

FOR THE RECORD

Lottie up
Gifts to the 1993 Lottie Moon Christmas offering for foreign missions set a new record and were up 2.37 percent over the previous year, but total gifts still fell short of the \$85 million goal.
See page 2.

Media criticized
SBC Life, the official "good news" publication of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, has published an article strongly critical of how state Baptist newspapers and other Christian media reported the firing of Russell Dilday as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.
See page 2.

Art imitates faith
Kentucky artist Gayle Williamson weaves themes of spirituality, joy and sorrow into her fiber art.
See page 3.

Editorial
Kentucky Baptist churches ought to provide practical help for tobacco farmers as well as lung-cancer victims.
See page 5.

Free speech case
The U.S. Supreme Court last week declined to hear a Kentucky case regarding the denial of exhibit space to an anti-abortion group at a Frankfort festival.
See page 6.

Movement aims to 'redraw marriage map'

By Marv Knox
Editor

LOUISVILLE—Alarmed by the rapid advance of divorce across the national landscape, a handful of Kentucky Christians have united to help "redraw the marriage and divorce map in America."

They're pioneers in a movement called Marriage Savers. They're crossing denominational lines to fight divorce in Louisville. And they think others should join the cause.

The theory behind Marriage Savers is straightforward: If churches would do more to strengthen and nurture the marriages they bless, then the national divorce rate—which reportedly equals half the number of marriages that take place in any given year—would plummet. Since about 75 percent of America's first marriages are conducted in churches, a growing number of ministers and counselors think the theory is worth testing.

The key strategy of Marriage Savers is adoption of a standardized marriage policy for all or almost all churches in participating communities, explained Michael McManus, a Presbyterian layman and syndicated columnist who developed the Marriage Savers concept.

If churches stick together, they can force a couple in the community who want a church-blessed wedding to take steps to help their marriage succeed, he said.

Requirements for church weddings comprise the most notable feature of community marriage policies. Typical policies spell out the length

of time a couple must wait and the steps they must take before they get married in a participating church.

For example, many community marriage policies require at least a four-month waiting period before a wedding can take place. They also require several premarital counseling sessions, along with a test to determine compatibility for marriage. And they often include

connecting an engaged couple with a "mentor couple," usually laypeople who can interpret the compatibility test, offer practical advice and provide a model of a healthy marriage.

If the marriage policies are successful, they result in a healthy number of broken engagements. Breaking up a doomed engagement is preferable to helping a family pick up the pieces of a failed marriage, McManus theorized.

But Marriage Savers' community marriage policies cover more than engagements and weddings, he said. They often provide preparation for marriage that begins with teaching children and youth appropriate marital attitudes. They also allocate resources for strengthening existing marriages—such as providing continued relationships to mentor couples, pastoral leadership regarding the importance of marriage, marriage enrichment conferences and intensive

help for troubled marriages.

Some couples who want to get married in a church might find the community marriage policies a bit restrictive. And their supporters might claim such a policy could push couples to civil marriages.

However, the results justify that risk, McManus countered. Based on early results, he predicted the divorce rate of couples married in Marriage Savers churches will fall drastically. "We can push the divorce rate to 10 percent or below in any church."

Marriage savers got started in Modesto, Calif., in 1986, when 95 pastors from across the city's theological spectrum agreed to participate. The movement has enjoyed a growth spurt to 24 communities since last year's publication of McManus' book, "Marriage Savers" and his continent-crossing trips to promote community participation. It's expected to boom this summer, with the advent of a Marriage Savers resource collection, produced by McManus, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, the Roman Catholic Church and the American Family Association.

The Sunday School Board helped organize community marriage policies in several Southern cities last fall, and the results were better than expected. *See Movement aims ..., page 8*



Messengers will face election, Dilday firing

By Bob Allen
Associated Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (ABP)—A contested presidential race, reaction to the firing of a seminary president and a likely recommendation that mission gifts from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship be refused by agencies are among issues awaiting messengers at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Orlando, Fla., next week.

The convention, in the Orange County Convention/Civic Center, is the ninth to be held in Florida in the 15 million-member convention's 148-year history and the first in Orlando, the tourist mecca best known for attractions including Sea World and the Walt Disney World Resort.

But at least for three days, June 14-17, business—and not necessarily pleasure—will be the main focus for the convention crowd, which is predicted to exceed 23,000.

Among issues expected to gain attention of messengers are:

■ **Presidential election.** Messengers will elect a successor to SBC President Ed Young, pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston, who is ineligible for another term.

The two announced candidates—Fred Wolfe and Jim Henry—both claim allegiance to the conservative movement which dominates SBC politics.



OPEN ARMS Orlando, Fla., is preparing to greet more than 20,000 Southern Baptists who will descend on the city for the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention June 14-16. Here, a boy feeds birds near Lake Eola, with the Orlando skyline in the distance. More than 2.3 million people live in Orlando—20 times the population when Walt Disney World opened 23 years ago. Transition in the growing city offers a challenge to the Greater Orlando Baptist Association's 123 churches. (BP photo by Laura Sikes)

But Wolfe, and not Henry, has received the endorsement of the inner circle of megachurch pastors who have set the conservative movement's agenda since 1979. Wolfe, pastor of Cottage Hill Baptist Church in Mobile, Ala., is current chairman of the SBC Executive Committee.

Despite Wolfe's position as the favored conservative candidate, observers expect Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, to attract votes for several reasons. He is predicted to draw support from messengers em-

barrassed by the poor track record of many SBC leaders in support for the Cooperative Program, the SBC's unified budgeting plan. Others see a vote for Henry as a protest against the firing of Russell Dilday as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. Still others are expected to vote for Henry because they believe the time has come for leadership positions to be opened to a broader circle than the coalition of theological conservatives. *See SBC messengers ..., page 6*

Our prayers focus inward, scholar says

NASHVILLE (BP)—Most Americans say they regularly send messages to God. But 20th-century prayers and those offered up 2,000 years ago seem to reveal a different agenda, according to a Baptist who has studied biblical prayers.

A recently published Gallup poll found nine out of 10 American adults pray, and 36 percent of those pray daily.

The major difference between modern Americans' prayers and prayers recorded in the Bible is the focus, said T.W. Hunt, prayer specialist with the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. "The biggest single non-biblical aspect of American praying today is lack of intercession or praying for others."

But Americans do model at least one aspect of biblical prayer, Hunt said. "According to the survey, people tend to pray more often for spiritual things (94 percent) than for material things (18 percent). That is also true in the Bible."

Six types of prayers are found in the Bible, Hunt said. These include confession, worship, praise, thanksgiving, personal petition (praying for self) and intercession (praying for others). Hunt has a three-inch thick notebook filled with 35 years of personal documentation on prayers of the Bible.

"A preponderance of prayers in the Bible are either praise or intercession. The majority of teachings in the Bible are for intercession. The Bible tells you to pray for other people, and this is where Americans fail most dismally," he said.

"Incidentally, I found in the Bible that God primarily did his great work through intercessory prayer," he added.

For example, Moses' prayers delivered the children of Israel from Egypt; Esther's prayers delivered her people from the murderous plot of Haman; the prayers of Nehemiah rebuilt the Jerusalem wall; and the prayers of the church of Antioch started a missionary movement.

Hunt said Christians can begin to pray more for others by just making a list of who or what they would like to lift up to God. "Prayer is a discipline like exercise or eating nutritious foods," he said.

But personal petition has a place in the Christian's prayer life, Hunt confessed. "It is a legitimate and valid form of prayer. In fact, some great things came from personal petition too."

"Abraham prayed for a son; Hannah prayed for a baby; Hezekiah prayed to live. And there are 40 petitions by David recorded in the Bible."

BAPTISTS

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Colorado Baptist** Convention officials have announced full repayment of a \$1.5 million debt that has plagued the convention for more than a decade. The debt was caused by failure of the Colorado Baptist Foundation. The financial crisis precipitated numerous cutbacks in state convention services.

■ **Pat Pattillo**, a former vice president at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, has been named executive director of the National Foundation for Youth, a new charitable foundation established by Florida philanthropists Jack and Ruth Eckerd. Since 1986, Pattillo has been vice president for university relations at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

■ **The first class** to complete three full years of study at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Richmond, Va., graduated May 27. By graduating its first three-year class, the seminary qualifies for associate membership in the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada.

Coppenger says media didn't tell all on Dilday firing

By Mark Wingfield
News Director

NASHVILLE—A publication touted to promote what's right with the Southern Baptist Convention devotes two pages of its June issue to what's wrong with Baptist media coverage of Russell Dilday's firing.

The two-page article in SBC Life was written by Mark Coppenger, SBC Executive Committee vice president for public relations and a candidate to replace Dilday as president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Coppenger is editor of SBC Life, which is published by the Executive Committee and mailed to about 70,000 church and denominational leaders every month.

His article also takes to task Associated Baptist Press, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, Baptist Press, Religious News Service, Christianity Today, Southwestern Seminary's faculty and the secular press.

Coppenger reserves his praise for two publications—the Indiana Baptist, published by the state convention which he previously served as executive director and whose editor he hired, and World, an independent

evangelical journal based in Asheville, N.C.

All other publications, Coppenger implies, could not be trusted to tell Baptists the true story about Southwestern. That's why he decided to use SBC Life to tell "the rest of the story," he wrote.

"I know this sort of talk is distressing to some readers. Couldn't we just be nice and positive? Well, folks, it is nice and positive to stand up for conscientious trustees who are being dogpiled by the press. And I can't see where it would be particularly nice to remain silent."

When Coppenger launched SBC Life last summer, he billed it as a "good news" publication to tell all the positive things about the SBC that don't get reported elsewhere.

But Jim Watters, president of the state Baptist papers' professional group, the Southern Baptist Press Association, reacted to Coppenger's departure from this format.

"His long and quarrelsome opinion piece about the Southwestern Seminary fiasco ... comes across as the work of a partisan spin doctor, rather than the effort of a journalist committed to presenting the news about the Good News," said Watters,

editor of the Northwest Baptist Witness.

The June issue's article about Southwestern "was a clearly different approach," Coppenger admitted in a telephone interview, "but I felt that the overwhelming treatment of the Southwestern trustees merited a different approach."

And on another level, the SBC Life column is good news, he said. "The article says to Southern Baptists, 'Good news, your trustees are not as bad as some people are saying.'"

Coppenger's main point in the article is that Southwestern's trustees had good reason to fire Dilday but the press has neglected to report on those good reasons.

Most press accounts have focused on trustee actions such as locking Dilday out of his office and denying a plan to fire him even though trustee leaders had been soliciting votes for several weeks.

"Most (state paper) editors are ready to hammer conservatives but infinitely oblivious to or tolerant of moderate missteps," Coppenger wrote.

If the papers truly were interested in investigative reporting, they would have written about the content of Dil-

day's 1982 book, "The Doctrine of Biblical Authority," Coppenger explained.

Dilday's writings in that book were cited by trustee leaders as a reason for the firing, but only after two weeks of virtual silence on why Dilday had been fired.

For his criticism, Coppenger cites Dilday's 23 references to a 1979 book by Jack Rogers and Don McKim, "The Authority and Interpretation of the Bible."

While other evangelical scholars rebuked Rogers and McKim, Dilday did not, Coppenger wrote.

"Rogers/McKim claimed to demonstrate that biblical inerrancy was not the historic position of the church, and that the concept was bogus," Coppenger said. "In their eagerness to make their point, they omitted and twisted a great many things ... Even the casual reader found Rogers/McKim faulty."

