
AADP
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Anchorage, AK 99521-0390

Dr Allen Ault was corrections commissioner for Georgia until 1995. He told the BBC the executions he supervised were 'state-sanctioned murder' and 'It stays in your psyche forever.' He goes on to say "it is by every definition premeditated murder...It's the most premeditated murder you can possibly imagine."

Dr Ault is a trained psychologist who began working in the prison system in order to help and rehabilitate people, but a promotion to the position of corrections commissioner meant the responsibility for overseeing the state's executions fell to him. During his time at the prison in the early 1990s, Dr Ault supervised five executions. Dr. Allen Ault is currently Dean at Eastern Kentucky University.

Read

More: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2566327/I-nightmares-Former-prison-commissioner-supervised-executions-Georgia-confesses-deaths-haunted-him.html#ixzz3MOSIUaEP>

Mark your calendar and bring friends!

***Donations encouraged
Call or email Sue for
information at
scjohnson@gci.net -
301-5005 or 276-5753***

<http://www.aadp.info/index.php>

Alaskans Against the Death Penalty

February 2015

Newsletter

Mark Your Calendar for the Hugh Fleischer Memorial Chili Feed

Featured Speaker: Dr Allen Ault



Sunday, March 1st, 2015 @ 4:30 pm
At the home of Lanie Fleischer (1401 W 11th Ave
Anchorage 274-2453)

Food & Refreshments provided (side dishes welcome)



Info: contact Sue at scjohnson@gci.net or 301-5005

Thirteenth Annual World Day of Faith in Action on the Death Penalty in Anchorage

was held Sunday, October 5, 2014



Amnesty International and Alaskans Against the Death Penalty sponsored an interfaith vigil; a gathering of faith leaders from a broad spectrum of faith communities and human rights activists to examine the death penalty from faith perspectives and to speak out against the death penalty. St Mary's Episcopal Church hosted the event. A gathering took place afterward for food and fellowship.



Bill Pelke



Averil Lerman

Guest Speakers included Bill Pelke, Averil Lerman and Susan Orlansky. The awesome "Sally's Kitchen Singers" shared some inspiring music with us.

Bill spoke on forgiveness and Averil spoke on the history of the death penalty in Alaska. **Susan Orlansky** also updated the group on death penalty cases around the United States.

"The prophet Zechariah enjoins us: 'See that justice is done.' It is our solemn obligation not just to promote justice but also to stand up and decry injustice when we witness it. The system for administering capital punishment is profoundly flawed." – Letter from prominent religious leaders to President Clinton, 2000



Kathy Harris (far right) with our guest speakers and local faith leaders



Sally's Kitchen Singers



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Ugandan tour exemplifies abolitionist collaboration

AADP contributed \$1,000, First United Methodist Church Foundation \$2,500 and another \$3,500 from members of AADP or about 1/3 of the cost for the African Journey. Thank you!

Journey photos: [Scott Langley Photography](http://scottlangleyphoto.com/) (<http://scottlangleyphoto.com/>)

Article by Emile Carreau published on December 21st, 2014

US-based World Coalition member Journey of Hope answers the call to tour Uganda and strengthen the fight against the death penalty in the country.



Photo : Scott Langley

Collaboration between abolitionists is nothing new. Sometimes this is done on a grand scale, such as the triennial world congresses against the death penalty. But the global fight against the death penalty also benefits from partnerships on a smaller scale.

The Journey of Hope's recent mission to Uganda in November at the request of former death row prisoner, Edward Mpagi, reminds us how effective collaboration between abolitionists can be at the local level. Collaboration of this sort is desperately needed as some conservative politicians and religious figures have been pushing for homosexual acts to be punishable by death in recent years. The controversial "kill the gays bill", however, was not enacted, much to the relief of the local LGBT community.

More recently, abolitionists were pleased to see that the country abstained from voting on a United Nations resolution on a moratorium on the use of the death penalty. The country had previously voted against the resolution and signed the Note Verbale of Dissociation.

The U.S.-based Journey of Hope and its founder **Bill Pelke** have a history of touring to spread the organisations simple message that the "Answer is love and compassion for all of humanity." The Journey of Hope has travelled to 16 countries and about 45 states. Journeys are organized by the state or country coalitions hosting the event. "We could not hold successful events without the help of grass roots organizers in the state or country," said Pelke.

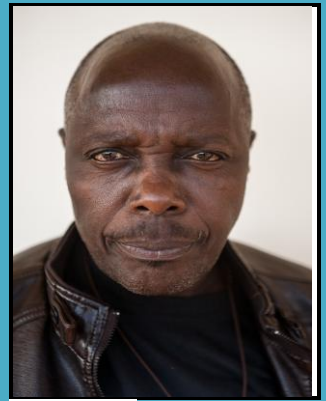
On the 2010 Uganda Journey, Pelke, Mpagi and two other American and Ugandan activists travelled to Rwanda for a meeting of 25 African nations on the issue of the death penalty.

