

# The Abolitionist

Coloradans Against the Death Penalty

Vol. 4, No. 1

March 2006

## Annual Dinner to feature David Kaczynski, brother of the “Unabomber”

*Abolitionist awards go to the Harlan Defense Team and Charles Milligan.*

The 2006 CADP Annual Dinner, scheduled for April 6, will feature a keynote address by a man with quite a story to tell.

David Kaczynski is executive director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty (NYADP) and the brother of Ted Kaczynski - the so-called “Unabomber” - who was arrested in 1996 after David and his wife Linda approached the FBI with their suspicions that Ted might be involved in the series of bombings that caused three deaths and numerous injuries over 17 years.

Despite his diagnosis of paranoid schizophrenia, Ted was charged capitally and only avoided the death penalty after his family waged a two-year

campaign to convince the U.S. Justice Department that Ted’s delusions had precipitated his violent behavior. Under pressure from the media and advocacy groups including the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, the Justice Department offered a plea bargain that spared Ted’s life, but it never publicly acknowledged that Ted’s mental illness was a mitigating factor.

In 1998, David and Linda received a one million dollar reward from the Justice Department for their role in the Unabomber investigation, which they subsequently donated – minus attorney’s fees and taxes – to the victims and their families. Through the Unabomber Survivors Fund, \$680,000 was distributed to victims of the assaults.

Prior to joining NYADP, David was assistant director of the Equinox shelter for runaway and homeless youth in Albany. As director of NYADP and as a board member of the National Coalition to



**David Kaczynski**

Abolish the Death Penalty, he is currently focused on a campaign to ban the death penalty for people with serious mental illnesses. David is currently writing a book on violence and healing with Gary Wright, who was seriously injured by one of Ted Kaczynski’s bombs in 1987.

### **ABOLITION AWARDS**

Along with the keynote address by David Kaczynski, this year’s Annual Dinner will also feature the presentation of two awards—one for an outstanding achievement this past year and one for a lifetime of work against the death penalty.

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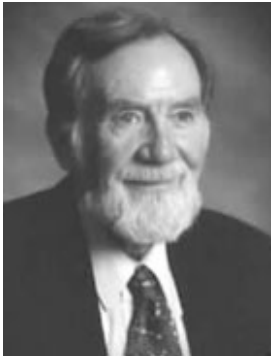
*For ticket information and dinner details, see page 4.*

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## **ANNUAL DINNER, continued**

The 2006 Abolitionist of the Year award goes to the **Robert Harlan Defense Team**, for their outstanding work in getting Harlan off of death row. Robert Harlan was convicted and sentenced to death in 1995 for the murder of a casino waitress and attempted murder of a woman who came to her aid. Although his conviction was affirmed on direct appeal, Kathleen Lord and Sharlene Reynolds of the Colorado State Public Defenders Office did an incredible job of convincing Judge Vigil of the Adams County District Court to vacate the death sentence because of juror misconduct. Jurors in the case improperly brought Bibles into the jury room and wrote down and quoted passages from the Old Testament. Such reliance on outside sources is strictly forbidden and jurors are instructed accordingly. Harlan's death sentence was overturned by the Colorado Supreme Court on March 28, 2005, and in October, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the state's appeal.

Also noteworthy is the work of investigator Raelee Knapp. Raelee's juror interviews were crucial to this success, and getting jurors to talk openly like she did is a remarkable achievement. Others who worked on the case include Bryan Shaha, Greg Worthen, Wayne Diffie, and the late Terri Brake. Congratulations to this team on a remarkable victory!



**Charles Milligan**

At the Annual Dinner, CADP will also honor **Charles Milligan** – minister, professor, and chair of the Colorado Council to Abolish Capital Punishment during the 1960s – for more than four decades of leadership in the fight against the death penalty.

Charles, who was born in Sterling, CO, first became involved in prison reform issues in Massachusetts in the 1950s, while teaching ethics at Tufts University. In 1957 he returned to Colorado to teach at Iliff School of Theology, where he taught philosophy and religion until his retirement in 1988.

