

THE TEXAS CHALLENGE

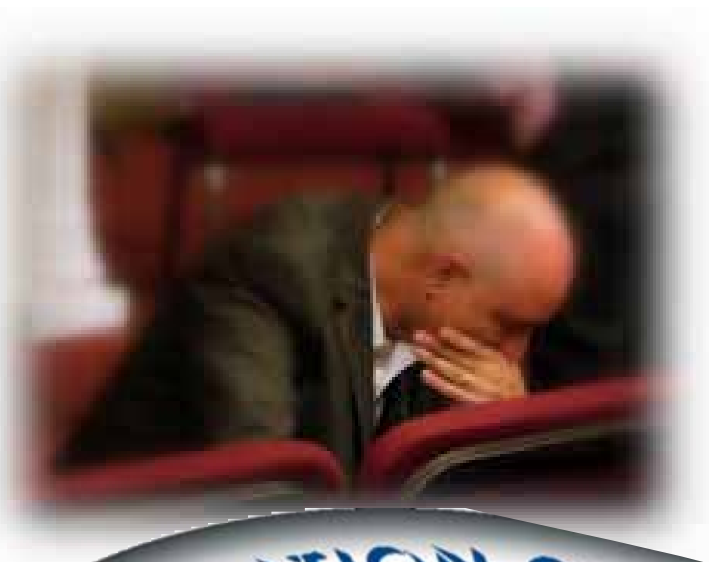
Edgmon's Story

Holding the Line in Waco

WMO Tops \$600,000

Central District Celebrates 50 years

Camp Sunshine 20 Years Strong



October 24-27 Help Judy
Smith Build Home for
Missionaries to Regroup
in Minden, Texas



Holding the Line in Waco

by John Davis

Gay and I were in Waco on Labor Day weekend to spend a couple of days with family and had the privilege of visiting the Connally Free Will Baptist Church in Waco. Pastor J.E. Jean started the church in February, 1976, and they Air Base Road in April of the First FWB Church of Waco, which folded quite a few years back. In fact, most of the members of First Church moved over to the Connally group.



acquired their current property on of that year. They were an offshoot

The pastor grew up in the Four Square Gospel Church, but, through diligent Bible study, came to disagree with some of their doctrines, especially speaking in tongues. He believes that Free Will Baptist doctrine is as close to the Bible as you can get.

Bro. Jean led singing as his son Terry played the piano. Then Bro. Jean preached a very good sermon from Acts 4, where the apostles provided evidence from the scriptures to the Jewish leadership that the Jesus they rejected is really the Lord and Creator. Although the Pharisees and Sadducees failed to accept Jesus, about 5,000 people were saved through the preaching of Peter, John, and the other apostles.

We were asked to pray for Sister Ginger Jean, the pastor's wife. She has been quite ill and has been in and out of the hospital and rehabilitation facility, and remains in a nursing home. If she is able to return home, she is not expected to be able to stay alone, so participating in services will be difficult on the rest of the family. The Jeans are blessed to have 3 sons who are able to help them

Bro. Jean told us about God providing the nice building they worship in, which is on a main road in northern Waco a few blocks from Interstate 35. This building was formerly a day care center, but it was not really suitable for that purpose because it had a septic tank. The septic system could not handle the volume of water, and the playground became muddy every day. Since they couldn't really function that way, the day care center let the building get repossessed, and the bank gave the church a bargain on the property, allowing them to just pay the realtor's commission and then take over payments until it was paid off!

The congregation is small, but faithful. When they moved to this part of town, they thought that being close to Texas State Technical College would be beneficial to the church, but in recent years, it has not worked out that way.

We had a nice visit and found a few people we both knew or knew of, including Bro. Keith Woody, Bro. Thermon Murphy, and my Uncle Sanford Davis who had pastored down the road in Temple, as well as Elbert J.W. Vaughn, my wife's Great-Grandfather, who pastored in Waco several decades before Bro. Jean came on the scene.

It was a good visit with a faithful servant of our Lord. We look forward to visiting the Connally church again some day.

World Missions Offering Tops \$600,000

Antioch, TN—The International Missions office staff and World Missions Offering (WMO) team are rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord and the faithfulness of His people. Once again, the denomination has responded to the need for reaching the lost around the world. At the end of June, gifts for the 2013 World Missions Offering exceeded \$600,000.

“O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.”
Psalm 107:1

“Giving to International Missions and to the World Missions Offering has never been a better investment,” declares Danny Williams, chairman of the International Missions Board. “On many of our fields, we are working with mature leaders who are developing their own strategies for multiplying churches in their countries. We could learn a lot from them. And, in other countries, our national churches are desperate to send their own to the ends of the earth.”

“We are extremely excited about the way the 2013 WMO is trending,” reports Mark McPeak, director of advancement. As of June 30, \$604,284.43 has been received in the office. This amount already exceeds all previous WMO totals—except the historic response to the 2012 financial crisis.

The 2012 total of \$1,010,935.64 was, by far, the largest offering ever received and included some unusually large gifts. The board’s difficult decision to hold missionaries stateside due to our financial shortfall produced a crisis, and the denomination responded. “We will always be grateful for the way our people stood with us in 2012,” says Clint Morgan, general director of the Mission. “But, we are equally encouraged that the denomination is giving again this year, without a looming crisis... simply because we want to see the gospel taken to the ends of the earth.”