"Dr. Dilday, on the other hand, commended Rogers/McKim to Southern Baptists, warmly citing it 23 times in his second and third chapters. In the later chapters, he worked from their base, doing his best to remove the term 'inerrancy' from our working vocabulary."

North Carolina general board criticizes SBC's direction

ASHEBORO, N.C. (BP)—The way the Southern Baptist Convention has been going in recent years is not the "North Carolina Baptist way," according to a statement adopted by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina's general board May 24-25.

The statement, titled "Cooperation in Autonomy, Reaffirming the North Carolina Baptist Way," challenges the SBC's conservative direction since 1979. It was adopted on a voice vote with only scattered opposition. Several board members spoke strongly against the motion, however.

The statement charges conservative SBC leaders who have come to power since 1979 with adversely affecting the denomination's fellowship and witness. "Every agency/institu-

tion/board of the SBC has suffered some degree of discord and disruption."

The North Carolinians express "keen disapproval" of events such as:

■ The March 9 firing of President Russell Dilday at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

■ The February 1994 "attack upon the Annuity Board and Paul Powell" by the SBC Executive Committee.

■ The "unprecedented assailing" of the Biblical Recorder, the North Carolina state paper, and its editor by the SBC Christian Life Commission in March 1994.

■ The "systematic exclusion of Baptists unwilling to support the redirection of the SBC since 1979."

In the statement, North Carolina

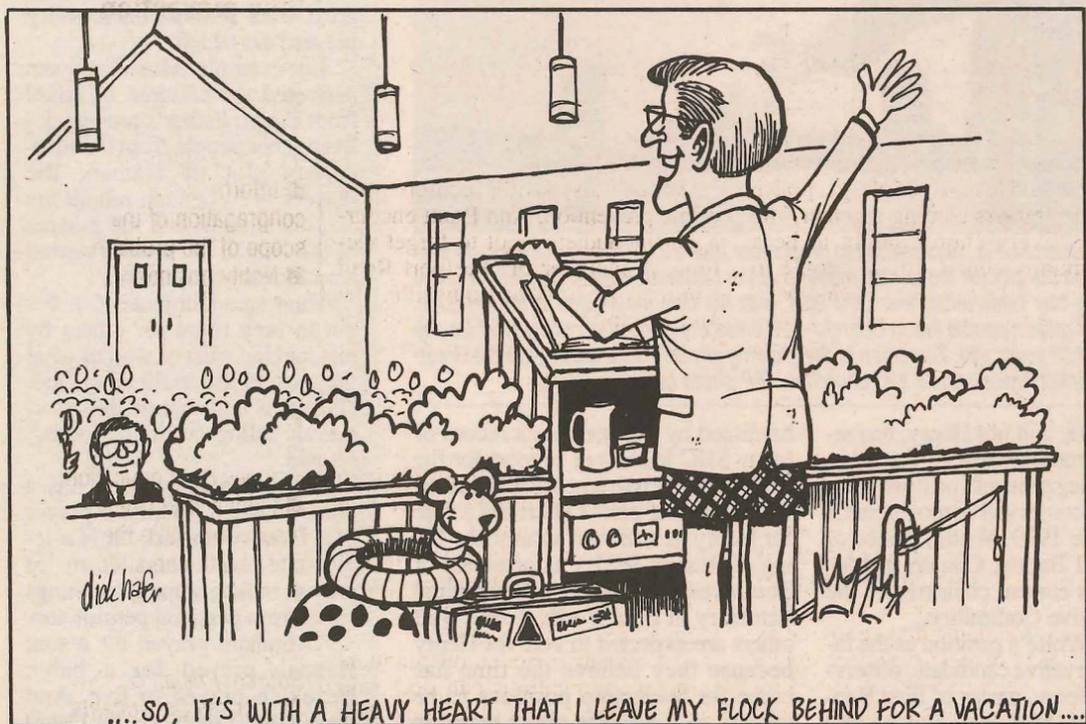
Baptists distance themselves from the SBC by saying: "We do hereby reaffirm and recommit ourselves to the principle of autonomy, from which emerges all other guiding principles of our state convention, the North Carolina Baptist way. Our supreme loyalty and obligation are not to human institutions but to the One who sets us free. We are free to follow our Lord's directions in the doing of missions, evangelism, education, and benevolences. We totally and completely reject any form of hierarchal structure which enables any Baptist entity to coerce, threaten or control the beliefs, programs and priorities of any other Baptist body."

The statement also declares that North Carolina Baptists—and not

SBC leaders—will determine how missions money from North Carolina Baptist churches is distributed.

In a related matter, Roy Smith, the North Carolina convention's executive director-treasurer, has written a letter to Ralph Pulley, trustee chairman at Southwestern Seminary.

"I write this letter, not merely to add my name to the list of those displeased with your actions, but to address what may be an equally important concern: the task of state executive directors to promote the entire Southern Baptist denominational program," Smith wrote. "In a phrase, we have been the 'collection agency' for both state and national Baptist programs. Your recent actions make that task extremely difficult."



Lottie Moon offering up 2.37 percent

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Southern Baptists gave a record \$82.9 million to the 1993 Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions.

The final total, tallied after books on the offering closed May 31, represented a 2.37 percent increase over 1992 receipts of \$80.9 million.

This year's gifts missed the \$85 million goal but topped the previous record, set in 1991, by more than \$1.5 million.

The increase encouraged Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board leaders in light of the fact that 1992 and 1990 offerings both were below the previous years' totals.

"I'm ecstatic," said FMB President Jerry Rankin. Despite disagreements among Southern Bap-

tists, the offering "affirms that we're still focused on missions and that Southern Baptists are confident in what God is doing through our Foreign Mission Board," he said.

"It will encourage missionaries, because they get all kinds of messages about what's going on in the convention, and some of them are feeling very insecure in terms of finances."

"It doesn't represent a windfall, but it does ensure that we'll be able to meet their budgets this year," he added.

Thanks to the upturn in giving, Lottie Moon funds will go beyond basic needs to provide about \$1.9 million of the FMB's \$8 million capital budget for such things as new construction, equipment and vehicles for missionaries.

KENTUCKY

Baptist artist weaves spiritual themes, joys & sorrows

By Melanie Childers
Staff Writer

LOUISVILLE—Stitching together life's joys and sorrows provides personal healing for visual artist Gayle Williamson.

A Louisvillian and member of Highland Baptist Church, Williamson is gaining notoriety as a fiber artist who weaves spiritual themes and universal questions into a uniquely personal art form.

Her latest collection, "Inter-Forms," was on exhibit at the Brown Hotel's Margaret Parshall Gallery in Louisville May 23-June 5. It represents an integration of two distinct, contemporary art forms: experimental embroidery and digitally sequenced electronic music. Musician Christopher White collaborated with Williamson on the project.

"It's peaceful and tranquil, yet there's chaos in them too," she said of her work.

Traditional lace stitches of pearl cotton threads frame contemporary swirls of color—in heavy watercolor threads and in lighter threads of silk and metallic cotton and rayon. Deep blues and purples, shades of green and hues of reds are intricately embroidered together on silk acetate.

Williamson uses a process of photo transfer with needlework embellishment. Images such as postage stamps and tiny reproductions of famous paintings make their way into the iconic, medallion-shaped interpretations.

The 13 pieces in the exhibit remind viewers of stained glass windows through which sparkling light radiates reverence, peace and tranquility.

While she admits her use of color and design are two of her greatest artistic assets, Williamson insists she makes decisions meditatively, not methodically.

She begins each day's work by

greeting the Lord: "Good morning, God. This is Gayle, reporting for duty. What would you like for me to do today?"

"It's my lifeline," she explained. "I am a trained artist, but my work is inspired."

Williamson received a bachelor of arts degree in music from Bellarmine College in Louisville, as well as bachelor and master of arts degrees in fiber arts from the University of Louisville.

Much of Williamson's inspiration has developed through extended visits to Europe and Indonesia, she said. Famous paintings, as well as colors and architectural patterns from cathedrals and their stained glass windows, have found subtle, innovative settings in Williamson's work.

A quiet, private person not accustomed to great publicity, the artist considers her work a calling from God, she said. "For me, the spiritual part is the main part. I have a real strong faith and trust."

Williamson's art is multi-dimensional. "People connect with my work because it operates on so many different levels," she said.

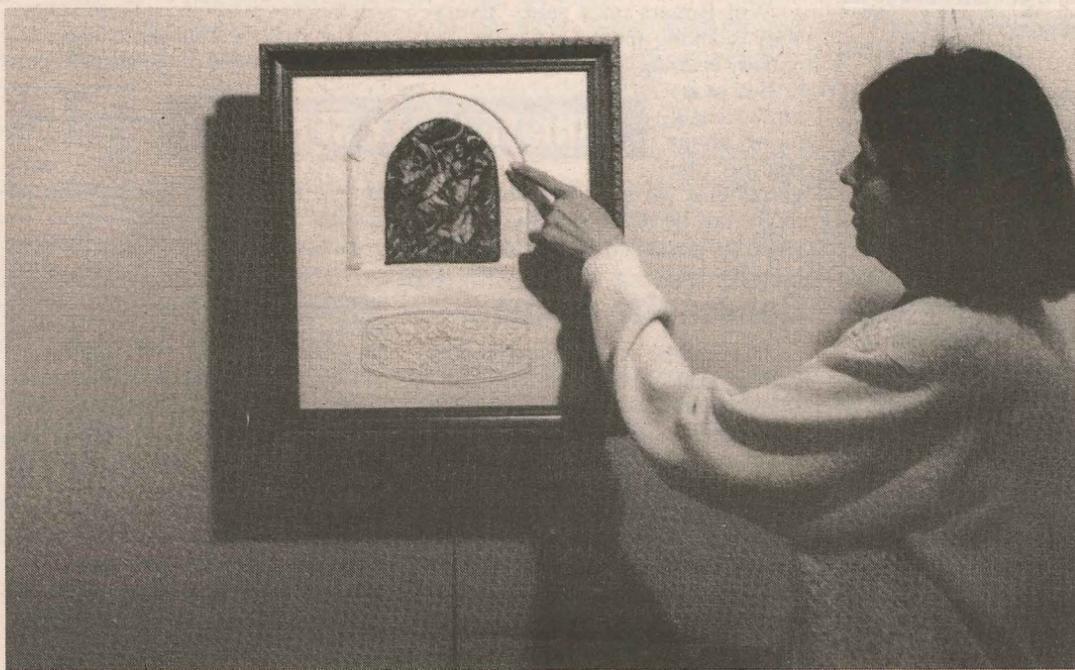
On a personal level, the work mirrors Williamson's own complex life of searching, she said.

The motherhood theme, predominant in her art, is characterized by images of Madonna and child. Williamson interprets the theme by finding parallels with her own experience as a mother of three sons.

The artist's depictions caution that while the mother is a nurturer and care-giver, she must be careful not to lose her own identity.

On a more universal level, Williamson poses questions of women's identity throughout history, particularly biblical history. "I began wondering, 'What happened to the females?' and I wanted to know where I fit in," she explained.

In her art and in her life, William-



son learned to examine the past, discovering how she fit into the overall scheme of things. "Take what's beneficial, grieve the losses and move on through the present," she said.

"I started out using art as a therapy to express who I am and what I'm about," she explained. "The first piece I ever did was fragments—nothing connected."

Beginning with photography and adopting various artistic media, Williamson gradually was able to work through troubling and demoralizing experiences of her own life, she said. "I moved from one media to the next, expressing very personal and sometimes painful experiences as I continued the journey to find myself."

