

Tornado blessings astound Tulia couple as Baptists provide relief

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A bulldozer prepares to remove the heavily damaged Ellis family trailer home following a tornado that hit Tulia. (Photos by Barbara Bedrick/BGCT)

Tornado blessings astound Tulia couple as Baptists provide relief

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

TULIA—As Nancy and Kerbow Ellis return to teach at their West Texas

classrooms, they do so with a newfound understanding of how their faith overcomes all adversity.



Nancy and Kerbow Ellis insist they've been blessed in the aftermath of a tornado that destroyed their home. They are one of four Tulia families to receive BGCT disaster response assistance.

The Tulia couple—both schoolteachers— lost their home to a tornado April 21, but they insist God has blessed them in allowing them to survive the storm and its wrath. They were in Amarillo at a concert instead of at home when the tornado hit.

Federal panel decries Iraq's religious-freedom record

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Federal panel decries Iraq's religious-freedom record

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—For the first time since the United States overthrew Saddam Hussein four years ago, a non-partisan federal panel said May 2 that religious freedom in Iraq is gravely endangered.

The [United States Commission on International Religious Freedom](#), in its annual report to Congress and President Bush's administration, said the conditions for religious freedom in Iraq are "alarming and deteriorating."

Baptist nurse retraces steps of pioneer missionary in Nigeria

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The 300 residents of Mission of Mercy Orphanage in Otutulu, Nigeria, enjoy new toothbrushes that were just part of the extensive health evaluation and treatment they received from a CERI volunteer team that included nurse Kerrie Snow. (CERI photo by Kerrie Snow)

Baptist nurse retraces steps of pioneer missionary in Nigeria

By Craig Bird

Baptist Child & Family Services

OTUTULU, Nigeria—Squinting against the glare of the tropical sun and the dust hanging in the air, Kerrie Snow couldn't help but imagine it was 125 years earlier. Instead of an Australian-born Baptist nurse from Houston, she was a "wee Scottish woman" known as "the White Ma of Africa."

"Many years ago, I had the joy of being the missionary story lady for several years during Vacation Bible School," she explained. "Two summers, I told about how Mary Slessor had to deal with some formidable Nigerian tribal leaders in the late 1880s. I never dreamed that someday I would find myself also going to meet an Eje—which means 'aggressive and powerful like the hyena'—representing a faith he didn't share."



In a face-to-face encounter with a Nigerian tribal chief, Kerrie Snow was thrilled to explain to the Muslim how Christians were assisting the orphans in his area.

(CERI Photo)

Abstinence program draws support in Del Rio

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Strong gusty winds at Right Choices for Life's first Family Fun Day in Del Rio complicated but didn't lower the fun level as these basketball players quickly learned. (Photos by Craig Bird/BCFS)

Abstinence program draws support in Del Rio

By Melissa Gonzales

Baptist Child & Family Services

DEL RIO—In Del Rio, the Right Choices for Life program is redefining “everybody’s doing it”—turning peer pressure into positive influence.

More than 90 percent of the South Texas city’s eighth grade students—720

out of 795—signed up for Right Choices for Life, a [Baptist Child & Family Services](#) program geared toward helping teenagers abstain from premarital sex and illegal drugs.

Maciel named president at Baptist University of the Americas

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Maciel named president at Baptist University of the Americas

By Brad Russell

Baptist University of the Americas

SAN ANTONIO—René Maciel, assistant dean at Baylor University's Truett Theological Seminary, has been named president of the [Baptist University of the Americas](#), effective Aug. 6.

Baptist University of the Americas' trustees elected Maciel, 48, at their May 7 meeting.

San Marcos Academy students learn value of service

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San
Marcos
Baptist
Academy
students
loaded
50 boxes
of used
books
into a
truck for
donation
to Rural
Nigerian
Outreach
project.

San Marcos Academy students learn value of service

[San Marcos Baptist Academy](#) volunteers collected 50 boxes of used books to help schools, hospitals and rural outposts in Nigeria, and an eighth-grade Boy Scout at the academy led his peers to build a wildlife observation platform for a new San Marcos park.

The academy provided textbooks that were no longer needed—as well as several outdated-but-functional computers and other supplies—to Rural Nigerian Outreach.

“Teachers change books, courses change, or texts become outdated for our students,” said Bob Bryant, school principal of the academy. “It is a real joy to know that these perfectly good books are going to be put back into service and be used where they are so desperately needed.”

John Myers completed his Eagle Scout service project by leading members of the academy’s National Honor Society, other volunteers from the academy and members of Boy Scout Troop 1954 to construct a wooden wildlife observation platform for a new park in their city.

