about the lack of institutional support in place to prevent the dehumanization of individuals because of their race, education or other attributes.

In 1993, Phears chronicled his life's journey in his autobiography *Ain't, But It Can Be*. He wrote the book to help his young grandchildren understand the obstacles he faced growing up and how he overcame them with courage, commitment, character, competence, and connections.

Phears also wrote *It's Up to Us*, which challenged his readers to concentrate on the development of the nation's youth.

Phears is survived by his son, David, daughter, Jo Addy, and eight grandchildren.