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WINTER SOLSTICE CEREMONIAL SITE THREATENED WITH DESTRUCTION

For Immediate Release

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ATTN: Editor

The Winter Solstice was probably the most important day in the lives of Native Americans. Their religious celebrations associated with the shortest day of the year and the coming of the New Year marked the rebirth of the earth and the end of darkness.

An important Native American ceremonial site associated with the Winter Solstice was discovered in San Jacinto County, Texas. The owners of the site, which is located on private property, were contacted to determine if they would be willing to donate a perpetual State Archaeological Landmark easement to The Texas Historical Commission in order to insure the site's protection.

Dr. Kenneth Russell (94) and his wife Marjorie Russell (90) graciously made the donation to the THC, believing that this generous act on behalf of the citizens of Texas would insure protection of the site. Their hopes of permanent protection were soon dashed.

Sam Houston Electric Power Cooperative decided against the advice of three State Agencies that bulldozing the 35,000,000 year old Catahoula boulders at the site would be necessary in order to construct a multi-million dollar 138 kv transmission line to supply electric power to no new customers in an area with very low population density, already served with more than adequate power.

SHECO's agents and attorneys spent hundreds of thousands of dollars convincing an Administrative Hearing Judge that the area was unworthy of protection and due to the fact that Texas State Law offers almost no protection of historic landmarks including formally dedicated State Archaeological Landmarks, SHECO bulldozers may soon destroy an irreplaceable part of our heritage.

The fact that this site had the same importance to Native Americans as a Baptist Church has to rural East Texans, the Russells believe that SHECO's obsession with destroying this religious site would constitute a hate crime and should be prosecuted as such.

The Power Company, with the concurrence of the Public Utility Commission, is scheduled to irreparably harm not only the Winter Solstice Ceremonial Site but America's only formally dedicated Beaver Sanctuary, The Holy Trinity Wilderness Cathedral, a Texas Parks and Wildlife Trail, the Westernmost Longleaf Pine Sanctuary, a Perpetual Forest Sanctuary and The Ethician Family Cemetery.

The Russell family is convinced that these important historic, religious, and natural areas have been targeted for damage by SHECO because their church, which owns the cemetery and Chapel of the Nativity which would also be harmed, welcomes Jews, Muslims, African-Americans, and peoples of all other faiths, ethnic origins and sexual orientations.

San Jacinto County is deep in White Supremacist country and the power company headquarters is located in Livingston, where the KKK rallied in support of the murder of an African-American who was dragged to death behind a pick-up truck in nearby Jasper.

The Universal Ethician Church has suffered from numerous episodes of vandalism and bigotry directed against it. The power company has used its attorneys and paid agents to attempt to force the church to release the names of its members and has ridiculed the importance of the Winter Solstice religious ceremonial site. SHECO and its agents have at least twice trespassed on The Holy Trinity Wilderness Cathedral, knocking down fences, rutting botanical areas, destroying or damaging hundreds of trees and shrubs, breaking through locked gates and rutting the main road into the heart of the Cathedral.

This year, the solstice will occur on December 21st. For those wishing to observe the event a gathering will take place at the Chapel of the Nativity located at the intersection of Waterwood Parkway and F.M. 980 at 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon.

George H. Russell, an outspoken opponent of the death penalty, is a resident of Huntsville, Texas, known worldwide as "The City of Death."

He is founder of The Patriot Network, and author of its 35+ web sites located at www.patriotnetwork.org, as well as founder of The Universal Ethician Church, an interfaith ministry with a worldwide following via the church's 275+ web sites located at www.salvationnetwork.org.

Russell, 60, is an educational video producer, environmental activist, historic preservation specialist, photographer, art and antique collector, philanthropist, American patriot and ethician.

Additional biographical information may be found in Who's Who in America, through Internet searches, and in other publications. Images of Mr. Russell suitable for downloading for publication may be found at www.salvationnetwork.org.