The 2013 WMO effort, led by national chairman Mark Price, has focused on involvement. “We relied on the African proverb ‘put your faith in God, but tie your camel tight,’” Price explains. “We began with prayer and dependence on the Lord, and then invited our pastors, churches, and people to be involved.” A record-setting 870-plus churches have either sent

in their offering or indicated they plan to participate in the 2013 WMO. “Once again,” says Price, “we have heard story after story of how God has moved in people’s hearts and we have seen Him at work, doing great things! This is the way God intended us to work—together. All of us doing our part, no one person or church carrying the full load.”

The largest WMO, before 2012’s record response, was \$528,107.86 in 2008. At the pace this year’s offering is coming in, we expect the total to go well beyond \$700,000—a 20% increase over the best non-crisis offering received. “Our philosophy is to grow the offering incrementally each year by involving more and more of our people,” McPeak explains. “We consider the 2013 WMO a great success, and we can continue to build on it.”

Gifts to International Missions, through the WMO or through monthly giving, help us labor together with the Body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission! We praise the Lord for every person who is involved in this partnership.

Jacque Cox Gone to Be With The Lord

Jacque Cox, 61, wife of Larry Cox, pastor of the First Free Will Baptist Church in Bowie, Texas, passed away Wednesday, July 17, 2013, in Decatur, Texas. Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, July 20, 2013, at the First Free Will Baptist Church in Bowie, with husband, Larry Cox, officiating. Burial was in Elmwood Cemetery. Jacque worked at Advanced Rehabilitation and Healthcare of Bowie as a Director of Medical Records.

Survivors include husband, Larry Cox; daughter, Cheree Cox and grandson, Jayden Cox, all of Bowie; brothers, Johnny Kirkland, of Weatherford, and Mac Kirkland, of Arkansas. Jacque was the daughter of longtime Texas Free Will Baptist pastor, the late Alton Kirkland, of Weatherford, Texas.

Thurmon Murphy

Central District Marks 50-Year and 20-Year Camp Anniversaries

by John Davis

I was a 5-year-old riding in the back of a pickup on a hot afternoon in the summer of 1963. I watched as the older boys and men cleared brush to build a fence on the newly acquired property of the Central Texas District Association of Free Will Baptists. This 11 acre place at Carlos, Texas was being developed into the district's first encampment. I probably got in the way enough that they put me in the truck to get me out of danger and to not impede the work. Now, 50 years later, I am no longer fascinated by such work, but I truly appreciate the blood, sweat, tears, time, and money that went into making Camp Carlos a reality.



If you've been around youth camps as long as I have, you probably know numerous people who were saved at camp, answered the call to preach the Gospel or to go to the mission field, or made some other life-changing decision while at camp. That makes all the hard work and investment worthwhile. When you consider the value of a soul, nothing else compares.



2013 is the 50th anniversary of Central Texas youth camps. Until we had suitable facilities, the district rented camps like the ones on the coast at Lake Mathis and Palacios, and at Pineywoods in East Texas. Some memories are quite faded now, but as I recall, the first building at Camp Carlos included a large, multipurpose room where chapel was held, with barracks-style dormitories on each side. About 40 or 50 bunks were placed on each side. At least one year, there were enough girls to fill both dorms, so the boys "got to" camp out in Army tents and cots. That was quite an adventure for a 9 year old, but I'll settle for good old-fashioned air conditioning now.

1993 was our last year at Camp acquisition of most of the community by Power Association for coal mining and tions. The camp board used the proceeds an 11-acre property in Keith with a barn 4-room dorm was added immediately vilions of about 2,000 square feet each in front and back of the barn. Chapel was held on the "front porch" and recreation and crafts took place in the screened-in "back porch." The first year of camp at this new district camp, named Camp Sunshine, was 1994. A basketball court, volleyball court, playground, and several other outdoor features were added.



Carlos due to the the Texas Municipal power plant opera- from the sale to buy and living quarters. A along with covered pa-

Several years later, a new chapel was constructed. It is an indoor, air conditioned chapel! Various upgrades have taken place in the last few years to make the grounds and buildings more attrac-



tive.

Now that we have used Camp Sonshine for 20 summer district camp sessions and numerous other outings, it is considerably different from those early days, but the focus remains the same: reaching young people for Jesus Christ.



Something happened at Girls' Camp this summer that gives an old man a great feeling. My 7-year-old granddaughter Elisa accepted Christ at camp. Her parents have taught her about Jesus her whole life and I would not expect her to neglect getting saved very long. Boys' Camp had a course on soul winning for the older boys. My grandson Seth is more spiritually mature than most 9-year-olds, so I asked Bro. Topping if he could be included in the older class. He soaked it up and started talking to his 10-year-old, unchurched cousin about The Lord. I was privileged to listen in as Seth took him down the Romans Road, explaining every part and confirming understanding. The cousin accepted Christ as Savior and began attending Sunday School and Church upon returning home. The local pastor was informed and will begin discipleship and plan a baptism.



To find out how you can help make the next one or two or fifty years even better, please contact me at (361) 652-3813 or atjd@nodial.net. For directions and more info, see <http://www.texasfwb.org/sonshine/>

Greetings from the Home Missions Department!