In addition to a serious personal illness and other difficult experiences, Williamson said, she has borne the pain of a son afflicted with depression and alcohol addiction.

"Today, I don't hate or resent," she said triumphantly. "I have a peace in-

side of me I would never give up."

That peace is reflected in her newest form of art, Williamson said, which utilizes more tranquil themes. That's a big contrast from the darkness and violence prevalent in her photography, she admitted.

"It took faith and hope," she explained. "I've gone through a metamorphosis. The key for me is that I never gave up. I stay in close communication with my higher power."

Her latest exhibit was sponsored by Alternative Roots of Atlanta, with primary funding from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Williamson said she hopes other people gain a serenity and tranquility—"no matter what else is going on in their lives"—when they study her art.

The White House and the Billy Graham Center Museum in Wheaton, Ill., both have purchased pieces of Williamson's art.

SPIRITUAL THEMES Kentucky artist Gayle Williamson laces spiritual themes throughout her work, such as these pieces of fiber art recently on exhibit at the Brown Hotel in Louisville.

Churches called to join war against crime and violence

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—Churches must offer more than traditional Sunday and Wednesday services if they hope to stop the violence plaguing America, an urban pastor told a conference of Kentucky Baptists last week.

"The church has the right message, and we have to continue giving it," said T. Vaughn Walker, pastor of First Gethsemane Baptist Church in Louisville. "Because of our historical relationship with the community, we have an opening to reach people that others can't."

"We have to build a foundation with youth," he explained. "We can't turn crime and violence around until the church gets serious. We have to open our doors every day and invite youth in. I believe in the power of God to deliver."

He suggested churches should offer after-school activities, summer youth programs, leadership development, mentoring programs and surrogate parents for children from single-

or no-parent homes.

Walker, who also is associate professor of black church studies at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, was one of five panelists for a discussion on crime and violence held at Fern Creek Baptist Church in Louisville May 26.

"The Church Addresses Crime and Violence" was sponsored by Long Run Baptist Association and Central District Baptist Association.

Panelists painted a bleak picture of crime and violence in America:

■ Criminal violence adds \$3.5 billion a year to the nation's health care costs.

■ The FBI says guns were used in 60 percent of the 19,000 murders committed in 1989. Add suicides and accidents, and handguns are used to kill 22,000 people a year.

■ The Children's Defense Fund lists homicide as the third-leading cause of death for children 5 to 14; a U.S. child is 15 times more likely to die by gunfire than a child growing up in Northern Ireland.

Churches must take action to stop

these trends, panelists said.

Separation of church and state doesn't mean public policies should be divorced from biblical policies, said Ken Sehested, executive director of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, in Memphis, Tenn.

"I would love to see clergy, police and firefighters coming together," he said. "Every church ought to be a community center. Invite people to come in so we can know each other."

Sgt. Robert Fraction of the Louisville Police Department's physical assault squad outlined the seriousness of the challenge faced by churches.

"Are we going to sit back and do nothing?" asked Fraction, who attends Abundant Life Ministries in Louisville. "I don't think we should. I know there's a spiritual war; Satan is the enemy, and he is here to steal, kill and destroy. In the name of Jesus, I'm going to do what I can to stop it."

Cyril Wantland, director of the office of alcohol and drug education for Jefferson County Schools, called for church involvement. He said it is crucial, since drug organizations hire stu-

dents as couriers and dealers.

"I'm here to encourage you to get involved with young people," he said. "Offer activities for them in the afternoon and evenings ... This is mobilization time. We need to be motivating and reaching out to them."

While discussion centered on crime prevention, Ann Pruitt encouraged the audience not to forget victims. A member of Westport Road Church of Christ in Louisville, she and her husband formed Kentucky Voice for Crime Victims after their son was murdered.

"Victims didn't ask to be victims. Ministry to them pays off," she said.

Pruitt said the pain of losing a loved one to violence is difficult to describe. "At times you feel like you're losing your mind," she said.

The seminar's chairman said it was aimed at giving attendees at least one concrete idea that they could implement in their churches.

"We want to focus on practical things congregations can do," said Wayne Hager, pastor of Midlane Park Baptist Church in Louisville.

Drug prevention tips for churches

- Provide drug information workshops for clergy and staff.
 - Inform the congregation of the scope of the problem.
 - Notify businesses selling liquor that a special effort will be made to monitor sales to minors.
 - Develop a curriculum for church youth that includes drug education.
 - Identify and use resources within the church membership such as teachers, lawyers, counselors and judges.
- Source: Phelps & Associates Consultants, Louisville.

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

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God has only 1 salvation plan

Will Rogers once said, "Everybody is talking about the weather, but nobody is doing anything about it."

Some times we talk more about sharing the gospel than we actually share it. We might not be sharing the gospel as much as possible, but the gospel is

still the power of God unto salvation.

The Apostle Paul put it like this: "I'm not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto salvation to those who believe it, to the Jew first and also the gentile."

But people cannot believe the gos-

MINISTERIALLY SPEAKING

Community dream

It would be wonderful if conservatives Dan Quayle and William J. Bennett included unselfishness and community in their writings on family values and virtues.

Destructive love of money, or greed, is the cause of so much wrongdoing and is so much a part of our culture hardly anyone addresses the problem—preachers, politicians or media pundits. Our selfish pursuit of the American dream blinds us to seeing the possibilities available in Martin Luther King Jr.'s "beloved community dream," a dream rooted in God's kingdom dream. For Christians, the kingdom dream should be top priority.

Our country is one big, diverse family. No one can reach their best without the help of God and other people. Loving God, not money, with all our heart, mind and soul, and loving our neighbors as we love ourselves is the most important family value and virtue.

In the long run, only nations whose people have a vision of community and implement it are going to thrive and survive.

*Paul Whiteley Sr.
Louisville*

Breeding grounds

It is sad that our Baptist denomi-

nation has now been reduced to a religious club in which we must pledge allegiance to doctrine and dogma.

Our churches are becoming breeding grounds for cult activity and blasphemous teachings by so-called Baptist ministers. The concept of priesthood of the believer is shunned by pastors because it doesn't conform to fundamentalist agendas. The highest priority in today's Baptist denomination is obedience and conformity instead of soul freedom and individual responsibility. Power-monger pastors

stand in pulpits and dish out criticism of church members, but the first time a member points out a deficiency in the pastor, he can't take it and plots to rid that member from the fellowship.

I fear that the denomination that at one time defined the best of Jesus' teachings is now nothing more than a political club of judgmental Pharisees, and I weep for the future of our children under this leadership.

I have no confidence in fundamentalist teachers and ministers and have decided to "home-church" my children rather than subject them to non-traditional teachings.

*Glenn Hall
Henderson*

Virgin birth vital

Some Baptists, including Cecil Sherman, contend that the virgin birth of Jesus is a relatively unimportant

pel if they have never heard it. How can one believe in him of whom they have never heard?

Take inventory of your life. Ask yourself, "When did I last share the good news of Jesus Christ?"

Bearing witness about Jesus is the responsibility of every saved sinner, for God has no other plan for the salvation of this world.

*Danny Haynes, pastor
First Baptist Church
Middletown*

doctrine since it is not mentioned many places in Scripture. But without the virgin birth, how do we explain the deity and sinlessness of Jesus?

I see no reason why it is harder to accept the physical miracle of Jesus' virgin birth than the moral miracle of his sinlessness. One denial will lead to the other.

As the Son of God, Jesus was not the natural sharer of man's guilt. Had he been a sinner like us, he could not have saved us.

The fact that John and Paul did not specifically refer to the virgin birth does not mean they did not believe in it. What John said about the Logos becoming flesh supports the idea. And so does Paul's doctrine of the pre-existent Christ taking upon himself human form (Philippians 2).

We run into problems when we categorically argue that any important truth must be mentioned often in the Bible. The Sermon on the Mount appears only in Matthew and Luke. Likewise, the parables of the Good Samaritan and of the Prodigal Son appear only in Luke. Surely they are no less important than such accounts as the healing of the woman with an issue of blood that appears in all the synoptic gospels.

Almost always those who are biased against the virgin birth are biased against miracles. But without miracles we have no Christianity, no new birth, no resurrection.

*L.D. Kennedy
Campbellsville*

day in that same hospital, will start life with disadvantages. Within that room full of just-born babies, there were already disparities of health and advantage not of their own making.

It still is a marvel to me that some who are born into life so disadvantaged make something good of their lives and the lives of their children.

Chances are that someone helped—a family member; a social worker; a teacher; a church; a minister—God knows. In birth it is sometimes difficult to accept that "life is not fair, but God is good."

God is good. But God's goodness is made visible in the love and caring of those who love God—who are sensitive, reaching out, helping, sacrificing for the benefit of others.

The church falls short in proclaiming that God is good if the church is not in the forefront of demonstrating how God's love is good.

"Oh merciful God, grant that those of us who enjoy the bounty of birth, nurture and substance may find more joy and pleasure in serving others than the continued and blasphemous blessing of ourselves."

William W. Marshall is executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

BAPTIST FORUM

'Life is not fair, but ...'

I cannot recall the first cries of any of our three children's entry into the world.

Times have changed since those years when fathers were excluded from the birth experience, and a new memory was deposited in my mind as I stood just outside that "birthing room" not many weeks ago.

For I heard our granddaughter's first cries and marked the precise time by my watch, startling the nurse by the desk with a loud "Yes!" as though the 'Cats had just scored the winning touchdown over the Tennessee Vols.

Later in the day, the entire family of Cliftons and other Marshalls gathered to greet Sarah and the proud parents.

Another birth was taking place that day as I paced between the waiting room and the room where Sharon labored.

Another young mother was laboring, her pain expressed so loudly that all could hear, even in the waiting

room. I stood some of the time by the desk outside Sharon's room, overhearing some of the discussion by the nurses.

The father of the child to be born was referred to as her "boyfriend" who, apparently, was not there. Nor were there other visitors—no other family. I sensed some irritation from one nurse because this young woman was going it alone.

Sarah has two loving parents and four doting grandparents who were present at some time during the day and after; the pastor of our church visited; a group of Sunday school friends had arranged to provide evening meals for two weeks; numerous other friends and family, in various ways, offered support and friendship.

To the point of some distraction, I labored, not as Sharon with Sarah, but with the realization that life isn't fair; that Sarah has been given a two-parent home and strong support base while another child, born that same

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall



Keep a purpose

By John Lepper

Recently I met someone who had retired several years ago but because of boredom had gone back to work. His post-retirement job was fun and gave him purpose. He pointed out that he refused to do certain things in this new job and that he was, for the most part, having the time of his life.

I regularly meet people who have retired and gone back to work, sometimes to earn extra income but many times to fill the days with meaning.

I also regularly meet people who have retired and wouldn't think of going back to work again, even part time. These people have found fulfillment in their retirement years in something besides work.

Whether in a job or in some other avenue, it is of utmost importance to find meaning and fulfillment as we age.

Viktor Frankl lived through some of the worst atrocities known to humanity: the Holocaust. He saw many of his own people put to death. He saw many others give up hope and die before they were herded into gas chambers. Others survived because they had hope; they had a purpose for living.

Frankl was fond of quoting a German philosopher who said, "He who has a why to live can bear with almost any how." In other words, the person who can find a deeper meaning to life can bear almost any circumstance, no matter how dreadful, no matter how traumatic.

