

Around the State

December 17, 2009

- **The [University of Mary Hardin-Baylor](#)** will feature Kelly Cherry and Andrew McKnight during its writers' festival set for Jan. 6-9. The four-day literary event is open to the public. Fees depend on sessions attended. Cherry will present the George Nixon Memorial Lecture Jan. 7 at 7 p.m. McKnight will perform a concert Jan. 8 at 7:30 p.m. To register or request more information, call (254) 295-4561.

- **A Ruth Graham "Get Growing" conference** sponsored by [Crestview Church in Midland](#) will be held Jan. 29-30. The conference is presented without charge and is open to the public. Graham, daughter of evangelist Billy Graham, will speak Friday evening to open the conference. A variety of speakers will lead workshops throughout the day Saturday. Topics will range from Graham's discussion of the meaning of forgiveness to others such as depression, divorce, abuse, abortion, pornography, anger and body image. Recording artists Jason Catron and Huntley Brown will lead worship. An offering will be taken. Reservations are required for attendance due to limited seating and can be made at www.ruthgrahamandfriends.org. For more information, call (432) 694-7701.

The reigning Miss Mary Hardin-Baylor, Brianna Edwards (left), stood alongside the newly crowned Miss Mary Hardin-Baylor Rachel Jaster of San Antonio. Jaster's platform was "discovering and utilizing our God-given talents to serve our community."

- **Sarah Carbajal** has received endorsement of the [Cooperative Baptist](#)

[Fellowship](#) as a chaplain. She serves at Vitas Innovative Hospice Care in Fort Worth.

- **Carson Runge** won a mini-trial competition Dec. 7 to garner the title of [Baylor Law School's](#) newest Top Gun. As winner of the competition, he received a bronze statuette of the competition's founder and \$3,000.
- [Hardin-Simmons University](#) presented degrees to 307 students during winter commencement ceremonies Dec. 12. Ninety-seven students received master's or doctor's degrees.
- [Dallas Baptist University](#) honored Mike Arnold and Ed Spann at an alumni banquet Nov. 20. Arnold, a member and past chairman of the board of trustees, received the distinguished alumnus award. Spann, former dean of the DBU College of Fine Arts, was named honorary alumnus.
- [East Texas Baptist University](#) named Paul Tapp director of alumni development. He previously served as director of alumni relations. Also, Lindsay Culbertson moved from director of annual giving to director of alumni relations.
- [Baptist Child & Family Services](#) received a contract to provide comprehensive statewide emergency management support during public health events, including emergencies and disasters, by the Texas Department of State Health Services.
- **Linda Pehl and Margaret Prydun**, professors of nursing at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor's Scott & White College of Nursing, received the designation of Certified Nurse Educator from the National League of Nursing.
- **Two [Houston Baptist University](#) mock trial teams** competed in an invitational tournament at Baylor University Dec. 4-6. One team finished second and the other sixth in the 18-team competition.

- **The [Howard Payne University](#) Model United Nations team** participated in a conference in Washington D.C. The ten students represented Bosnia and Chile during the three-day simulation of a U.N. meeting.

Anniversaries

- **Diamond Hill Church in Fort Worth**, 100th. Chris Galbraith is pastor.
- **Larry McGregor**, fifth, as youth minister at Eastridge Church in Red Oak, Dec. 1.
- **Clay Hopkins**, fifth, as youth minister at First Church in Midlothian, Dec. 1.
- **Tommy Culwell**, 30th, as pastor of Colonial Hill Church in Snyder, Dec. 6.
- **Earl Hahn**, 55th, as pastor of Faith Temple Church in Spring, Dec. 15.

Retiring

- **Ronnie Laughlin**, as associate pastor of education and administration at First Church in San Angelo, Jan. 31. He has served the church 20 years, and served churches in Louisiana for the remainder of his 48 years of ministry.

Deaths

- **Robert Noland Jr.**, 77, Dec. 8 in Wylie. A graduate of Southwestern Seminary, he served as business administrator at the Baptist Hospital in San Angelo, First Church in Arlington and First Church in Garland. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Bettie; sons, Rob and Rick; and two grandchildren.

- **Othal Brand Sr.**, 90, Dec. 12 in McAllen. A former mayor of McAllen, he was an active Baptist layman. He also was a guest on the television program “What’s My Line?” as the world’s largest grower and shipper of onions. He was a member of [Calvary Church in McAllen](#), which began meeting 54 years ago in his backyard. Active in matters of faith, he served as national director of the Religious Roundtable, a director of the Baptist Foundation of Texas, president of the Rio Grande Valley Baptist Brotherhood Association and as a deacon and Sunday school teacher for more than 25 years. Working in various states in Mexico, he carried his Bible and his pistol throughout the rural countryside earning the title “pastor con pistola.” For his service, he received an honorary doctorate in law from Hardin-Simmons University and an honorary doctorate in business administration from Howard Payne University. In addition, he was awarded the Freedom Medal from HPU’s Douglas MacArthur Academy of Freedom. He served as chairman of the academy’s board from 1962 to 1972 and also from 1973 to 1986. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Kathryn; daughters, Marjorie Ferrell, Karyn Purvis and Cynthia Brand; son, Othal Jr.; 18 grandchildren; and 19 great-grandchildren.

- **Mary Vic Cobbs**, 83, Dec. 12 in Tyler. She served as a volunteer missionary with the Foreign Mission Board on a multitude of assignments, and traveled with her husband, who worked for the FMB, to visit missionaries in more than 40 countries. Following their retirement, they returned to Texas and became members of First Church in Tyler. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Becky Fanning. She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Louis; sons, Bobby and David; brother, Shelby Weir; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandsons.

Ordained

- **Jonathan Krake**, to the ministry at Southwest Park Church in Abilene, Nov. 15.

- **Josh Woodard**, to the ministry at Southwest Park Church in Abilene, Nov. 15.

- **Gilbert Ramirez**, to the ministry at First Church in Devine, Nov. 29.

Email Around the State info to ghenson@baptiststandard.com