

FOR THE RECORD

Elder group meets

The ad hoc group promoting a plan to "refocus" the Southern Baptist Convention on missions met recently in Chicago and outlined objectives and plans for a "Convocation of Hope." See page 2.

Mobile minister

With support from several Louisville churches, Mike Bowling has found a vital ministry as chaplain to residents of a mobile home park. See page 3.

Editorial

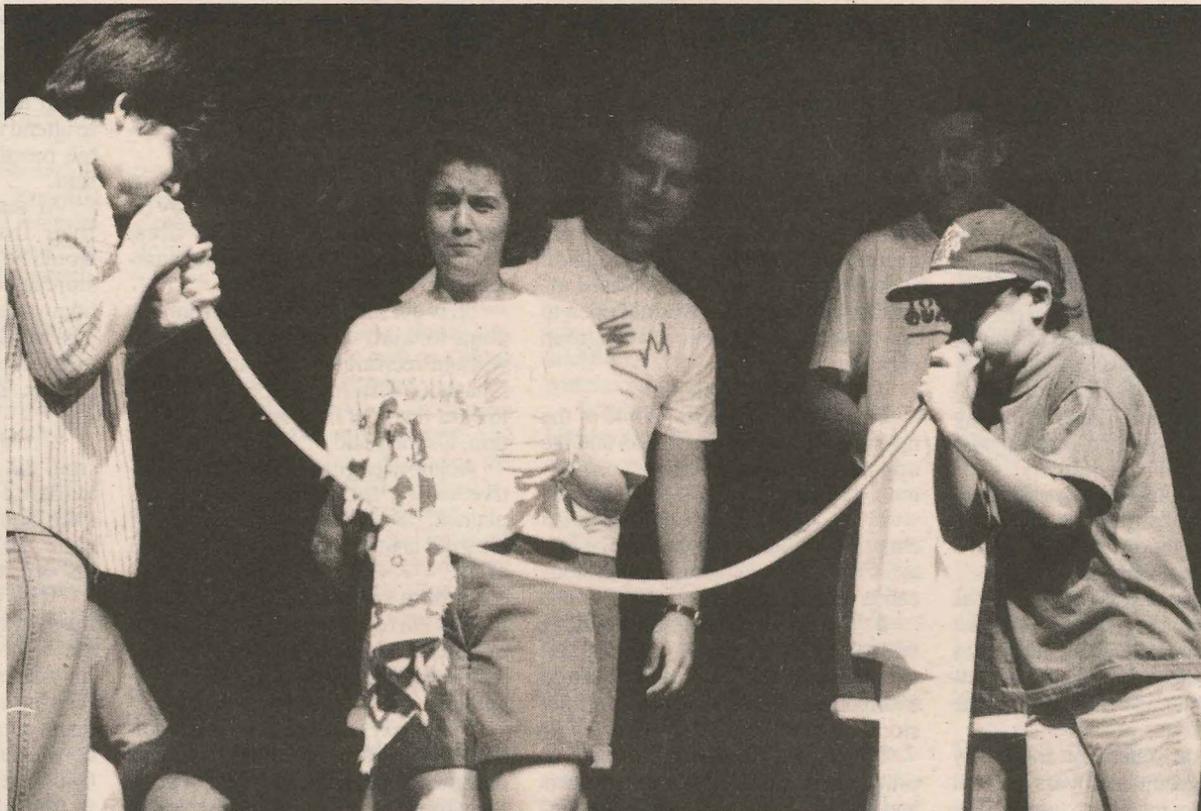
The Coalition of Hope faces an uphill battle for SBC reunification. See page 5.

Abortion issues

The U.S. House has voted to retain the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits government paying for abortions for poor women. Meanwhile, a bill which would guarantee access to abortion clinics is headed for the full Senate. See page 7.

Notice

In keeping with our traditional schedule, the Western Recorder will not be published next week. The next issue will be dated July 20.



TAKE MY YOLK Youths from Beechmont Baptist Church in Louisville take part in a contest to blow egg yolk through a tube to see who has more hot air and who gets egg on the face during "Youth Quake '93," June 21-24. About 200 teens participated in the event, of which 25 registered spiritual decisions. See story on page 3.

Faith in God gets ex-con free at last

By Marv Knox
Editor

EMINENCE—Prison walls can't hold Ricky Holcomb, thanks to God and Eminence Baptist Church.

Holcomb broke at least one federal gun-control law in 1989; that's a major crime for an ex-con who's not even supposed to touch rifles, much less sell them illegally.

But a judge who examined Holcomb's life this summer ruled the soon-to-be deacon should not go to prison.

His story really begins more than 20 years ago, when a red-headed kid from Eminence started drinking. Then he started using drugs. When he was 21, an assault conviction landed him in the penitentiary. And the long shadow of his past darkened his life.

Light began to penetrate that darkness in 1985. "I was overwhelmed by the presence of God," he says, remembering the night he watched evangelist Billy Graham preach on television. "I spent the next two years trying to stay sober, making deals with God. But God used my consequences to get my attention."

In 1987, life got so bad he let go of his bottle and reached out to Christ. That decision changed him for the better, but it didn't eliminate mistakes.

Stupid mistakes, he admits. In 1989, Holcomb was working part-time in a sporting goods store while earning a college degree. Following the orders of his boss, he falsified papers for the sale of some guns. The "buyer" turned out to be a federal agent, and the "sale" turned out to be

□ See Faith and friends ..., page 3

Youth worker gives tips on encouraging teen abstinence

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)—Want to help teens resist sexual temptation and remain sexually pure until marriage?

Chuck Gartman, a youth ministry consultant at the Baptist Sunday School Board, offered this advice in the form of an acrostic during a recent session at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center in New Mexico:

■ "L" is for loving youth unconditionally.

■ "O" is for offering resources

such as time and attention, as well as books and Bible studies that focus on sexuality from a Christian perspective.

■ "V" is for valuing God's ways. If adults don't value God's ways in their own lives, they will have a hard time communicating his truths and standards to teen-agers, Gartman said.

■ "E" is for equipping youth with the "whys" and "hows" and not just the "whats." In other words, don't

just give teens information about the physical aspect of sex, he said, but explain to them why they should abstain and how they can experience the perfect love of Christ.

Referring to the Baptist Sunday School Board's recently released Christian sex education resources and the sexual abstinence campaign "True Love Waits," Gartman said he is glad Southern Baptists are beginning to talk about sexuality.

'Jurassic Park' could raise questions of faith & science

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Imagine this scene now playing in a Sunday school room near you:

Little Johnny has just seen this summer's hit movie, "Jurassic Park," and perhaps feasted on the related "dino-size" fries and hamburgers at a nearby McDonald's. So on Sunday morning, filled with wonder about the world of dinosaurs, he eagerly asks his teacher a deep theological question.

"Mrs. Jones, where are the dinosaurs in the Bible?"

Think it won't happen?

Think again, says Kathryn Chapman, professor of Christian education at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Chapman, who recently led a seminar on current issues in ministry with children, said she spent a considerable amount of time discussing how to deal with questions exactly like that.

With a reported \$100 million expended on publicity and with promotional tie-ins lurking everywhere a parent turns, Steven Spielberg's "Jurassic Park" is nearly unavoidable this

summer.

And since many children seem naturally interested in dinosaurs anyway, the special effects in this larger-than-life movie are bound to heighten children's questions about dinosaurs, she said.

How a teacher answers Johnny's question will depend largely on the teacher's own understanding of creation and the age of the earth.

But Marge Myers, director of Southern Seminary's Child Development Center, offers this possible answer to teachers in a bind: "The Bible is a book about people and their relationship to God. It is not a book about animals."

In some cases, teachers may feel comfortable giving further explanations, depending upon the age of the child, the knowledge of the teacher and the real intent of the child's ques-

tion, Chapman added.

"When talking to children about issues that are larger than life, the proper way to respond is to let them lead by letting them ask the questions," she said. "Don't try to unload on them an explanation they're not ready for."

"Another thing is always to listen for the question behind the question," Chapman continued. "For example, when a

child who is 5 or 6 asks about death, they may not be asking about eternal life; they may be worried about who will take care of them if their parents die."

Many times children's questions are raised out of fear, she said. So since the people-chomping animals of Jurassic Park could incite fear in

children, a teacher might respond to Johnny by saying, "Are you afraid dinosaurs might come back?"

That could open a door to find the child's real agenda and avoid getting bogged down in unnecessary theological explanations, she counseled.

There's also a positive side to such questions, noted William Hendricks, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary. If properly nourished, a child's fascination with dinosaurs can show a love for God's creation, he said.

Dear God: Why aren't the dinosaurs in the Bible?

■ More on page 6

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Fred Wolfe**, the new chairman of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee said in a recent interview with Associated Baptist Press that he doubts the committee will act on a motion referred to them to exclude from the SBC churches which ordain women as ministers or deacons. Unlike homosexuality, which prompted exclusionary action from the SBC recently, women's ordination "is not a moral issue," Wolfe said. "It's a matter of interpretation and conviction."

■ **Ron Boswell**, the architect for Southern Baptists' program of using volunteers in foreign missions, has resigned from the Foreign Mission Board to become pastor of Grove Avenue Baptist Church in Richmond, Va.

■ **Grant applications** are now being accepted by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union for its Second Century Fund. Gifts are given annually in three categories: to develop missions organizations abroad, to enhance WMU leadership in the United States, and to foster education about missions and WMU among Southern Baptist seminary students and faculty. Applications are available from WMU, Box 830010, Birmingham, Ala. 35283-0010.

■ **Correction:** Last week's Recorder reported that 195 teenagers professed faith in Jesus Christ during the annual youth evangelism conference. A clarification from the individuals responsible for calculating that total shows the correct number is 180.

Ad hoc group sets objectives, possible convocation

By Bill Webb
Illinois Baptist

CHICAGO (BP)—The coordinating workgroup for the "Coalition of Hope," formed on the eve of the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Houston, met June 24-25 in Chicago, drafting a mission statement and six objectives and setting in motion plans for a nationwide "Convocation of Hope."

The workgroup, which includes former Sunday School Board President Lloyd Elder, focused on a 15-page document Elder released in May on the state of Southern Baptist mission trends and his recommendations for "calling the family back together."

Elder's plan calls for reunification of the various factions within the SBC under the banner of missions.

Herschel Hobbs, pastor emeritus of Oklahoma City's First Baptist Church and a past SBC president, has joined Elder, now a professor at Belmont University in Nashville, in the effort.

The mission statement drafted by the six workgroup members present at the Chicago meeting states: "The

purpose of this movement shall be to call Southern Baptists, at a critical moment of opportunity and challenge, to new levels of missions commitment and accountability in response to God's fresh call to world evangelism."

Rodney Osborn, a physician from Peoria, Ill., and convener of the workgroup, drafted the vision/mission statement and objectives released after the session, which was not open to news media or other non-workgroup members.