On the positive side, purpose in life gives meaning, joy, a positive sense of well being. As we age, we can face life with dread and boredom or we can look forward to every day with anticipation and expectation. The choice is ours.

Whether we find purpose for life in post-retirement work or in other things is not the issue. The issue is that we find purpose in something.

We as Christians find ultimate purpose in Jesus Christ, for he brings ultimate meaning in this life and the next. He transforms our meaninglessness into meaning, our boredom into excitement and our future into glory.

John Lepper is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry department.

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

Flames of controversy burn the tobacco industry

The tobacco industry has been burned lately, and that's a smelly-but-painful problem for Kentucky.

Ordinary folks can't imagine Kentucky without tobacco. Sort of like driving across the commonwealth without spotting those black barns. History and commerce have rolled tobacco and Kentucky together like a big, fat cigar.

Bottom-line figures have quite a bit to do with that. Tobacco pays many of the state's bills. Family tobacco farms provide the backbone of rural Kentucky. Local economies would dry up if those farms died. The tax base would dwindle. Stores would board up. And quite a few churches would close their doors.

Anybody with a smidgen of compassion also cares for tobacco farmers and workers. Most farms have been in the same families for generations. Raising tobacco is the only job many farmers know. When the no-smoke politicians talk tobacco, they may think about giant corporations, but their words strike a match to the livelihoods of growers, who may be a single crop away from the unemployment line. No wonder farmers express their own moral outrage at the people who are morally outraged over smoking's evils.

Congressional foes have tobacco by the roots these days. That's understandable. Except for Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina and a few other spots, tobacco-bashing translates into vote-getting: Most people don't smoke, and most non-smokers hate somebody else's smoke. Nicotine is addictive. Tobacco causes cancer and emphysema (even among the families of tobacco farmers). Tobacco-related medical treatment pushes skyrocketing costs of healthcare ever higher. And those insidious Joe Camel ads make parents' blood boil. Small wonder trash-talk about

tobacco is popular with pols who watch the polls.

Can Kentuckians who care about both tobacco-farm families and public health find a way past this impasse? Ignoring the physical consequences of tobacco use is morally irresponsible. But so is turning our backs on farm families and the communities they support.

One solution stands out: Find another use for those tobacco farms. If they can produce other crops, they can continue to sustain the families who live on them, as well as produce healthier produce.

Normally, farmers are among the first to balk at this idea, and you can understand why. They've got money invested in machinery designed to raise tobacco, not vegetables. As long as tobacco still sells somewhere in the world, why change?

If you can read the papers, you know why. Congressional foes intend to shred the tobacco industry, leaf by leaf. Producers sit on the hot seat almost daily. Time and public sentiment stand on the side of tobacco's adversaries. Fewer Americans light the tobacco flame.

So, Kentucky must read the writing on the side of the barn: Tobacco is an industry in decline. Farms and farm communities are going to die if they don't get help converting to a sustainable alternative soon.

Tobacco farmers need relief from tobacco as much as lung-cancer victims. Kentucky churches must lead out in proposing solutions; the tobacco industry and government haven't been much help. Can we envision effective, affordable uses for farmland? Will we discover the apparatus to help farmers convert? Do we have the creativity to help factories re-tool and factory workers learn new jobs?

Stay tuned; the challenge won't go away.

Marv Knox

As Kentucky realizes tobacco is a declining industry, church people can help redeem the livelihoods of farm families by leading the search for productive alternative uses of tobacco farmland.

Is divorce the 'unpardonable sin' for a Baptist minister?

After more than 11 years of marriage, my wife decided she wanted a divorce. She contacted her very first sweetheart and told me to get out. I begged her to go to counseling. Our director of missions, several pastors, a pastoral counselor and a social worker all tried to get her to come to counseling sessions with me, but she refused all of their invitations.

At the time, I was pastor of a small Southern Baptist church. Due to all the stress, I resigned. My church refused my resignation and told me to take a three-month leave of absence. I have not heard from one member since those three months have passed.

Several pastors in the association have told me I never will be able to be pastor of a Southern Baptist church ever again. I have even been told that

God is through with me, and if I intend to continue to preach, I should seek other denominations. While this is not the view of every church in our association, it is the view of many.

Would someone please tell me what chapter and verse in the Bible says divorce is the unpardonable sin?

I know God hates divorce. In many situations, sin of either husband or wife causes this to happen. Some even go as far as to say that divorce is sin. Does this mean that because my wife sued me for divorce, even though I made every attempt possible to reconcile our marriage, that I have sinned?

Why is it acceptable for murderers, gossipers and thieves to repent and be made leaders of some of our churches, while if you are the victim of the "D-word" God doesn't love

you any more?

"All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17). Yet how many churches have you heard say, "Sorry, brother, but because you have been the victim of sin, God is through with you"? Isn't it strange that in the same epistle John describes how confession brings about cleansing from all unrighteousness?

I do not see where the Bible says divorce is the unpardonable sin, yet many Baptists feel God has no use for me.

I am so very thankful that God, and not these unforgiving sinners, called me to preach. I was asked in my ordination examination what I would do if the ordination council chose not to ordain me. I said: "I am going to preach, no matter what you decide. It was God who called me to preach and not you." I intend to con-

tinue to make myself available to preach every chance I get. I am not worried about what others may think, because I am accountable to God for doing what he called me to do.

Jesus was rejected by his own people, "and he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:54-58).

How many people in your church, maybe even the person who sat next to you last Sunday morning, are unable to serve God in the way God has prepared and called them to serve because of the unbelief of the Pharisees in the church?

The church is supposed to be a hospital for sinners and not a storehouse for saints, yet it seems the words of Chuck Colson ring so true: "Church is the only place that I know of where we shoot our wounded."

Name withheld

"Church is the only place that I know of where we shoot our wounded."

Chuck Colson

VIEWPOINT

Nobody ever cried, '3 strikes & you're out!' in this tee-ball league

If you've been trying to call our house on Friday nights and haven't been able to reach anybody, it's because we've got better things to do than sit around waiting for the phone to ring.

No, we haven't been climbing Mount Kilimanjaro, "mapping" the DNA structure of new medicines or even hanging out at the mall. We've been at the ballpark.

Molly's taken up The National Pastime, so we've attended practices and/or games for about a month now.

Actually, she's been playing a scaled-down version of baseball known as tee-ball. In this age of zillion-dollar lawsuits, Lyndon Recreation Association doesn't allow 7-year-olds to play real baseball, with hard balls thrown near soft flesh. So we've been

watching the Kittens (hey, this is a girls' league) step up to the plate and swing at a rubber ball on top of a waist-high tee.

Prior to the season, Molly figured she'd have to be a good spitter to excel at baseball. She learned to spit too. Now she can spit as well or better than she catches, hits and throws.

Nobody spits in tee-ball, however. Not even coaches. Maybe spitting is a psychological tick developed by grown men who stand in small chalk boxes while somebody throws 94-mile-per-hour

baseballs at their heads. Who knows? But Molly has given up spitting; She must be saving spitting for the big leagues.

Aside from being neater than real baseball, tee-ball offers several other compelling features:

- Everybody plays. No benchwarmers in this league. Coaches scatter 13 or more players throughout the infield. No need for outfielders; these kids can't hit that far. When a batter hits a ball, an entire flock of kids chases it, and plenty more hang back on base to miss the ball when somebody finally throws it. Ev-

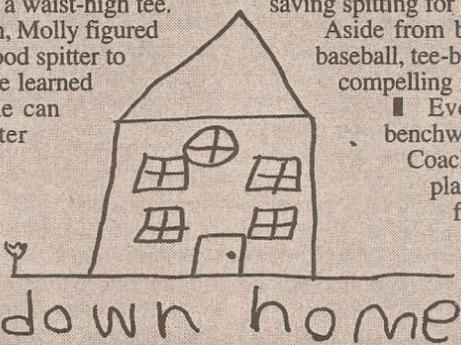
erybody bats too. The assistant coach lines the players up, and they bat in order, nine per inning.

- Nobody strikes out. A batter can swing five or 10 times or more, but she doesn't stop until she whacks that ball and runs to first base. All these kids have perfect batting averages.

- Nobody keeps score (except for a couple of coaches who drink an extra cup of testosterone before the games). The point is for kids to learn the skills of baseball. Period. Everybody wins because they have fun and don't lose.

If church were as positive and player-friendly as tee-ball, maybe more people would want to join our "league."

Marv Knox



NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Clinic access bill now law.** A new law prohibiting blockades at abortion clinics was signed into law May 26. On the same day, anti-abortion groups filed suit to stop the law's enforcement. President Clinton signed the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act May 26. The law makes it a federal crime to block access to abortion clinics, to damage property or to physically intimidate patients and clinic workers. The American Life League and Pat Robertson's American Center for Law and Justice have filed suit in federal court to stop the law's enforcement.

■ **School fined over Equal Access.** A school board in New Jersey will pay nearly \$100,000 in attorney's fees for trying to sidestep the Equal Access Act. East Brunswick Board of Education has agreed to pay Donna Pope \$97,000 in attorney fees after Pope successfully sued the school district. Pope and other students at her high school wanted to hold a Bible study on school property before the beginning of the school day. The New Jersey school board revised its guidelines for student groups to require faculty advisers to participate in the clubs they advise. The U.S. Court of Appeals affirmed lower court decisions that the school was attempting to block the Equal Access Act by creating policies in conflict with the act.

■ **City sued over homeless ministry.** Liberty Counsel, a religious civil liberties defense group, filed suit in federal court against the city of Daytona Beach, Fla. May 23. The case alleges that the city's refusal to allow a church to operate a ministry to the homeless violates the church's right to free exercise of religion. Daytona Rescue Mission has sought since 1992 to purchase property for its ministry, but city leaders have blocked the church at every turn, even changing the definition of "church" in the city zoning code to exclude homeless ministries.

■ **CLC contracts letter service.** The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has enlisted a letter-writing service to help individual Southern Baptists campaign against inclusion of abortion in health care reform. Under its arrangement with the CLC, USA Letters, a Washington-based company, provides personalized letters addressed to President Bill Clinton and members of Congress expressing opposition to abortion coverage in health care proposals. The letters, with envelopes, are pre-addressed to each person's United States representative and two United States senators, as well as the president. Each letter contains room for a written postscript as well as a signature. The letters may be ordered by calling (900) 933-1776. The cost for the service is \$5.95.

■ **Not a traditional Baptist college.** Starting next fall, students at California Baptist College in Riverside, Calif., will be assessed a \$15 disaster preparedness fee. The fee will pay for emergency survival kits to be used in case of earthquakes or other natural disasters. Every student will receive a kit containing a space-age mylar blanket, first aid items, a three-day supply of drinking water, emergency food rations and a flashlight and radio with batteries.

■ **Women's conference stirs debate.** Six months after the "Re-Imagining" conference was held in Minneapolis, fallout continues due to its controversial feminist elements. At the conference, thousands of women blessed milk and honey and shared it as a ritual alternative to holy communion, one speaker questioned whether the crucifixion of Jesus is too violent an image for a religion of love, and God was given the female name "Sophia." The conference was supported by several mainline Protestant denominations. Mary Ann Lundy, a national leader of the Presbyterian Church USA has lost her job at the denomination's Louisville headquarters due to criticism of her support for the event. Conservative Presbyterians and Methodists have expressed outrage over the event. But conference organizers are trying to make "Re-Imagining" into an institution by raising money and establishing an office to further its work.

