

# **DOWN HOME: Pucker up for some really good news**

March 30, 2007

Posted: 3/30/07

## **DOWN HOME: Pucker up for some really good news**

Now, here's some useful news:

Kissing is good for you.

And I'm not making this up.

[\*Heart-Healthy Living\*](#) magazine puts it out there in black and white in its spring issue. "Couples who kiss often are eight times less likely to feel stressed or depressed." Ta-da!

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## **EDITORIAL: Worse than crashing a \$1.5M Ferrari**

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## EDITORIAL:

# Worse than crashing a \$1.5M Ferrari

Did you hear the one about the actor and the sportscar?

No joke. Comedian Eddie Griffin was practicing for a charity car race to promote his upcoming movie, *Redline*, when he lost control of a rare Ferrari Enzo and crashed it. (See the wreck on YouTube [here](#).) Griffin totalled the car. It cost \$1.5 million.

Wrap your brain around that: A \$1.5 million red sportscar, gone in a nanosecond. Can you even comprehend anything on four wheels costing \$1.5 million?



The car's owner took the wreck pretty well. *Redline* producer Daniel Sadek reflected: "I'm glad Eddie came out of the crash OK, but my dream car got destroyed. I went to my trailer for about 15 minutes, and I thought: 'There's people dying every day. A lot of worse things are happening in the world.'"

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# ETBU nursing students put training into practice in Mexico

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## ETBU nursing students put training into practice in Mexico

**By Mike Midkiff**

*East Texas Baptist University*

MARSHALL—East Texas Baptist University Department of Nursing students took time away from the books and put their training to use, conducting free medical assessment clinics during a weeklong mission trip to Mexico.

The eight nursing students accompanied 28 students involved with the Baptist Student Ministry, traveling to Monterrey, Mexico, during spring break.

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Residents of a remote village outside of Saltillo, Mexico, wait to have a free health assessment done by nursing students from East Texas Baptist University. ETBU nursing students spent time during spring break to do medical missions in Mexico. (Photo courtesy of ETBU Department of Nursing)

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# Faith Digest

March 30, 2007

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## Faith Digest

**Survey says moral values weakened.** Three-quarters of Americans believe moral values in America have weakened in the last 20 years, and almost half think they have significantly weakened, according to [a survey](#) released by the Media Research Center. The survey found 74 percent of American adults said they believe moral values in the United States are weaker than they were two decades ago, while 48 percent said moral values were “much weaker.” Sixty-eight percent of Americans surveyed said the media—both entertainment and news—have a detrimental effect on moral values. More specifically, 73 percent said entertainment media had a negative influence on moral values, and 54 percent said the news media do. Eighty-seven percent of Americans said they believe in God, while 36 percent agreed that people should always live by God’s principles and teachings. The study was conducted by the polling firm Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Associates and the center’s [Culture and Media Institute](#). The results were based on 1,000 surveys of American adults ages 18 and older by telephone and 1,000 surveys completed online in December. It had an overall margin of error of plus or minus 2.2 percentage points.



**Wipe out malaria, first lady urges.** Laura Bush congratulated religious

and community organizations involved in the fight against malaria and urged others to join in the campaign at a White House conference. She highlighted the President's Malaria Initiative, called PMI, which was launched in 2005 and aims to spend \$1.2 billion over five years to address malaria in 15 countries. The first lady cited several groups—from Catholic Relief Services to megachurch pastor Rick Warren's Saddleback Church in California—that are fighting the disease, which kills about 1 million people, many of them children, each year.

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## **HBU students take local & global missions plunge**

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Brittany  
Myer, a  
Houston  
Baptist  
University  
student,  
shares a  
smile with  
two  
children  
from  
Yellowstone  
Academy in  
Houston.  
(Photo  
courtesy of  
HBU)

## **HBU students take local & global missions plunge**

Two groups of [Houston Baptist University](#) students recently stepped out of their comfort zones and into places where they could meet urgent human needs in Christ's name.

One team spent spring break taking an "urban plunge" into Houston's Third Ward—one of the city's most impoverished areas. Another group dug wells, helped offer medical clinics and led Vacation Bible School in Nicaragua.



A village girl in Nicaragua enjoys the pure, clean water a new well provides.

The inner-city missions experience, coordinated with the school's Center for Student Missions, included visiting an adult day-care center, leading a museum field trip for schoolchildren from the Third Ward and helping at the Harbor Light shelter sponsored by the Salvation Army. An inner-city church provided lodging for the students during their three days of service with nonprofit organizations in the area.

"Initially when the students arrive in these impoverished areas, they arrive with the comprehension and interpretation from what they've seen on television—the crimes, the poverty, the struggle. We immediately take them to these neighborhoods they've heard about from the news and show them around. Then, they are connected with people who live in these neighborhoods," said Jason Shaffer, HBU coordinator of spiritual life, community service and missions. "Students' stereotypes and fears fade as they recognize the humanity in those that society casts aside."

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# **Keep "dream stealers" at bay, keynote speaker urges lay leaders & ministers**

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Nearly 100  
pastors,  
youth and  
women  
ministry  
leaders  
and  
Sunday  
school  
teachers at  
Inspire '07  
were  
motivated  
to  
evangelize  
and grow  
their  
churches.

The  
customized  
regional  
event was  
held at  
College  
Heights  
Baptist  
Church in  
Plainview.  
(Photos by  
Ferrell  
Foster)

# Keep 'dream stealers' at bay, keynote speaker urges lay leaders & ministers

**By Barbara Bedrick**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

PLAINVIEW—Pastors and lay church leaders should “recognize those things that are dream stealers” and exercise mountain-moving faith, keynote speaker David Mahfouz told participants at Inspire '07.

