



# WORLD NEWS

## Dragging Defendant Sentenced To Die

By C. BRYSON HULL  
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BRYAN, Texas (Sept. 23) - A white supremacist was sentenced today to die by lethal injection for dragging a black man to his death on a rural road.

Lawrence Russell Brewer is the second man to get the death penalty for the June 7, 1998, killing of James Byrd Jr., who was chained to the bumper of a pickup truck and dragged for three miles along a bumpy country road northeast of Jasper.

Byrd's sister, Mary Verrett, said her family was relieved.

"He had his day in court," she said. "The jurors said what we want to say to him."

Brewer, 32, joins John William King, convicted in February, on death row. A third white supremacist, 24-year-old Shawn Allen Berry, will be tried next month.

The Brazos County jury that convicted Brewer on Monday deliberated for 14 hours Wednesday and today before deciding on a punishment.

State District Judge Monte Lawliss pronounced the sentence as Brewer's mother, seated be-

hind her son in the courtroom, dabbed her eye with a tissue.

Brewer's attorney, Doug Barlow, said his client "had resigned himself to this."

"He said to me, 'I'll be all right,'" Barlow said.

About an hour into their talks today, jurors asked to see photos of Brewer's tattoos, which include a burning cross, SS lightning bolts

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and Ku Klux Klan symbols. They also wanted a photo of Brewer with his family.

The jury on Wednesday reviewed some of Brewer's letters and a portion of his testimony that described events immediately preceding Byrd's death.

In his closing argument Wednesday, Jasper County District Attorney Guy James Gray said the facts of the slaying showed Brewer is a continuing danger and should be condemned.

"The degree of pain they were willing to inflict on this man is an indication of the degree of racial commitment," Gray said.

A defense attorney argued that Brewer, a convicted burglar, had no history of violence in prison

and should get a life term.

The prosecution contended Brewer was the racist ideologue who taught King and Berry his views, and that his position as "Exalted Cyclops" in a racist group showed the depth of his commitment to racism.

Byrd, a former vacuum cleaner salesman, was abducted early on June 7, 1998, and taken to a remote area northeast of Jasper.

His ankles were harnessed with a 24 1/2-foot logging chain to the bumper of a pickup truck and he was dragged for three miles.

His battered torso, minus his head, neck and an arm, was dumped between a black church and cemetery where it was found a few hours after daylight.

The circumstances of the crime provoked national outrage. In a jailhouse note to King last year while both were under arrest, Brewer appeared proud of what they had done.

"I do believe we are bigger stars, or should I say hero of the day, than what we ever expected," Brewer wrote.

The case was moved to Bryan, about 150 miles west of Jasper, because of pretrial publicity.

## Fed Ex Makes A Special Delivery To Janus Youth Programs

Children at the Janus Youth Program site in Northeast Portland received barrels full of school supplies courtesy of FedEx employees just in time to hit the books again this fall. FedEx employees' donation this month will provide 95 additional children with supplies they need, providing supplies to 150 kids at this United Way-funded agency.

United Way Campaign Manager Sarai St. Julien said the donation from FedEx came in response to employees' impression of facility following a visit in August. They admired the work at Janus Youth Programs, she said, and decided to lend a hand. "This was spontaneous reaction to taking a tour at the agency," St. Julien said. "They just wanted to help out."

United Way funds 150 health and human programs that strengthen families, invest in positive experiences for children and youth, enhance senior independence and meet emergency needs in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington.



## DELTA SIGS GO DRY AT U OF O

The brothers of the Delta Sigma Phi are making the most of sobriety. The University of Oregon fraternity elected to go dry a year ago. They are the first - and only - fraternity on campus to go dry. The brothers are still allowed to drink - just not in the house.

Some wondered if the move would kill popularity, but the Delta Sigs report they're thriving. Membership is up from 30 to 45 and they are remodeling the third floor of the house to build nine new rooms. The house had the best grade point average among campus during winter and spring terms. In fact, the brothers won the national fraternity's Pyramid of Excellence award for being one of the nation's top chapters.

## Woman Settles Case Over Stillborn Baby for \$100,000

9-24-99 McMinnville, Ore. (AP) - A woman who gave birth to a still-born child and filed a wrongful death suit against a hospital and an emergency room physician has settled out of court. She said she was unaware she was pregnant.

On the first day of trial Tuesday, Karen Richmond settled for \$100,000 from the physician and agreed to

drop the Willamette Valley Medical Center from the suit.

The case stemmed from Richmond's 1996 birth to a baby born dead in a breech position in her home.

Richmond, who was 18 at the time, said she was not aware she was pregnant when she began experiencing medical problems and sought treatment the evening before giving birth. "It was fantastic that she could

not know she was pregnant," said attorney Mark Lawrence. "It was fantastic that she could be in a hospital in labor, and not have it be diagnosed. "It was fantastic that the baby could come out of her body and she not be able to comprehend it. Ultimately, that's why a settlement is appropriate," he said. Lawrence said Richmond felt vindicated.

## Poor Families Are Getting Poorer

By MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

The goal of the Children's Defense Fund is to end welfare as we know it by ending poverty as we know it. So far the 1996 "welfare reform" law is not doing this.

Two studies released on August 22, the third anniversary of the welfare law, showed some alarming but not unexpected findings. During the first full year of the welfare law, thousands of children fell into extreme poverty. Despite a booming economy and rising employment, the income of some of the nation's poorest families dropped due to even greater losses of food stamps and cash assistance.

In one of the studies, CDF found that the number of children living in "extreme poverty" - defined by CDF as income below one-half of the federal poverty line, which means having less than \$6,401 a year in income for a three-person family - jumped to 1.8 million in 1997, up by 426,000 from the year before. This rise was directly linked to the weakening protective role of cash assistance and food stamps. (Unlike previously released government figures on extreme child poverty, CDF's figures took account of food stamps, as well as school lunches, housing assistance, and taxes.)

In a separate study, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities concluded that "too much emphasis has been placed on caseload reduction and insufficient attention paid to income and poverty outcomes."

The Center, a nonpartisan research and policy institute in Washington, DC, found that while the average earnings and overall incomes of low-income families with children headed by females rose substantially between 1993 and 1995 in response to a growing U.S. economy, after the 1996 federal welfare law the average incomes fell for the poorest 10 percent of female-headed families. Those families saw their incomes plummet from \$5,587 in 1995 to \$4,873 in 1997 - a loss of more than one-seventh of their income.

Imagine one-seventh of your annual income taken away. Could you manage? Could you manage if you were already

dren on an income already far below the poverty line? Imagine trying to raise healthy successful children on less than \$6,401 a year - or \$123 a week - today. Could you do it? It is no wonder to me that children in extreme poverty are the ones at greatest risk of stunted growth and lasting educational disadvantage.

If the very poorest families with children are going to make it, they must have help. Some parents need job training, a loan to fix their car, or other help securing jobs that pay a living wage. Others need help

finding and paying for quality child care, health care for themselves and their children, and food and financial assistance while they struggle to get ahead in the low-wage labor market.

The simple fact is that too few are getting what they need. Maybe this nation's leaders have stopped caring about the poorest families among us. But what I cannot understand is how anyone, anywhere, can not care when 2,162 children are born into poverty every day in America. How can anyone not care that the number of chil-

dren living below one-half of the poverty line soared by nearly half a million in the first year of the welfare law alone?

Nearly 10 million American children live in poverty despite having someone in the family who works. How can anyone not care when millions of poor children in the richest nation on earth live in homes without enough food, without enough health care, and without enough hope?

I don't understand that. I never have and I never will.

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