Those objectives include:

■ "To inform Baptist people of the mission/purpose of our vision and the opportunity new levels of commitment will mean to world evangelism."

■ "To mobilize Southern Baptist church members in support of the historic Baptist organizational missions center."

■ "To stimulate state conventions and Southern Baptist boards and agencies with the imperative of world evangelism and to new levels of missions support."

■ "To call Southern Baptists to prayer and repentance for slowness and intransigence, however uninten-

tional, in our response to God's fresh call to world evangelism."

■ "To encourage the building of trust and fellowship among the Southern Baptist family as a missions people."

■ "To foster such changes in Southern Baptist structures as may be necessary to better serve the Great Commission and to provide accountability."

"It is our intention to start from this point forward without looking back, without recrimination ... and without rehashing what has happened before" toward the goal of world evangelization, Osborn said.

Acknowledging the fourth objective called for repentance, he explained, "We think we are all guilty. No guilt is implied unless it is with all of us."

Osborn outlined a tentative plan for a "Convocation of Hope" involving the heads of every SBC agency and five people from each state convention.

"Our next task will be the invitation of the executive director (or his designee if unable to attend) and president (or the vice president in the pres-

ident's absence) of every state convention at a meeting in Nashville, Tenn., possibly on Monday, Sept. 20, when they would each be preparing to attend the SBC Executive Committee meetings as observers," Osborn said.

At that meeting, the representatives from each state convention would be asked to "call/elect/commission/select" five people from their own states to attend the convocation. The workgroup suggests those who are selected include men, women, pastors, laity, ethnics and other minorities.

"At the Convocation of Hope, from the some 300 individuals in attendance will come whatever next steps should be undertaken to complete the mission of the coalition," Osborn said.

"This may take the form of a commission that ultimately would have the responsibility, if so determined, for whatever report/recommendation/resolution the convocation might deem appropriate to bring before and/or present to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Orlando, Fla., in June of 1994."

Election a 'miracle,' Rankin tells missionaries

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—In a letter to nearly 4,000 missionaries around the world, the new president of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board called his June 14 election by FMB trustees "a miracle."

"With all that has been happening in the Southern Baptist Convention as well as a sequence of discouraging developments related to the Foreign Mission Board, few of us would dare hope that a new president would be selected, not only from within the staff, but even from off the field," wrote Jerry Rankin, the veteran Asia missionary and mission administrator elected president.

In his first full week in office, Rankin also met several times with FMB staff to get acquainted, share views, answer questions and assure them of his focus on a worldwide missions agenda. He told them he plans no immediate restructuring of the staff or organization and foresees no additional staff reductions in the near future. In May the board eliminated

37 jobs, or 8 percent of its 450 home office positions, because of downturns in financial support.

Rankin faces the task of restoring full confidence and support for an agency shaken by repeated differences between trustees and some staff and missionaries over mission philosophy and administration.

Rankin said it would be "premature" to project changes in mission strategy before consulting trustees, FMB staff and missionaries. But he listed three "general areas of personal concern and vision" in his letter:

■ A need to "move back toward field-generated strategies. We have such a great diversity in history, culture, responsiveness and maturity of Baptist work throughout the world; local missions and area staff should have more ownership in planning and methodologies."

Earlier, he told Baptist Press he would seek to find "balance" between the heavily field-oriented approach under the 26-year presidency of Bak-

er James Cauthen and the more centralized strategy during the 13-year presidency of Keith Parks.

■ Continue "and even enhance" efforts to reach World A—a quarter of the globe that has had little or no chance to hear the Christian gospel. "But we should also concentrate on reaping the harvest that God has ripened on fields that are open and responsive," he said.

■ Provide "channels for Southern Baptist churches in the U.S. to be involved in missions overseas."

Clarifying his third point, Rankin said that although the board has been a continuing channel for Southern Baptists to serve overseas, he feels it must broaden that channel.

"We've had too narrow a strategy to utilize people other than career missionaries and International Service Corps personnel," he said. "We've missed opportunities for tapping extensive resources and manpower in Southern Baptist churches that could help us impact a lost world."

Carleton to head SBC Education Commission

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP)—Stephen Carleton has been elected executive director of the Southern Baptist Education Commission, to replace retiring director Arthur Walker Jr.

Carleton, 55, was elected without opposition during the commission's annual meeting June 27 in Riverside, Calif. He has been executive vice president and academic dean at California Baptist College since 1971.

"The committee was aware of tensions in the convention and we wanted somebody who could speak and be heard in our educational community and be able to relate to leadership in our convention," said Jerry Henry, search committee chairman.

"We have worked with SBC leadership in choosing Steve Carleton as

our nominee. Steve wants to work with the Southern Baptist Executive Committee and he is positive about making things happen," he said.

Carleton, a native of Shattuck, Okla., earned the bachelor's degree from Oklahoma Baptist University, a bachelor of divinity degree from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary and a master's and Ph.D. in church history from the University of Chicago.

Along with Carleton's election, commissioners signaled their intention to turn the Education Commission to be more in line with the denomination's conservative leadership.

Commission member Tommy Middleton, pastor of Woodlawn Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, La., was

critical of the national Faith and Discipline Conference sponsored by the Education Commission in June 1992.

Middleton cited "a dearth of solid, more conservative balance" in the conference.

Middleton specifically mentioned the need to deal with issues in public education such as "the seduction of the New Age Movement," creationism vs. Darwinian evolution, relativism vs. absolutism and secular humanism.

Commissioners adopted a motion to explore how the commission might provide support for private and home schools. Any such pursuit likely would require a change in the commission's program assignment from the SBC.

Ministers' wives happy with role, WMU poll shows

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Ever wonder what ministers' wives think about themselves and their roles in the church?

A recent survey taken by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union found most ministers' wives are satisfied to be ministers' wives, don't assume responsibility in the church just because it is expected but believe more is expected of ministers' children than church members' children.

If they could change anything, the wives said, they would:

■ Assume more personal identity.

■ Change people's expectations of their roles.

■ Express their own opinions in business meetings.

■ Be seen for who they are.

■ Have more personal and family time.

■ Get rid of the double standard that expects perfection from a minister's wife but not from church members.

Only 6.5 percent of the women interviewed were dissatisfied with their husband's vocation as a minister.

And of the 138 women who responded to the survey, 103 said they felt "called" or "gifted" to be a minister's wife.

The survey also found that among couples who serve churches with 100 or fewer members, only 13.8 percent are able to live on the husband's salary alone. More than half the women who serve these smaller churches work outside the home.

Bowling's walk in the park yields fruitful ministry

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—Ministering to people is like a walk in the park for Michael Bowling.

As pastor/director of a new mobile home ministry in Louisville, Bowling knows that building personal relationships with people often makes a greater impact on their lives than preaching to them.

Sometimes a walk through the Holiday Mobile Home Park where he works helps him do just that.

"Job description: be available," he said, emphasizing flexibility and innovation as requirements.

And you can't do that if you don't live among the people, he added: "You have to be one of them."

Bowling said he believes "the single key factor" to his success in the ministry is that he and his family live in a mobile home at the park with the other residents.

Bowling said his work is a new type of chaplaincy.

It started simply, after the family moved into the park in August 1992.

Bowling and his wife, Beth, opened their home so neighborhood children would have a place to play; they delivered Christmas cards to the 300 families in the park; Bowling took the children sledding; and any time an emergency vehicle entered

the park, he, too, went out to help.

Gradually, Bowling said, his rapport with residents grew and the needs they brought to him became more pressing.

He was asked to counsel troubled teen-agers and families in crises. He found volunteers to donate food and clothing for a family whose mobile home burned. He ministered to a woman terminally ill with cancer.

The work resulted from a Southern Baptist Home Mission Board survey which targeted the park as a place where ministry was needed.

Long Run Baptist Association made a financial commitment and took initial steps toward beginning the work. Associational leaders asked local churches for further support.

"Our church was looking for some place to get involved in local missions work," said Pastor Dallas Vincent of Ormsby Heights Baptist Church.

At the invitation of Tony Hough, a former Long Run worker who now is associate director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's direct missions department, Ormsby Heights committed to support the ministry and began looking for a "non-traditional person" to fill the "non-traditional need," Vincent said.

Bowling, a student at Boyce Bible School and a former HMB church planter in Kalamazoo, Mich., seemed the perfect choice.

"He knows how to relate to all kinds of people," Vincent said. "And he has the where-with-all to get to the source" when a need arises.

Vincent, too, had the where-with-all to get the ministry off the ground, Bowling said. In one day, members of Ormsby Heights pledged adequate funds to purchase a large mobile home for Bowling's family.

Ormsby Heights now is the leading sponsor of the mobile home ministry. About four other churches, in addition to HMB funds, also offer financial support and guidance.

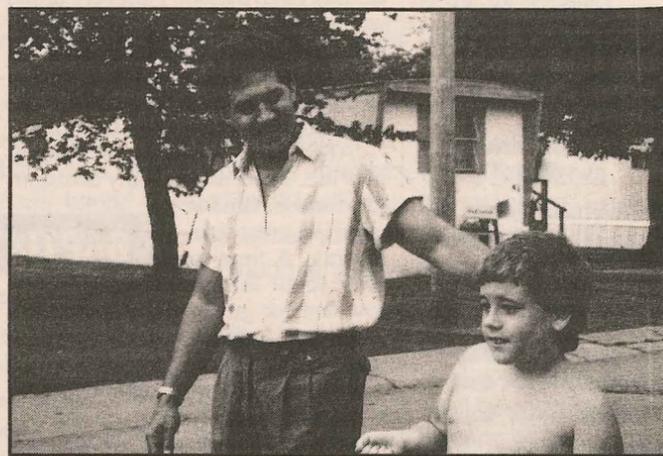
While admitting that neither he nor leaders at Ormsby Heights had a well-developed vision for how the ministry should materialize, Bowling said both parties agreed an overtly evangelistic approach was not the answer.

"We tried holding Bible studies in homes, but they weren't very effective," he explained. "It's foreign and threatening" to non-churched people.

Bowling said building relationships and being a friend to residents in the park was more effective.

Soon after Bowling began directing the mobile home ministry, he also was asked to preach at Minors Lane Baptist Church, which is almost directly across the street from the mobile home park, Bowling said.

After serving as interim pastor for several months, Bowling was called to Minors Lane as pastor last Febru-



FRIENDLY STROLL Mobile home park chaplain Michael Bowling walks through Holiday Mobile Home Park in Louisville with his new friend and neighbor Shawn Langley.

ary. Minors Lane Baptist Church has "grown tremendously in every area" in the last year, he reported. For example, vacation Bible school was held for the first time in three years, the church's day care has been re-opened and the building no longer is in disrepair. Attendance at the church currently averages 80-100 people.

Still, Bowling said, the mobile home ministry meets some needs that a church can't meet through traditional means.

Bowling said 16 people from the park have made decisions for Christ in the last year. Also, about 35 people from the park have begun attending Minors Lane Baptist Church since last August.