Around the State

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Around the State

- **East Texas Baptist University** has expanded its annual writers' conference from one day to two, June 1-2. Twenty-three presenters will be included this year, with Friday's activities beginning at 2 p.m. Saturday will begin at 8:30 a.m. The cost is \$60, with a \$20 discount offered to high school and college students. The fee covers a luncheon on Saturday. Registration deadline is May 28. For more information, call (903) 923-2083.
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Justin Murphy, director of the Douglas MacArthur Academy of Freedom and professor of history at Howard Payne University, dressed as George Washington as a means of building interest among students for "American Revolution Week." The week was designed to give students an opportunity to study a historical period through a range of experiences outside the classroom. In addition to re-enactments by professors of scenes from the time period, a fife-and-drum corps also played around the campus, and special lectures about the time period were conducted. The week was rounded out with the Williamsburg Faire, complete with booths run by student organizations that included corset lace-up, knife throwing and a May pole. Artisans also demonstrated glassblowing, soap making and blacksmithing.

- **Houston Baptist University** held a naming ceremony for the Joella and

Stewart Morris Cultural Arts Center and the Belin Chapel. A special naming ceremony paid tribute to the Morrises, whose financial contributions made the arts center possible. Morris also was among the founders of the university and twice served as chairman of the board of trustees. The Belin Chapel is named for Mary Ann and Bruce Belin. The arts complex will be dedicated in October.

- **Ron Smith**, senior professor of theology at Hardin-Simmons University, has retired after 28 years of service.
- **Dallas Baptist University** has created a new dual 54-hour master of arts degree. The master of arts in Christian education/master of business administration degree primarily will be offered through evening and online courses. For more information, call (214) 333-5242.

Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[The Road to Unafraid](#)

By Jeff Struecker with Dean Merrill (W Publishing Group)

Mark Bowden's 1999 bestseller *Black Hawk Down* vividly visualized the story of the 1993 "Battle of Mogadishu," the U.S. Army's Delta Force and

Ranger raid to capture two senior lieutenants of Somali warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid as part of a United Nations peacekeeping force in Somalia.

One of those U.S. Army Rangers who was a part of that harrowing and heroic experience was Capt. Jeff Struecker.

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

New Baptist Covenant launches website. The New Baptist Covenant has launched www.newbaptistcovenant.org, a website that provides information about the Celebration of a New Baptist Covenant event, slated for Jan. 30-Feb. 1 in Atlanta. In addition to providing general information about the celebration, the website also offers opportunities for volunteer involvement. Information on housing, transportation and needs for large room blocks also will be posted on the site.

Olive named Bluefield president. David Olive will be the next president of Bluefield College, a Virginia Baptist school, effective July 1. Olive, executive vice president and chief operating officer at Pfeiffer University in Charlotte, N.C., will be the ninth president in Bluefield's 85-year history. Olive has worked at Pfeiffer since 1998. Before Pfeiffer, Olive served three

years as director of charitable gift planning at Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., two years as a legal advocate for students at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, and one year as the coordinator of alumni and development programs at Tennessee Tech University in Cookeville, Tenn. He is a licensed attorney and an ordained minister with a master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Cartoon

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Baptists care for disasterâs youngest victims

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Baptists care for disaster's youngest victims

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

CACTUS—When a tornado hit Cactus, calls poured in from across the state to offer help. Among them was First Baptist Church in Borger, which sent cases of bottled water, disposable baby diapers and other supplies to the devastated Panhandle community.

“It’s good to see how God can put into people’s hearts to help,” said Delilah Rosales, a pastor’s daughter. “It’s a big, big blessing.”



Licensed
daycare
workers
helped
parents
check in
children in
Cactus,
where they
found
refuge and
rest in the
Texas
Baptist
Men
Emergency
Child care
Unit.

DOWN HOME: Sheâs a young dog; will she do tricks?

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DOWN HOME:

She's a young dog; will she do tricks?

We took Topanga to school, but I should've worn the dunce cap.

Topanga is our 5-month-old puppy. Years ago, she would've been called a mutt. Today, she's a cava-tsu, a mix between a cavalier King Charles spaniel and a shih tsu. So, she looks like a shih tsu but has a spaniel's floppy, frolicky, I'm-just-happy-to-be-here disposition.

When Joanna told me we signed up for the training course, I figured Topanga's class would be composed of four or five dogs. I figured wrong. It looked more like a dog zoo, with probably 25 to 30 canines. Everything from a Great Dane named Django to a chihuahua named Sonic, who looked like Django's snack.

I thought we were OK but quickly knew we were in trouble when the teacher began by announcing, "Of course, we've (she was speaking on behalf of the dogs) all learned our names and how to sit."