

# **Llano girls step up to support others after flood**

July 24, 2025

A dozen girls in Llano set up a lemonade stand and bake sale to benefit the people of nearby Kerr County, which suffered from the deadly July 4 flooding of the Guadalupe River. The girls raised \$4,095 for the Texans on Mission's disaster relief effort.

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# **Community volunteers multiply Texans on Mission ministry**

July 24, 2025

Community volunteers who offer to help for a day are not trained in disaster relief, but when paired with trained Texans on Mission volunteers, they provide extra hands for the work.

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# **Strong reactions to Baylor**

# **grant decision continue**

July 24, 2025

Baylor University's announced receipt of a grant for the study of "disenfranchisement and exclusion of LGBTQIA+ individuals and women" in the churches and its subsequent decision to return the grant continue to prompt strong reactions.

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# **Texans on Mission give grieving parents baskets of blessing**

July 24, 2025

One searcher after the flood in Kerr County came across personal items with the names of four children on them. Those items are being returned to those families with a special touch from Texans on Mission volunteers.

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# **Around the State: Wayland team joins sports ministry and**

# **missions in Alaska**

July 24, 2025

In the tiny village of Ninilchik, Alaska—where the road ends and Cook Inlet begins—a team from Wayland University brought more than sports skills and service projects this summer.

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## **Multi-generational flood recovery team deploys**

July 24, 2025

Matt Enriquez called his 89-year-old grandfather, Ramiro Peña, to tell him he was deploying to Kerrville. He ended the call with a surprise proposition.

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## **Texans on Mission volunteers help Hill Country families**

July 24, 2025

John Vlasek stands in the middle of his home, stripped bare of furnishings, walls, ceilings and flooring. Even his rock fireplace is gone.

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# **Buckner honors orphans who fled Vietnam 50 years ago**

July 24, 2025

Buckner International hosted a reunion July 12 honoring Vietnamese orphans who fled Vietnam 50 years ago, arriving in Dallas after a two-month journey on June 12, 1975.

Recently, seven of the orphans from Cam Ranh with their families returned to Vietnam marking the 50th anniversary of their journey.

Representatives from Buckner International joined them on the trip to Saigon and Cam Ranh, which for some was their first time back in Vietnam.

The trip to Vietnam included a return visit to the site where Cam Ranh Christian City Orphanage once stood. While there, they distributed shoes to children in need.

During the reunion ceremony, Albert Reyes, CEO of Buckner, noted the words of James, Jesus' half-brother, inspired founder R.C. Buckner to begin the organization.

James 1:27 says "religion that God our father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world."

Reyes told reunion attendees that was the driving passage that he saw and from the very beginning those two groups are the "focus of our work—care for children and senior adults."

“Your experience and your story is woven into the larger Buckner picture that now stretches all around the world,” Reyes said.

The Buckner reunion event gave the orphans a chance to reflect on five decades of impact and changes—in their home country and in themselves.

To conclude the reunion, Buckner dedicated a bench as a memorial to honor Pastor Nguyen Xuan Ha and Pastor Jim Gayle for their efforts in caring for the orphans at Cam Ranh Christian Orphanage.

## **The orphans’ journey, 50 years ago**

During the final days of the Vietnam War, 69 Vietnamese orphans traveled across South Vietnam. The children spent two days on a broken boat on open seas until they made it to the United States and eventually were transferred to Buckner Children’s Home in Dallas on June 12, 1975. Their arrival in Dallas garnered [national attention](#) as the largest single group of refugees from Vietnam.

North Vietnamese military forces were sweeping through south Vietnam in the spring of 1975. The city of Cam Ranh began to collapse, leaving the Cam Ranh Christian City Orphanage with the difficult choice of fleeing.

Thirteen caregivers and their children fled with orphans, accompanying them as they boarded busses bound for safety.

When Saigon fell, the group made their way to the South China Sea on a leaky boat that failed two days into the voyage.

They were rescued and towed into Singapore where they waited five days without food or water before Southern Baptist missionaries intervened.

The group flew to the United States and made it to Buckner Children’s Home where about half of the children eventually were adopted.

Those who were not adopted remained on the fourth floor in the children's home dormitory, where they were given English lessons to prepare them to enroll in Dallas Independent School District.

The group has remained close through the years.

## **Sam's salvation story**

Sam Schrade (Sang Nguyen) a toddler at the time, was one of the orphans. Years have passed since the day he arrived at Buckner Children's Home.

He now runs a media company covering sports for ESPN and Fox Sports in Houston where he resides with his wife and children.

"I was able to go back for the first time in 50 years two weeks ago. My dad was an American soldier. My mom was Vietnamese ... I wasn't very wanted. They did not need me. And I was amazingly scooped up by the Cam Ranh Christian Orphanage," Schrade said.

Schrade reflected on the trip he made back to the place he once called home. He considered how far God brought him and the rest of the orphans.