Court upholds Kentucky free speech case

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The free-speech rights of a Kentucky right-to-life group were not violated when the group was denied booth space at a Frankfort civic festival, the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed last week.

The high court declined to disturb the Kentucky Supreme Court's ruling that Downtown Frankfort Inc. could prohibit Capital Area Right to Life from exhibiting at the annual "Great Pumpkin Festival."

Downtown Frankfort Inc., a non-profit entity established to promote downtown revitalization, organizes the annual festival held on a public mall.

After Capital Area Right to Life distributed plastic models of fetuses from its booth in 1989, the festival's sponsors adopted a policy denying booth space to organizations deemed incompatible with the festival's goal

of "fun and entertainment."

The Kentucky court said Downtown Frankfort Inc. was acting on behalf of the city and subject to free-speech requirements. However, since pro-abortion groups also were denied space, the court said the festival's new policy was content-neutral and a valid time, place and manner restriction.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor dissented from the U.S. Supreme Court's refusal to review the case. She wrote that the Supreme Court has held that valid time, place and manner restrictions on speech cannot be based on either content or subject matter.

In other cases, the U.S. Supreme Court last week:

■ Refused to review lower-court rulings ordering Cobb County, Ga., officials to remove a framed panel of the Ten Commandments and teachings of Jesus from a county courthouse in Marietta.

A federal district court, in a ruling later affirmed by the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, concluded that the panel "has the effect of endorsing religion in general and Christianity in particular and therefore violates" the First Amendment's requirement of church-state separation.

■ Refused to review a Colorado court's \$1.2 million sexual-misconduct judgment against an Episcopal diocese and bishop, which were held legally responsible for a parish minister's sexual misconduct.

Affirming a trial court's decision in favor of the victim, the Colorado Supreme Court said the diocese and bishop breached their fiduciary duty to act in the best interest of the victim, in part because they had psychological reports that gave reason to believe the minister "should not be put in a position to counsel vulnerable individuals."

CLC joins boycott of abortion pill's sponsors

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has joined with the National Right to Life Committee and four other organizations to promote a boycott of the companies which have made possible the introduction of the French abortion pill RU-486 into the United States.

The boycott will target the products of Roussel Uclaf, the French manufacturer of RU-486; Hoechst AG, the German parent company of Roussel Uclaf; and Hoechst Celanese and Hoechst Roussel, the German corporation's United States subsidiar-

ies. A list of products to be boycotted will be announced in a few weeks, NRLC President Wanda Franz said.

The other organizations announcing support for the boycott are Focus on the Family, Concerned Women for America, Christian Coalition and Family Research Council.

"Southern Baptists are consumers, and we will urge our members to enthusiastically support the boycott," said James Smith, the CLC's director of government relations.

At the repeated urging of the Clinton administration, Roussel Uclaf recently donated its United States patent

rights for mifepristone, commonly known as RU-486, to the Population Council Inc., a non-profit corporation. The action cleared the way for the Population Council to pursue the manufacture, testing, licensing and marketing of the controversial pill in the United States. RU-486 may be available for use in the United States by early 1996.

"Hoechst AG and Roussel Uclaf may or may not be able to escape the legal responsibility by giving the patent away, but they cannot escape the moral responsibility for what will ensue," the NRLC's Franz said.

SBC messengers face election, Dilday firing

Continued from page 1

■ **Southwestern Seminary.** The March 9 firing of President Russell Dilday, orchestrated by conservative trustees, unleashed a firestorm of criticism from faculty, students, alumni and even from within the board of trustees. The convention, however, will offer the first opportunity for opponents to register their dissatisfaction in tangible ways.

Cecil Sims, executive director of the Northwest Baptist Convention, has announced he will bring a motion to dismiss the three trustee officers.

■ **Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.** The 3-year-old organization of moderates displaced from SBC leadership in the last decade and a half is increasingly perceived as a threat by current leaders for its potential of siphoning off money that otherwise would flow into convention ventures.

In February, the SBC Executive Committee ordered its officers and staff to conduct a study of "the impact" of Fellowship funds on SBC agencies. The findings are to be reported to the Executive Committee's business and finance subcommittee meeting scheduled in conjunction with the SBC.

The officers are expected to recommend to SBC agencies that they refuse gifts from local churches routed through the Fellowship. It is likely the Executive Committee will act on

the subcommittee's proposal June 13 and pass on a recommendation to the convention.

■ **Statement on racism.** Founded in 1845 because its predecessor, the old Triennial Convention, refused to appoint slaveholders as missionaries, the SBC never has publicly repented of its checkered past on racism. An organization of associational directors of missions, who meet in conjunction with the SBC, have announced they plan to consider a statement on repentance of racism, which, if adopted, will be introduced to the full convention.

Messengers also vote on a Cooperative Program budget of \$136.54 million for the 1994-95 fiscal year. The budget, based on actual receipts in the 1992-93 fiscal year, is 1.23 percent lower than the current year's budget.

SBC Registration Secretary Lee Porter, who brings a record of uncanny accuracy in his predictions of convention crowds over the years, expects between 23,000 and 25,000 messengers to attend this year's meeting. That is the same projection he offered for last year's meeting in Houston, at which his estimate uncharacteristically missed the mark. A total of 17,768 messengers registered in Houston.

If Porter's projection is more accurate this year, convention planners fear logistical problems, particularly

traffic gridlock on International Drive, the main access route to the convention center. There are 5,400 spaces in four main parking lots, said Jack Wilkerson, convention manager. The SBC creates special traffic problems because, unlike the typical large trade show at which participants come and go, virtually all SBC messengers converge on the meeting hall at once.

Construction for an expansion of the convention center complicates the traffic problem by closing a main parking entrance on International Drive. Wilkerson said limited shuttle service will be available. He recommends that messengers who drive use the parking lots on Republic Street and "try to keep as much traffic off International Drive as we can."

Messengers also should plan to arrive early for convention sessions, Wilkerson said. Discounted food prices have been negotiated with vendors to make it possible for messengers to get meals without leaving the convention center.

The meeting hall proper should be adequate, Wilkerson said. The main assembly hall will seat 11,500 and an adjacent annex will accommodate another 9,500 who will be able to view proceedings only on image-magnification screens.

If needed, he said, two overflow rooms can be opened, providing another 3,500 seats.

MARRIAGE

Are churches marriage savers or wedding factories?

By Marv Knox
Editor

Are churches wedding factories or marriage savers?

The question has profound implications, said Michael McManus, the driving force behind Marriage Savers, the national movement to strengthen marriages and cut the divorce rate.

"For many, marriage today is a losing gamble," McManus wrote in an article for National and International Religion Report.

"The central domestic issue of our time is that the American family itself is splintering," he added. "Six of 10 new marriages fail, victims of divorce or separation. ... Sixty-five percent of the marriages that remain intact still are profoundly unhappy; 40 percent are devitalized."

And although churches are trying to fight the divorce epidemic, they're not as effective as they should and could be, he wrote.

"Many churches are mere 'blessing machines,'" he charged. In 1991, America suffered almost 1.2 million divorces, although church ceremonies blessed 75 percent of first marriages.

"Churches can be more than 'wedding factories' that prepare couples only for an event but not for a life together. Some American churches have implemented practical methods to prevent divorce. The results have been encouraging. Not only can nine out of 10 troubled marriages be saved; they can be joyful and last a lifetime."

Churches can take seven steps to save members' marriages, McManus claimed. They are:

■ **"Make a case for premarital chastity, especially with teens."**

Promiscuity leads to divorce, he said, noting people who have sex before marriage are 60 percent more likely to divorce than people who are virgins when they marry. Unfortu-

nately, only 15 percent of mothers and 8 percent of fathers have discussed premarital sex with their children.

McManus recommended resources for helping teens remain chaste. Youth speaker Josh McDowell has created "Why Wait?" a series with one videotape for teens and another for parents. The phone number to order tapes is (214) 907-1000. Sex Respect, a course taught in public high schools, has caused pregnancy rates to drop 50 percent among participating teens; phone (815) 932-8389.

And the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board has developed True Love Waits, a campaign that has reached hundreds of thousands of teens nationwide; phone (615) 251-2000.

■ **"Ask seriously dating couples to take the Relationship Instruction course as an insurance against divorce."**

Couples follow workbooks and share their answers with each other and a mentor couple or pastor. They also agree not to be sexually active and not to discuss possible engagement while taking the four-month course, to limit their time together and to complete the course even if they break up.

"The result of these tough standards is that 50 percent of those who take the course do not marry each other," McManus said. "But for those who do, the divorce rate is less than 10 percent."

The course was developed by Jim Talley, a Baptist pastor from Oklaho-

ma; phone (405) 949-2227.

■ **"Give Prepare, an inventory that X-rays the relationship before the wedding."**

The Prepare premarital evaluation asks the couple each to react to 125 statements about their expectations of marriage, personality issues, communication styles, conflict resolution, finances, leisure, sex, children and parenting, marital roles and priorities, and religious values. Answers are computer-scored and interpreted by trained counselors. The couple then meets at least twice with the counselor, minister or mentor couple who administered the test, getting feedback.

Prepare has an 86 percent accuracy rate in predicting divorce. Each year, 10,000-15,000 of the 100,000 couples who complete the inventory call off their engagements, avoiding bad marriages, McManus said.

A similar survey, Enrich, has been designed to diagnose strengths and weaknesses in already married couples. For more information about both inventories, call (800) 331-1661.

■ **Focus on marriage preparation.** "Catholics, who have the best marriage preparation ... recognize the main reason marriages fail is poor communication," accounting for 60 percent of all divorces, McManus reported.

Marriage preparation programs incorporate five key ingredients of the Marriage Savers concept—a waiting period before marriage; a premarital compatibility survey; connection to older mentor couples who pass on

their experience to young couples; lectures on issues such as finances, sex, communication and parenting; written exercises that help couples communicate feelings and expectations.

■ **"Encourage attendance at Marriage Encounter, the best marriage saver."**

More than 10 religious faiths, Baptist included, participate in volunteer-run Marriage Encounter conferences, which have helped about 1.5 million couples in 32 years.

"The entire process is aimed at getting couples to share deep feelings, which get bypassed in life's busyness," McManus said.

According to various academic studies, 80 percent to 90 percent of participating couples fall back in love. The Marriage Encounter phone number is (800) 795-LOVE.

■ **"Help couples realize even deeply troubled marriages can be saved."**

At St. David's Episcopal Church in Jacksonville, Fla., Pastor Dick McGinnis called upon seven couples with "once-rocky, now-solid" marriages to counsel troubled couples using 17 Marriage Ministry principles they developed.

Since 1987, they have helped more than 33 couples, and the church has not had a divorce; phone (904) 641-8177.

■ **"Call for community marriage policies that unite clergy in divorce-preventing covenants that span denominations."**

So far, 24 communities have adopted marriage policies, McManus reported, and many more are expected. The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board is producing a six-part Marriage Savers video series and related materials, due for release this month. To order, call (615) 251-2277 or (800) 458-2772.



Marriage facts

■ 60 percent of American children born today will see their parents divorced by the time they are 18. Of those 60 percent, half will see a second divorce before they are 18.

■ Six out of 10 new marriages will end in divorce or separation.

■ 1 million American children will see their parents divorce this year.

■ One-half of new marriages include at least one partner who has been divorced.

■ Seventy-five percent of second marriages fail.

■ Cohabitation has soared sixfold since 1970.

■ Only 55 percent of adults are married today—the lowest figure ever.

