

Friona church's furniture bears mark of 92-year-old carpenter

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Woodworker labors long for Carpenter from Nazareth

By George Henson

Staff Writer

FRIONA—A look at J.G. Baker's hands gives a glimpse into a man who has enjoyed working with wood his entire life, but a look at his heart gives insight into a man who has placed his eternal life in the hands of yet another carpenter.

While he is approaching age 92, even a casual observer can tell he was a powerfully built man and no stranger to hard work. He and his family ran harvesting combines from Arizona north to almost the Canadian border, and then back south, ending in the wheat and maize fields of the Texas Panhandle for many years. During the off-season, Baker worked in his woodshop.

J.G. Baker,
age 92,
acknowledges
illness in
recent
months has
left him
weakened,
but the
sturdy,
carefully
crafted
furniture he
has built for
churches
throughout
the state will
last for many
years. (Photo
by George
Henson)

Buckner orphan writes her story

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Frances
Jones (top,
left)
remembers
a happy
childhood
at Buckner
Orphan's
Home in
Dallas
before
being
adopted at
age 18.
She
recounts
her story
in *Orphan
Journey:
Memoirs of
Growing
up in
Buckner
Orphans'
Home.*

Buckner orphan writes her story

By Analiz González

Buckner International

GARLAND—Only a privileged few children grow up with perks like private piano lessons, swimming classes and rigorous academic programs.

Frances Jones counts herself among the privileged. Minus parents, her childhood was almost a fairy tale.



Frances Jones

Frye has seen change over 50 years at the organ bench

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Within Frye's heart, there still rings a melody

By George Henson

Staff Writer

LEWISVILLE—Ruth Frye considers herself supremely blessed. For more than 50 years, she has had the opportunity to do what she loves—serve God from the organ bench of First Baptist Church in Lewisville.

Frye began playing first for her Sunday school class as a child, and by age 9 or 10, she was the accompanist for the youth choir. Just a few years later, she began playing the organ after the church's organist moved away.

Ruth Frye has been organist at First Baptist Church in Lewisville for 50 years.
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Wanted: Gospel preachers for South Africa

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Charlie
Singleton,
director of BGCT
African-American
ministries, helps
Molehi Karneels
Diutwileng,
president of
Baptist Union of
Southern Africa,
in his search for
gospel preachers
for his homeland.
(Photos by
Barbara
Bedrick/BGCT)

Wanted: Gospel preachers for South Africa

By Barbara Bedrick

Texas Baptist Communications

DALLAS – Molehi Karneels Diutwileng paints a picture of Baptist ministry in South Africa that is both disconcerting and hopeful.

He describes how nine pastors serve 30 churches in one region. Thirteen churches have no buildings. He and other Baptist pastors fear they may be driving away some of the very nonbelievers they need to reach—people with HIV/AIDS.

Study shows intact, religious family reduces achievement gap for minority children

April 13, 2007

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Faith & family help minorities bridge academic achievement gap

By Ken Camp

Managing Editor

WACO—The academic achievement gap between Anglo students and their African-American or Hispanic peers disappears when the students live in intact, religious families, a new study shows.

William Jeynes, a nonresident researcher with the [Baylor University Institute for Studies of Religion](#) and professor of education at California State University at Long Beach, discovered religious commitment and intact parental family structures bridge the achievement gap, both among students in public schools and in private religious schools.

Texas House bill would expand CHIP

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Texas House bill would expand CHIP

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

AUSTIN - A bill overwhelmingly approved by the Texas House of Representatives would include more than 100,000 additional children in the [Children's Health Insurance Program](#) in the next two years.

The legislation, which passed 126-16, allows families to stay in the program for one year instead of having to reapply every six months, and it would wave the 90-day waiting period for uninsured children. It now goes before the Senate.

Spiritual "smorgasbord" reveals hunger for ultimate

meaning

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Spiritual 'smorgasbord' reveals hunger for ultimate meaning

By Cecile Holmes

Religion News Service

ASHINGTON (RNS)— A new book based on interviews from the PBS program [Religion & Ethics NewsWeekly](#) finds a spiritual hunger beneath the secular veneer of modern culture, with many searching for something beyond the material world.

The Life of Meaning was edited by the show's executive editor and host, Bob Abernethy, and longtime journalist William Bole. They drew essays in the book from interviews conducted by Abernethy, who founded the show 10 years ago after four decades as an NBC correspondent. Bole has written for many publications, including the *Washington Post* and *Commonweal* magazine.