We truly appreciate the support, both prayer and financial, received for the ministries of the Home Missions Department in past years. The Lord has truly been good to us though you, His people. We are so thankful for all that you have sacrificed to help our missionaries. We know that God will take care of His people. Planting churches has been important to Free Will Baptists for more than 200 years, and it still is important today! Winning the lost is still the number one priority.

Home Missions is celebrating its 75th year in operation. We are truly building on our past and...working in the present...to grow our future. Please pray for the...

MISSION: NORTH AMERICA OFFERING November 24, 2013

Please contact the Home Missions Department for free promotional materials at 1.877.767.7674 or through the website at www.homemissions.net. Also, if you have any questions or need any help, please feel free to contact our department.

Thank you for helping us spread the word!

Fellowship FWB in Bryan VBS!

Our VBS was Aug 7-9 from 6-8:30pm. We did Group's 'King-Rock' and had a great time. We had a total of 46 children to attend and about 25 adult helpers with 2 teen helpers. We had a great time teaching kids to "Stand Strong for God!"

I am proud of our folks at Fellowship who made it their emphasis to support some of the family and children's activities in Alpedrete through our offerings at VBS. Our offering was a competition of the girls against the boys with the funds going to Anthony Edgmon. We raised \$408.91 for special 'missions projects' that Anthony had in mind. Anthony was our guest preacher Sunday, August 11, and we were thrilled to present him with the offerings. With Anthony's help, we identified two key events, a Back-to-School party in September and an Open House at the end of the year, to sponsor. With the tremendous offerings we received during VBS we were not only able to sponsor both of those two events, but perhaps a third event (a Cinco de Mayo party) next spring as well! What "put the icing on the cake" is that Anthony was able to be with us in person to share in the good news as we closed our VBS activities.

Doug Dickey
Fellowship Free Will Baptist Church



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had
the



HayDay VBS at Lakehills

We just finished HayDay VBS at Lakehills. The first night we challenged our kids to raise money to help a young girl named Nataly, at the Jars of Clay church in Monterrey Mexico, pay for the cost of attending school in the fall. Even though she will attend public school, there are tuition, uniform, book & supply expenses - about \$460 per year.



Keeping with our farm theme, we did a boy vs. girl “moo-lah” for missions challenge. To make it exciting, it was decided that if the boys raised more money, Marsha Hood had to kiss a pig. If the girls collected the most, then bro. Woody had to kiss the pig. Wednesday night the money was counted and the boys were declared the winners! Marsha had to pucker up & pay up - giving Hampton a smooch! In just 4 days our teachers, volunteers & kids had collected \$600!

Sergio & Coriann Flores, who previously pastored the church, accepted a check on Nataly’s behalf. Although the Flores family live in Cedar park now, Sergio travels to Mexico once a month to see about the church and its people.



Obon

Obon is a festival held every year, typically around August 13-15, in which the Japanese people visit the graves on their ancestors and pray to them, believing the dead spirits return to visit during this time.

We see this as a very dark time spiritually. Please pray specifically during this time that as people pray to these deceased spirits that God would reveal to them that He sent His Son back to this world to revive our spirits which were dead and to give our spirits new life in Christ! Pray also for Japanese believers during this time to be able to know how to balance the traditions of their culture with Biblical truth and to have courage to share their faith and hope with their families.

Who are the Gaijin in your Neighborhood?

We have recently become acquainted with several more of our neighbors who have been so kind to us. Their kids enjoy playing with Eli and we are so thankful he can have other kids around to play with. Almost every time we meet someone new, they tell us they knew about the Gaijin (foreigners) living in their neighborhood and were glad to finally meet us and find out we weren’t too scary! Pray that our presence here and our friendships with these people will create opportunities for us to share God’s love with them.



From Texas...

Bud & Ruth Bivens Mexico

Greetings from Pharr TX, where the suitcases are open, being unpacked and re-packed, the washing machine and dryer are running, and we are getting ready to take off in two different directions.

We had a precious time in Altamira at the Mexican National Association. Bud traveled down by bus on Tuesday, I flew down from Reynosa on Wednesday (paid 1/3 the price if I had flown out of McAllen). Brother Rick Cash and crew from Alabama flew in Thursday. Services started with the pastors' meeting Friday morning, then pastors and delegates Friday afternoon. That night we had a wonderful, Spirit blessed, worship service as people arrived from all over.

The ladies' meeting was Saturday morning, the young peoples' meeting Saturday afternoon, another great service Saturday night, then again Sunday morning, with the children's meeting at nine. The 10:30 worship service was composed of lots of singing, and Brother Lynn Blanchard was not even given the pulpit until 12. I so appreciate Brother Mark Riggs coming. When he is there I don't have to translate.

I also appreciated the National Womens' Committee who did the cooking this year. Bud fixed breakfast for the fellows at our house, and they did the dishes. I just tried to stay out of the way. Then we ate our other meals during the convention over at the big dining room. Sunday afternoon the Alabama representatives met with the Mexican Executive committee to make plans for the coming year.

Brother Rick always brings the cream of the crop with him. And, he always tries to bring someone who has never come before. Brother Lynn had come down two or three times before. His daughter Candace attended the Bible Institute and ended up married to a Mexican pastor's son. They are working in Puerto Rico now. Brother Ricky Carroll and his wife Theresa have been down before. He has come several times to help on construction projects. Brother Jason Miller, pastor of the Corinth FWB Church in Midland City, Al. was the newcomer this year.

