

EDITORIAL: '04 decisions will impact decades_92004

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EDITORIAL: '04 decisions will impact decades

2004 will get a dog-eared and tattered page in Texas Baptist history books. Generations from now, our descendants will pore over these months, evaluating their impact on all that follows.

Next week, the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board will consider the most significant reorganization of the BGCT in at least five decades. The board will act on new mission, vision, values and priority statements that place the health and vitality of local churches at the center of everything the convention does. It will vote on governance proposals that drastically reduce the size of the BGCT's rambling decision-making apparatus and make the convention more accountable to the churches. And it will review strategies that will outline how the convention will serve churches to make them stronger so they can bring people to Christ and minister in Jesus' name.

If the Executive Board approves, then messengers to the BGCT annual session this fall will vote their approval or disapproval. And if the messengers ratify the changes, BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade will begin the vital task of assigning staff to new responsibilities and allocating budget dollars to make it all happen.

EDITORIAL: Contest: Care for the poor_92004

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EDITORIAL: Contest: Care for the poor

Like the tides, phases of the moon and the Texas Rangers' inevitable September nosedive, some events are predictable.

Take the responses that arrive every time an editorial calls on Texas Baptists to advocate government support for poor people. Say restoring funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program. Or helping the elderly and chronically ill with their prescription costs. Or maybe ensuring a basic level of education for all children, no matter where they or their parents were born.

Some responses are worse than others. Nobody these days enjoys being called a socialist. Most Christians don't appreciate their faith being called into question.

Six BGCT-related schools post increases in fall enrollment; three universities show drop_92004

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Six BGCT-related schools post increases in fall enrollment; three universities show drop

By Ferrell Foster

Texas Baptist Communications

Six schools affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas reported student enrollment increases this fall.

Reorganization will help BGCT meet Texas churches' needs, leaders agree_92004

September 16, 2004

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Reorganization will help BGCT meet Texas churches' needs, leaders agree

By Marv Knox

Editor

Reorganization of the Baptist General Convention of Texas is long overdue, BGCT leaders agree, but they predict the changes will enable the BGCT to improve its ability to meet the needs of Texas Baptist churches.

Executive Board will consider streamlining BGCT governance_92004

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Executive Board will consider streamlining BGCT governance

By Marv Knox

Editor

A streamlined Baptist General Convention of Texas decision-making structure and an emphasis on accountability are the key ingredients in a historic proposal to reorganize the convention.

Group accuses two churches of endorsing Democratic candidates_92004

September 16, 2004

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Group accuses two churches of endorsing Democratic candidates

By Robert Marus

ABP Washington Bureau

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A religious-liberty group often accused of attacking

conservative churches for political activity has criticized two progressive Baptist congregations for Democratic advocacy.

'Uncle Charlie' leading Ugandan orphans to Christ_92004

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'Uncle Charlie' leading Ugandan orphans to Christ

By Leann Callaway

Special to the Baptist Standard

Five years ago, musician Charlie Bancroft picked up a nickname while on a mission trip to Uganda, and it's stuck with him.

Floaters puzzled but happy with free water ministry on Guadalupe River_92004

September 16, 2004

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'Tubers' puzzled but happy with free water ministry on Guadalupe River

By Craig Bird

Special to the Baptist Standard

CANYON LAKE—Every summer, the Guadalupe River becomes an international waterway. Mike Bates thinks that makes it a prime location to tell folks about a God who loves the whole world.

Texas Baptist Men teams race to work between Florida

storms_92004

September 16, 2004

Posted: 9/10/04

Texas Baptist Men teams race to work between Florida storms

By John Hall

Texas Baptist Communications

MOBILE, Ala.—After days of waiting on Hurricane Frances to move through Florida, Texas Baptist disaster relief volunteers and their Southern Baptist counterparts from other states raced to meet needs in the storm-ravaged state.

Cybercolumn by Brett Younger: Like no one's watching_92004

September 16, 2004

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CYBERCOLUMN:

Like no one's watching

By Brett Younger

Alfonso Soriano and I were on television together—sort of. On Staff Appreciation Day—which ought to rank just behind Easter and Christmas among church holidays—my family hit the jackpot. We received tickets to a Texas Rangers' game.

When I buy tickets we, sit close to teenage fans with painted faces, pigeons and God. Since “bleachers” and “upper bleachers” are about the same, I don't pay much attention to where our seats are located. But on this occasion, I noticed “VIP infield, Row 1.” I thought our friend was kidding when she handed me the tickets and said: “Dress well, because you're right behind the plate. You'll be on TV the whole time.”

Outreach ministries take many forms_92004

September 16, 2004

Posted: 9/10/04

Outreach ministries take many forms

By Craig Bird

Special to the Baptist Standard

CANYON LAKE—Giving away bottles of water and soft drinks to sunburned tubers may be the most unusual outreach project at First Baptist Church in Canyon Lake, but it is certainly is not the only one.

70-year-old swims English Channel for missions_92004

September 16, 2004

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70-year-old swims English Channel for missions

RIDGEFIELD, Conn. (ABP)—George Brunstad of Wilton, Conn., gives new meaning to the term “putting feet to your faith.” In fact, he also put his arms and his legs into it. In an effort to raise awareness for his church’s ministry in Haiti, the 70-year-old Baptist layman swam the English Channel.

His swim set a new record, not for speed—he finished in 15 hours, 59 minutes—but because he is the oldest person ever to tackle the channel. He broke the record of Bertram Clifft Batt of Australia, who was 67 years old when he made the journey in 1987.

“His inspiration for the swim came when he went with our church last November on a mission trip to Haiti,” said Bob Guffey, Brunstad’s pastor at Wilton Baptist Church. “George swam to raise awareness of and money for the Center of Hope orphanage and school project that (the church)

sponsors in Hinche, Haiti.”