Source: Michael McManus in "Marriage Savers"

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER J. BROWN FOR THE WESTERN RECORDER

MARRIAGE MATTERS
Michael McManus (right), writer of the nationally syndicated column "Ethics and Religion," talks with Southern Baptist family ministry leaders during a conference at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville. (BP photo by Terri Lackey)



Saving more marriages is columnist's passion in life

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—Saving marriages isn't Michael McManus' only passion, but it certainly is one of his most fervent. The journalist/marriage-for-life champion is taking on the religious establishment and charging it with neglect.

Saving marriages "is not the job of the government; it is not the job of the school; it's the job of the church," said McManus, writer of "Ethics and Religion," a syndicated column.

"Many pastors sidestep tough topics like chastity, cohabitation and divorce, even though secular evidence supports a biblical position on these issues, he told Southern Baptist discipleship and family ministry leaders.

"We have a strange paradox in the United States. We have more people in church than any other modern nation. (Pollster George) Gallup says two-thirds of our people are members of a church.

"And 42 percent are in church on

Sunday, yet we have the highest divorce rates, the highest teen pregnancy rates and the highest crime rates. We seem to have all this religiosity and no demonstration of that religion."

And Southern states, often considered the most religious, have the highest divorce rates in the country, he added.

McManus has a battle plan for what he calls the "war on divorce." "America's pastors, priests and rabbis have access to U.S. marriages, but less than 20 percent of all American couples have had any premarital counseling," he said.

A member of Fourth Presbyterian Church in Bethesda, Md., McManus has traveled coast to coast touting community marriage policies.

A community marriage policy works off principles McManus has uncovered during years of research. His book, "Marriage Savers," outlines a strategy for reducing divorce in America.

The book particularly targets tri-

ple marriages as a catalyst to divorce. Couples who cohabit before marriage are about 50 percent more likely to end up divorced than those who don't, he said.

"Sixty percent of all couples married today live together first. Of those people who cohabit, 40 percent don't marry," he cited. "Of those who marry, 45 percent will divorce before year 10."

McManus believes cohabitation is the reason the number of never-married adults has doubled from 21 million in 1970 to 42 million today.

"Some people live with partner A, B and C, then wind up not married at 37, and they wonder why," McManus said.

His interest in saving marriages came in the 10th year of his marriage to Harriet. He was working in another state, staying away for a week at a time. When he came home, he didn't seem to have time for his family.

After a year of that schedule, a member of their church "suggested a Marriage Encounter weekend that

makes a good marriage better." His wife didn't want to go, and he didn't feel the need.

Finally, they agreed to go on the retreat, where they spent time communicating and "falling in love again."

In their 28th year of marriage, the McManuses have been mentors to about 20 newly married couples and trained more than 20 couples to become mentors.

MARRIAGE

Movement aims to redraw marriage & divorce map

"This has the potential to redraw the marriage and divorce map in America and significantly impact the divorce rate."

Tim Cleary, Southern Baptist Sunday School Board

Continued from page 1

pected, reported Tim Cleary, the board's national singles consultant.

"I was just amazed at the dynamics of the thing," Cleary said. "It's a very holistic approach to saving marriages that includes work with young people, with never-married single adults, with single-again adults, with remarriages. It covered the whole range of issues that I've never seen covered before."

The new Marriage Savers material also encourages reconciliation for separated and already divorced couples. "Reconciliation must happen first, to facilitate healing," he said. "We'll try to help people to forgive (and, if possible) to try to get back together."

Marriage Savers will make a huge impact, Cleary predicted. "This has the potential to redraw the marriage and divorce map in America and significantly impact the divorce rate."

Kentuckians committed to Marriage Savers are on the cutting edge of the movement for at least two reasons, McManus said.

First, Louisville is the largest city that has attempted to establish community marriage guidelines. With an estimated 850-900 congregations, Marriage Savers organizers have a huge territory to cover.

Second, it's the only city in which a lay couple, not ministers, have spearheaded the efforts.

Gary and Sherry Hendricks, members of Shively Baptist Church, heard about Marriage Savers on the radio

and decided their city needed help.

They had experienced firsthand the benefits of marriage enrichment through Marriage Encounter, a multi-denominational effort originated by the Catholic Church.

"A community marriage policy has a lot to offer families and couples," Mrs. Hendricks explained. "We see it as an answer to strengthen families."

Ministers from across the city shared their vision and joined a task force to draft proposed guidelines for supporting marriages in the Louisville area. (They avoid the word "policy" for fear of sounding too rigid and breaking a coalition that spans the Catholic-Protestant-Evangelical continuum.)

"There's a big need for family emphasis in our churches," said Jim Wofford, pastor of Cooper Memorial United Methodist Church. "Churches have almost abdicated to trends in contemporary society. Quite honestly, I've found myself questioning whether we make a difference."

But participation in Marriage Savers has helped Wofford "broaden my awareness of tools and programs available to sharpen my counseling skills and to improve the programs available for couples."

Help like that is needed, added Allen Lehmann, pastor of Trinity Chapel Assembly of God.

"As a pastor, I have to deal with the year-after-year complications of broken marriages," he reported. "The appalling statistics are only the surface issue. The everyday heartaches, hassles and stresses on broken families are why I'm involved. ...

"If we can help resolve this problem of the breakdown of marriages, we will do more to help our society than we could do with any other single thing."

Barbara MacDonald, director of the center for family ministries for the Catholic Church's Archdiocese of Louisville, agreed.

"Couples are faced with social pressures in a secular world that doesn't value lifelong commitment," she observed. "The more we can do to encourage an underlying faith commitment, the more we can help build a bond or bridge through difficult times."

Close observers credit the Catholic Church with leadership in premarital counseling and marriage requirements, but MacDonald is glad to have allies.

"It's been rewarding to see how many other denominations put energy on marriage preparation," she said. "We're finding that when marriages fail, it's often because of things that could have been addressed in marriage preparation."

That's just the start of a good

thing, stressed Jim Holladay, pastor of Clifton Baptist Church.

In addition to premarital counseling, "we want clergy to take seriously the need for ongoing programs that emphasize the importance of marriage," he said, noting Marriage Savers' emphasis on teaching children and youth about marriage and providing long-term marriage enrichment and counseling also are invaluable.

So is the interdenominational effort that goes into Marriage Savers, members of the Louisville task force said.

"A lot of people call churches trying to find the best deal on a wedding," Holladay explained. "If we can agree this marriage-preparation time is non-negotiable, it'll be hard to run around and find a Marring Sam to conduct a wedding. We won't get 100 percent participation, but it will make a statement to the community that marriage should not be entered into lightly and unadvisably."

Although the Louisville document is being structured to meet the unique needs of that community, Marriage Savers can be implemented in towns and cities of all sizes across Kentucky, planners said.

"I think it would be easier in a small town to get it together," Mrs. Hendricks said, adding laypeople can implement much of the program. "We don't want pastors to look at this and say, 'Oh, no, that's just more work I have to do.' Help is available in churches. Laypeople can be trained to help."



Helping young people soar

When you were a child, did you ever pretend you could fly? Did you stand outside on summer evenings, close your eyes, and imagine yourself soaring above the clouds?

I hope that your life, like mine, has had moments when you "soared" above it all. I hope you've had moments when you had the opportunity to excel, when you faced a difficult challenge and overcame it, when you set a goal for yourself and achieved it.

These moments are essential for all of us. When I visit on our campuses and talk with the youth in our care, I am aware that these moments of success—of "soaring"—are especially important. Children who come from abuse situations as so many of our children have, must deal with not only the physical scars but the emotional ones as well. This is why we offer our children every chance at success.

This summer, many of the young people in our care will have the opportunity to build good memories of success as they do new things, test their skills and abilities, and help themselves by learning to help others. We're excited about

the camps the young people will be attending, the special activities they will participate in on their campuses, and the mission trips they will go on with their churches. These latter opportunities are especially exciting because they mean that our young people will have the opportunity to share with others what you have so richly shared with them—

the love and grace of Jesus Christ.

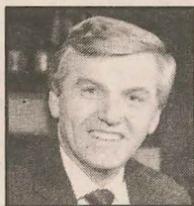
There also will be plenty of opportunities this summer for our children simply to be children and relax. Many of our youth have had to grow up too quickly and circumstances have prevented them from simply enjoying being young in the summertime. While we cannot erase their

pasts, we can make a difference for today and for their future.

I am so very grateful to Kentucky Baptists for helping us make dreams come true for children who have almost forgotten how to dream or hope. Thank you for providing young people with a safe, loving environment where they can soar!

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

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Curtis C. Mooney

Christ's healing community

This month's guest writer is Stuart G. Collier, director of pastoral care at Tri-County Baptist Hospital in LaGrange.

Raccoon Mountain and Straight Mountain were not just any mountains, they were the front and back of the Appalachian valley in which I grew up in northeastern Alabama.

On one side of our property lived Mr. Murphy on his fragrant pig and chicken farm, and on the other was Tobe who lived on his fragrant pig and cow farm.

Daisy was our milk cow, Robert our dog, Mt. Pisgah our church, Pike's our store, the mining pond our swimming hole, and Buzzard Rock, a high mountain overlook, was our claim to fame and tourist site for visiting friends in our little town of Altoona.

In our valley also lived Chester, the deputy sheriff who lived on in local legend, a number of moonshiners, people with biblical names like Hosea (pronounced "Hosey"), Grace, Thomas, Eulala (it sounds biblical), Levi, Theodotus, Martha, my neighbor Tobias Eules, and then others like Pansy, Verbon and a clan known only as the Smiths.

Why mention these?

Because they were part of my life. They were community to me, and community is a place where you belong. Belonging makes life good.

Thinking about Baptist Healthcare Foundation and the lives touched by this important outreach reminded me of community, because like all those vital

parts of my early community, the Foundation belongs in the Baptist community of healing.

And the biggest part of the healing community is all the Baptists across Kentucky who know about and care about and support the Baptist healing community of our Kentucky Baptist hospitals in Louisville, Lexington, LaGrange, Corbin and Paducah and the Foundation.

I hope more and more people will support the Baptist healing community through gifts to the Foundation. It is a good way to be a part of Christ's healing community.

Any questions or comments concerning this article, Baptist Healthcare System or Baptist Healthcare Foundation should be directed to Charles W. Cox Jr., president of Baptist Healthcare Foundation, 4007 Kresge Way, Louisville, Ky. 40207 (502) 896-5003.

BAPTIST HEALTHCARE FOUNDATION

MARRIAGE

Marriage Savers plays in Peoria

Development of a community marriage policy is a key component of saving marriages, according to participants in the Marriage Savers movement.

And Peoria, Ill., has drafted a "national model" policy, said Michael McManus, creator of the Marriage Savers concept.

A preface to the policy notes: "It is the responsibility of pastors to set minimal requirements to raise the quality of commitment in those we marry. We believe that couples who seriously participate in premarital testing and counseling will have a better understanding of what the marriage commitment involves."

The Peoria policy is comprised of 10 requirements:

- "A minimum of four months' marriage preparation."

- "A minimum of four counseling sessions, with one devoted to the use of a premarital test or inventory and one devoted to the biblical understanding of marriage and divorce."

- "Training of leader/mentor couples in each church to work as role models and counselors with

engaged couples."

- "Attendance at an Engaged Encounter weekend or seminar for engaged couples to improve communication skills and to establish their marriages with Christ at the center."

- "At least two post-marital counseling sessions with a mentor couple, six months after the wedding and one year after the wedding."

- "Encouragement for all married couples to attend a couples' retreat, such as Marriage Encounter or Marriage Enrichment."