The crowning event of the trip was the dedication of the new church building at Cues de Palmas Altas



on Monday. Pastor Valentin Castillo and his wife Luci graduated from the IBLAC Bible Institute last year and have been in charge of the work for some time. Bud and I started the work, meeting with the people under a huge tree backk in '07. It was a thrill to see the beautiful blue and green church and see the men of the congregation stand up behind the pulpit and give their testimonies. Around 80 people from Altamira went to the service, which entails a boat ride across the lake, between floating islands of bulrushes, then up the river Tamasi to the isolated community. The congregation rented several boats and most of them made more than one trip across, taking people to the service, then bringing us back to the Altamira side of the lake after the meeting and meal were over. The ladies served us fried fish and ceviche. We did not feel that it was a good idea to eat the raw fish, but, I couldn't avoid it without hurting someone's feelings. We got news that Brother Mark was running a fever and having chills by the time he got home. I am not sure who the third person in our group was who ate it, I hope they did not get sick. Thankfully, the diarrhea did not hit me until I made it home from the airport the next day and I have recovered.

I flew back to Reynosa Tuesday and Bud came in on the bus yesterday, got here about four, safe and sound, with his vagabond disguise. He will be leaving tomorrow for Huntsville, Texas, for a quarterly meeting, and I will take off on Saturday for a long awaited vacation on Padre Island. Bud and the grand-gal won't get there until they complete their obligations in services Sunday. Maritza plays a base guitar in the praise band at her church.

John and Paulina surprised us yesterday, just as we sat down to eat supper. They dropped by on their way to the island too, pulling their pop-up camper. With good help at the children's home they (cont'd p. 12)

To the uttermost parts of the earth



Mick and Rachel Donahue **Spain**

And, they're off!

For as hectic as our summer has been, we're just now getting to the "busy season." With all we have going on this week and next, we wanted to inform you so you can help pray us through it all. :)

This Tuesday morning at 10 AM (3 AM central time), Rachel is going in to take her written driving test. This is a really big deal here--even tougher than language school. (Ask any expat who's been through the process.) She can't start driving lessons with an instructor until she passes this test, and we need for her to have her license before Baby Gabe's arrival this fall. Rachel has walked many miles to and from school (now 31 weeks pregnant) and spent many hours studying and taking practice tests. Please pray for her as she goes for her exam on Tuesday!

This week we'll also be going to Keith's school to find out what he needs for the fall. He starts first grade here next Monday, and he's really excited! After being immersed in swim class and his Sunday School class this summer, he's not the least bit worried about the new adventure that lies before him. We know this will be the toughest transition for him yet, but we know that the One who called our family here will be with Keith at every moment. Please ask God to give Keith courage, to make his paths straight, and to place people in his path who will make his transition a bit easier.

Mick is immersed in Greek studies, he is about to begin attending Spanish driving school (now that Rachel is almost finished), and he will begin teaching English at a local outreach center in October. This week, he will also begin shadowing the director of the center (a Moor believer) to learn about all the facets of the work they do. Ask the Father to provide daily strength, focus and understanding for studies, and wisdom in decision making.

The longer we're here, the more we hear about the work God is doing in this area. We have no idea what's in store for the coming months, but we have a keen sense that God has placed us here for such a time as this. Thank you for your support (both through prayer and finances) to make it possible for us to be here. God is definitely up to something. Keep praying and giving! His will be done!

In Him, and for His glory in Christ alone,
Mick, Rachel, Keith, and Ian

SHIP Needs Your Help to Help Judy Smith

Judy is a wonderful, Godly woman who has served the Free Will Baptist denomination for years, spreading the gospel of Jesus, across the world. As a Free Will Baptist missionary to Japan, Judy shared her gifts. She is a gifted ventriloquist. She and her wooden companion have been used not only in Japan, but across the world, including several Olympics, to lead people to Jesus.

Now, Judy needs our help. Judy came to SHIP by way of Frances Ellis in the Carthage/Henderson area. At a WAC meeting, Judy shared the vision that God has given her to continue to help others, and Frances suggested that she get in touch with us.

Can you let Texas Free Will Baptists know that Judy's work is not done and she needs their help? She has given so much; we need to prayerfully consider how we can give back to her and her new mission. Please feel free to contact Judy (910.290.1435) or me (979.324.2599) for more information about this project. We can all pitch in and help Judy and make this a reality. The attached letter explains in more detail how we can help her finish the new facility.
(cont'd on pg 13)

Bivens Update (cont'd from page 10)

are going to get to take a few days rest too! That is nothing short of a miracle!!!

Thank you for your generous support and prayer. We feel so unworthy of the Lord's many blessings and often agree that no one has as much fun as we do. Please continue to hold us up in prayer.

May your investment in His work be multiplied back to you many times over.

Ruth Bivens

Make me a blessing to someone today..

Bud & Ruth Bivens

Rainbow Ministries Tu Projimo

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Getsemani Children's Home

Our son John and his wife Paulina founded the Casa Hogar Getsemani (Getsemani Children's Home) in Morelos, Coahuila in 2005. When Bud and I are there my heart is so blessed that I feel like my feet don't even touch the ground.

