Violence deters Nuevo Laredo missions

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Violence deters Nuevo Laredo missions

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

SAN ANTONIO—The number of Texas Baptist mission trips to Nuevo Laredo is down significantly this year, due in large part to violence between drug cartels there.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas Border/Mexico Missions office facilitated fewer than 10 mission trips to Nuevo Laredo this year, down from nearly 30 in 2005.

Child learns early lesson about selfless giving

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Megan Simmwell, age 7, sits among the 100 arts and crafts supplies she received for her birthday. Simmwell donated all the gifts to children served in STARRY's emergency shelter program.

Child learns early lesson about selfless giving

By Miranda Bradley

Children at Heart Ministries

ROUND ROCK—Most adults find it hard to be selfless, no matter how many sermons they hear about it being "more blessed to give than to receive."

But Megan Simmwell, age 7, learned the lesson early—and has become hooked on giving.

Recently, she gave her own brand-new birthday presents to children served by STARRY's emergency shelter program. STARRY is a community-based agency of Children at Heart Ministries that serves children, teenagers and parents in crisis.

Protestants decide there's something about Mary

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Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem in *The Nativity Story*.

Protestants decide there's something about Mary

By Sarah Price Brown

Religion News Service

LOS ANGELES—Scot McKnight, a religious studies professor, was teaching several years ago when he had an “aha” moment.

McKnight had just read aloud the Magnificat, the Virgin Mary’s hymn of praise from the Gospel of Luke.

Growing church family finds room for expansion

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Growing church family finds room for expansion

By George Henson

Staff Writer

ODESSA—As families grow, the need for a larger home often follows. Primera Iglesia Bautista in Odessa has found what seems to be a perfect fit for its growing family of believers.

More than twice as many people have made professions of faith in Jesus Christ in 2006 than in 2005 at Primera, Pastor Mario Martinez said.

On the Move

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On the Move

• **Gary Anthony** to First Church in Temple as associate pastor of music from Gaston Oaks Church in Dallas, where he was minister of music/administration.

• **Larry Archer** to Sylvester Church in Sylvester as pastor.

• **Mike Bradford** to East Side Church in Rusk as pastor from Fort Phantom Church in Abilene.

• **Richard Butts** to Skyline Church in Lubbock as pastor.

Love of reading modeled for children, single moms

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Love of reading modeled for children, single moms

By Miranda Bradley

Children at Heart Foundation

ROUND ROCK—For the 10th consecutive year, Christmas came a bit early for some Round Rock children, as 21 teachers with the Austin chapter of the Delta Kappa Gamma Society brought cookies, books and the joy of reading to Texas Baptist Children's Home's Family Care residents.

"We get to give our time and our books to these kids," chapter President Shirley Shay said. "It makes for a very special experience."

Shrink stress and save sanity by getting organized

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Shrink stress and save sanity by getting organized

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

'Tis the season for anxiety attacks as to-do lists grow longer while days before Christmas grow shorter. But families can reduce holiday stress by following a few simple organizing tips, Christian author Marcia Ramsland said.

"The holidays are as much a matter of organization as they are a matter of the heart," said Ramsland, author of *Simplify Your Life: Get Organized and Stay that Way*. "If you do anything in life more than once, organize it and simplify it. That's especially true at the holidays."

Texas Tidbits

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Texas Tidbits

Baylor receives grant for lupus research. Baylor Research Institute—an affiliate of the Baylor Health Care System—has received a $6.2 million grant that will allow its immunology division to establish a Center for Lupus Research. The grant comes from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases. According to the Lupus Foundation of America, about 1.5 million Americans have a form of lupus—90 percent of them women.

Academy alumni support Gridiron Heroes. Representatives of the San

Marcos Academy class of 1976 presented a $1,976 donation to Gridiron Heroes, a Texas-based support and outreach service organization that offers services to young athletes and their families affected by spinal-cord injuries. Eddie Canales founded Gridiron Heroes after his son Chris suffered life-threatening spinal cord injuries in a football game. Both the father and son are San Marcos Academy graduates.

TOGETHER: Passion grows for being â□□on missionâ□□

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TOGETHER:
Passion grows for being ‘on mission’

As 2006 draws to a close, I celebrate the growing passion I see in many churches for being “on mission” with God. This passion is exemplified in many ways.

Our cowboy church leaders are responding to God’s blessings in their lives and are starting new churches across Texas. People’s lives are being turned around. Folks who have never been to church or had felt they could never again be “at home” in a church are finding God’s promise of peace and salvation to be real.

Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

There are new churches in small towns on the edge of urban sprawl where God is using men and women who never before realized they could be leaders in a church to reach scores of people for Christ. Because of the passion for reaching people that bubbles up in the hearts of so many churches, we are starting 180 churches in Texas this year.

A Hispanic church in Texas is so eager for God to work through them that they started a Vacation Bible School in Guanajuato, Mexico, and now a church is there. They connected with the social needs of the people who live in that area, opened a school, now accredited by the Mexican Board of Education, which is teaching labor skills for an impoverished community. One of their families now lives as missionaries in that community, and other families have caught the vision of missions service.

Tots compel students to give

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University of Mary Hardin-Baylor residence dorms competed to give the most to the area Toys for Tots campaign sponsored by the Marine Corps Reserve.

Tots compel students to give

By Jennifer Sicking

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

BELTON—Melissa Ochs returned from a weekend trip to find bags of toys in her dorm room at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor.

An anonymous donation, helped push Johnson Hall ahead of other campus residence halls in the “dorm wars” competition to collect toys for the area Toys for Tots campaign by the Marine Corps Reserve.

Dozen UMHB students share Christmas joy worldwide

December 14, 2006
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Dozen UMHB students share Christmas joy worldwide

By Jennifer Sicking

University of Mary Hardin-Baylor

BELTON—Russia wasn't Felicia Cano's first choice for a Christmas vacation destination, but she believes it's exactly where God wants her to be.

"This trip, for me, is kind of a stretch," said Cano, a junior business management major from Bay City. "I love Africa. I've gone to Africa. But God put Russia on my heart."

MORE BLESSED TO GIVE: Compassionate conservatives? Research says, â□□Yesâ□□

December 14, 2006
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MORE BLESSED TO GIVE: Compassionate conservatives? Research says, 'Yes'

By Frank Brieaddy

Religion News Service

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (RNS)—Syracuse University professor Arthur Brooks may be the newest darling of the religious right in America—and it's making him nervous. The child of academics, raised in a liberal household and educated in the liberal arts, Brooks has written a book that concludes religious conservatives donate far more money than secular liberals to all sorts of charitable activities, irrespective of income.

In the book, *Who Really Cares: The Surprising Truth About Compassionate Conservatism*, he cites extensive data analysis to demonstrate that values advocated by conservatives—from church attendance and two-parent families to the Protestant work ethic and a distaste for government-funded social services—make conservatives more generous than liberals.

“For too long, liberals have been claiming they are the most virtuous members of American society. Although they usually give less to charity, they have nevertheless lambasted conservatives for their callousness in the face of social injustice.”–Arthur Brooks

(Photo by www.fotosearch.com)