

# Leader roped into service

February 19, 2007

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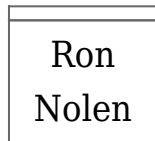
## Leader roped into service

**By Toby Druin**

*Editor Emeritus*

WAXAHACHIE—Ron Nolen got “roped” into the cowboy church business.

Nolen, coordinator of the [Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches](#), was working many hours as a church starter for the Baptist General Convention of Texas in 1999, when his son, Matt, a roper, gave him a lariat to try as a means of relaxation.



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## Cowboy church-planting school slated

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# Cowboy church-planting school slated

The first advanced-track [Texas Fellowship of Cowboy Churches](#) church-planting school will be Feb. 24-25 in Bandera.

## **See Related Articles:**

- [Cowboy Churches: Roundin' Up Strays](#)
- [Disabled rodeo-riding pastor overcomes obstacles](#)
- [Baptisms, mission dollars follow cowboy church growth](#)
- [Cowboy churches spread, thanks to laid-back approach](#)
- [Leader roped into service](#)
- Cowboy church-planting school slated
- [Cowboy church slideshow](#)

The two-day symposium, designed for new and experienced pastors and lay leaders who want to begin a western-heritage ministry, will include team training workshops on pastor, elder and children's ministries, plus western-style discipleship. Other sessions will focus on Christian leadership skills, communications and conflict resolution.

Presenters at the conference will include BGCT Executive Director Charles

Wade; Paul Powell, dean of Baylor University's Truett Seminary; and Joel Gregory, Truett preaching professor.

Following the Saturday sessions, participants will gather for a barbecue dinner, a concert by the Rawhide Fellowship Cowboy Band and an appearance by western movie stuntman Rudy Robbins. For more details or reservations, call (888) 611-2651.

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# Cowboy Churches: Roundin' Up Strays

February 19, 2007

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## Cowboy Churches: Roundin' Up Strays

**By Barbara Bedrick**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

GEORGE WEST—Wearing a dust-covered cowboy hat and a pair of boots, Pat Traxler immediately made a connection with needy people in Africa even before he gave them food and water.

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Monty Hill,  
men's ministry  
leader at  
Rafter J  
Cowboy  
Church in  
Terrell,  
welcomes  
worshippers  
who relate to  
the  
congregation's  
laid-back  
worship style  
and affinity  
with the  
western  
heritage.  
(BGCT photos  
by Barbara  
Bedrick)

“It was amazing what that old Stetson could do,” said Traxler, pastor of Brush Country Cowboy Church in George West. “They were fascinated. The image struck a chord. Although the people didn’t speak English, they knew enough to call me ‘cowboy.’”

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# Former BGCT leader claims race a factor in Valley probe

February 19, 2007

Updated: 2/16/07

## Former BGCT leader claims race a factor in Valley probe

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

Otto Arango, the central figure in an investigation that revealed misuse and mismanagement of Texas Baptist church-starting funds in the Rio Grande Valley, was singled out for suspicion because he was a financially successful Hispanic from the Dominican Republic, another key figure in the probe has asserted.

E.B. Brooks, former head of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Church Starting Center, made the assertion in a 25-page document he sent to members of the BGCT Executive Board and selected Baptist Building staff.

E.B. Brooks
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# Around the State

February 19, 2007

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The  
Houston  
Baptist  
University  
Choral  
Union took  
center stage  
at Houston's  
Jones Hall  
for the  
Performing  
Arts during  
a  
performance  
of "Credo"  
by Krzysztof  
Penderecki  
last month.

The  
performance  
was the  
culmination  
of more  
than two  
and a half  
years'  
preparation.

## Around the State

- **The College of Christian Studies** at the University of Mary-Hardin

Baylor presents its winter lectures series "The Formation of a Christian Mind" Feb. 21-23. Todd Still, associate professor of Christian Scriptures at Truett Theological Seminary, will be the featured speaker. The series of five lectures will be held at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. Wednesday, 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. Thursday, and 11 a.m. Friday.

- **Richard Russell**, assistant professor of English at Baylor University, will receive the 2007 Achievement Award for New Scholars in Humanities and Fine Arts from the Conference of Southern Graduate Schools Feb. 25 at the organization's annual meeting.
- **Barbara Bush**, former first lady of the United States, will be the guest speaker for the McLane Lecture at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor Feb. 26. Attendance will be by invitation only.
- **The Dallas Baptist University** baseball team has been ranked the top NCAA Division I independent team in the country by Baseball America heading into the 2007 season. The Patriots are looking to secure their first-ever NCAA Division I tournament bid. They play the No. 1 team overall Feb. 20 when they travel to Houston to take on the Rice Owls.