In the early 1960s, Charles became increasingly involved in the issue of the death penalty, publishing articles in religious journals and an essay in Hugo Bedau's classic anthology, *The Death Penalty in America*. Charles was also the driving force behind an effort to place a death penalty abolition referendum on the 1966 ballot. Although the referendum was unsuccessful, Charles and others continued to press on, laying the groundwork for later work.

Looking back over his many years of involvement, Charles sees cause for optimism. "Things are starting to move," he says, pointing to recent shifts in public opinion on the death penalty. "I feel more hopeful than I ever have before."



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# IN MEMORIAM: Father Jim Sunderland

CADP fondly pays tribute to Fr. Jim Sunderland, who passed away in January at the age of 81. Fr. Jim was well-known in the Denver area for his work on behalf of peace and justice and his anti-death penalty activism. In 1984 Fr. Jim, along with others, established the Colorado Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty, the predecessor organization of CADP.

Jim Sunderland was born and raised in Denver. He served in the Army Air Corps during World War II and attended West Point before deciding to become a Jesuit priest, a decision inspired by a Jesuit teacher he had had at Regis High School.

## Missed an Event? Watch the Video on our Website!

Did you miss hearing Stephen Bright, director of the Southern Center for Human Rights and subject of the documentary, "Fighting for Life in the Death-Belt," when he spoke in Boulder and Denver in November? Meant to make it to some of the DU Death Penalty Awareness Week events in February but never got there? You can now view them online! Just go to our website at [www.coadp.org](http://www.coadp.org).

In 1981, Fr. Jim returned to his native Colorado, having been gone since 1943. It was then that he met Charles Milligan, who, along with Rollie Rogers, had been fighting against the death penalty in Colorado for years. Jim credits Charles with getting him involved in the movement, calling Charles his inspiration and mentor.

In 1983, Fr. Jim asked to be relieved of his duties as a hospital chaplain to become the Diocese of Denver's first fulltime prison chaplain. Through this work he came to know prison inmates and those involved in prison reform and the death penalty abolition movement. He served on the Board of the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty.

During this time, Jim testified on behalf of a half a dozen men facing the possibility of death. In 1997, he worked for clemency for Gary Davis, and when that failed, organized a vigil the night of Gary's execution.



**Fr. Jim, jailhouse chaplain, anti-death penalty activist, and founder of the Colorado Coalition Against the Death Penalty, passed away in January.**

Although Jim officially retired in the late 90s, he continued to be an eloquent voice for peace and justice, a voice that will surely be missed!

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### *State Legislature*

## **Death Penalty Aggravator Dropped from Bill**

HB 1153, a bill concerning changes to Colorado's sex offender laws, was introduced in January. One provision of the bill would have made "being a sexually violent predator at the time of committing a capital offense" a death penalty aggravator. This portion of the bill was removed by the House Judiciary Committee, thanks, in part, to the hard work and testimony of several people from the Public Defender's office. With that and other changes, the amended bill was passed out of committee Feb. 2 on a 10-1 vote and sent to the Colorado General Assembly for further consideration.

Coloradans **Against** the  
**DEATH**  
PENALTY

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## *Join Us for the CADP Annual Dinner!*

Thursday, April 6, 2006

The Renaissance Hotel, 3801 Quebec, Denver

6:00 p.m. Cash Bar/Appetizers

7:00 p.m. Dinner & Program

Guest Speaker: David Kaczynski, Executive Director of New Yorkers Against the Death Penalty and brother of Ted Kaczynski, the "Unabomber."

Abolitionist of the Year award to the Defense Team for Robert Harlan

Special Lifetime Achievement Award to Charles Milligan

Tickets: \$60 per person

\$25 students/low-income

Purchase your tickets online by visiting [www.coadp.org](http://www.coadp.org) or mail your check (payable to CADP) to:  
CADP Dinner, c/o Randy Canney, 1733 High St, Denver, CO 80218.