In 2014, Pelke had another opportunity to travel to Africa and contacted Mpagi again.



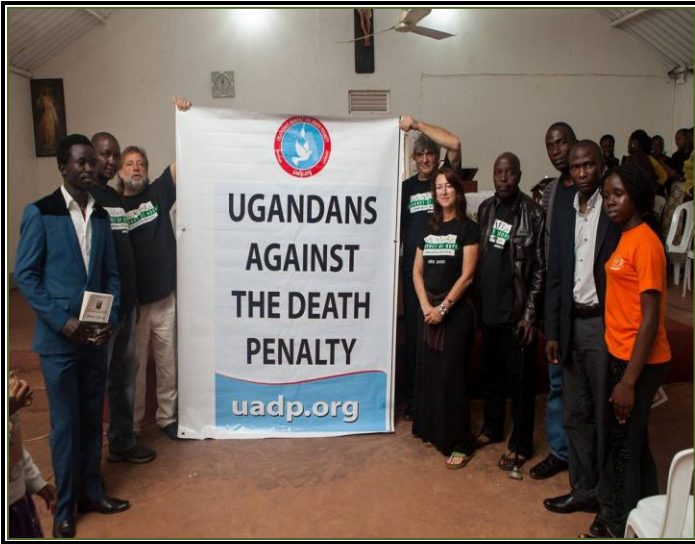
"The Journey of Hope put together a team of ten for the return visit. Edward informed us that he would like to launch Ugandans Against the Death Penalty during our November 12-24 visit and that became one of our top priorities in our fundraising efforts," Pelke said.

"We receive no grants or any sort of major funding," he noted. "For this Africa Journey there were over 160 personal donations and five national or state (abolitionist) organizations donated."



Edward Mpagi

"I invited the Journey of Hope to come to Uganda to help me to create awareness among Ugandans about the dangers of the death penalty," Mpagi said. The 'Journey' also helped launch Ugandans Against the Death Penalty which is now working on registering members country wide. "We had radio, TV talk shows, a press conference, we visited different schools, women death row prisoners and churches. That has created great awareness among the local population about the dangers of death penalty," Mpagi said. "The Journey has sparked the fight against the death penalty in Uganda. I saw prominent religious leaders changing their stand on the death penalty after meeting the Journey's speakers," he remarked.



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INNOCENCE: Additional Inmates Exonerated which brings the number to over 150 since 1973

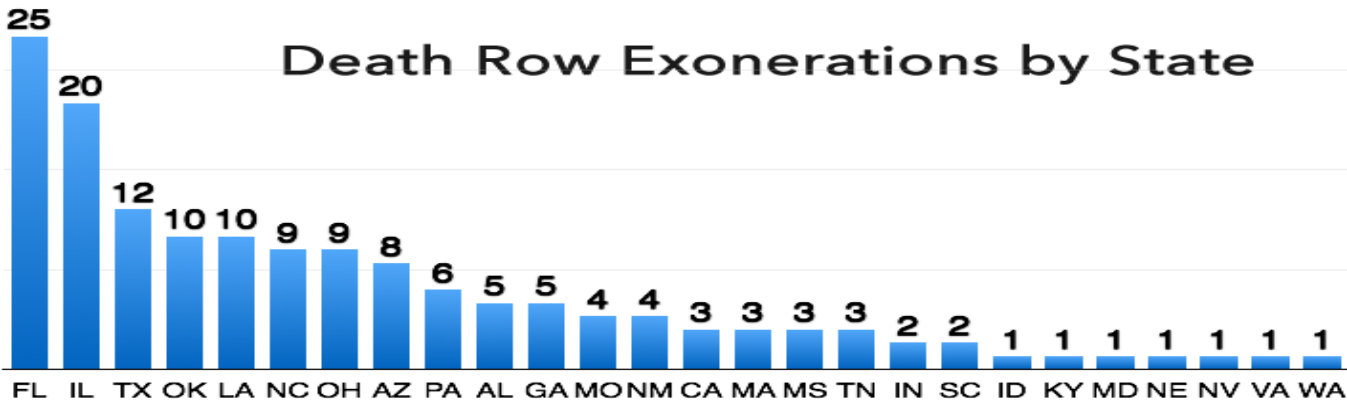


A judge formally dropped the charges against **Wiley Bridgeman (L)**, making him the 149th person exonerated from death row since 1973. On December 9, **Kwame Ajamu (R)** (formerly Ronnie Bridgeman) was also exonerated making him the 150th person exonerated since 1973 and the 7th in 2014. The third man involved, **Ricky Jackson** (not pictured) also sentenced to death was exonerated as well.

