


PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
WESTERN RECORDER

July 23, 1996
Vol. 170, No. 29

FOR THE RECORD

Olympic ministry
Over the next three weeks, the Western Recorder will highlight Baptist ministries in Atlanta during the summer Olympics. Coverage begins this week on pages 1 & 6.

Disney employees
A veteran employee of the Walt Disney Co. wants Southern Baptists to know that many Christians work for Disney and are making a difference in their workplaces. See page 2.

Side by side
Fifty years ago, the Ashby twins of Shelby County got married on the same day. This summer the two couples, who have shared much of life and ministry, celebrated a double golden wedding anniversary. See page 3.

Family Forum
How safe are your children? See page 4.

Editorial
Lessons from two events of the past week that have left indelible marks on our memories. See page 5.

Welfare reform
The U.S. House of Representatives last week passed a massive plan for reforming welfare. See page 7.

Shively starts new Financial Fitness Center

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—When Shively Baptist Church opened its new Financial Fitness Center June 30, officials didn't expect such a fervent response.

About 50 people or couples already have expressed an interest in ongoing counseling and education, said Michael Diggs, minister of education.

Among those needing help is a non-church member experiencing a severe financial crisis, which demonstrates Shively's goal of using the program to reach the unchurched, he said.

"This is a combination of helping the church and outreach," said Diggs. "But our focus is helping the community. We want to say, 'Here's the church, we can help you get on the right track.'"

"We're trying to get out in the community and get away from the stereotype of the church that isn't doing anything, and the only help they give is food and clothing."

After last month's dedication service, the program—which includes counseling and regular spending reviews for the first 90 days—is just getting under way. Monthly seminars don't start until September.

Rick Fields, a certified public accountant and president of Fields & Co., is the volunteer director.

"I'm really excited about it," said Fields, who plans to offer biblically-based financial planning for his clients at the center. "It's got the possibility for changing people's lives, and that's what ministry is all about."



OLYMPIC ENERGY A youth group from Berea Baptist Church in Berea performs for visitors to one of the many Atlanta-area Olympic venues where Atlanta International Ministries '96 has coordinated hospitality and ministry efforts.

Baptists compete for Olympic message

By David Winfrey
News Director

ATLANTA—With the summer Olympics as a backdrop, Baptists from around the world are competing with a variety of voices to reach an unparalleled international audience with the message of Jesus Christ.

Olympic visitors are bombarded with sights and sounds at every turn by groups ranging from multi-million-dollar sponsors to bilingual Mormons.

Baptists are relying on gifts, entertainment and Southern hospitality to make a lasting impression with their Christian message of God's love.

In downtown Atlanta, volunteers staff a welcome center, complete with restrooms, a large-screen TV, air conditioning and free water—a drawing card for visitors to a city where tem-

peratures soar into the 90s and stores charge \$1 for a cup of water.

Near competition arenas, singers, actors and puppeteers help fans keep their minds off the heat or long lines.

At area hotels, groups are organizing "kids club" activities, including games, refreshments and Bible stories.

Churches are conducting sports camps with Olympic themes and Christian messages. Families are welcoming international visitors into their homes.

All these activities are done for the purpose of meeting needs and building bridges to tell people about Jesus, said Linda Johnson, director of Atlan-

ta International Ministries '96. AIM '96 is the coordinating body for 8,000 Baptist volunteers.

Baptists' track record in Olympic ministry dates to the 1980 winter games in Lake Placid, N.Y., said Bill Lee, director of special ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. In addition to evangelism opportunities, Olympic ministries raise the visibility of Baptists in the host city and to

visitors from around the world, he said. The Lake Placid ministry resulted in formation of a new church.

Before moving to Atlanta, Johnson
□ See *Baptists compete ...*, page 6



16-year-old was leader in youth group but died 'huffing'

By Terri Lackey
SBC Sunday School Board

NASHVILLE (BP)—A quick glance under the bill of Ricky Stem Jr.'s baseball hat is testimony that he really was a good kid.

There, among the sweat stains and doodles, is the reference of a Scripture verse penned in the handwriting of a child. Philippians 4:13—a verse about hope and strength.

Ricky won't be wearing that hat anymore. A Christian since age 7, the 16-year-old died June 20 after "huffing" fluorocarbons from his home air conditioning unit.

"We're claiming that verse as our own," his mother, Diane Stem, said of the Scripture that has been Ricky's favorite since he was a young child. Through their pain, Stem, a 16-year employee of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, and her husband,

Ricky Sr., are hoping to warn other Christian parents their child could be next.