John is our second son. When he was born, the Lord answered his older brother Monte's prayer for the Lord to give him a little brother. As a toddler he had two surgeries for birth defects in his lower abdomen. Then, when he was five a doctor who was seeing him "just had a strange feeling about that little boy," and ordered an XRAY. That was when we discovered that he only had one kidney. He was immediately admitted to the hospital where tests showed that other defects had destroyed half of his one kidney. The doctor commented that we were "lucky" to find it when we did.

"I don't usually find this problem until the kidney is completely blown out," the doctor said. "And then we have to do a transplant."

I assured him that "luck" had nothing to do with it. I knew that the Lord had led us blindly, stumbling, to see that doctor, and the strange feeling he had was divine intervention. He assured us that John could live a normal life. He told us that a person can live with 1/3 of a kidney, providing they have no further injury. He warned us that John should not play con-

tact sports, avoid bull riding in the rodeos, jumping out of trees, etc., anything that might cause an injury to his kidney.

Of course, it was John who climbed the tallest tree, swung highest on the grapevine swings, and took every other risk he could find. Monte fought with him continually, hovering over him like a mother hen, afraid that he would have to give his little brother a kidney.

When he was playing little league ball in Pryor, John's Uncle Al gave him another name. There was another boy on the team who looked so much like him, whose name was also John. It was hard to tell them apart on the field. Uncle Al named my John "Moose." So, lots of people in Mayes county never learned his real name. And, when they were introduced to him they were surprised that he is not as big as a moose.

When John turned 16, Hubby says that it seemed like someone turned a switch in his back and a stranger walked out of his room. The sweet spoken, gentle child we had taken to church since the first Sunday of his life, taught at home, and raised in Christian school through the sixth grade, rebelled against ever thing we had ever taught him. He began to drink and run with a rough crowd. He was in and out of all kinds of trouble at school. He was 17 when he made an illegal turn in town, right in front of a city Police car. The officer turned on his lights and instead of pulling over, John fled from him. Other cars joined the chase, and after some time, set up a road block. John ran it. That is a crime, a felony. The Lord was still in control. As he fled the scene, over rough country roads, the battery bounced off the mounting in the old truck, and the truck died. John leaped out and took off running, leaving his billfold with his driver's license and a young lady companion on the seat.

When he pounded on the front door about three o'clock that morning Bud went downstairs to let him in. I pulled my robe around me as I came down the stairs and I heard John tell his dad that someone had jumped him and stolen the pickup. Bud just turned and picked up the phone and called the police to report the theft. The officer who answered asked us to bring John in. He told Bud what had happened and said they had planned to wait until morning to come pick him up.

We dressed, drove our son to the Police Dep't. The District Attorney met us there. She knew that we had worked with John for years, so she offered us a deal. If we would get John out of the county she would refer his case to juvenile court. If he remained in the area he would be tried as an adult and the (cnt'd pg, 12)

Wildwood FWB Annual Event *by Lee Wilcox*

In the traveling we do, we have been exposed to a number of ways that churches raise funds. There is an equal amount of diversity in the projects they pursue. Projects that come to mind range from the 2014 National Meeting to support of local food banks and homeless shelters. One church has a designated person who sells items that people have donated via Craig's List. Others do things in a more traditional way. This is Wildwood Church in Porter, Texas.

Wildwood does two things that seem to have developed into annual events. Every year the women's group holds a Bazaar. Every year on the fourth of July, the men hold a barbecue sale.

This was the serving line that didn't stop. Louis Watson was actually eating but we left him in the picture anyway. He may have actually been doing double duty by supervising the serving line while he ate. If so, I would want to give full credit for that arduous work.

From left to right are Wanda Swan, Ruth Richards, Alera and Vera (identical twins and I may have them reversed) with Betty Perkins standing in front of the refrigerator. I couldn't help noticing how it was actually the women who were getting tired. I guess that's just a matter of staying in shape.



To the left is Ms. Betty Friend who is the church treasurer. She is more than happy to take your money. That allows you to eat... a lot.

Sometimes you need men around to just add to the structural stability of the building. Chris is holding the door in place. It's easier to see in the picture above but Don is leaning against the door to lend counter support. While being attentive to the structure these two busy men somehow found the time to supervise everything that was going on in their area.



There are a lot of ways to raise funds. I personally think that when an organization works together like Wildwood has done it becomes more cohesive. The world throws enough slings and arrows that the cohesiveness becomes very important. It is probably more beneficial in the long run than the funds.

punishment for a felony is three years in the state prison.

Loving friends had recommended a Christian youth ranch in Arkansas to us. We had tried to talk John into going there to get him away from the gang of kids he was running with. Of course, he had refused to go. That Sunday morning he had no choice. He wept as he packed his clothes. It was after dark when we pulled up the mountain side to the ranch and handed him over to a stranger. He was so angry. As I watched him disappear into the darkness I feared I would never see my son again.