Faith and friends set Eminence ex-con free at last

Continued from page 1
a sting.

No matter how the feds interpreted his actions, Holcomb looked to be in trouble. But the wheels of justice turn slowly, and he didn't hear much about his case from the time of the bust in February 1990 until September 1992.

Meanwhile, Holcomb and his wife, Pam, moved back to the church of his youth, Eminence Baptist, where their faith began to grow.

"This is a love story," he confesses. "I found the older people were the ones who had been there when I was a kid. That was a testimony to me; I had been squandering my life, and they stayed right there.

"I felt their love and acceptance, too. They knew me; they knew my past, but they accepted me anyway."

Eminence's members also called out skills and commitments from the Holcombs. In the fall of 1990, the church asked them to lead the youth group. They looked past his prison record and wrist-to-shoulder tattoos and saw a couple who love God and youngsters.

Starting with only two regular attenders, the Holcombs and Eminence Baptist eventually witnessed the baptism of 11 teen-agers in one day.

When Holcomb's legal troubles resurfaced last September, he backed away from the youth program. "I didn't want to drag them through it," he says. Not one to quit completely, he started a Sunday school class for alcoholics.

When his case came up again, his outlook appeared grim. The prosecutor emphasized his criminal record.

"He tried to cite me with three felony convictions and hit me with 10 to 20 years in prison," Holcomb remembers.

In those dark days, Eminence Baptist and its pastor, Michael Duncan, stood solidly beside Holcomb and his family.

"Michael put his reputation on the line; he stuck his neck out," Holcomb says of his pastor. "He said that he believes in me. He said that if he had the least bit of doubt, he wouldn't back me—no way, no how."

In church, Holcomb told a story many of his fellow members already knew—about his fight with alcohol and his time in prison. And now about his uphill battle to beat another rap.

When the service was over, nobody came to shake Duncan's hand at the church door. Everybody lined up to hug the Holcombs.

"That was the most overwhelming love I've ever felt," Holcomb says. "There was not a dry eye in the house."

Months later, Duncan told the church: "I knew then that even if we were wrong about Ricky—which I didn't think we were—we were being church. Our necks were in this together."

Church members put more than their necks into the effort. They wrote letters and made calls to everyone they thought could make a difference—the judge, the prosecutor, his probation officer, even legislators.

And the effort spread beyond the church. Eminence residents know Holcomb and his past, but they've seen him change—into a loving father, strong church member, commu-

nity leader and role model for kids. "Almost every church in Henry County was praying for me," he reports, "and people would stop me on the street to let me know they were for me."

That helped, especially in the dark days when Holcomb feared the worst. He now admits he might have turned back to the bottle or run away, were it not for the strength he received from Christ expressed by fellow believers.

Despite the darkness, he persevered. He earned a social work degree from Spalding University with a 3.95 grade-point average, got accepted into graduate school and lined up job offers.

When he walked into Judge Joseph Hood's U.S. district court June 22, he didn't know where his future would lead. Even though the judge had received 75-100 supportive letters, the prosecutor wanted a stiff sentence.

But rather than talk about the background of the case and the criminal record, Judge Hood wanted to know how Holcomb had changed. With his pastor and several deacons sitting nearby, Holcomb told the story of the power of Christ and a church's love.

Hood sentenced him to two years' probation, with two months' home detention and 120 hours' community service.

"Mr. Holcomb essentially has rehabilitated himself through the church and his friendship with the people in the church," Hood told the Western Recorder. "You hear stories about people who say, 'Judge, give me a chance and I'll make something of my life.' Mr. Holcomb had already done

that. There wasn't any reason to rehabilitate him further."

What the judge calls "rehabilitation" Holcomb calls "being Christ-filled."

"The witness here is that Jesus Christ can work in anybody's life," he told fellow church members the following Sunday. "The hope the Bible gives me is that no matter what I've done, no matter where I've been, Jesus still loves me and loves everybody here."

'Youth Quake' rocks church

LOUISVILLE—Youth Quake '93 exploded into a dynamic array of Christian videos, rap groups, speakers and outlandish games at Beechmont Baptist Church in Louisville June 21-24.

For the four-day event the church sanctuary was transformed into a "concert hall"—complete with fiber optic lighting, large-screen video and powerful audio speakers.

About 200 youths from Louisville and the surrounding area heard messages from inspirational speakers and musicians, sang together, visited college booths set up in the fellowship hall and threw pies at each other.

Suzanne Clayton, Youth Quake planning committee member, said the purpose of the event was to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and to "promote healthy Christian lifestyle choices."

Clayton emphasized that Youth Quake was conducted by the youth of the church, not just for them. The church's youth group averages about 23, she said, and each of them had responsibilities during the week and in preparation for the event.

Of 336 registered during the week, about 25 youths made decisions, including some professions of faith in Jesus Christ, Clayton reported.

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Earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.—Jude 3

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Get prayer back

I am a recent graduate of Barren County High School. I am very proud we were able to have a prayer at our graduation. The thing that hurts is to see several of my fellow graduates of the class of '93 all over the United States are not getting that freedom.

After graduation, we start a brand-new life. There are so many decisions to be made. Graduation is a great time to pray. A time to pray about tomorrow and for guidance for the rest of our lives. A time to thank God for giving us life.

With just recently graduating, I have faced many trials and have seen many things in school. Drugs, sex, suicide. We all need to pray for this, and what better way than to pray at graduation.

Each year the Kentucky Baptist Convention holds a day called See You at the Pole. This is a day where students gather together at their schools' flagpoles and pray. To pray for their teachers, principals, schoolmates and problems they face. Who knows, one day they may try to ban this, but it won't be without a fight.

The problem is that this world is too divided among each other. People are divided among religions and races. We need to pull together as one and pray for our nation. I would like to say to all Christian students, "Let's pull together for our rights and show America that we want prayer back in schools."

Andy Lowe
Glasgow

Know the facts

I was distressed to learn Cumberland College was included on Paige Patterson's list of "neo-orthodox" persons and institutions (WR, June 22). This list claims Cumberland "does very little about missions and evangelism." I feel it is necessary to

The trend in holidays

First of all, let me thank my good friend, Bill Marshall, for his complimentary invitation to substitute for him in the writing of this column while he ministers in Russia. When I asked if there were any instructions or restrictions, he assured me I was free to write whatever is on my mind.

Since this first effort is to be published in the immediate time frame of our celebration of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, I'm of a mood to speak of holidays in general and, first, Independence Day in particular.

I want us to get into the habit of calling the holiday by its name, not just its date. It is the only holiday I know anywhere that is almost universally spoken of simply by its date. A special day to keep alive historical memory deserves and needs a descriptive name. It has such a name. Let's use it.

The world "holiday" is a contraction of "Holy Day." There are religious holidays observed as holy by

refute the errancy of this assumption.

The Baptist Student Union at Cumberland College does quite a bit about evangelism and missions. During the 1992-93 school year, we sent out 20 revival teams, reached many children through Love in Action and cooked for the elderly. Our choir and creative ministries team ministered to many churches, while both our evangelism committee and ministry training organization sponsored campus revivals in which many students made decisions to follow Christ.

Mountain Outreach, President Bush's 220th point of light, ministers to both the physical and spiritual needs of those in surrounding communities. We currently have 25 summer missionaries serving around the world.

To say that evangelism and missions do not occur at Cumberland is to be ignorant of the facts.

As far as Dr. Patterson's doctrinal concerns, I would challenge him to speak to any member of Cumberland's religion faculty and then question their commitment to the Bible as God's inspired word.

I regret Dr. Patterson feels it is necessary to make slanderous statements which he cannot verify regarding Christian persons and institutions. I am proud to be affiliated with Cumberland College and its various ministry organizations.

Bryan S. Riley
Williamsburg

Drop subscription

After months of consideration and prayer, and due to the growing fundamentalism of both Southern Baptists and the Western Recorder, and because of your biased intolerance on such issues as homosexuality, I request that you immediately remove my name from your mailing list.

I do not want to subject myself, my family and those I love to continued,

prejudicial and intolerant attitudes regarding sexuality—views which I think foster spiritual arrogance and condemnation.

I support fairness and civil rights for all and believe that your publication attacks such human rights issues.

Jim Watkins
Louisville

Sabbaticals

Every pastor needs a sabbatical. Why?

He needs to get away from the shop, even if only for a little while. A pastor can lose his perspective. The sense of God's call may not be as clear as it once was. And he may need a rest.

How should a pastor spend a sabbatical?

Many end up going to school or taking a trip. However, the average pastor would be more ready to come back to his work if he tried different things. For example, working a month at McDonald's. He might consider stocking shelves at a grocery, or substitute teaching. This will give him an appreciation for the "real world." He will better understand how people are thinking and hurting.

When should he take a sabbatical?

If he has been pushing hard for the last six or seven years, then the time has come to get away. The church needs to understand it will be healthy for the congregation as well if the pastor can get away to sharpen his skills and maybe even refocus his call and life.

Normally in Baptist life, if a pastor gets burned out he looks for a different church. If he cannot find one, then he and the congregation may get at odds with each other. If the pastor leaves under bad terms, then it takes everybody a long time to get over it. In the long run, a sabbatical would have been healthier for the church and pastor.

Glenn Mollette
Louisa

birthdays to great men and their contributions to history. These are our hero images and very important to the moral fiber of the nation.

This schoolboy remembers reports and schoolroom play skits on Abraham Lincoln's and George Washington's birthdays—and the history we learned connected with them. Now we have merged these two birthdays into a joint observance, into the anonymity of "President's Day." A well-intended move, for which sound reasoning can be given. But the inspiring lives of these two men who rose up and cast their shadows over history will somewhat blur into obscurity. I'm worried about that. We need our hero images for role models.

Now we have gone another step. We have moved these merged birthdays to the nearest weekend, and this is the trend with holidays, to create longer break time. I fear that "long weekends" may become the only identity by which holidays are remembered. As I said, I know the good reasons for the trend, but are we losing more inspiring heritage and tradition than our great nation can spare?

Franklin Owen, of Lexington, is the retired executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

ON MISSION TOGETHER



Franklin Owen

close—about as high as secular history has ever reached. Independence Day—it deserves to have its meaningful name spoken and written—is not just a date on the calendar that many children know only as firecracker day until they get pretty big, sometimes.

Holidays are meant to be more than just days off from work or school. They are memorials to great events worth remembering, or the



Remarriage?

By Harry Rowland

Morton Hunt estimates that of those divorced, 85 percent of the men and 76 percent of the women remarry. Remarriage is not some abstract concept, but a reality with which Christians must deal.

Two possible views are predominant. One is based upon the fact that Jesus is hard on divorce, coupled with the belief that a prohibition on remarriage for anyone, for any reason, will turn the tide on a rising divorce rate. The other is based upon the words "caring" and "loving," which then are misused to make divorce too easy. Both are extremes and when yoked to Christians rob them of God's abundant life.