The Baptist General Convention of Texas and [Caprock Plains Baptist Association](#) sponsored the inaugural Inspire event March 24 at College Heights Baptist Church.

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## Evangelical support for Iraq war apparently wavering

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## Evangelical support for Iraq war apparently wavering

**By Julie Sullivan**

*Religion News Service*

DAMASCUS, Ore. (RNS)—Suzanne Brownlow shivers on an Oregon highway overpass as a cutting wind whips her sign: “Honk to End the War.” Her weekly demonstration is the latest turn in a fractious journey that has taken the evangelical Christian mother from protesting abortion clinics to protesting the war in Iraq.

“I feel like at least we are doing something,” Mrs. Brownlow said, waving to passersby along with her husband, Dave, and two youngest children.



Suzanne  
Brownlow  
and  
daughters  
Desi (left)  
and Sierra  
(center),  
look at  
photos of  
their son  
and  
brother  
Jared, 20,  
who serves  
in Iraq.

Mrs.  
Brownlow  
is an  
evangelical  
who had  
supported  
President  
Bush but  
now  
strongly  
opposes  
the war.

(RNS  
photo by  
Benjamin  
Brink/*The  
Oregonian*)

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# Texas Baptist Forum

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## Texas Baptist Forum

### God & Allah

Charles Kimball claimed Islam and Christianity worship the same God: "Allah is simply the Arab name for God" ([March 5](#)).

Letters are welcomed. Send them to [marvknox@baptiststandard.com](mailto:marvknox@baptiststandard.com); 250 words maximum.

## **Out (Loud)**

*“As I thought of what may await me, I felt a feeling of great trust. No one raised in the kind of church environment I grew up in totally leaves behind the acrid smell of fire and brimstone, but I felt an overwhelming sense of trust in God.”*

### **Philip Yancey**

Author, on awaiting news of whether injury sustained in a car crash would threaten his life, before he was released with a neck brace to be worn for 10 weeks

([www.philipyancey.com/RNS](http://www.philipyancey.com/RNS))

*“There has been a great deal of talk lately about the role of religion in politics. Yet, if the religious voice were truly a factor, then 45 million Americans—and 8 million children—would not be uninsured.”*

### **Marla Feldman**

Director of the Joint Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism (RNS)

*“Saddam Hussein is developing at breakneck speed weapons of mass destruction he plans to use against America and her allies.”*

### **Richard Land**

President of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, in 2002 (Baptist Press/ethicsdaily.com)

*“My justification for the war was not based upon weapons of mass destruction.”*

### **Richard Land**

In 2007 (BeliefNet/ethicsdaily.com)

This is a ploy by Muslims to encourage the widespread use of this falsehood by nonbelievers so the non-Islamic world might be tranquilized into thinking Islam is just another harmless religion, one that might some day be persuaded to convert to Christianity, if we don't antagonize them by political incorrectness.

A comparison of the characterizations of Allah in the Qur'an and Jehovah God in the Bible will reveal vastly different beings the most casual eye can easily detect.

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## On the Move

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## On the Move

- **Amanda Bludworth** has resigned as minister of youth at Salt Creek Church in Brownwood.
- **Louis Brewer** has resigned as pastor of College View Church in Abilene.
- **Herb Bullock** to Pleasant Hill Church in Austin as pastor from High Pointe Church in Austin, where he was senior citizen's pastor.
- **Seth Carnes** has resigned as pastor of students at Southside Church in Brownwood.



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# More Americans exercise choice in religion

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## More Americans exercise choice in religion

**By Andrea Useem**

*Religion News Service*

WASHINGTON (RNS)—When Aurora Turk was growing up in Mexico City, being Catholic was a given.

“It was taught to me by the nuns at school and my mother at home,” she recalled. “My whole world was Catholic.”

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## Students find missions calling

# through BSM

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Students from Stephen F. Austin State University helped work on a Katrina-damaged church during spring break.

## Students find missions calling through BSM

**By John Hall**

*Texas Baptist Communications*

NACOGDOCHES—When Ashlee Stricklin was a high school senior, Stephen F. Austin State University barely made the list of colleges she considered attending. But when she visited, she found God calling her to the campus.



Stephen F. Austin State University  
pray during Beach Reach at South  
Padre Island.

**Students Minister at Spring  
Break**

- [Beach Reach volunteers immersed in missions service](#)
- [Baylor fraternity brothers serve God in the Ozarks](#)
  - [DBU students build homes in South Carolina & South Dakota](#)
- [HBU students take local & global missions plunge](#)
  - [ETBU nursing students put training into practice in Mexico](#)
  - Students find missions calling through BSM
  - [More than a day at the beach](#)

She stopped by the school's Baptist Student Ministries, where a speaker told students God brought each one of them to the BSM that night for a reason.

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## **Two generations of Wiesers**

# **serve as student missionaries**

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Ken Wieser (left, top row), associate pastor at Heights Baptist Church in Alvin, and his wife, Judy (left, lower), never expected their three children—Kris (center, top), Jana (center, lower) and Keith (right, top)—to follow in their footsteps and serve as student missionaries with the Baptist Student Ministry at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. Keith's wife, Paige (right, lower), also served as a student missionary. (Photo courtesy of the Wieser family)

# Two generations of Wiesers serve as student missionaries

**By Ken Camp**

*Managing Editor*

ALVIN—The Wieser family sees student missionary service as more than a family tradition. For two generations, they believe it's been God's instrument for confirming a calling to Christian service.

Ken and Judy Wieser both became involved in missions through what was then called the Baptist Student Union at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches. Their three children—Keith, Jana and Kris—not only followed their parents' lead in their college choice, but also each served terms as student missionaries.