The Glen Cunningham Youth Ranch had specific rules. Each new comer had certain tasks they had to complete correctly, moving up from one difficult level to another, to easier and easier jobs. The first job was digging a trench to certain dimensions. The director told us that John obeyed the rules and came up through the ranks faster than any young man they had ever had before. He grew up knowing how to obey, so it was not hard for him

John graduated from High School there. When he turned 18 the following September, he returned home, a more mature young man, but still running from the Lord. He was 23 and had gone through a list of traumatic events before he completely surrendered his life to the Lord. After that decision he followed us to Mexico and studied at the Seminary of the Cross in Reynosa. He met Paulina there. They married after attending seminary together for a year.

John and Paulina moved to the Piedras Negras Children's Home in Feb. 2000, planning to stay for one year and learn how to establish and run a home. After that year they were so in love with the children that they just could not walk away from them. They worked there for five years before founding the Getsemani Children's Home in Morelos, about 30 miles West of Piedras Negras. Several of the children they loved so went with them to Morelos.

Initially they used a house in town that was owned by a local Evangelical church. The Mayor of the city helped them locate property that was then donated to them, just at the north edge of town. First John had to build a bridge across the irrigation ditch that runs down beside the street. He remembers completing that bridge in '05, walking out and looking at the property that had been donated to them and asking, "What have we got ourselves into now?"

The Lord provided. Construction crews came. The Getsemani Home grew like mushrooms popping up

out of the ground. At the present time it is a beautiful property with four homes that will accommodate house parents and ten children; a duplex with two three bedroom units; a large dining hall with its own large kitchen; a dorm for visiting workers that will house up to 60 people with its own kitchen and ample bathrooms; an office; another small building where sewing machines and computers are available; a large storage building; a barn for cattle and sheep, chicken house and pig pens. There is a neat play ground with swings and other neat places for the children to play. During the time they worked in Piedras Negras we helped them buy a home there, a few blocks from the orphanage, where they could get away on their days off. Over the years John has added an upstairs apartment to the house, making it available for young people from the children's home who turn 18, are no longer under the authority of the DIF, and have no place to go. The young people are able to live there and go to a technical school or college. John and Paulina continue to support them, check on them frequently and help them until they get on their feet and are able to move out on their own.

The DIF, "Department of Family," is similar to our Department of Welfare. They oversee the running of the children's home. Children who are reported to the police or the DIF are removed from homes where they are abused or abandoned and placed in safe homes. At different times people have brought their own children, or children of their employees to the DIF for care. The Getsemani home receives no financial support from the government, only rules and regulations and a DIF Social Worker looking over their shoulder.

Currently there are 24 children at the home in Morelos, and two young men living in the house in Piedras Negras. At the end of May, Shon and Janeen Young moved from Colorado to work with John and Paulina. They brought their 13 year old daughter Brook who has always been home schooled. They are serving as house parents in House #2. John and Paulina live in House #3. Two teen-aged boys live in house #4. John often spends the night there, making sure they get to bed on time and get up and off to school. Deloris, a single mother, lives in one side of the duplex with her two small boys, and caring for a third boy. Each house is responsible for their own breakfast, then Paulina, Janeen and Deloris work together, taking turns and helping each other get the other meals prepared. When we are there, Bud and I live in one

side of the duplex and he works with two or three of the older girls each evening preparing the supper. My main job is giving hugs and babysitting when someone needs help.

At the present time Don Abiu, an elderly man, lives in House #1. He tends to the yard and keeps an eye on Chuy, a 15 year old boy who is unable to speak and appears to have been badly abused.

The children at the home attend the public schools in Morelos: Kindergarten, Primary, Secondary (equivalent to our Junior High), and the Vo-Tech which accepts students once they are ready to enter 10th grade. Those who need Special Ed, or want to go on to college attend High School in Allende, another little town about five miles away. The Secondary and Vo-Tech are within easy walking distance from the home. All of the others have to be taken to school and picked up. They are all home from the Morelos schools by 1:30 and ready for lunch. We continue to pray for someone to come who can be the full time cook, and for someone else, a teacher who could teach the children there at the home.

When I see the ministry that John and Paulina have with the children my mind goes back to all the years that my heart was on its knees, praying for that young man. I knew, from all of the scrapes and accidents that he survived, that the Lord had a special plan for his life. What a joy it is to see them so faithfully serving, and the impact their lives have on the children who are brought to them. And my heart just rejoices and praises the Lord for His faithfulness.

We so appreciate the people who support them monthly and make the ministry possible. In years past, up to 20 groups a year came down, bringing offerings, groceries and supplies. Now, with the on-going violence between the drug cartels in Mexico, only one group came last year. Please keep them in your prayers.

John & Paulina Bivens
Rainbow Ministries Tu Projimo
338 Monroe St. PMB # 373
Eagle Pass TX 78852s
Cell Phone: 830-352-4803
soartomex@aim.com



Help Build Shelter for Missionaries

In 1976, Judy Smith left the comforts of family, home, and country and the familiarity of language, traditions, and way of life and traveled around the world.

Now, Judy is back in the states, in Texas. Her service in Japan is done, but her service to the Lord continues. God placed a vision in Judy to continue serving by ministering in Minden, TX, to children and a place of rest for returning missionaries.

But she's kind of stuck right now and needs your help. We are writing today to ask you to pitch in and get this project back on track. On October 24-27, a group will meet in Minden to "dry in" her house. And we need your help.