It is clear that divorce is not Jesus' plan. But Scripture reveals that Jesus permitted it (Matthew 19) and that remarriage is allowed (I Corinthians 7). These passages are said to speak to "biblical grounds." But many singles want to know if it is right to remarry—period. The answer is not always an easy one. A good understanding of these passages and I John 1:9 will help.

When I seek to understand the overall teachings of Christ, I am convinced that remarriage—in most cases—is permissible. The primary conditions are that the couple be willing to undergo serious, in-depth Christian counseling, and that they are convinced the decision to remarry represents God's will for their lives.

In counseling, five criteria are addressed:

- Have I forgiven myself?
- Have I forgiven my former spouse?
- Has enough time elapsed to exhaust reasonable possibilities for reconciliation?
- Have I resolved all unfinished business from my previous marriage?
- Do both I and my partner believe it is God's will and for his glory that we marry?

We cannot allow the world of single-again to become an asylum for the "marital incompetent" but rather a "school for the remarriageable." Good second marriages make contributions to our society and churches. With God at work, remarriage can be a great opportunity.

Harry Rowland is pastor of Fort Mitchell Baptist Church.

■ Send your questions about children, teens, marriage, singles or aging to "Family Forum," Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253.

Coalition faces uphill battle for SBC reunification

Can the Southern Baptist Convention be reunited?

If we knew the answer to that question, we would know whether all the effort going into the new SBC Coalition of Hope is worth the organizers' time and tears.

The Coalition of Hope developed on the eve of the 1993 SBC annual meeting in Houston last month. It's based on a 16-page document developed by Lloyd Elder, former president of the convention's Sunday School Board. That report, titled "Calling the Family Back Together," proposed 20 "action plans" intended to de-politicize the SBC denominational structure, to reincorporate moderates into that structure and to change the structure to ensure broad participation by all Southern Baptists. The initiative gained momentum in Houston, when leaders from numerous SBC state conventions gathered to discuss the idea. That group birthed the Coalition of Hope and created a special committee to figure out how to give the entire convention an inoculation of its own version of hope.

Now, the special committee has met and developed its own objectives for the Coalition of Hope. They are designed to emphasize missions and evangelism as the core of denominational unity, call the convention to new levels of support for missions, seek "prayer and repentance for slowness and intransigence ... in our response to God's fresh call to world evangelism," promote denominational trust and initiate changes "as may be necessary to better serve the Great Commission and to provide accountability."

In an effort to advance its cause, the Coalition of Hope also plans to hold a "convocation of hope," which would involve the heads of all SBC agencies and five representatives from each state convention. The convocation's "broad-based representation" would be responsible for developing specific plans for reunifying the SBC.

The Coalition of Hope faces an uphill battle. Numerous reasons come to mind, but these four stand out:

■ SBC leaders aren't likely to support the coalition.

Conservative SBC leaders got to power by utilizing the convention's current policies. Unless they worry about the flow of money needed to support the convention's vast operations, they have no incentive for following through on the early ideas floated by the coalition. From a political standpoint, inviting moderates back would mean renewed political headaches and potential loss of hard-won power.

The convention's current rulers won by the convention's current rules. They've already spoken of "broadening the tent" of denominational participation. The SBC Peace Committee's mandate to secure meaningful participation from every arena of denominational life failed to do just that. Why expect them to join a coalition that wants to change the rules that put them in power?

■ Significant numbers of moderates don't have an incentive for reunification.

Although most moderates continue to support the SBC's Coopera-

tive Program unified budget, moderates who have joined the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship share a commitment to preserve Fellowship causes. Elder's research interestingly noted the Fellowship's first Coordinating Council supported the Cooperative Program better than members of the SBC Executive Committee. And most Fellowship churches, at least in Kentucky, indicate they still intend to provide at least some support for the Cooperative Program. Still, a call for absolute reunification within the SBC most likely would ask them to abandon or neglect an institutional child they have helped bring to life.

On another level, many moderates have felt relief from the political battles that dominated the SBC during the '80s. Time after time, they have vowed to leave politics behind. But by its very nature, an effort to push through the coalition's constitutional changes would mean engaging in politics, again.

■ The coalition's changes—at least several of Elder's action plans—would defy longstanding Baptist polity.

Those proposals would allow state conventions a significant hand in selecting SBC leadership, particularly through the process of electing trustees to SBC agencies and institutions. Traditionally, Baptists' doctrine of the priesthood of every believer and its corollary, the autonomy of the local church, has had larger implications. Baptists have held that each sphere of Baptist life—individual believer, local church, district association, state convention and national convention—is autonomous.

Several of Elder's proposal would give states at least limited control over the national convention. Other people have attempted to violate the polity in the other direction, insisting national convention actions mandate certain state and associational actions. But those abuses cannot justify new polity abuses. And while the effort to secure grassroots involvement is noble, an additional wrong won't make things right.

■ These polity changes proposed in Elder's action plans would ensure conflict in state conventions.

Throughout the '80s, the denomination engaged in political war for the right to determine the convention's future. Ultimately, the battle was over selection of trustees for SBC agencies and institutions, and it was conducted on a national battlefield. Now, if states were allowed strong latitude in the trustee-selection process, the partisan politics which dominated the national convention during the last decade would dominate the state conventions during this one.

States already have a big-enough challenge from those who want to import SBC-style politics into state conventions. If SBC issues are inserted into state conventions, vicious battles will be inevitable.

Don't read these words as denigration of the Coalition of Hope's efforts. The coalition's goals are noble. The cause is worth the cost. But coalition members must be forthright, honest and realistic about their challenge. The cure they offer must be better than the ill they diagnose. Baptists should pray for them as they do their work.

Marv Knox

The Coalition of Hope must be realistic about its efforts to reunify the Southern Baptist Convention: The SBC's power brokers will want to maintain the status quo. Moderates won't want to abandon their new causes. The group's early proposals present serious polity problems. And the effort could shift the political war to state battlefields. Still, the reunification effort is a noble cause and deserves Baptists' prayers.

Wildcats inspire a solution to the great minister-salary crisis

The phone rang late Wednesday night. And although sleep had overtaken me, I instinctively knew who was calling.

"Hello, Brother Editor," Deep Pulpit boomed, "aren't asleep yet, are ya?"

I'm a Southern boy, and Mama taught me decent folks don't call after 10. Guess Deep Pulpit's mother was a Yankee.

"What's going on, my friend?" I asked, trying to sound awake.

"Well, I've been watching the 'Cats," Deep Pulpit intoned.

"It's the middle of summer," I responded. "How can you do that?"

"Video, you bucket-head. Video!" Deep Pulpit thundered.

"Good. I'll call you in the morning," I told him, starting to hang up.

"Wait," he blasted. "I'm having a mael-

strom of brain-wave activity here."

While I know Wildcat basketball excites many fans—even in summer—Deep Pulpit's seizure was unusual.

"So, what's new?" I asked.

"We had business meeting," he answered. "And the brothers and sisters here have determined to keep the pastor poor, while the Lord keeps him humble."

"I didn't know."

"I'm sorry," I said.

"Don't worry about it," he responded. "That's what this brainstorm is all about."

"See, before I turned on the 'Cats, I was watching Wimbledon, and those players looked like jumping billboards. Then I remembered how basketball coaches get zillions of bucks for dressing their players in X-brand sneakers, not to mention the fortune they make with their weekly TV shows."

"Then I realized preachers could do the same thing! What would you think if I had a Brown's Big Bibles logo sewn on the back of my suit? I could get an endorsement fee for dressing the choir out in Holy Host robes. We could

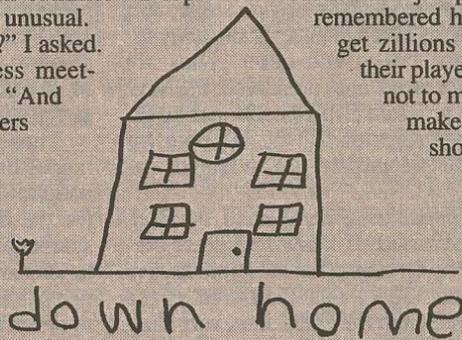
paste a Daily Devotions emblem on the pulpit. We could print, 'The pastor's wardrobe supplied by Bob's Menswear' in the bulletin. We could have Welch's sponsor the Lord's Supper and get Frank's Funeral Parlor to back my weekly call-in 'Parson-to-Person' TV program.

"This'll be great!" Deep Pulpit insisted. "After I get my picture on the cover of Preacher magazine, I can give up church ministry and go into full-time consulting. Thank God for this vision!"

Deep Pulpit was so pumped, I was pretty sure he wouldn't go to bed all night, but I needed my sleep.

"Blessed are the poor ...," I began quoting. Just as I thought, Deep Pulpit hung up on me.

Marv Knox



Quest for dinosaurs leads to creation questions

5 views of creation

How does one reconcile the book of Genesis with modern geological findings that the earth is billions of years old? Biblical scholars offer a variety of explanations, including these five common views of creation cited by Millard Erickson in his book "Christian Theology":

- **Gap theory.** This view holds that there was an original, complete creation of the earth billions of years ago. But due to some type of catastrophe, the creation became empty and unformed. God then re-created the earth a few thousand years ago in a period of six days. The apparent age of the earth and the fossil records are to be attributed to the first creation.
- **Flood theory.** According to this view, the earth is only a few thousand years old. During a tremendous flood at the time of Noah, waves with a velocity of 1,000 miles per hour picked up various forms of life and deposited them under tremendous pressure. The various strata of the fossil record represent various waves of the flood. Under these unusual circumstances, there was accomplished what normally would require three billion years to accomplish.
- **Ideal-time theory.** This theory says that God created the world in six literal days a relatively short time ago but made it look as if it were billions of years old.
- **Age-day theory.** This concept is based on the fact that the Hebrew word for "day," while most frequently meaning a 24-hour period, is not limited to that meaning. So the days referred to in Genesis 1 represent epochs, or long periods of time.
- **Pictorial-day theory.** This idea, also known as the literary structural theory, views the days of creation as more of a logical structuring than a chronological order. Either God's revelation to Moses came in a series of six pictures or the author arranged his material in logical groupings.

Belief in literal Bible declining

PRINCETON, N.J. (RNS)—One of the most dramatic shifts in religious beliefs in America is how people view the Bible, according to pollster George Gallup.

Just 30 years ago, two-thirds of American adults said they believed the Bible was to be taken literally word for word, he reports.

Today, less than half (49 percent) the adult population holds that view.

A similar trend is seen among teen-agers, Gallup says.

"Although some young people continue to interpret the writings of the Bible literally word for word, the majority now are more likely to view scriptural writings as inspired accounts that sometimes must be interpreted figuratively," he reports. "Young elders also are less likely than their parents to accept biblical accounts of the creation of humans and the universe as literally true."

When asked to identify their view of how humans came to be, only 40 percent of adults and 35 percent of teens say they think God created humans in their present form within the last 10,000 years.