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**Baylor regents OK**  
**athletic/academic complex**

February 19, 2007  
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## **Baylor regents OK athletic/academic complex**

WACO (ABP)—[Baylor University](#)'s board of regents has approved a plan that will begin integrating athletics into academic campus life at the school.

On Feb. 8, Baylor's regents unanimously approved a \$34 million plan to build an on-campus athletics facility and academic center.

It will mark the first time the athletics department and football-training grounds are located on Baylor's main campus.

The new site will be called the Alwin and Dorothy Highers Athletics Complex and the Simpson Athletics and Academic Center. Its focus is a 96,300-square-foot main building that will sit next to the school's Mayborn Museum Complex and other athletic facilities near the Brazos River.

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## **BGCT sponsors inaugural Inspire 2007 training event to encourage leaders**

February 19, 2007

Posted: 2/16/07

# BGCT sponsors inaugural Inspire '07 training event to encourage leaders

The [Baptist General Convention of Texas](#) will launch its inaugural [Inspire '07](#) event March 24 at College Heights Baptist Church in Plainview.

The one-day training opportunity for church staff, leaders and members will encourage discussion, learning and ex-change of ministry, evangelism and missions ideas.

David Mahfouz, pastor of First Baptist Church in Port Neches, will be the keynote speaker.

Sunday school training workshops include pre-school, children, youth, adults and general sessions. Eleven specialty workshops include creative church leadership, blended worship, transitional churches, small-group ministry, single-parent ministry, women's ministry and lifestyle evangelism.

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## Book Reviews

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## Book Reviews

[Grave Risk](#) by Hannah Alexander (Steeple Hill Café)

In *Grave Risk*, Christy Award-winning author Hannah Alexander weaves an

intriguing tale that keeps the pages turning.

The title aptly describes nurse Jill Cooper, who finds herself at risk, both of great danger and of death when her much-loved, retired high school principal Edith Potts dies of a heart attack and revered shopkeeper and former science teacher Cecil Martin succumbs to a fall. Jill senses the deaths aren't as the sheriff believes, especially when Edith's nephew drops should-have-been-destroyed school records on her porch.

The logo for "Off the Bookshelf" features the words "Off the" in a small, red, sans-serif font stacked vertically to the left of the word "Bookshelf" in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below "Bookshelf" is the tagline "What's everyone reading anyway?" in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font.

Off the **Bookshelf**  
What's everyone reading anyway?

What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to [books@baptiststandard.com](mailto:books@baptiststandard.com).

To complicate matters, two of Jill's former sweethearts suddenly appear in the small town. Can Jill solve the mystery and bring the truth of the past to light before she meets her end?

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## **Baptist Briefs**

February 19, 2007

Posted: 2/16/07

# Baptist Briefs

**Baptists among mission workers killed in Honduras.** Three Americans on a mission trip in Honduras were killed in a truck crash Feb. 6. Ten other people were injured when the truck flipped on a remote mountain road, authorities said. Two of the deceased—45-year-old Perry Goad and 58-year-old Richard Mason Jr., both of Cartersville, Ga.—belonged to Tabernacle Baptist Church in Cartersville. Martha Fuller, 66, from Newnan, Ga., also was killed in the accident, which happened near the village of Mal Pais. Fuller was a member of Newnan First United Methodist Church. The weeklong trip included a group of 28 people traveling with Honduras Outreach, Inc., a Georgia-based, nondenominational charity that has sent North American volunteers to the Agalta Valley in Honduras the past 18 years. The volunteers— up to 1,000 a year—often spent time constructing roads, routing electricity and implementing running water in the remote villages there.

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**Bush receives SBC religious liberty award.** President Bush received a Southern Baptist award for his advocacy of religious freedom in a recent presentation at the White House. Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, presented the John Leland Religious Liberty Award to Bush in the Oval Office. The commission gave the award to the president for "courageously defending the right of all people to exercise freely their religious faith," according to the framed citation.

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## Cartoon

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“Look on  
the bright  
side: At  
least we  
all  
brought  
our  
permission  
slips.”

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Baptist churches, in Texas, the BGCT, the nation and around the world.

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# 2nd Opinion: Confront and prevent child abuse

February 19, 2007

Posted: 2/16/07

## 2nd Opinion: Confront and prevent child abuse

**By Denton Lotz**

Jesus taught us, "Whoever receives one in my name receives me; but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:5-6). He also admonished, "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them; for to such belong the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 19:14).

Baptists always have affirmed children. A Baptist deacon, William Fox, began the Sunday School Society in 1785 to remedy the horrors of the Industrial Revolution, which forced children as young as 10 years old to work underground in mines 12 hours a day, six days a week.

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Today, the situation of children worldwide has become worse. In October 2006, the United Nations released [The UN Secretary General's Study on Violence Against Children](#). After reading this document, Christians and other men and women of good will should become angry and energized to work to stop child abuse.