Bridgeman once came within three weeks of execution, but his and Ajamu's death sentences were struck down when Ohio's death penalty was found unconstitutional in 1978. Ajamu had been released from prison in 2003, but Jackson and Bridgeman had spent 39 years in prison. Both were released after a judge officially dismissed their charges on November 21. When he was released, Jackson said, "The English language doesn't even fit what I'm feeling. I'm on an emotional high. You sit in prison for so long and think about this day but when it actually comes you don't know what you're going to do, you just want to do something." Judge Richard McMonagle, who dismissed the charges against Jackson, said, "Life is filled with small victories, and this is a big one."

Ajamu, Bridgeman, and Jackson were convicted based on the testimony of a 12-year-old boy who recently admitted that he never saw the killing. Ajamu's death sentence was reduced in 1978 when Ohio's death penalty statute was found unconstitutional. He was released from prison in 2003. Upon his exoneration, Ajamu said, "The important part is that we have been united while we are standing forward and upward and that we are not looking at each other in the graveyard," adding, "I feel vindicated. I feel free." The three men are expected to file for compensation for their many years of wrongful imprisonment. Cuyahoga County prosecutors said they will not object to efforts to obtain compensation, saying that the men were "victims of a terrible injustice."

EXONERATIONS BY RACE	
RACE	EXONERATIONS
Black	78
White	58
Latino	12
Other	2



Have innocent inmates ever been executed?



There is no way to tell how many of the almost 1,400 people executed since 1976 may have been innocent. Courts do not generally entertain claims of innocence once the defendant is dead. Defense attorneys move on to other cases where clients' lives can still be saved.

Recently, the case of **Cameron Willingham** (pictured) has been in the news. He was convicted of murdering his three children by arson in a 1991 house fire. He was executed in 2004. A new report from a national arson expert, prepared for the Texas Forensic Science Commission, has concluded that the original investigation of Willingham's case was seriously flawed and could not support a finding of arson.

See also: D. Grann, "[Trial by Fire: Did Texas execute an innocent man?](#)" *The New Yorker*, Sept. 7, 2009.

Supreme Court to Hear Case on Intellectual Disability Hearings



The **U.S. Supreme Court** granted a writ of certiorari in *Brumfield v. Cain*, a death penalty case from Louisiana dealing with intellectual disability. Kevan Brumfield was sentenced to death prior to the Court's decision in *Atkins v. Virginia* (2002), which banned the execution of defendants with intellectual disabilities. After that ruling, Brumfield filed a claim of intellectual disability in state court. The court denied him a hearing because the trial transcript showed no evidence of his disability. A federal district court found that the state court had "mistakenly – and unreasonably– considered the record from Petitioner's pre-*Atkins* penalty phase as determinative of Petitioner's mental retardation claim under *Atkins*," granted Brumfield a hearing, and found him to be intellectually disabled and therefore exempt from execution. The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit reversed the federal district court's decision. Brumfield's attorneys said, "As a result of this decision, the compelling evidence presented to the district court will be ignored, and a person who was found to be mentally retarded will be executed." The Supreme Court will determine whether Brumfield should have been granted a hearing on his claim of intellectual disability.

NEW VOICES: Kentucky Judge Calls for Legislation to End the Death Penalty



Speaking from the bench at a hearing in a **Kentucky** capital case, Fayette Circuit **Judge Pamela Goodwine** said, "Something needs to be done legislatively in Kentucky and in every state in the U.S. I think the death penalty probably should not be a penalty, ever." Despite her personal views, Goodwine ruled that the death penalty could be sought against a man accused of participating in a murder, even though he did not shoot the victim. "As the law in Kentucky stands right now ... he's death-eligible as a conspirator in this case," Goodwine said. "That's the law as it stands right now. I, as a trial judge, have to follow that law whether I agree with it or not. If I had my druthers, there would be no death penalty in Kentucky." She added that she was frustrated with the time and expense of capital cases and the emotional toll they take on everyone involved.

Let's Keep it this way....

Death Penalty in Alaska

Abolished in 1957

Executions since 1976: 0
Innocent people freed from Death Row: 0
People on Death Row now: 0



***Stay Tuned for the date of the Annual
Fish Fry coming up in July***



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Concerned Alaskans Against
the Death Penalty



Sue Johnson, ED

Contact: scjohnson@gci.net

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***Thank you for all your support of this cause.
We cannot do this without your help!***

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