Another 46 percent of adults and 52 percent of teens believe humans developed from less advanced forms of life but that development was guided by God.

The view that humans developed from less advanced forms of life not guided by God is held by 9 percent of adults and 10 percent of teens.

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

Dinosaurs may fascinate children, but they can perplex adults who want to reconcile the existence of dinosaur fossils with the biblical account of creation.

Any discussion of dinosaurs and the Bible taps into one of the most controversial debates ever to touch the church: evolution vs. creationism, science vs. religion.

Yet this touchy topic is likely to surface in Christian homes across America this summer due to the popularity of the blockbuster movie "Jurassic Park," which depicts dinosaurs roaming the earth in special-effects splendor.

The topic is so controversial that many of the Southern Baptist theologians interviewed for this article declined to be quoted by name. The possibility of their views being misunderstood in such an article, they said, is too great in the current political climate of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The one thing almost everyone now agrees on is that dinosaurs did exist at some time in the past.

From that common agreement, two main schools of thought part company quickly. And then various interpretations are to be found within each of those groups.

The main dividing point depends on whether a person accepts a young-earth or old-earth model.

■ Young earth model.

The young-earth model—favored by biblical literalists and those commonly known as "creationists"—says the earth was created in six literal days, six 24-hour periods.

According to this view, the earth was created about 6,000 years ago. Archbishop James Usher popularized this idea in the 17th century by calculating all the genealogies of the Old Testament to determine that the earth was formed in the year 4004 B.C.

Despite scientific evidence to the contrary, creationists insist that this young-earth model must be accepted if the Bible is to be believed.

The fossil record—layers of ancient sediment, bones and forms scientists study to understand the past—appears the way it does due to the worldwide flood of Noah's day, creationists assert. This explains why dinosaur bones and other relics are compressed and preserved the way they are, said Bill Hoesch, public relations director for the Institute for Creation Research in San Diego, Calif.

Dinosaurs were created by God, Hoesch said. "I know they were created by God because the Bible says in Exodus 20:11 that God created the heavens and the earth and everything that is in them. And that means everything."

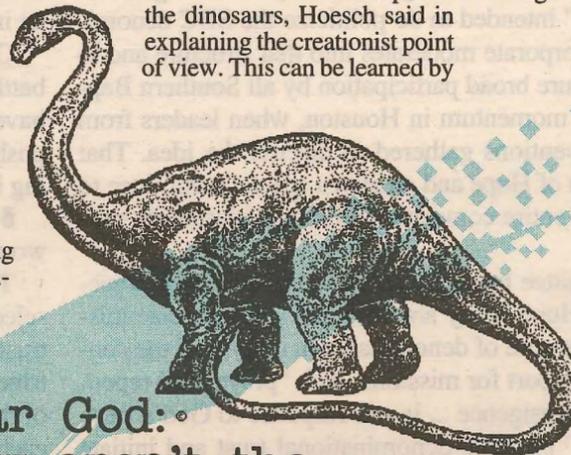
"There were no prehistoric ages," he continued. "Man and dinosaurs must have occupied the earth at the

same time if the Bible is true."

Then why are dinosaur bones and other bones located in different strata of the fossil record?

"I don't know," Hoesch explained. "Perhaps it had to do with the mobility of man running to higher ground (during the flood) ... That doesn't bother me too much."

But the flood did not wipe out the dinosaurs, Hoesch said in explaining the creationist point of view. This can be learned by



Dear God: Why aren't the dinosaurs in the Bible?

reading Job 40 and 41, he said.

Those passages describe two giant beasts God talks to Job about creating, in the context of helping Job see how small he is in comparison to God.

"Look now at the behemoth which I made along with you; He eats grass like an ox. See now, his strength is in his hips. And his power is in his stomach muscles. He moves his tail like a cedar," one passage says.

In another passage God says to Job, "Can you draw out Leviathan with a hook, or snare his tongue with a line which you lower? ... His sneezings flash forth light, and his eyes are like the eyelids of the morning."

If dinosaurs were still around in Job's time, Hoesch noted, that means Noah had to take some of them on the ark during the flood.

"There aren't that many of the dinosaurs types that are the really huge ones," he reasoned. "And there's no reason why they had to be adult forms. They could have been juvenile dinosaurs."

Many biblical scholars who affirm the strict creationist point of view, especially as it relates to the Job passage. "Behemoth" is considered by some to be an unknown animal or perhaps a very large form of a hippopotamus. Likewise, "Leviathan" is considered to be another unknown creature, or perhaps a very large form of crocodile.

■ Old earth model.

Those who reject the young-earth model of creation in six literal days adopt a variety of other explanations for the Genesis creation story. (See sidebar.) The most common interpretations are that the days represent epochs of time or are symbolic language to describe stages of creation.

Using radioactive dating techniques, most modern geologists now believe the earth is about 4.5 billion years old. Christians who reject the literal-day theory of creation general-

ly claim to explain their views of Genesis as compatible with modern scientific evidence about the age of the earth.

"The totality of the evidence just does not point to the earth being only a few thousand years old, no matter how ardently creationists might wish that it did. No amount of juggling can change the overwhelming weight of the evidence,"

wrote Davis Young in his book, "Christianity & the Age of the Earth."

Young, an evangelical Christian who teaches geology at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., is a firm believer in the old-earth theory.

"I ... want to persuade Christian brethren that they should not fear the idea of the antiquity of the earth," he wrote. "They should not be overwhelmed by the available evidence that the earth is billions of years old is

somehow damaging to Christianity. The available evidence from science in no way undermines the Bible or our Christian faith."

Biblical scholars who advocate the old-earth theory say it is important to realize the Bible makes no claims to be a book of science or geology but rather is a book about God's relationship to humans. Thus, for elements of scientific history to be condensed or even omitted from the Bible does not make either less true, they contend.

According to the old-earth view, dinosaurs lived after God created the earth but before he created humans. This perhaps puts the creation of dinosaurs on what the Bible calls the fifth day or early on the sixth day. Genesis 1:21 says that on the fifth day "God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded."

On the sixth day, the Bible says, God created "the beasts of the earth" and then humans.

So why doesn't Genesis specifically mention dinosaurs and help clear up the confusion? Probably because dinosaurs were extinct long before the Bible was written, one Baptist scholar explained.

Modern scientists say dinosaurs dominated the earth for 165 million years and were wiped out by a planet-wide climate change or the effects of a catastrophe such as an asteroid smashing into the planet.

For Christians to accept an old-earth theory does not require accepting the theory that humans evolved from apes, another Baptist scholar explained. While some old-earth advocates do embrace the whole concept of evolution, others do not, he said.

"There are old-earth advocates who are non-evolutionists, sometimes called progressive creationists," he said. "There are others who are theistic evolutionists, who accept an old earth and macro-evolution as the means by which God created."

House keeps ban on paying for abortions

WASHINGTON—The controversial Hyde Amendment which bans federal funding of abortions for poor women was upheld by the U.S. House of Representatives June 30.

The 16-year-old ban, which had been under attack by pro-abortion groups and the White House, was retained by a 255-178 vote.

The amendment to a \$216 billion appropriations bill still could be deleted or changed by the Senate, which must consider the legislation next. Any differences between the House version of the bill and the Senate version must be worked out by a joint committee.

Rep. William Natcher, a member of First Baptist Church in Bowling Green, was a key player in the heated debate in the House. Natcher serves as chairman of the appropriations subcommittee where the amendment originated.

Natcher told the Louisville Courier-Journal he was determined "to maintain the position of the House" in the eventual conference committee with the Senate.

The amendment is named for Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill., who first offered the ban and who led the effort to keep the ban in place this year.

The Hyde Amendment is intended to prohibit Medicaid paying for abortions except when necessary to save the life of the mother or when the pregnancy was the result of rape or incest.

Some anti-abortion forces predicted the House vote on this issue foreshadows a tough road ahead for the Freedom of Choice Act, pending legislation that would mandate that states not restrict access to abortion.

However, others who support the Freedom of Choice Act said the vote on the Hyde Amendment may not be a true test because of the parliamentary maneuvering that surrounded its passage.

Clinic access bill passes committee

WASHINGTON (ABP)—A bill designed to combat escalating violence and vandalism at abortion clinics is headed to the Senate floor after receiving a bipartisan endorsement from the Labor and Human Resources Committee June 23.

After rejecting a series of amendments pushed by Republican senators who want the bill to include language protecting the free-speech rights of demonstrators, the panel voted 13-4 in favor of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1993 (S. 636).

Three of the panel's seven Republican members—Nancy Kassebaum of Kansas, James Jeffords of Vermont and David Durenburger of Minnesota—voted with the committee's 10 Democrats in favor of the bill.

The bill would create federal criminal and civil penalties for threatening or using force or physical obstruction to intentionally injure, intimidate or interfere with people seeking to obtain or provide abortion-related services. The penalties also would apply to the destruction of property at abortion-related facilities.

The bill would allow private parties, the U.S. attorney general or state attorneys general to seek relief by court injunction.

The push for the legislation intensified when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in January that an 1887 civil-rights law could not be used to bar abortion-clinic blockades, and after the slaying of clinic physician David Gunn in Florida two months later.

Sens. Dan Coats of Indiana and Orrin Hatch of Utah said changes already proposed by chief sponsor Sen.

Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., answered some, but not all, of their concerns.

In his revised bill, Kennedy replaced the term "abortion services" with "abortion-related services" to cover facilities providing both pregnancy care and pregnancy termination. Abortion opponents say violence is escalating at clinics that counsel against abortion, not just abortion clinics.

Coats said the bill should include free-speech protection. "We ought to protect peaceful, lawful protest for any reason," he said.

Kennedy responded that free-speech rights already are protected by the First Amendment and that lawful demonstrations would not be affected by the bill.

"This is not about free speech," Kennedy said. "This is about violence and intimidation and threats and force."

