

Elder statesman Fletcher lauded as educator, writer

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Bill Pitts (left)
of
Independence
Association
presents this
year's Elder
Statesman
Award to
Jesse
Fletcher.

Elder statesman Fletcher lauded as educator, writer

By Ferrell Foster

Texas Baptist Communications

INDEPENDENCE—Texas Baptists honored educator and author Jesse Fletcher as recipient of this year's Elder Statesman Award in a special service at Independence Baptist Church June 3.

The award is given each year by the Independence Association to honor significant contributions to Baptist education in Texas.

Faith Digest

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Faith Digest

Creation Museum opens. The Answers in Genesis Ministry opened a \$27 million Creation Museum in Petersburg, Ky., just across the state line from Cincinnati, Memorial Day weekend. The main hall of the 60,000-square-foot building features animatronic dinosaurs and figures of young children playing near each other in a way its owners believe life really occurred some 6,000 years ago. The state-of-the-art museum includes vibrating seats and sprays of water in a theater that depicts Noah's flood, and extensive exhibits that claim the Grand Canyon could have formed around the time of that flood rather than millions of years ago as suggested by most scientists.

Crusade crew reunites for library opening. Song leader Cliff Barrows, 84, and soloist George Beverly Shea, 98, joined their longtime crusade partner Billy Graham in a rare public appearance at the dedication of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C. Graham, 88, also was joined by his son, Franklin, who heads his father's ministry and by three former presidents—George H.W. Bush, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton—who took turns praising the evangelist. The \$27 million library and history complex includes a barn-styled building reminiscent of the dairy farm where Graham spent his boyhood years, with a 40-foot glass cross as its entrance.

Immigration issues reveal disparity between views in pulpits and pews

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Immigration issues reveal disparity between views in pulpits and pews

By Daniel Burke

Religion News Service

WASHINGTON (RNS)—As Congress debates immigration policy, many prominent religious leaders—from all shades of the theological spectrum—have called for a “comprehensive and compassionate” reform of existing laws. It’s part of what they see as their biblical mandate to care for the stranger.

But it’s unclear if their flocks in the pews agree. More than 60 percent of white evangelicals said immigrants are a “burden” to the United States because they take jobs, housing and health care, according to a 2006 poll conducted by the non-partisan Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

Texas Baptist Forum

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Texas Baptist Forum

Falwell's legacy

I was surprised at the article concerning Jerry Falwell's legacy ([May 28](#)). No mention was made of the evangelical outreach that showed the road to salvation for thousands and thousands of souls over his 50-year ministry.

Actual evangelism as an evangelical Christian will always be his greatest legacy. It wasn't the television, radio, university or controversial comments that his ministry was built upon. It was the winning of souls at every opportunity.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jump to online-only letters below
Letters are welcomed. Send them to marvknox@baptiststandard.com ; 250 words maximum.

Out ((Loud))

“The tragic thing is to think how many churches this Sunday will be treated to safe, nice, harmless, insignificant, intramural and Trivial Pursuit sermons. There are going to be an awful lot of sermons preached in Christian churches ... that actually probably help the world become a worse place.”

Brian McLaren

Author and former pastor (ABP)

“I feel like I’ve been attending my own funeral.”

Billy Graham

Evangelist, joking about the dedication ceremony of the Billy Graham Library in Charlotte, N.C. (RNS)

“I share with my comedian friends who primarily work comedy clubs that if they want a real challenge, come try to make a roomful of Baptist deacons laugh without a two-drink minimum! Then we’ll see how funny you really are!”

Chondra Pierce

Christian comedian (Today's Christian/RNS)

That is the thing that all ministries should be based upon.

TOGETHER: Who's going to fill their huge shoes?

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TOGETHER: Who's going to fill their huge shoes?

Three great Texas Baptist leaders died in the past few weeks: John Baugh, founder of Sysco and strong Baptist layman; Herbert Reynolds, Baylor University's 11th president; and Ronald Edwards, pastor of Minnehulla Baptist Church in Goliad and president of the African American Fellowship.