"It is hard to know how far we've come in life when we don't know where we started. And for this trip, for me, it meant seeing where we started. Now I know how far we've come," Schrade added.

"We were transferred here. I was three years old. The fact that Buckner facilitated Christian homes changed my life. My mom led me to Christ in fourth grade. I became a Christian and all of us in the group have a lot of gratitude," Schrade concluded.

*Buckner International Communications contributed to this story.*

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# **Brothers immersed in disaster response after flood**

July 24, 2025

The Wheat brothers are well-known as ministers in this part of the Texas Hill Country. Robert serves as director of missions for Hill Country Baptist Association, while his brother John is pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Kerrville.

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# **Texans on Mission chaplains care for flood survivors**

July 24, 2025

Seven Texans on Mission chaplains are ministering to people dealing with the aftermath of the deadly Hill Country flash flood on July 4.

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# **Baylor grant decision draws support, disappointment**

July 24, 2025

More than 60 Texas Baptist pastors and church leaders endorsed an open letter of support for Baylor University's decision to return a grant for the study of the "disenfranchisement and exclusion of LGBTQIA + individuals and women" in churches, while the grant-issuing foundation issued a statement expressing disappointment.

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# **Students serve families affected by storms in Southeast Texas**

July 24, 2025

About 60 students and sponsors from churches across Texas showed up in Nederland to volunteer with Bounce, a student disaster recovery ministry.

Middle and high school youth gathered at First Baptist Church in Nederland where they were housed, fellowshiped and participated in nightly worship services.

"They have been so gracious to open their facility for us. They have played a significant role in the recovery efforts. We appreciate their partnership," David Scott, director of Bounce, said.

The teens spent multiple days divided into multiple job sites to make

repairs on homes that suffered damage from previous storms. Students and leaders teamed up with 4B Disaster Response, South Main Baptist Church in Pasadena and Texans on Mission.

“People are still living in Harvey-affected homes,” Scott said. “It’s been almost seven years. We are delighted that there are so many highly motivated students who are giving a portion of their summer vacation to serve these people who have such great needs.”

High school student Uriel Moctezuma participated for the first time in Bounce with his team of seven youth and three leaders from The Crossing Baptist Church in Mesquite.

“I’ve been on a mission trip before, but I never worked in a big group of seven people. I’m really excited. I have experience with repairing houses damaged from natural disasters. I really want to help where I can,” Moctezuma said.

## **Siblings sent to serve**

Lydia, high school student and member of The Woods Baptist Church in Tyler came to Bounce with three students and four leaders. Two out of her group are siblings, high schoolers Joseph and Mary.

The siblings worked together to shift furniture around a home to make room for replacing and installing new wood flooring.

“We felt led to go on a mission trip this summer because we were trying to figure out summer activities. We wanted to do something local, but outside of our city, something out of our comfort zone. We want to help people,” Lydia said.

Joseph came to Bounce with years of experience ranging from remodeling bathrooms to building storage nooks like bookshelves.

“It is always a great opportunity for everyone to learn about the Lord and to be able to do what God told us in the Great Commission,” Joseph said.

## **The background on Bounce**

Bounce—a ministry of Texas Baptists—was created to engage middle, high school and college students in mission work from church planting to disaster recovery.

Chris Liebrum, former director of disaster recovery, consulted with Scott to launch the ministry in 2013. In 2014, they gathered their first crew of students to start ministering to people in West.

“We were in West in June of that year doing recovery from the fertilizer plant explosion. We spent two weeks there,” Scott said.

Scott added Bounce was the first ministry integrating student ministry and volunteer service together for community service ever to do disaster recovery.

Ron Zimmer, construction coordinator for Bounce, makes sure the projects are prepared for the volunteers to learn onsite and start projects.

“My responsibility is to get everything ready for the kids, so when they get here it is a meaningful experience for them. Most of my job is done months and weeks ahead of a project. I work with the agencies like Jefferson County Long Term Recovery. We’ve done a lot of projects with them. They embrace us,” Zimmer said.

With supervision and training, the students are prepared to spend each day installing bathroom vanities, replacing baseboards, repairing roofs and installing floors. The goal is to help each student understand the importance of sharing the gospel and serving communities.

“We’re here to minister. God needs us here to minister to people, and that’s our first and foremost goal. We do that through loving on the neighbors, the residents, and do some work too,” Zimmer continued.

## **Bounce plans for Hill Country flood disaster recovery**

Scott and his team are reaching out to churches and ministries within the Hill Country in preparation for disaster recovery from the tragic floods that overwhelmed the community along the Guadalupe River.

While there are preliminary conversations between Kerr County officials and local ministries, the decision at this time is to wait until emergency response is completed.

“They are not ready for us at this point in time. They’re still in that first phase of disaster work. We’ve reached out to a couple of people in the area and a couple of the churches to see what their role is going to be and how we might partner with them to mobilize students,” Scott said.