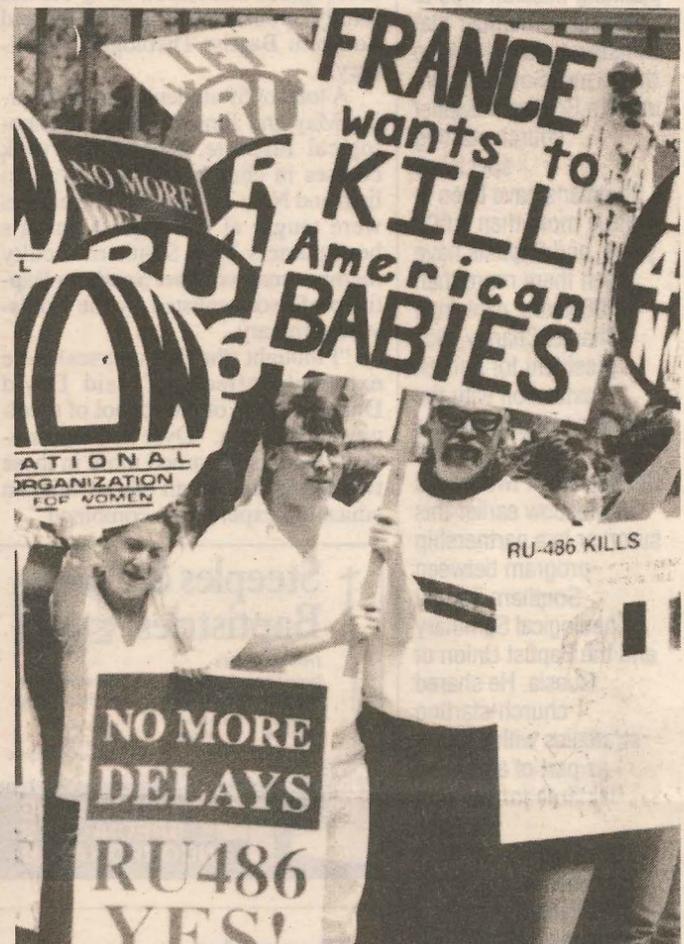
Kassebaum told Kennedy she agrees with the purpose of the bill but thinks its protection should extend beyond abortion clinics. She plans to introduce a bill to ensure that violence—whether at an abortion clinic or other location—designed to prevent people from engaging in legal commercial activities would be treated the same under federal laws.

"The freedom of speech guaranteed by the Constitution does not include bombings, vandalism, assault, arson, destruction of property and physically preventing people from entering medical clinics," Kassebaum said.

A measure similar to Kennedy's bill is pending in the U.S. House of

Representatives where Judiciary Committee action is expected this summer.

That bill is H.R. 796, sponsored by Reps. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y., and Constance Morella, R-Md.



STREET SIGNS Members of the Feminist Majority Foundation and the Christian Defense Coalition express opposing views on importation of the French abortion pill RU-486 outside the French Embassy in Washington June 18. (RNS photo)

HMB makes abortion alternatives video

ATLANTA (BP)—Actress Lisa Whelchel believes a video she narrates for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board offers women facing crisis pregnancies the information they need to consider all their options.

"It is a great gift to a woman who at that time in her life wouldn't consider anything a gift," said Whelchel, who for nine years starred as Blair on the television series "Facts of Life."

Designed for use in crisis pregnancy centers, "The Heart of the Matter" explains fetus development, risks associated with abortion and pregnancy options.

"I feel that it offered a realistic picture of what abortion really is, and yet it's nothing heavy-handed at all," said Whelchel, the mother of three.

Sylvia Boothe, coordinator for the HMB's Alternatives to Abortion ministries, said the video attempts to explain the details of abortion as well as inform women of other options. "Most women are not given all the information they need before an abortion," she said.

The video shows ultra-sound pictures of a developing baby, including movement and a beating heart. It also includes descriptions of abortions, narrated by a former abortion provider.

"Abortion is surgery," Carol Everett says in the video. "Unlike all other surgical procedures, in abortion the doctor is not required to provide you with any information about the abortion procedure, about immediate risk

or long-term effects."

The video describes psychological trauma sometimes associated with abortion, and it also explores options for keeping the child and for adoption.

"I think it's a wonderful message covering any questions a young woman would have," Whelchel said. "It's just my great hope that it will get into thousands and thousands of crisis pregnancy centers."

Southern Baptists operate about 100 crisis pregnancy centers, Boothe estimated, adding that the video is suitable for other audiences.

The 24-minute video costs \$9.50 plus handling. For information about the video, call Boothe at (800) 962-0851. Orders for the video may be directed to (800) 634-2462.

Senate confirms Flynn as next U.S. ambassador to Vatican

By Pam Parry
Baptist Joint Committee

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The Senate has confirmed Boston Mayor Raymond Flynn as the next U.S. ambassador to the Vatican.

Flynn will be the third person to fill the post since 1984 after Congress repealed a ban on U.S.-Vatican ties.

Flynn's nomination by President Bill Clinton has been criticized by opponents of formal ties between the United States and the Roman Catholic Church.

One Baptist senator, Jesse Helms, R-N.C., spoke against the post but not against the nominee himself.

"I judge him to be an intelligent and personable man," Helms said of Flynn. "Just the same, I remain persuaded that the United States has no business sending an ambassador to any religious entity, be it Baptist or Methodist or, as is the case here, the seat of the Catholic Church."

Helms also put in the Congressional Record a resolution opposing diplomatic ties with the Vatican approved by the Southern Baptist Con-

vention this summer.

The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission took an early stand against Clinton's Vatican appointment in a December letter to the president-elect. "It's disappointing that a Southern Baptist president has just entrenched for the foreseeable future a policy which violates church-state separation," said James Smith, CLC director of government relations, after Flynn's confirmation.

Smith said more could have been done to stop Flynn's appointment if the "religious left," traditional propo-

nents of church-state separation, had vigorously opposed Flynn's nomination.

The Baptist Joint Committee also denounced the Flynn confirmation.

"This action confers special privileges on and grants special access to one particular denomination," said Oliver Thomas, BJC general counsel.

Flynn said he intends to advance human rights, democracy and social justice as ambassador to the Holy See: "Government is society's tool for balancing the scales of social and economic justice."

Russian center begins with Southern Seminary's help

Remember Christianity not new to Russia

ATLANTA (BP)—When planning mission trips to Russia, remember that Christianity is not new to the former Soviet Union, urges a Southern Baptist church starting specialist. Christians have been in Russia more than 1,000 years, and Baptists have been there more than 100 years, explained Charles Chaney, vice president for church extension with the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Chaney spent two weeks in Moscow earlier this summer in a partnership program between Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and the Baptist Union of Russia. He shared church-starting strategies with pastors as part of a training institute for Russian Baptists. Ten of his 50 students had been in prison for their faith during past oppression from the state church or the communist regime, Chaney said. All of his students were bivocational church leaders who spent their vacation time at the training institute. "Who am I to talk to them about dedication to Christ, commitment or willingness to go the second mile?" he asked. Christians traveling to the former Soviet Union—including Kentuckians embarking on a new partnership venture with Russian Baptists—need to realize the commitment level of Russian Christians may be considerably above that of American Christians, he said. Russian Christians may resist foreigners promoting evangelism without discipleship, he added. So American Christians need to be as helpful in follow-up as they are in evangelism, Chaney said.

By Pat Cole
Southern Seminary

LOUISVILLE (BP)—The Evangelical Baptist Union of Russia recently began its first endeavor into theological education at a school jointly sponsored by the union and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

A total of 59 students enrolled during May and June at Moscow Theological Institute, where they took courses in church planting, evangelism and New Testament. The classes were taught at the Baptist union's headquarters by a Southern faculty member and two other Southern Baptist professors enlisted by the Louisville seminary.

"I thought (the first courses) were extremely effective," said David Dockery, dean of the school of theology at Southern. "Over and over students said they learned more in these two weeks than in all other Christian education experiences combined."

Dockery's faculty colleagues in Moscow were Charles Chaney, vice president for extension at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, and Ron Johnson, director of the evangelism department of the Georgia Baptist Convention.

"I've never been in a place where people were more eager to hear the word of God," said Dockery, who taught New Testament in Moscow. Chaney and Johnson taught courses in church planting and evangelism.

The Moscow school will offer two weeks of intensive training twice a year. Those who complete all courses offered over a three-year period will receive a certificate from Southern Seminary. Most classes will be taught by Southern Seminary faculty members or other professors recruited by the seminary.

Students in the school's first courses ranged in age from 19 to 45 and included professional people, tradesmen and factory workers, said Dockery. While most students had been converted since Perestroika in 1987, some had suffered severe persecution for their faith prior to the loosening of restrictions on religious practice, Dockery said.

Much of the spiritual fervor that initially swept the nation after the collapse of communism is still alive, Dockery said, adding, however, that churches are in desperate need of trained leadership to sustain new believers.

"There's still an openness to the

gospel, but the novelty of Christianity is wearing off," he said. "The photo sessions are over and it's time for education, training and hard work to help churches grow."

The devotion of the Russian students was evident both inside and outside the classroom, Dockery said, noting that after class students and professors went into the Moscow streets to share the gospel.

Dockery stressed that the two weeks in Moscow helped expand his own understanding of the Christian faith. "I taught them some things about the New Testament, but they taught me some things about faith and discipleship," he said.

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Memories

As I write this article we have just completed a special weekend at Glen Dale.

Saturday night we had a dinner to honor C. Ford Deusner and to establish the C. Ford Deusner award which will be given annually to a special friend of Glen Dale.

Sunday was the annual homecoming under the big trees beside the railroad tracks at Glen Dale. I love to visit with the alumni for they have special memories of people and the home.

Otis Brown of Crown Point, Indiana was at Glen Dale in the late 30s and early 40s. His favorite memory was of his conversion. He was always getting into trouble, and one day was caught breaking into the food storage area.

The superintendent sat down with him on the steps and tears came to both of their eyes. He asked Otis if he could lead him to Christ. Otis said "yes" thinking it was a good way to get out of punishment. But his conversion was genuine and it changed his life. Today, Otis is very involved in his church and so is his family. He thanks God for a person who cared enough to share.

Mabel Tyman Reed and Tom Taylor both live in San Diego. They were there when "Daddy" Moore was superintendent in the 20s and early 30s.

Mrs. Reed told me how much she thought of "Daddy" Moore and of Mrs. Larrimore, who was the matron in her dorm. Tom remembered the time "Daddy" Moore brought his big radio out on the porch so the boys could listen to the Gene Tunney fight in 1927.

This was Ralph McConnell's first time back since he left the position of superintendent back in the mid 70s. It was a special day for "Bro. Mac" and even more so for the young people whose lives he touched there.

Ralph recently retired as the director of missions for the Christian County Association.

Glen Dale can be characterized in many ways. For the hundreds of people who returned for homecoming, it is quite special.

Curtis Mooney is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243.

Paid Column

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

The Good Samaritan

Recently, I participated in a CPR class at Baptist Regional Medical Center in Corbin. During the class I was reminded of the Good Samaritan law. The law is to protect people who in good faith stop to help someone.

The term "Good Samaritan" of course comes from the story Jesus told when asked, "Who is my neighbor?" Jesus told the story of a man who was robbed, beaten and left for dead. Several people passed by, but they crossed to the other side of the road to avoid the injured man. Then a despised Samaritan walked by, and he stopped to help. He cared for the man and took him to an inn to recover. The answer to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" was obvious—it was the Samaritan.

Hospitals are filled with people who could be called "Good Samaritans." They work in the hospital primarily out of a desire to help people. We said good-bye to one such person at Baptist Regional recently.

Dorothy Walker was a dear, sweet lady who worked as a volunteer. She logged 5636 volunteer hours from April 1986 to May 1993. She worked many days even though she was not feeling well. Dorothy always had a smile and a good word to say. She worked at

the surgery information desk and always gave a sympathetic ear to those who were anxious about news from their loved one.