We need carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and people who will just fetch and tote and help. Housing is provided at a nearby camp grounds. And the wonderful people of Judy's church will keep us fed. Maybe God isn't calling you to work there, but pray about the other way you can help: through a generous contribution. Our goal is \$40,000 to complete Judy's home. Your contribution is vital, so please send it immediately.

Judy's home is going to be simple and beautiful. It will be a place where children and adults alike can come and find comfort and rest and healing. Please help make it happen.

Pray about the role that God has for you. I know He will speak to you and show you His will. For more information, please see the contact information below. You may also contribute online at www.shipinternational.org. If you can go to Minden on October 24, please let me know immediately. We will have a planning meeting prior to the trip.

I sincerely hope you will take this opportunity to show your gratitude to Judy for her years of service in Japan. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Robert Horton
President, Shelter the Homeless International Projects

I wrote this preparing to leave for Tampa to attend the National Convention. Since the State Meeting, I had several weeks' worth of 10- to 13-hour days at the office, two out-of-state trips (one for a short vacation, thankfully), a number of tasks to follow up from the State Meeting, keeping up with church duties, packing for the National Convention, and looking forward to VBS. WHEW! Whoever said summer was a season of leisure hasn't been near my routine lately.

And I know that many of you also face similar workloads, with jobs, families, church activities, and other interests and needs pulling you in many directions. While some of the things we fill our time with are discretionary, many of the things we do are worthwhile and beneficial, and it can be difficult to find the time to do the things we feel we need to do. If this sounds like you, let me encourage you to do two things that I'll paraphrase from Scripture:

1. Look carefully at how you walk, walking wisely, and make the best use of your time. (Eph. 5:15-16)
2. Do not grow weary in doing good, because you will reap the benefits if you do not quit. (Gal. 6:9)

God wants us to be faithful to serve Him, but He does not want us to be so busy that we are not actually appreciating that what we do is service to Him. Don't get so caught up in all of the activities and needs that we fail to actually maintain our relationship with Him.

There are a number of changes and activities on the horizon; one is the fact that, for the second straight issue, you are reading this in electronic format or someone has printed a copy for you. We are going to continue publishing The Texas Challenge in electronic format for the foreseeable future to continue to save costs and use our resources wisely. As we continue this transition, we would appreciate



your input on how to most effectively get the information to you in a timely manner. Visit www.meetingthetexaschallenge.com to find regular updates on all the happenings in Texas Free Will Baptists.

Now that the National Convention is over, we are "on the clock", preparing to host the 2014 convention in Ft. Worth on July 27-30, and we will be making preparations for our own 100th annual meeting next June. We will be in touch over the coming months about specific needs (financial and personnel) that you can help us meet. In the meantime, please be in prayer for both of these meetings, and start making plans now to attend them and bring your church family with you.

You Can Help Family Ministries Expand

Family Ministries is expanding and needs your help! Executive Director Frank Woods has had a vision to expand our on-campus school for some time. Providing a quality education for the young people we serve is second only to sharing Jesus Christ with them. A good education means they have a greater opportunity to become productive citizens later in life.

This vision has led him to propose to our Board of Trustees an expansion project that would provide adequate classroom space and counseling facilities. There is just not enough room in the old facility for our ever expanding ministry.

Existing School



Proposed Expansion

Since 1939, Family Ministries has been caring for children while doing our best to stretch every dollar. But if we ever hope to see this project become a reality, we need your support. We desire every Free Will Baptist Church to consider receiving an offering, or putting us in your budget. We need each individual to become one of our partners for just \$20 per month. Thank you in advance for your prayerful consideration in helping in this major endeavor. For more info, please call 423-276-8877.

Stay connected through our newsletter, website, twitter and facebook.

Mission: Spain *by Marcus Brewer*

I first met Anthony Edgmon in person in 1993 when he hosted me in his dorm room while I attended Welcome Days at what is now called Welch College. So, I was excited to have the opportunity to repay the favor when he visited Fellowship FWB Church in early August as part of his trip into central and south Texas. Though Anthony was born in Florida, he didn't spend much time there before his family moved, spending a number of years in Pine Bluff, Arkansas before ultimately settling in Denison, giving him his ties to the Lone Star State.

Anthony graduated from Free Will Baptist Bible College in 1994, where he answered God's call to missions. He was also active in a number of student ministries, including four years on the Rejoice ministry team, where he traveled extensively throughout the country during the school year, and as a student missionary to Panama in the summer of 1994.

Anthony and his wife Lea were approved as career missionaries in April 1997 by what was then known as the Board of Foreign Missions, eventually reaching the mission field in October 1998, about the same time I moved to Texas. The Edgmons and their missionary partners Tim and Kristi Johnson minister in a town called Alpedrete, which is about 30 miles northwest of the center of the capital city of Madrid. Alpedrete, like all too many towns and villages in Spain, had never had an evangelical church in their entire history; for Alpedrete, that history dates back approximately 500 years, about twice as long as the United States has formally been a country. So, as you can imagine, the need in Alpedrete and the surrounding area was great.

The Edgmons' and Johnsons' ministry in Alpedrete has been a successful one, as they opened an Outreach Center (Centro de Encuentros) in December 2005, beginning with activities for children, women, and families and expanding into regular worship services and other events designed to bring people together to hear the Word of God. The first regular worship service at Centro de Encuentros was held on Sunday, February 5, 2006. Since then, an active and vibrant congregation has grown in



Alpedrete, and the members all have a great desire to share the Gospel with not only their friends and neighbors locally but others around the world.