Bob
Abernethy,
executive
editor and
host of the
PBS program
*Religion &
Ethics
NewsWeekly*,
is co-author of
*The Life of
Meaning*.
(RNS/courtesy
Seven Stories
Press)

Around the State

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Five hundred people from 40 churches attended the “Celebrating Senior Adults Conference” at Central Church in Jacksonville. In addition to 10 breakout topics, participants heard from Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Director Charles Wade, Ken Hall of Buckner International and Paul Powell of Truett Theological Seminary.

Around the State

- **The University of Mary Hardin-Baylor** will host a Governor's Forum at 9:30 a.m. April 19, featuring former Texas governors Dolph Briscoe and Mark White. It is free and open to the public.



Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene has received a rare and valuable manuscript. The ancient Sefer Torah scroll contains more than 200 columns comprising the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses, which appear as the first five books of the Christian Old Testament and the Jewish Bible. Scribed in Hebrew on highly finished white cow vellum panels, the scroll about 27 inches tall. It is the product of a South Arabian Jewish scriptorium, published in the late 17th or early 18th century. The scroll has been appraised at a market value at more than six-figures, but many experts believe the document to be priceless. Robert Ellis (left), associate dean of Logsdon Seminary, evaluated the scroll after unpacking it. Doyle and Inez Kelley, benefactors of the Kelley College of Business at HSU, gave the scroll to the university. (Photo by Tiffany Turk)

- **Dallas Baptist University** will hold the 19th annual Norvell Slater Senior Adult Hymn Sing at 2 p.m. April 20. Last year, almost 1,000 senior

adults attended the event. For more information, call (214) 333-6824.

- **The modern foreign languages department** of the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor will present an evening of bilingual storytelling, “Our Stories—Nuestros Cuentos,” at 7 p.m. April 21 in the Shelton Theater on campus. The event will consist of readings and comments by authors Araceli Ardon and Debbie Lufburrow. It is free and open to the public. For more information, call (254) 295-4631.

- **Tickets are on sale** for Howard Payne University’s fourth annual “Singin’ with the Saints” Southern gospel concert for senior adults. The concert will begin at 1:30 p.m. May 17 at Coggin Avenue Church in Brownwood. Featured performers will be The Florida Boys, Gold City, The Brazos Boys and HPU chancellor and humorist Don Newbury. Tickets are \$12 and can be ordered by credit card at (800) 950-8465.

Small coffee company takes “fair trade” one step further

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[Small coffee company takes “fair trade” one step further](#)

Roastmaster
Matt
MacBride
moves freshly
roasted
beans
through a
cooling pan
at the
Beneficio
Coffee Co. in
Sacramento,
Calif. (RNS
PHOTOS/Max
Whittaker)

Small coffee company takes 'fair trade' one step further

By Joanna Corman

Religion News Service

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—For the 15 years that Tom Angus worked for a company that negotiated the lowest possible prices for coffee beans, he occasionally would travel to Costa Rica, meet with farmers and hear about their desperate poverty and how they were losing their land.

Angus insists he was able to remain “mentally disconnected” from the poverty he saw.

Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

[River Rising by Athol Dickson](#) (Bethany House)

Welcome to 1927 Louisiana. Pilotville is a sleepy little Gulf Coast town, unique in its equal treatment of all people, regardless of their color. It's a town that takes pride in its generous spirit while turning a blind eye to the shroud of fear that sits heavy on its African-American citizens. Until, that is, Reverend Hale Poser arrives in search of his past.

River Rising is a story about the search for a lost baby girl by a man in search of his parents. What he discovers is that Pilotville, an apparent oasis of equality, is really the last stronghold of slavery and racism.

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.

The novel also is the story of faith. And as we follow Poser's realization that

he is a miracle worker, we discover the greatest mystery of all. True faith is something we must work out “behind our backs.” The moment we become aware of it, it disappears.

Baptist Briefs

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Baptist Briefs

Georgia Baptist communicator killed.

Diane Reasoner

Diane Reasoner, 57, longtime communications specialist for the Georgia Baptist Convention, was killed in an auto accident April 1 in metro Atlanta. Her husband, Richard, clinical director of Christian Counseling and Psychological Service, in Suwanee, Ga., was injured in the three-car accident on Interstate 985 that killed two and seriously injured five others. Diane Reasoner had worked for the Georgia Baptist Convention 20 years. She oversaw the work of the *Georgia Religion News* weekly radio program, electronic media, the convention website, public relations and print materials. She also was developing Georgia Baptists’ Internet radio ministry, scheduled to launch in May. In addition to her husband, she is survived by two sons, Rich and Rob, and three grandsons. Reasoner was a member, along with her husband, at First Baptist Church of Duluth, Ga.

Baptist historian to be honored.

Cartoon

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"I like our
new pastor,
but
sometimes
he does
seem a little
judgmental."

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