She taught this writer that we should not be too busy to stop and say hello. Too often we become like the priest and the Levite and forget there are people all around that need someone to care. Dorothy demonstrated daily that she cared, both to people she knew and those she did not.

Dorothy set an example for us. Her actions came from a sense of love and commitment. We would do well to follow her example. We can do that in many ways: working in churches, volunteering in hospitals and nursing homes, giving to the Foundation and many other ways.

We will miss Dorothy, and we will remember her as one who was dedicated to helping people. She indeed was a neighbor to many. Who will be your neighbor?

Chaplain Wayne Sibley is director of pastoral care at Baptist Regional Medical Center. Comments concerning this article, Baptist Healthcare System or Baptist Healthcare Foundation should be directed to Charles W. Cox Jr., president of Baptist Healthcare Foundation, Corporate Complex, 4007 Kresge Way, Louisville, Ky. 40207 (502) 896-5003.

Paid Column

PEOPLE

Bulgarian evangelicals unite against hate campaign

By Marty Croll
SBC Foreign Mission Board

SOFIA, Bulgaria (BP)—Evangelicals in Bulgaria are joining forces to protect themselves from a media hate campaign they claim has been stirred up by the Orthodox Church and left-over communists.

Forming an alliance May 10, they adopted a constitution and drafted a

proposed law for religious liberty. As their first president they elected Teodor Angelov, president of the Baptist Union of Bulgaria.

Angelov and other leaders offered their draft law in meetings with the nation's religious affairs chief and with an adviser on religion to President Zhelyu Zhelev. They also will present it to Parliament.

The group's organizational meet-

ing in Sofia, the capital, included about 100 representatives of Baptist, Methodist, Church of God, Pentecostal and Congregational churches. They named their group United Evangelical Churches in Bulgaria.

Cults such as Hare Krishna and the Mormons have clouded Eastern Europe's religious landscape since the region cast off communism. The Bulgarian media have decried their influence and lumped evangelicals with them, calling them all sects.

"The awful calamity is that along with many of these sects and behind the cover of faith come drugs, organized crime, terrorist groups and dirty money laundering," one newspaper article stated. "This is why the concern for the state's own survival is coming to the fore here."

In another article, the author proposes allowing only the Bulgarian Orthodox, Muslim, Catholic, Armenian and Jewish faiths to function.

When Southern Baptist representatives Bill and June Wardlaw sought their yearly visa renewals in Bulgaria in May, the passport bureau director told them if it was up to him he would give them one more month and then send them home for good, Wardlaw said. They were able to secure visas from a local office nearer Kazanluk, the central Bulgarian town where they moved in April.

"People think the evangelicals are doing all kinds of weird things behind closed doors," Wardlaw said. One article he heard was printed in the Black Sea town of Varna claimed evangelical pastors eat their children for breakfast. In a city on the Romanian border, an Orthodox priest told young people it's OK to beat up on evangelical pastors, he added.

The anti-evangelical campaign is beginning to affect day-to-day relationships.

One woman who plays host to a congregation in her home was told by a neighbor that if she didn't stop the worship services, the neighbor's husband would use police connections to close them down.

"Pray for religious freedom in Bulgaria," Wardlaw said. "Right now it's kind of hanging in the balance."

WORLD VIEW

■ **A bipartisan initiative** which addresses global poverty through a redirected U.S. foreign aid program was introduced in Congress recently. The Many Neighbors, One Earth Resolution—supported by Bread for the World—seeks to make the primary goal of U.S. foreign aid to foster sustainable development which reduces hunger and poverty. The proposal calls for shifting money from lower-priority security and economic aid programs to programs which meet humanitarian needs.

■ **Boris Yeltsin**, president of Russia, said April 21 that the Russian government accepts full blame for abusing the Christian church during the communist years and has apologized for it.

■ **The refugee population** worldwide increased by 1 million people in 1992, according to the 1993 World Refugee Survey. The survey says the world refugee total is 17.5 million. This highlights the tremendous opportunity Southern Baptists have to help resettle refugees in the United States, said Bill Fulkerson, director of refugee resettlement for the Home Mission Board. For information on refugee resettlement ministries, contact Fulkerson at (404) 898-7395.

■ **The Southern Baptist nursing school** in Gaza will continue operation as a United Nations facility under a recently signed lease agreement. After more than 40 years of ministry there, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board gave up operation of the training school due to difficulties in keeping staff there.

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• Thursday, July 15, 7 p.m. (CST)	Second Baptist Church Hopkinsville, Kentucky
• Friday, July 16, 7 p.m. (CST)	Lone Oak Baptist Church Paducah, Kentucky
• Sunday, July 18, 11 a.m. (CST)	Buena Vista Baptist Church Owensboro, Kentucky

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PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

The rate of Kentuckians dying of cancer has increased steadily from 1955 through 1991. Kentucky's cancer death rate in 1955 was 126 per 100,000 citizens. By 1991, that rate had grown to 232 deaths per 100,000 people. Source: Cabinet for Human Resources

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **CLARKSVILLE, Tenn.**—Marvin E. Hines Sr., Kentucky pastor for several years, died recently. He retired December 1985 after 50 years of ministry. Hines is survived by his wife, Ruth.

■ **COVINGTON**—David Moeller, pastor of Covington First Church, will retire July 25.

■ **FRANKFORT**—Bellepoint Church called John Michael Nichols as minister of music.

■ **LEWISPORT**—Bob and Marjorie Keenan of Lewisport Church have been appointed by Mission Service Corps as youth counselors to summer mission work at Camp Joy, 5303 Baptist Camp Rd., Apopka, Fla. 32712.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Ninth & O Church called John Mark Toby as associate pastor. He previously served as interim associate pastor and principal of Ninth & O Academy.

■ **MURRAY**—Locust Grove Church called Buron Richerson as interim pastor.

■ **PARIS**—Silas Church called Curtis Coots of Georgetown as pastor.

■ **RICHMOND**—Rosedale Church will celebrate its 50th anniversary July 25. Founding pastor Eldred Taylor will speak at the morning service. A meal will be served at noon, and a tent service is scheduled for 1 p.m. Friends and former members are invited.

MISSIONARY UPDATE

■ **Bonnie Brown**, Kentucky native and missionary to Nigeria, has returned to the field at Baptist Mission, P.O. Box 197, Port Harcourt, Nigeria.

■ **Bob Compton**, a 24-year veteran of foreign missions, died June 22. He served 18 years in theological education in Colombia and Costa Rica. Compton was a graduate of Southern Seminary and was previously pastor of churches in Kentucky.



CHAPLAIN ENDORSED Dan Clevenger, shown here with his wife, Barbara, was endorsed by the Southern Baptist Chaplains Commission in a May 23 service in Atlanta. Clevenger serves as a healthcare chaplain in Corbin. (HMB photo)

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED: Full-time, mission-minded minister of youth and education, focusing on youth evangelism and discipleship. Church located in small town in western Kentucky coal field region. Housing projects provide real mission field. Send resumé to First Baptist Church, 214 South Broadway, Providence, KY 42450, or call Pastor Danny Davis, (502) 667-2212 or 5431.

WANTED: Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to Boone's Creek Baptist Church, 197 Cleveland Road, Lexington, KY 40509.

FOR SALE: Kimball Organ, church type, 5 years old, double keyboards, 13-note pedals, computer by Eelka, EP-13 series, walnut finish, half price. Kimball organ, P.O. Box 724, Moniticcello, KY 42633. (606) 348-8620.

LOOKING: Part-time minister of music. We also are seeking a full-time minister of youth and education. The church has a resident membership of approximately 500 and an average attendance of approximately 210. Send resumé and referrals to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 200 North Morgan Street, Morganfield, KY 42437. (502) 389-1042.

AVAILABLE: 2-Bedroom, 2-bath condo for vacation rental, Sanibel Island, Florida. Large pool, tennis courts, sauna, bikes, screened porch. Best beach on the island. Call Pat Owen (502) 895-8752.

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POSITION: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary will make a faculty appointment during the academic year for the following position: Christian Missions—associate or full professor, tenurable or tenured position; MDiv or equivalent, PhD or DMiss, 5 years experience in an overseas setting essential. Nominations and applications are invited by Sept. 15, 1993. All faculty must be active members of a Baptist congregation and emphasize a conservative-evangelical theology. Send biographical information to: Search Committee Dean, Office of the Provost, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280.

FOR RENT: Furnished duplex, Crescent Avenue, Louisville, owner's downstairs unit—very nice. 2 bedrooms, 1 bath, living room, dining room, kitchen, screened porch, hardwood floors, appliances, washer/dryer, water, TV cable, yard maintenance furnished, off-street parking. \$650/mo. + LG&E, security deposit, references. (502) 897-6132.

WANTED: Accepting resúmes for a full-time pastor. First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 321, West Liberty, KY 41472.

Miles of mountain hiking to Turkey Foot

Have you ever made a 32-mile hike with a 15- to 30-pound pack? Several OBI staff and 21 of our boys have just done so. For all involved it was an experience that will be remembered forever.

It was testing, tiring, a little painful and exhilarating. They had a lot of fun and are glad they did it. Boys' Dean Bud Underwood and wife, Kay, our admissions director, devoted many hours to planning, preparation and execution. Everything went off like clockwork.

On Monday they met to pack at 6:30 a.m. and went on one of our school buses to Lomero on the Laurel County line, where they began their hike on a trail laid out by the U.S. Forest Service. In each of their packs were changes of socks, an extra pair of shoes, swim trunks, two quarts of water, snacks of cookies and granola bars.

They walked 50 minutes and rested 10. At noon they swam for 25 minutes, then lunched on Vienna sausage, pork and beans, a cup of fruit cocktail and vanilla pudding.

That evening, having walked 10 miles, they camped at S-Tree, which has neither electricity or water. Mrs. Underwood and her daughter-in-law, OBI teacher Lori, met them with a van-load of their sleeping bags, fresh water and a change of clothing. Also they delivered fried chicken from the OBI kitchen, and heated corn and green beans over a fire. By 9:30, with campfires built, all settled down to sleep while the women returned to the campus.

Tuesday morning the Underwood women, with OBI automotive repair and welding teacher Harold Underwood, left the campus at 5:30 with fresh water and the ingredients for breakfast. Dozens of eggs were scrambled over an open fire, along with pounds of bacon and sausage. Many loaves of bread were toasted in skillets.

Dirty clothes and bedrolls were put in the van as the support group returned to campus, and the hikers were off to walk 14 miles the second day.

Dean of Students Erma Smith, husband John, our drafting teacher, their youngest son, '82 OBI graduate Chuck, and myself joined the three support persons in taking a fresh change of clothing, bedrolls and the ingredients for supper and met at the prearranged campsite called Turkey Foot.

Our hikers beat us there, and each had bathed in cold, rushing river water near their four campsites. They had wood fires going at each one.

