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Select a budget: Thursday, January 14, 2010

BC-MCT-NEWSFEATURES-BJT — wire editors (1400 words)

McClatchy-Tribune News Service
Newsfeatures Budget for Thursday, January 14, 2010

Updated at 2 p.m. EST (1900 UTC).

Additional news stories appear on the [MCT-NEWS-BJT](#).

TOP STORIES

In Iran, opposition appears to spread into heartland

IRAN-OPPOSITION:LA—Mohammad knew he had to be careful in approaching his old classmate Hamed, the one from the conservative Iranian family. They come from a small city, after all, and word gets around.

When they ran into each other in their hometown of Birjand last summer, the pair hadn't seen each other for nine years. As they caught up on old times, the conversation turned to Iran's disputed election between President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and challenger Mir-Hossein Mousavi.

A clever and highly ambitious young man whose dream until seven months ago was to go abroad, get rich and have drinks by a pool in Miami, Mohammad found himself drawn into political activism after the election — and trying to recruit friends and acquaintances to join him.

1250 (with trims) by Borzou Daragahi in Beirut. **MOVED**

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SPECIAL REPORT: PENTECOSTALISM IN LOS ANGELES

Pentecostals ascendant in Los Angeles' Little Central America

RELIG-PENTECOSTALS:MCT—Standing in the park where they'd met, Jorge Flores remembered his fallen friend, an "hermano," or "brother" — as he called every male brought to the church.

"Yes, it is a sad thing that he died," the man said quietly in Spanish. "But his soul had been saved. And really, that's the most important thing."

This man, he described, had aided an already drunken stumble with the slowly bouncing swagger of the belt-less.

"It broke my heart," he said of the man's uneven gait. "I took off my belt right then and there and handed it over before giving him a hug."

Wrapped in a stranger's embrace, the man began to cry.

Flores said the police found this man dead 16 days later, huddled on a sidewalk next to the grassy lawn of a south L.A. park.

"I only saw him that once," Flores' said before his thin lips curled into a small smile. "But at least I know we'll meet again in Heaven."

Flores grew up a devout Catholic. But also like many of those living within the region, he became a Pentecostal after experiencing a "supernatural electricity" course through him as what he said was a presence, the Holy Spirit, overtook and baptized him for the second time.

1050 (with trims) by Deborah Stokol. **MOVED**

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From their mouths, to God's ears

RELIG-PENTECOSTALS-TONGUES:MCT—At first, only one woman's voice dominated the large synagogue-like room. Even the ethereal piano had stopped to make sonic room for her wailing.

"Torrelaish obabababay torreysh bobobobobui," she cried into the microphone, her voice rasping with each sharp, sobbing intake of breath.

Not long afterward, a thrumming sound of high-pitched howling filled the room as members of south L.A.'s Elim Central church began to emit ululations akin to those Arab women let out during weddings.

They were speaking in tongues.

850 (with trims) by Deborah Stokol. **MOVED**

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They say a little prayer for you: multi-platform proselytizing

RELIG-PENTECOSTALS-PRAYER:MCT—Missing its weekday bustle, the only thing loud about the intersection of South L.A.'s Vermont and Slauson avenues on a Sunday afternoon was the bright yellow McDonald's sign, indistinguishable from those lining street corners around the globe.

An occasional car whizzed down the wide, treeless road, passing an El Pollo Loco and Yoshinoya along the way.

Then a voice pierced the relative silence.

"Lord Jesus, please forgive my sins. ... I open my heart to you and I receive you now as my Lord and Savior," its owner said in Spanish.

As his voice droned on, people approached him with the purposeful strides that come from recognition.

The group's members collected at the corner, with the speaker speaking on and one of his cohorts carrying a guitar, preparing to play with and accompany his fellow missionaries as soon as the preaching would end.

750 (with trims) by Deborah Stokol. **MOVED**

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Pentecostalism: From humble beginnings to dominant presence

[RELIG-PENTECOSTALS-HISTORY:MCT](#)—Pentecostals derive their name from the feast of Pentecost, a Christian holiday taking place 49 days after Easter. The second chapter of the Bible's Book of Acts describes it as the time in which the Holy Spirit came down to the Apostles, endowing them with the ability to speak in sacred tongues not their own.

550 by Deborah Stokol. [MOVED](#)

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UNITED STATES

Census strives to keep it simple

[CENSUS:KC](#)—Filling out the 2010 census shouldn't take much longer than filling up your car.

Officials are touting the form as one of the shortest in decades. Ten questions. Ten minutes. Piece of cake.

No more of the "long form" version that was sent to a random 15 million households back in 2000.

Officials hope the simplicity will result in greater participation and accuracy in the once-every-10-years count.

900 (with trims) by Matt Campbell in Kansas City, Mo. [MOVED](#)

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Asian carp: One man's invader is another man's dinner

[ENV-CARP-EATS:TB](#)—Asian carp may indeed be poised to destroy commercial fishing as we know it in the Great Lakes, but Reggie McLeod likes his smoked or pickled.

The Vietnamese community cooks carp in coconut milk with lemon grass and chili peppers. The Polish like to draw out the pungent fishy odor by soaking it in milk and onions.

The humble Asian carp, which by some accounts is now within six miles of Lake Michigan, didn't ask to be at the center of a legal and political firestorm.

There's no question this ugly, stinky fish has an image problem in the United States. But so many varieties of carp, including the feared Asian carp, have been popular in ethnic cuisines for so long that some can't help but see the crisis as the culinary opportunity of a lifetime.

1000 (with trims) by Joel Hood in Chicago. [MOVED](#)

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Desert ostrich ranch is a shadow of owner's dreams

[OSTRICH:LA](#)—Perched at a picnic table in jean overalls, D.C. "Rooster" Cogburn nodded in and out of a nap under the mid-afternoon sun, his chin resting on his chest.

Nearby were gigantic beige ostrich eggs, ostrich feathers and cotton T-shirts featuring the words "Rooster Cogburn Ostrich Ranch," souvenirs for the tourists.

But not today.

Cogburn once had a dream right out of frontier days, but with a modern twist. He wanted to create one of the grandest ranches in the West — a ranch for ostriches. To Cogburn, Arizona's dry climate and abundance of alfalfa translated into the ostrich capital of the nation.

But after an unpredictable accident, the ranch has been reduced to a roadside attraction.

1000 (with trims) by Nicole Santa Cruz in Picacho, Ariz. [MOVED](#)

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THE WORLD

Egyptian Christians feel vulnerable after deadly shooting spree

[EGYPT-ATTACK:WA](#)—Fear and bitterness linger in this leafy riverside town a week after three Muslim gunmen fired into a crowd of Christians who were leaving church, killing seven people and hurling Egypt into a new chapter of religious strife.

The day after the drive-by shootings Jan. 6 on the eve of the Coptic Christmas, Christians in Nag Hammadi smashed shop windows and torched cars before police stopped the rioting with tear gas and rubber bullets.

Now that the dead are buried and three suspects are in custody, what remains is a shattered Christian community that has little faith that Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak's U.S.-allied administration will protect them.

900 (with trims) by Miret El Naggar in Nag Hammadi, Egypt. [MOVED](#)

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