- "Create a marriage ministry of mentoring couples, whose marriages once nearly failed, to work with troubled marriages."

- "Pastors will fully cooperate to learn more about how to bond couples for life."

- "The clergy should be the first to attend a couples' retreat, and many will go to a Family Life Ministries' 'weekend to remember.'"

- "Pastors will take this covenant back to (their) churches to be ratified by the appropriate boards."

Source: "Marriage Savers," by Michael McManus

Marriage Savers resources coming from Baptist publishers

Help is on the way for churches that want to save marriages.

A consortium of resources—including Marriage Savers creator Michael McManus, the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, the American Family Association and the Roman Catholic Church—is preparing a Marriage Savers resource kit.

The packets are being published and marketed by the Sunday School Board and are to be available this summer, said Tim Cleary, the board's national singles consultant and a key leader in developing the materials.

The kits include:

- Six videotapes that describe the aspects of Marriage Savers.

- A study guide to accompany the videotapes.

- A copy of McManus' book, "Marriage Savers," which provides background data about the nation's divorce crisis, examples of how churches are stemming the tide of divorce and ideas for implementing Marriage Savers principles in local churches and communities.

- A smaller booklet by McManus, "Ensuring Marriage: 25 Proven Ways to Prevent Divorce."

Cost for the entire kit is \$149.97, and it has been designed to be sold one per church, Cleary said. Additional copies of "Ensuring Marriage,"

which can be given to couples, will cost \$4.95.

Orders may be placed through the board's customer-service number: (800) 458-2772.

The Marriage Savers program is positive for three reasons, said John Lepper, the Kentucky Baptist Convention's family ministry director.

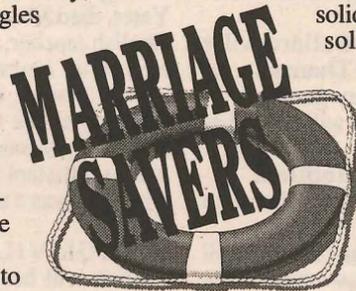
"First, it's proactive; it's preventative," Lepper said. "For so long, we've tried to help after divorce has taken place. These are good, solid resources with good, solid research behind them."

"Second, I'm pleased to see they're including videos. It's time we as Southern Baptists recognize video as a way of communicating."

"And third, it helps ministers band together for a good cause. It empowers the church and empowers ministers. For so long, we've felt powerless against the onslaught of the breakdown of the home."

Lepper predicted the Marriage Savers materials will make a difference in American communities.

"It may do for marriage what True Love Waits did for sexual abstinence," he said, comparing the new program to the wildly successful sexual abstinence ministry aimed at teens. "It may give us a positive issue to address the nation."



Marriage Savers "may do for marriage what True Love Waits did for sexual abstinence. It may give us a positive issue to address the nation."

John Lepper, Kentucky Baptist Convention family ministry director

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Saturday, June 18, 7:00 p.m.
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Meals ~ Saturday 5:45 p.m.
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PEOPLE

KENTUCKY KERNELS

Employment discrimination based on race topped the list of formal complaints filed by the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights in 1993. Of 118 formal complaints filed, 32 related to race and employment. The next-highest category was for 21 complaints related to employment and gender.

There were 19 formal complaints about housing discrimination based on race, and four about public accommodation due to race. Complaints on religious discrimination occurred only in the employment category, with three formal actions filed. No complaints related to religion and housing or public accommodation were filed.

Source: Annual report of Kentucky Commission on Human Rights 1993

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **ALEXANDRIA**—Bill Barnard, pastor of Grant's Lick Church, will retire June 30.

■ **BOWLING GREEN**—Glendale Church will celebrate its 39th homecoming reunion revival Aug. 13-16. Also the 32nd annual youth Bible conference is Aug. 11-13.

■ **CECILIA**—Cecilia Church will celebrate its 175th anniversary June 26 with an all-day service. Former pastors and members are invited. Contact the church at (502) 862-4228 for more information.

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Ballardsville Church called Donna Thomas, a recent Southern Seminary graduate, as minister of music. She will begin her new ministry June 12.

■ **GOSHEN**—Bill Holifield resigned as pastor of Liberty Church to become pastor in Port Allen, La.

■ **GREENVILLE**—First Church will celebrate its 125th anniversary June

11-12. The Sunday service will be followed by dinner on the grounds. A period of reminiscing and challenge will begin at 1:30 p.m. The public is invited to all events. Call (502) 338-3453 for more information.

■ **HAWESVILLE**—Hawesville Church called Wallace Morris as interim pastor.

New Life Church called Eugene O'Bryan as interim pastor.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Elizabeth Draughon Yates, 87, widow of O.W. Yates, died May 17. She was a retired English teacher, director of religious education, church secretary at Lexington Avenue Church in Danville, assistant to the editor of the Baptist Record in Mississippi and public relations assistant at Georgetown College. She was a member of Rosemont Church.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Beechmont Church will host "YouthQuake '94"

Baptist hospitals complete staff reductions

LOUISVILLE—Baptist Healthcare System announced that two of its hospitals reduced their workforce June 1 as part of previously announced streamlining.

Approximately 68 employees were displaced at Western Baptist Hospital in Paducah, while 21 employees lost jobs at Central Baptist Hospital in Lexington.

Western Baptist Hospital has elim-

inated a total of 102 positions during the restructuring. However, hospital President Larry Barton said no further cutbacks are planned.

At Central Baptist Hospital, a total of 30 employees have been affected by cutbacks and no others are anticipated, said President William Sisson.

Baptist Regional Medical Center in Corbin previously announced the termination of 54 employees.

June 27-30. The contemporary event features Christian comedians, athletes and musicians and is open to all teenagers. Contact Suzanne Clayton at 244-6745 for more information.

Gethsemane Church ordained Roy Apted as a deacon June 5. Also, Bill Johnson was elected as a deacon.

Craig Loscalzo, professor of Christian preaching at Southern Seminary, began as interim pastor at Crescent Hill Church June 5.

■ **MEANS**—Means Church called John Ryder as pastor. He previously served as pastor at Beech Grove Church.

■ **MILTON**—Corn Creek Church ordained Bernie Ginn as deacon.

■ **OWENSBORO**—Sorgho Church called Dennis McFadden as pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Immanuel Church will host a centennial homecoming celebration June 11-12. Guest speakers include former pastors Wayne Dehoney, T.L. McSwain, Bill Hurt and Bill Cubine. Friends and former members are invited. For more information, call the church office at (502) 443-5306.

CLASSIFIED ADS

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FOR SALE: Oak pews, various lengths, \$10/ft., 12 chandeliers \$100 each, 10 stained-glass windows \$500 each, Porter Memorial Baptist, Lexington (606) 272-3441.

SEEKING: Clay First Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of music and youth. Housing and salary provided. Send resumé to Clay First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 485, Clay, Kentucky 42404. Phone (502) 664-2414.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor/minister of Grant's Lick Baptist Church, Campbell County, Kentucky. Send resumé to Search Committee, Robert Miller, chairman, 6098 Hissem Ave., Alexandria, KY 41001. Phone (606) 635-7420.

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'God has joined us together'

On Sunday, May 15, the class of 1994 proudly accepted their diplomas as graduates of Oneida Baptist Institution.

Salutatorian Kevin Thurman recognized the efforts of his classmates as he addressed the graduates: "We cannot exactly say it has been easy. It's been our most difficult task and achievement so far. ... Together we have stood beside each other in the best and worst of times. When we think about it, our classmates, these staff and faculty members and Barkley Moore have been our immediate family. Leaving today is going to be harder than coming—no matter if we wanted to come or not. ... It is truly God who had it in his perfect plan for us all to be here at OBI this day. ... Matthew 19:6 says: 'What God has joined together, let not man put asunder.' God has joined us together—we are the class of 1994."

Valedictorian Sarah Perrine spoke of the changes that had taken place in herself and her classmates: "I think we went through most of our senior year not really able to believe we were really seniors. ... It took a long time to adjust to being a senior, but somewhere along the way, we subconsciously let go of who we used to be and began to be molded into something new. ... Somewhere in there we began to stand taller, to look to the future. ... I hope if we've learned anything while at Oneida together, it's that Christianity isn't a bunch of useless religious words and phrases, but it's that joyful expectancy. ... Our time at Oneida has been beautiful. Now we're graduates, our dreams are just beginning. May God bless the class of 1994."

In addition to being Valedictorian, Perrine also accepted the Miss Oneida President's Award and the William A. Evans Memorial Cup, which is

the highest awarded by the school. Daniel Nichols accepted the Mr. Oneida President's Award.

Adulis Beyenne received the John Michael Davis Citizenship Award, the second-highest honor awarded by OBI.

Josh Mefford took the Brad Dorrough Friendship Award voted on by the student body.

The following seniors accepted President's Awards: Joseph Tolbert, Clem Browning III, Adulis Beyenne, Abigail Gordon, Aaron Gause, Dory Michael, Sarah Hoover, Daniel Nichols, Michael Mullins, Jeremy Strebeck, Sarah Perrine, Kevin Thurman, Kimi-toshi Takanashi, Ethan Allen.

THIS IS ONEIDA



A.B. Colvin

Each year's graduation gives us an opportunity to honor underclass students who have excelled in academics and who have made outstanding progress during the school year. Ed Lowdenback, middle school principal, and JoAnn Seymour, high school principal, presented these awards. Thirteen students received Scholar Awards, based on their grade-point averages. Ten students earned Progress Awards which had been decided by a secret-

ballot vote by all teachers, administrators and deans.

Every year at graduation we also honor staff members who have served for five, 10, 15, 20 or 25 years. This year eight people received plaques for five years of service, eight were honored for 10, two for 15 and four for 20 years. Ada Abner, our chief cook and dietitian, smiled to a standing ovation as she accepted her plaque for 25 years of ministry at OBI.

Written by D.J. Chesser and Laura Stockton with Denise Spencer

A.B. Colvin is administrator of Oneida Baptist Institute, Oneida, Ky. 40972

Dr. Kelly's secretary visits campus

"From my desk I observed students going to class. I saw their confidence growing." Mildred Oaks Barringer also gained new confidence during her four years on campus. She came to Clear Creek in 1949—a 35-year-old widow with three children—expecting to be financial officer. After a few days President L.C. Kelly told her Treasurer Helen Royalty "wasn't ready to turn over the records. How would you like to be my secretary?" With most of the faculty retired from other ministries, Oaks "felt like the kid on the block."

Kelly's desk and hers faced each other. "I thought he needed a separate room where he could entertain guests. We tried it, but it didn't last long. Now I realize how much I gained by those years across the desk."

Oaks remembers Kelly as "a man with bulldog tenacity. He once said 'If you give in to discouragement, you'll fall over and others will go on. You will be forgotten.' He was true to his vision and withstood a lot of criticism."

Kelly "couldn't wait to get the mail." The biggest surprise came when Oaks opened a package with \$7,730 in bills sent by an anonymous Tennessee donor. She was

there when 19 student cottages were built on one day in May 1951. She helped raise \$15,000 to match a gift from Harold Helm of New York to build a two-story furniture factory.

Clear Creek marked another turning point in Oak's life: She met Brother Jolly of Pineville First Baptist. When Jolly move to Roanoke, Va., he asked her to join the church

as director of religious education. "He believed in me and opened the door of opportunity. I got my training at Clear Creek by hearing the best of Southern Baptist leaders and used all the material saved from the summer conferences."

