

Iraqi constitution has double vision on human rights

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Iraqi constitution has double vision on human rights

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Iraq's new Constitution sets forth two competing visions of democracy and human rights, some religious-freedom experts insist.

The document "sets forth two competing and diametrically opposed visions of society—one based on religious freedom ... and another vision of society based on a hierarchy of group rights on Islamic law," said Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom at Freedom House. Shea is also vice chair of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom.

Controversy stirs over Katrina religious school tuition grants bill

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By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Hurricane Katrina's storm surge continues to muddy the line between church and state, as administration officials and some members of Congress are proposing aid to religious institutions in the disaster's wake.

A group of senators—including some who normally oppose public funds for private schools—have introduced a bill that would provide tuition grants to private and religious schools that have taken in students evacuated from their own schools in New Orleans and other affected parts of the region.

Vernon to be BGCT vice presidential nominee

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Vernon to be BGCT vice presidential nominee

By Marv Knox

Editor

LEVELLAND—A South Plains pastor with extensive involvement in Baptist General Convention of Texas affairs will be nominated as first vice president of the convention this fall.

BaptistWay Bible Series for Nov. 13: Regardless of leadership, follow God

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BaptistWay Bible Series for Nov. 13

Regardless of leadership, follow God

• Judges 8:22-23; 8:33-9:15

By Ronnie Prevost

Family Bible Series for Nov. 13: Look to God for answers to life's hard questions

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Family Bible Series for Nov. 13

Look to God for answers to life's hard questions

• Job 4:6-8; 8:4-8; 11:13-15

By Donald Raney

COMMENTARY: Welcome to a China where Mao is a capitalist icon

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Posted: 11/01/05

The bustle of a Chinese market reflects the nation's contrasts.
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COMMENTARY: Welcome to a China where Mao is a capitalist icon

By Marv Knox

Editor

BEIJING, China—You can eat with a fork in China.

Supreme Court denies Wiccan request to pray at county board meetings

November 3, 2005

Posted: 11/01/05

Supreme Court denies Wiccan request to pray at county board meetings

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The Supreme Court has turned away a Wiccan who sought to deliver prayers at a Virginia county's board meetings on an equal basis with Christian, Jewish and Muslim leaders.

The court declined to hear the case of Cynthia Simpson, formerly a resident of Chesterfield County, Va., Oct. 11. Simpson, a practitioner of the neo-pagan religion, had appealed an April decision by the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Senate panel retains subsidies for food for the needy

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Senate panel retains subsidies for food for the needy

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—After pleading from prominent religious leaders, a Senate panel has declined to recommend major cuts in a federal program that subsidizes grocery purchases for the needy.

On an 11-9 vote, the Senate Agriculture Committee approved a budget reconciliation plan to cut \$3 billion from farm-subsidy programs and other federal entitlements. The food-stamp program—which falls under the committee's jurisdiction—previously had been one of the areas where committee Republicans were seeking to cut spending by as much as \$574 million.

Cyber Column by Berry D. Simpson: Sunlight in the mountains

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CYBER COLUMN: Sunlight in the mountains

By Berry D. Simpson

It was late Friday afternoon, and the view from the top of Bush Mountain (at 8,631 feet, the second-highest peak in Texas) was phenomenal. To the south, I could see the sun reflecting off the stainless steel monument on top of Guadalupe Peak. To the west, I saw the Chihuahuan Desert and vast salt flats 4,000 feet below my feet. On the northwest horizon, I could see snow-covered Sierra Blanca 110 miles away. And looking north, I could sight along the western escarpment of the Guadalupe Range, a severe cliff face that stretched on and on for miles. It was beautiful.

Berry D. Simpson

However, as I stood there taking in the scenery, it occurred to me that my day was still two miles from being over, and I had a problem. The only thing I could not see from my perch was the trail. I tried to find it, crisscrossing the mountaintop, hoping to intersect the trail, but I couldn't find it. My legs were weary from the long day, and I was getting worried.

All I could see around me were big rocks and thorny bushes and scrubby pine trees; I knew I didn't have enough daylight left to bushwhack my way to the Pine Top campground before dark.

TOGETHER: Your church has a missions partner

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TOGETHER: Your church has a missions partner

We will gather in Austin Nov. 14-15 for the 120th annual meeting of the Baptist General Convention of Texas. "One Family-One Mission" is our theme.

You want to be there, because your presence will help strengthen your church. There will be information you can use, inspiration that is contagious, ideas that help renew and strengthen your church, and friendships that will last through eternity.



Executive Director
BGCT Executive
Board

We will focus on the Texas mission field, of course. But Texans never have been satisfied to evangelize Texas alone. As churches look for more ways to participate in world missions, Texas Baptists have several significant systems through which you and your church can be personally involved in state, national and international mission work.

To China with Love

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Jay Chastain of First Baptist Church in Longview plays with a boy in a Chinese orphanage in Xinjiang Providence after Buckner Orphan Care International volunteers placed new shoes on all the children. Paige Chastain cuddles a handicapped infant in a Chinese foster home. (Photos by Scott Collins)

To China with Love

By Marv Knox

Editor

BEIJING, China-The little Chinese girl giggled and squealed as Sherman Hope held her hands, spinning her around, swinging her between his legs and lifting her into the air.

Right or Wrong? Sex with her boyfriend

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Right or Wrong? Sex with her boyfriend

"My 16-year-old daughter just told me her best friend since they were in kindergarten has started having sex with her boyfriend. This girl's mother is a good friend of mine. Should I tell her what's going on?"