Soon hamburgers were being fried along with skillets full of raw onions. These, along with fresh tomatoes and pickles, made for wonderful hamburgers and cheeseburgers. Baked beans and potato salad satiated even the hungriest. The 20th birthday of one of our seniors, and the 56th birthday of John Smith, who had served at OBI 18 years, were celebrated with homemade chocolate cake.

All the support group left near dark except myself. I settled down on a rubber mat with a pillow and cover. Soon everyone was sound asleep including

Mr. Underwood's dog, Sunshine, who walked all 32 miles and had his own little sleeping pallet. Not having hiked all those miles, my sleep came later. It was beautiful looking up at the stars, a very bright moon, surrounded by trees 80 to 100 feet tall. It was delightfully cool and only the snap and crackle of the fire disturbed the silence.

Wednesday breakfast ingredients arrived from campus, campfires were doused, and the fellows began their eight miles of hiking while I returned with the sleeping bags to campus.

Barkley Moore is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

ONEIDA JOURNAL



Barkley Moore

Paid Column

Climb every mountain

Dan and Jennifer Brinker enjoy backpacking, rock climbing and rappelling. Following the Lord has brought them to some beautiful trails in Pine Mountain. The Brinkers are the eighth couple from Kento-Boo Baptist Church, Florence, to study at Clear Creek. Pastor Stan Cole is one of our best recruiters!

The Brinkers married Nov. 24, 1990. "I was searching for answers and we attended Kento-Boo. I thought baptism as a child saved me. We checked a visitor's card requesting a home visit, and I accepted the Lord during the pastor's call on Oct. 13, 1991," Dan stated. They made the decision for ministry the following year.

Entering Clear Creek in the January term sometimes results in difficulty finding work. With a year of electrical school, nearly two years of technical training, and experience as an installer of home heating and air conditioning, Dan met our need exactly. The new Hemlock Heights student housing area had six apartments waiting for units. Since January, Dan has completed those six and will soon begin installation of six more. A Holly Hill cottage also has received a heating system. Northern Kentucky friends helped purchase materials.

The unexpected mid-year trans-

fer of another student left an insurance office vacancy for Jennifer. She recently completed lifeguard certification in our family life center. As a lifeguard on the campus work program she also will be able to attend classes. She earlier attended Cincinnati Art Academy. Dan entered Clear Creek with hesitation because he had no college experience, but now states "I love the classes and the wonderful profes-

sors." They are excited about youth leadership in Southside Church, Middlesboro. Attendance has doubled.

In June Dan brought his 14-year-old twin brothers for a campus visit. The three-hour drive provided an opportunity to talk about the Lord. "They began to ask questions and we shared a lot. At home we looked at the Scriptures.

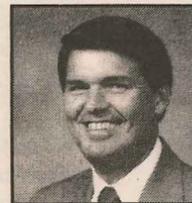
They were amazed all that was in the Bible. Both trusted the Lord and were so excited," Dan said.

With work and studies, Dan and Jennifer are not climbing as much. They are discovering spiritual heights, and their future ministry will include other experiences as thrilling as the salvation of his brothers.

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, Ky. 40977

Paid Column

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

Jewish rabbis say Pepsi isn't 'the right one'

JERUSALEM (EP)—Hopes that a conservative Jewish court would say "Uh-huh" to Pepsi-Cola were dashed when the court ruled that the popular soft drink is not kosher.

The court ruled that PepsiCo's use of scantily clad women in advertising and recent sponsorship of a concert by the rock group Guns N' Roses in Tel Aviv on the Sabbath mean that it wasn't "the right one baby."

It also was rumored that Pepsi would sponsor a Michael Jackson concert on Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish new year and high holy day.

On June 2, religious newspapers carried notices that Pepsi's "kashrut" licenses, which designates a product to be kosher, had been revoked by Jerusalem's ultra-orthodox rabbinates.

A product may be deemed non-kosher if it is forbidden by Jewish law or if its preparation or marketing violate Jewish laws.

Don't expect a rush to the competition, though. The rulings of the court that banned Pepsi are heeded only by Israel's ultra-orthodox minority.

Pepsi still holds the "kashrut" certificate issued by Jerusalem's official rabbinates—which is more tolerant—and observant Jews may still buy it.

Threat to Christians increases in Iran

By Mike Creswell
SBC Foreign Mission Board

BRUSSELS, Belgium (BP)—Muslims in Iran who openly declare Christianity are more likely to be executed following a change in government policy there.

Under a new policy, converts to Christianity are being charged with "apostasy" or "blaspheming the Prophet Muhammad," reported Iranian Christians living outside Iran. Under Islamic law, called "sharia," a judge is required to issue a death sentence for these offenses.

Christians inside the country fear the policy change will make evangelistic outreach even more difficult. Executions for general offenses such as drug trafficking are common in Iran, according to press reports, but executions of Christians have not

been routinely carried out by the government. Apostasy, however, is seen as a serious offense.

For example, apostasy was the charge levied against the writer Salman Rushdie for his book, "The Satanic Verses," which Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini deemed blasphemous against Islam. The writer, a British citizen, has been forced to live in hiding since then.

Muslims who become Christians in Iran at times have faced intense persecution, prison sentences or executions by government leaders who see themselves as agents of Allah. Mehdi Dibaj, a Christian evangelist who helped translate the New Testament into Farsi, has been imprisoned for eight years, for example. He spent two of the eight years in solitary confinement in a 3-by-3-foot cell with no light.

Recently, Iranian Christians said, a church member was ordered to appear in court and report on his pastor's sermons. When he refused, he was accused of the crime of "apostasy," or abandoning Islam, and condemned to death.

A noose was placed around the man's neck and his family was marched in before him. Officials told him to repudiate Christianity and be loyal to Islam or they would hang his family after him. He broke under the pressure and said he would give up Christianity.

Islam is the state religion of Iran, but the country officially recognizes Judaism, Christianity and Zoroastrianism. Although Christian workers say Iran treats the Christian community less oppressively than some other Muslim states, Iran's record is hardly commendable.

Locks hold as missionaries elude thieves

By Craig Bird
SBC Foreign Mission Board

LUANDA, Angola (BP)—Southern Baptist missionaries Curtis and Betty Dixon spent five hours on the floor June 7 while bandits tried to shoot the locks off their home in Angola and looted the house next door.

The Dixons awakened around midnight when the bandits began firing. Four bullets penetrated the front door of the house and the interior walls, exiting through the kitchen door. But the locks held. The houses are prefabricated aluminum structures.

The missionary couple spent the remainder of the night on the floor of their bedroom listening to the gang looting an adjacent mission residence.

That house was not occupied since fellow missionaries Don and Carol Minshew are on temporary assignment in Kenya.

Unable to shoot their way in, the gang discovered a wall in the Minshew house that had been damaged by a hand grenade Dec. 31 and pried the hole open enough to get inside. Then they passed the television, electric transformers, clothes and jewelry out the opening.

Two attempted robberies of the compound also occurred the week before. The first time an effort to shoot the lock off the compound gate failed. The next time a gang climbed over the wall but was unable to get into the houses. The Dixons were home on both occasions.

The Dixons now have moved

across Luanda, Angola's capital, to stay with Assembly of God missionary friends.

The rekindling of the 30-year-old Angolan civil war immediately after multi-party elections has left Luanda in chaos and Southern Baptist mission work in disarray. Missionaries have little hope stability will return soon. The Dixons, who have evacuated the country several times before, intend to remain if at all possible.

Missionary Mark Hatfield, currently living in Zimbabwe, planned to fly into Luanda June 12 to assess the situation. The last word he had was that the house where he and his wife, Susan, lived in Huambo had not been damaged or looted. But what has happened in the intervening months is unknown.

FMB shifts gears in Middle East

LARNACA, Cyprus (BP)—In a major policy change, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board will phase out support for the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary in Lebanon and instead set up a decentralized education program throughout the Middle East.

The change will leave the seminary in Beirut in the hands of Middle Eastern Baptists under a new 11-member board of trustees made up of Baptists from Lebanon, Jordan and Syria.

The current board has half FMB personnel and half Middle Eastern Baptists.

Middle Eastern Baptists support the plan, but some are concerned about raising \$100,000 a year to operate the school as FMB support phases out over the next three years.

This year the seminary will get \$6,000 from World Vision, an interdenominational missions group. Leaders say they must get support from many sources to keep the school open.

"Really, we're afraid" of the responsibility, said Nabih Haddad, general secretary of the Lebanese Baptist Convention, which has 25 congregations with about 1,000 members. He is a member of the seminary's new

board of directors.

But the seminary's board, even though it hasn't taken control yet, is "enthusiastic and working hard," said FMB representative Emmett Barnes, and is grappling with obtaining a new constitution, personnel and finances.

The Arab seminary has been the cornerstone in training Baptist leaders in the Middle East since its establishment in 1960.

Lebanon then was one of the more open countries in the region and students from most countries could attend freely.

Enrollment during the school's first decade averaged 12 to 15 students, reflecting the low number of Baptists in the Middle East.

But 16 years of civil war in Lebanon kept out many potential students, and artillery shells hit the school complex several times.

Now that fighting has stopped, enrollment climbed this year to 27 students from Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Sudan and Iraq.

The school offers a three-year diploma program and a two-year, less-intensive program.

A bachelor of theology degree also was offered to students who had at least one year of university-level education.

WORLD VIEW

■ **Bible societies** around the world distributed more than 600 million Scriptures last year, according to a report from the United Bible Societies.

■ **In a controversial ruling May 28**, Germany's Constitutional Court overturned a year-old liberal abortion law and replaced it with a set of tougher restrictions. By a 6-2 vote, the court invalidated legislation that had legalized elective abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy if the expectant mother had agreed first to consult an approved family-support organization.

■ **China's crackdown** on underground Christian churches continues into its fifth year and is not easing, according to a new report by the Puebla Institute, a Catholic human rights group. Reports collected by Puebla in recent months indicate that as many as 104 Chinese religious leaders are currently imprisoned, detained or restricted by the government.

■ **British and Portuguese Baptists** have agreed for British Baptists to send missionaries to Portugal, working cooperatively with the Portuguese Baptist Convention.

■ **For the first time** in half a century, the number of American missionaries abroad has decreased, falling from 50,500 in 1988 to 41,142 in 1992, according to a report of the Missions and Advanced Research Communication Center.

■ **A recent evangelism effort** in Tanzania's Kyela District resulted in 4,121 people professing faith in Jesus Christ and 411 rededicating their lives to him. Seven volunteers joined Tanzania Baptists and Southern Baptist missionaries to conduct the 15-day effort.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIND An archaeologist clearing away 14 centuries of dust and destruction has raised an ornate Byzantine church from the ruins of Petra, an ancient pagan city located in modern Jordan. The church, gleaming with whimsical stone and glass mosaics, is the first Byzantine structure unearthed in the fabled Nabatean city carved from solid rock centuries before Christ was born. (RNS photo)

**That's funny,
it doesn't
look like a
newspaper.**



**But it is
for Baptists who
can't see this page.**

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