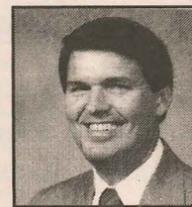
After 28 years as a widow she remarried, and at the age of 60 was elected county commissioner by Henderson

County, N.C. She served four years as chairman and drew from her experience in finance, public relations, personnel and administration first gained at Clear Creek.

Kelly once said, "Know that you are right in the Lord, and then go ahead." Mildred Oaks Barringer has followed that guidance and continues to enjoy a full life.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

MISSIONS

Kentucky native spins into action for sports outreach

By Marty Croll
SBC Foreign Mission Board

ROANOKE, Va. (BP)—Somewhere near a curve toward the close of a grinding day in the 1994 international Tour DuPont bicycle race, photographer-cyclist Drew Cuter positioned himself and started photographing.

During the next several minutes of picture snapping on a green mountainside, Cuter made his contribution to Southern Baptists' Tour DuPont outreach. The outreach is an effort to identify riders from all over the world seeking the gospel truth and link them to missionaries working in their home countries.

Media consultant Mark Snowden at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board will send Cuter's photos to racers as a complimentary gift and souvenir from the Tour DuPont, along with a letter introducing the gospel. Snowden is a Kentucky native and formerly worked with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Participants in the 11-stage Tour DuPont course this year started in Dover, Del., racing over flatlands of the Mid-Atlantic region and then turning west and snaking along the Virginia and North Carolina mountain ridges and finally into Winston-Salem, N.C.—about 1,060 miles. Seventeen teams competed for approximately \$200,000 in prizes.

Team members listed their native countries as anywhere from Mexico or Uzbekistan to Russia, Holland or France. Viatcheslav Ekimov, a Russian, won.

Baptists' Tour DuPont outreach program operated in the background,

among other things mobilizing prayer for riders through local churches in cities along the course. In some areas local church members passed out tracts and made contacts with cyclists and support crews.

In Asheville, N.C., for example, Buncombe Baptist Association distributed 367 English-language tracts and two Bibles. More than 1,000 tracts and nearly 50 Bibles were distributed during the 11-day event.

In Wilmington, Del., Jim McBride, director of missions for Delaware Baptist Association, obtained Latvian-language Christian materials from a Latvian Baptist church in Philadelphia for an injured Latvian rider.

If possible, McBride's wife, Daphne, will follow up with the rider, Juris Silovs, when she visits Latvia as a volunteer this summer in the Maryland-Delaware Convention's partnership with the former Soviet republic.

Snowden said he hopes to expand the outreach even more next year along the lines of other Southern Baptist sports outreach programs.

FMB representatives and local church volunteers have been deeply involved during the past several years in such events as the Summer Olympic Games in Barcelona, Spain; the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer, Norway; and the Indian Ocean Island Games in Madagascar off the coast of Africa. The board also assigns sports evangelist missionaries to design ongoing programs for outreach related to a variety of sports, including the use of professional sports figures to help communicate the gospel.

In many ways sports evangelism has burst onto the scene as a legiti-

mate gospel witness as international sports events have garnered increasing attention from business and media. Sports evangelism offers an opportunity to bridge cultural, ethnic, political and religious barriers as sports figures become increasingly important as role models.

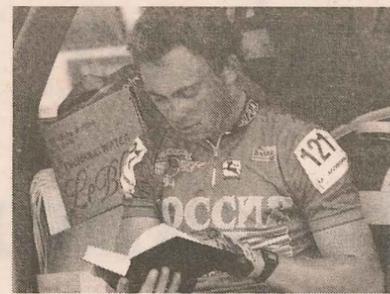
Snowden, a former summer missionary, started cycling as an outlet during his wife's bout with leukemia, and has completed two two-day 120 mile tours to raise money for leukemia research. As his interest in cycling has grown, he has looked for ways to meld it with another of his drives: evangelism.

In past years, the Tour DuPont's course has taken riders directly past the FMB's office on Monument Avenue in Richmond. Last year Snowden started envisioning the race as an opportunity to reach internationals.

FMB officials turned him loose to develop the idea. The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board immediately took to it, helping put together a network of Baptist associations along the route to support the outreach. The HMB appropriated nearly \$1,000 to print tracts in French, Spanish and English. Snowden secured six Russian Bibles from G.C. Harbuck, a home missionary in the Richmond area.

The International Christian Cycling Club also helped. It supplied a box of 28 Sports New Testaments like the ones used in Barcelona for hand-outs. It identified for Snowden about a dozen Christian cyclists along the route. One of them was Cuter, the photographer.

Fred Rodriguez, leader of the American Amateur team, told



RUNNING THE RACE Kentucky native Mark Snowden (above, center) greets a race marshal at the international Tour DuPont bicycle race in Richmond, Va. With Snowden is Bob Fowler, deacon at Gayton Baptist Church in Richmond. At left, Alexei Byakov, a member of the Russian team, pores over a Russian-language Bible given him as part of the Baptist outreach. (BP photos by Sandy King)

Snowden he hadn't ever been overly interested in his Roman Catholic faith. But he promised to read the Bible and tract Snowden handed him. Before the race out of Richmond began the next morning, Rodriguez made a point to tell Snowden he was keeping the Bible close to him.

Bob Fowler, a member of Gayton Baptist Church outside of Richmond, gave one rider a Spanish Bible.

The rider at first just said, "Gracias," Snowden said. "Then he looked down again and realized what it was. Then he said more emphatically, 'Gracias!' He put it in his jersey pocket and rode away."

HMB trustees get first-hand look at missionaries' work

By Sarah Zimmerman
SBC Home Mission Board

CHICAGO (BP)—Effective ministry in cities requires living and working amid the urban chaos, a Chicago pastor told Southern Baptist Home Mission Board trustees.

"Jesus did not commute. He did not make weekend trips. He so loved the world he came here," said Charles Lyons of Armitage Baptist Church. Lyons, his wife, and their five children live three blocks from their church in Chicago.

Armitage was one of 16 churches trustees visited on a tour of mission sites in northeastern Illinois and northwestern Indiana. They also saw ministries on college campuses, at a seamen's center, a state prison and a county hospital.

This was the first experience in inner cities for several trustees. "I've heard and read about the inner city, but it took this experience for me to understand its hurts and needs," said Harold Epperson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Kissimmee, Fla.

"I've never seen the poverty that I've seen in these inner cities," said Marvin Capehart, pastor of First Baptist Church of Alameda, N.M. "In New Mexico, children have a place to play and clean air. Here there are just people, people, people."

Living in an impoverished community means "every need known to humanity is beating on our front door," Lyons said. But he is undaunted. "The whole world is a bad neighborhood," he explained.

Indiana pastor Cato Brooks is equally committed to ministry amidst crime and poverty. "Being in the inner city gives you all kinds of opportunity for the church to be the church," said the pastor of Tree of Life Baptist Church in Gary, Ind.

Located between Chicago and Detroit, Gary is a battleground for rival gangs from the larger cities. Gary has Indiana's highest crime rate.

The church established Tree of Life Community Development Corp. to tackle issues such as substance abuse, homelessness, continuing education and hunger.

By sharing Jesus Christ with people who participate in the development projects, "we can turn our city around," Brooks said. "Any other thing would be a waste of time."

On the opposite end of the economic ladder, trustees met Ken Morris, pastor of Near North Baptist Church near downtown Chicago.

The Near North community of high-rise apartments has 1,000 people per square block. Residents' per capita income is \$61,000, and 70 percent of them have at least a college degree.

Though residents do not have many physical needs, Morris said, the community has a lot of lonely people. He began the church 12 years ago by developing relationships with neighbors through recreational activities. Now the church has 47 active members and 60 to 70 in worship each week.

In addition to economic diversity, trustees saw ethnic pluralism by visiting Korean, Russian, Romanian, Hispanic, Polish and African-American congregations.

Trustees also met pastors working to start congregations. The State Convention of Baptists in Indiana expects to start 54 churches this year, said Carrol Fowler, state director of missions. His primary focus is 10 cities with a population of 5,000 or more and no Southern Baptist church.

The HMB sponsors the tour for trustees each year. This year, trustees were reminded of the HMB's support in a variety of ways:

■ Seeing churches built with funds from the board's church loans division.

■ Meeting a US-2 missionary and a semester missionary assigned to Chicago college campuses by the HMB student missions department.

■ Being at Uptown Baptist Church, which provides 3,000 meals a month to needy residents with partial help



from the HMB hunger fund.

■ Meeting church planters who receive HMB salary supplements.

"It's good to see what the Lord is doing, but there is still a great job to be done," said Linda Principe, a Kentucky trustee and member of First Baptist Church of Brandenburg.

"I have a fresh appreciation for the sacrifice of home missionaries," said Syndey Odom, interim pastor of Southside Baptist Church in Cochran, Ga. His wife, Cloma, is a trustee.

"I've been impressed with the commitment of these workers and how much they give up to do what they do," he said. "I used to think foreign missionaries were the martyrs."

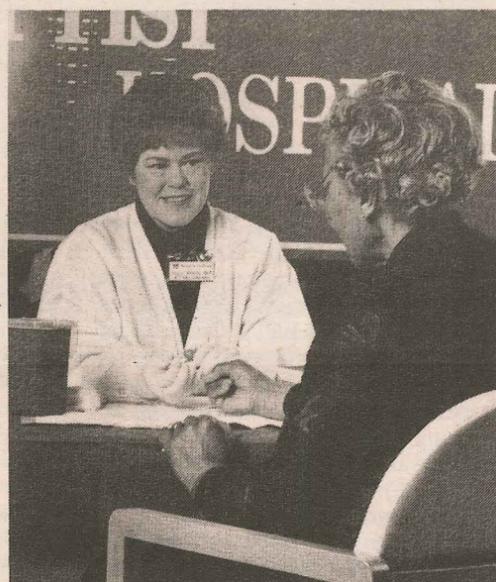
ON LOCATION Linda Principe, a Home Mission Board trustee from Brandenburg, poses with Alexa Popvici, founding pastor of Chicago's Romanian Baptist Church. The Romanian church was one stop on a recent awareness tour for HMB trustees. After visiting mission sites in Indiana and Illinois, Principe said she hopes to become a better witness, better promoter of home missions and a better prayer warrior. (BP photo by John Swain)

Baptist Healthcare System

Statement of Values

Baptist Healthcare System's values are derived from the depth of its Christian heritage, particularly its Baptist roots. Originating from that heritage are the values of humanity, compassion, mercy, fairness, justice, and reverence for the sanctity of life. As employees, management and the boards of directors serve our constituencies and one another, we seek to enhance the physical, emotional and spiritual health and well-being of all persons, without discrimination toward any.

The growth of Baptist Healthcare System will be accomplished in accordance with our core values and through basic commitments to our constituencies.



Our Commitment To Our Community

We believe it is our responsibility to provide accessible healthcare.

We believe that it is our duty to be financially responsible in the structure and delivery of healthcare services.

We believe it is our responsibility to contribute to the improvement of the general health and wellness of our community and environment through a continuum of care, effective community education and continuous quality improvement of our services.

We believe that it is our responsibility to provide care to all who are in need, without regard to ability to pay, yet within the reasonable bounds of responsible stewardship.

We believe that it is our responsibility to be a good corporate citizen by conducting business in a manner that is in the mutual best interest of the hospitals and the communities they serve.

We believe it is our responsibility to foster an environment that encourages volunteers from the community to contribute their diversity of talents to enhance our services.

BAPTIST HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

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