The Edgmons and Johnsons have been training leaders in the church at Alpedrete to prepare them to ultimately take over the operation of the ministry there; then they can then begin another mission work in another part of Spain. In the last year and a half, they have taken two large steps toward that goal: on Easter Sunday of 2012 they held their first services in a larger facility that doubles their meeting space, and just last month they received word from the Spanish government that the Alpedrete Church had been registered as its own entity, tremendous accomplishments.

There is still much work to do in Spain, particularly as the financial crisis continues to affect the Spanish people very much. With unemployment rates near 25% (even higher for young adults), many people are searching for answers. We thank the Lord that people like Anthony and Lea have answered God's call to take the Gospel to those in Spain who need to hear it.

I've been able to meet with Anthony again in person here in Bryan a couple of times since our first encounter, and I've always been interested in their ministry in Spain. Little did I know that I would eventually get to travel there, in the summer of 2010, and see it for myself. What was the situation in Spain then is still the case now: there are still many people who need the Lord, and it takes not only willing people to go share the Gospel, but also more willing people who support them with prayers and finances.

Please continue to be in prayer for the Edgmons as they are on Stateside Assignment in the upcoming months; pray for Anthony and his family as they travel, and pray for Emily and Marc as they adjust to a new school in new surroundings. If you have provided financial support to them individually or through the TEAM plan over the years, thank you so much for your giving, and please continue to do so. Be on the lookout for Anthony again in December, when he is scheduled to return to Texas and attend the Men's Retreat.



TWAC On the Move!

by Mitzi Burks, President

Exciting results were seen and shared at the national convention in Tampa, Florida! Lydie Teague's (France) personal testimony was very moving; personal testimony from a Panamanian women's leader expressing appreciation for the kitchen upgrades WNAC supplied; completed bathrooms in Mexico; the refurbished guest house for missionaries in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire; a keyboard for the Seminary of the Cross; funds for 300 Cuban sisters to attend a national conference in their country. Rejoice in \$497,225.43 given by 4,090 WNAC members in 22 states! And thank you Texas Women for being a part of this rejoicing, giving \$2,460.73 to International Missions, \$200 to Children's Homes, \$692 to WNAC, and \$819.39 to Shine 75. You also gave to Texas missions/projects over \$2700 and over \$11,000.00 for 2014 convention costs!! Thank you for working and giving as God leads!!

TWAC Retreat Oct 11 & 12

There's still time to register for the 2013 State Retreat, "His Hands" Isaiah 29:15, at Forest Glen, Oct. 11th & 12th. The registration fee of \$61 includes one night's lodging and 3 meals (extra night Thursday, October 10, & 2 meals \$36). Rachel Norris of Joy Pottery in Bryan will speak on and demonstrate the "Potter and the clay". Discover the richness of the layers of meaning in the portrayal of the potter and the clay by observing the work of a potter firsthand. Celina Henderson of McAllen will share "The Way of the Master." Celina is a home school mother, Pastor's wife, and was a missionary in Asia for 5 years. Mar-

sha & Ashton Hood will lead worship in music and Kareen Rust will be leading the craft. For a brochure, contact Lillian Pritchett, lillian55@consolidated.net or 936-597-8019.

More excitement! WNAC has been invited to Central Asia to lead conferences for our Christian Sisters. The cost for a native lady to attend is equal to \$100. Each local, district and state group is challenged to donate \$100 to pay for one woman's participation. If you accept this challenge please send your \$100, earmarked CAST (Central Asian Sisters Training) to WNAC, PO Box 5002, Antioch, TN 37011-5002. Monies must be received by December 31, 2013.



And Company's Coming!

July 27-30, 2014 NAFWB Convention at the Ft. Worth Convention Center! Volunteers will be needed as prayer warriors, to assist with WNAC banquet decoration set-up and table hostesses, to donate cowboy boots, flower arrangement for the meeting room/ballroom, donate items for Truth & Peace/YET gift bags, to continue raising funds as the host state, and assist where needed. To volunteer, contact any of the TWAC state officers; Mitzi Burks, mburks@eastex.net, 903-646-1667.

TWAC's New Logo!

Isn't the TWAC logo at the top wonderful! Our grateful appreciation to Phyllis Bass for designing! And thank you Esther Mayo and all the prayer warriors she has enlisted to pray for the 2014 NAFWB Convention. As Diana Bryant, Florida WAC, expressed, may God bless all the efforts, meet with us, and be glorified in everything we do!

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Online degree If you feel called to make a difference in government, or in managing a ministry, or managing a non-profit organization, consider the new Master of Publication Program at Hillsdale College. This program equips graduates with leadership, management, budgeting, communication, research and most importantly the Christian world-view. Students will gain hands-on experience with an agency in their career. If you've been called to make a difference in the political realm, or in the area of non-profit management, contact Hillsdale today! Call 405-912-9007 for more information.



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Upcoming Events for Texans

TWAC Retreat

October 11-12, 2013

at Forest Glen Camp, Huntsville

Shelter the Homeless International Projects

Help Judy Smith "Dry In" Her Home

October 24-27

Minden, TX



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