At John Baugh's funeral, Daniel Vestal, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship coordinator and his former pastor, described how he believed in the priesthood of each and all believers. He believed America had grown great because of the Baptist witness to religious liberty and our conviction of soul competency in matters of faith.



Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

His generosity to Baptist causes was legendary. One gift I would mention: He helped bring hundreds of pastors and spouses together for fellowship and retreat. He asked us to tell them: “A Baptist layman believes in you and is grateful for the sacrificial service you and your families give to the cause of Christ. This is a way for a layman to say, “Thank you for all you do.” That word healed marriages and sent pastors back to their tasks with vigor and dedication.

Herbert Reynolds loved Baylor and Texas Baptists. He believed the future of Texas, as well as the eternal future of Texans, depended on reaching people for Christ; and he believed new churches were a key strategy in helping that happen. He believed strong Baptist churches were a key ingredient also to a strong Baylor future.

Ministers not immune from sexual addiction

June 8, 2007

Posted: 6/08/07

Ministers not immune from sexual addiction

By Rick Owen

BGCT Counseling and Psychological Services Center

With few exceptions, the men and women who fill the pulpits and ministry positions of our Texas Baptist churches at one time occupied the pews. The churches from which our ministers came have not been immune to the aftermath of the sexual revolution and the presence of cable TV and the internet.

As a result, those among our memberships and in ministry who suffer with sexual concerns, sexual compulsivity or addiction are many. There are both ministers and church members who struggle with impure sexual thoughts; inappropriate, compulsive, offensive, or illegal sexual behavior; internet pornography addiction; or compulsive sexual-acting-out behaviors of various kinds.

On the Move

June 8, 2007

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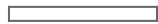
On the Move

- **Heath Barkley** to South Garland Church in Garland as children's minister.
 - **Clarence Barten** has resigned as pastor of Pilgrim's Way Church in Sanger.
 - **Trevor Dickson** to Crescent Heights Church in Abilene as interim minister of music.
 - **Scot Edmondson** to First Church in Lometa as pastor.
-

Cartoon

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RIGHT or WRONG? Censorship

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Posted: 6/08/07

RIGHT or WRONG? Censorship

A church member recently donated a book to our church library. But a question has been raised about the book's appropriateness for the library. If we don't shelve the book, we will be accused of censorship. How should we determine the appropriateness of the book?

Former Baylor president's death marks end of an era

June 8, 2007
Updated: 6/08/07

Former Baylor president's

death marks end of an era

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

WACO—Texas Baptist leaders agreed Baylor University President Emeritus [Herbert Reynolds](#)' death marked the end of an era in Baptist life.

Reynolds died May 25 at his family's second home in Angel Fire, N.M., at age 77 from what was presumed to be a heart attack.

Herbert H. Reynolds

**African American Fellowship
President Edwards
characterized as a quiet
giant**

June 8, 2007

Updated: 6/08/07

African American Fellowship President Edwards characterized as ‘quiet giant’

By **John Hall**

Texas Baptist Communications

Ronald Edwards, president of the African American Fellowship of Texas and pastor of Minnehulla Baptist Church in Goliad, died May 31 due to complications from an infection caused by a spider bite. He was 45.

Leaders of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the African American Fellowship, Guadalupe Baptist Association and the Goliad Ministerial Alliance were among the crowd who filled Minnehulla Baptist Church to overflowing at a June 6 memorial service for Edwards.

Ronald Edwards

Warren slated to speak at Texas Baptist annual meeting

June 8, 2007

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By **John Hall**

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS—Rick Warren, best-selling author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, will address the Baptist General Convention of Texas annual meeting in Amarillo.

Warren will speak Oct. 29 about his PEACE Plan, an effort where churches lead the way in eliminating issues such as illiteracy and poverty. PEACE stands for planting churches, equipping leaders, assisting the poor, caring for the sick and educating the next generation. “Missions—Together We Can Do More” will be the theme of the BGCT annual meeting.