

# News Service Briefs

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## **NICHOLE NORDEMAN HONORED AT DOVES**

Nichole Nordeman and Michael W. Smith were the big winners during the 34th-annual Dove Awards held in Nashville, Tenn., April 10, earning seven and six Doves respectively. The event featured a special tribute to Smith, who has won at least one Dove each year since 1989, The Tennessean reported. Besides being named Artist of the Year, Smith won Male Vocalist, Praise & Worship Album, and Long Form Music Video awards. Nordeman's awards included Female Vocalist, Songwriter, Song (for "Holy"), and Pop/Contemporary Album. Other winners included Third Day, earning a Group of the Year award, and Paul Colman Trio, which was named New Artist of the Year.

## **SINGAPORE PASTOR DIES OF SARS**

A 39-year-old Pentecostal minister became a victim of the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak that has caused alarm in parts of Asia, after going to a hospital to pray for someone with the condition. Simon Loh died in April in Singapore, where concern over the mysterious condition prompted the closure of schools. The pastor of Faith Assembly of God (AG) Church in Singapore, Loh contracted SARS after going to pray for the hospitalized daughter of a man who also died from the disease. The AG's Asia-Pacific regional director, Russell Turney, appealed for prayer for pastors as they ministered to those affected.

## **TIM LAHAYE LAWSUIT DISMISSED**

In March, U.S. District Judge Terry J. Hatter dismissed all of Tim LaHaye's claims against Cloud Ten Pictures (CTP), which released the film version of the best-selling *Left Behind* in 2001. LaHaye sued Namesake Entertainment—with whom the movie deal was originally made—and CTP in 2000, claiming he was fraudulently induced to sign the contract and that the original agreement was not honored. The ruling came a month before the release of *Armageddon*, the 11th installment in the book series co-written by LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, who did not participate in the suit for "religious" reasons. CTP lawyer Keri Borders said a countersuit against LaHaye—seeking damages of more than \$10 million—is expected to go to trial this fall.

## **FAITH-BASED INITIATIVE 'ENDS ON A WHIMPER'**

President Bush's widely touted plan to make federal money available to religious groups that provide social services is being mourned as it gets buried after a two-year battle. Family Research Council president Ken Connor said April 1 that the initiative was ending "not with a bang but a whimper." The Senate approved a much-modified form of a bill April 9 that whittled the original aim "down to almost nothing." The revised bill provides tax breaks for donations to charities, but excludes provisions that would have enabled religious groups to apply for government grants for some of their ministry programs by protecting them from local anti-discrimination laws.

## **Jim Bakker Returns to TV**

Jim Bakker has returned to television with an interview show that airs on 32 stations in 20 states, the Springfield (Mo.) News Leader reported. Filmed in Branson, Mo., at Studio City Café, The Jim Bakker Show features interviews with celebrity guests conducted before an audience of café patrons served by

a troupe of singing waiters. The show began airing in January and is funded by Bakker supporters. Former head of PTL Ministries, Bakker was convicted of fraud in 1989 and served five years of an 18-year prison term.

### **Fishing Pro Nixes Beer Ad**

Fishing pro and dedicated Christian Jimmy Houston was barred from top fishing prizes because he refused to wear a Busch beer apparel patch and add the beer sponsor's decal to his boat at three Bass Angler Sportsman Society (BASS) events, the Oklahoma Baptist Messenger reported. Because of his decision, Houston, a deacon at First Southern Baptist Church in Keys, Okla., and host of the ESPN2 TV series Jimmy Houston Outdoors, was disqualified from receiving qualifying points for the prestigious BASS Masters Classic tournament and a potential Angler of the Year prize worth \$100,000. BASS signed Busch as an official sponsor in 2002.

### **U.S. Missionary Killed**

American missionary Todd Fields, 41, was shot and killed during a robbery in Guatemala on March 28. Fields, from Mount Vernon, Ky., had served in Honduras with Global Outreach International for 13 years and was leading a group of high school students on a retreat to Guatemala when they were robbed, the Associated Press reported. Fields lived in Honduras with his wife, Lynell, and two daughters, Savannah, 14, and Sophia, 10.