"Ricky's in heaven, and I'm going to see him again someday," Diane Stem said during a recent interview at the family home. "I can't think of a better person that the Lord would have at his table than my son, but I wanted him a little longer here."

Huffing is one of many ways young people use inhalants, according to Valerie Handy, an alcohol and drug specialist in Nashville, who said the chemicals produce mind- and behavior-altering effects.

"All kids have to do is look under the kitchen cabinet," Handy said, to find one of more than 1,400 products that can be used as inhalants.

Some of those include airplane glue, butane, paint thinner, cleaning products, aerosol sprays, gasoline, correction fluids, even whipped cream.

This is just a cheap and easy high for the kids," Handy said, "and it can turn their brains into silly putty."

That is, if they live.

Ricky Jr. was one of more than 1,000 Americans who die each year from inhalants—and 500 of those are first-time users. Those who don't die can suffer damage to the liver, lungs, kidneys, brain and nervous system.

The Stems, who have a daughter and grandson, say they were caught completely off guard by Ricky's death by inhalants. He had attended church services three times the week before he died. That is the same number of times he tried the dangerous teenage fad, taught to him, his parents say, by a fellow member of his church youth group.

"He hadn't even tried it enough for us to notice any symptoms or a change in his behavior," Ricky Stem

Sr. said. "After church on Wednesday night, the day before he died, we sat out on the deck for two hours, just laughing and talking. Within a week of the first time he tried it, he's dead."

Ricky Jr. would have been a junior at Friendship Christian School in Lebanon, Tenn., next fall. He was an outstanding student and star athlete.

The Stems received his report card in the mail the day he died. A first-string pitcher as a sophomore, Ricky Jr. led his high school team to the state tournaments. Pro-baseball scouts had watched him play, his father said.

"Ricky was a leader in his youth group at church; he was an all mid-state baseball player, he was a health nut, he worked out all the time and watched his eating habits," Diane Stem said. "I don't want some Joe
□ See *'Huffing' snuffed out ...*, page 8

Moving? See page 4 (0723)

BAPTIST BITS

■ **Gardner-Webb** University's new divinity school has been named an associate member of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada. Associate membership in ATS is a necessary step toward attaining full accreditation. Full accreditation is at least two years away, officials said.

■ **William Oscar Taylor**, age 105, who was thought to be the oldest preacher in the Southern Baptist Convention, died July 7 of congestive heart failure at his home in Melbourne. Taylor co-founded Southern Baptist College (now Williams Baptist College) in Walnut Ridge, Ark., and was one of its first faculty members.

Review & Expositor reports advances

By Mark Wingfield
Editor

LOUISVILLE—The theological journal *Review & Expositor* has gained more than 400 new subscriptions since breaking its ties with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in March, according to the journal's managing editor.

Paid circulation of the quarterly journal has grown 35 percent, from 1,148 in April to more than 1,550 in July, said Dan Stiver, managing editor and professor of Christian philosophy at Southern Seminary.

Review & Expositor previously was the faculty journal of Southern Seminary. However, members of the publication's board announced in late March that they had broken formal ties with Southern and affiliated with a new consortium of participating and divinity schools. Participating schools primarily are new mod-

erate Baptist enterprises affiliated with state Baptist colleges.

The journal's board cited declining circulation and related financial difficulties as the primary reason for making the switch. According to the journal's circulation records, subscriptions had dropped from a high of 4,583 in 1987 to a low of 1,148 in April 1996.

At the first meeting of the journal's new board June 27, another school was accepted into the consortium. The Logsdon School of Theology at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, will join six other Baptist schools with representation on the journal's board. The board still has three seats for faculty members from Southern Seminary.

In other action at the June 27 meeting, *Review & Expositor* board members named a new associate editor, Nancy deClaise-Walford of Mercer University's theology

school.

"We are obviously greatly heartened by this healthy turnaround in our fortunes after the dismal news of the past few years," Stiver said. "We are especially enthusiastic about adding Hardin-Simmons, which will provide a nice balance between east and west. Our potential constituency is greatly expanded."

Stiver said two other schools also have inquired about joining the consortium.

Besides Hardin-Simmons, other schools currently in the *Review & Expositor* consortium include Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, Va.; George W. Truett Theological Seminary of Baylor University; Mercer University School of Theology; Central Baptist Theological Seminary; Gardner-Webb University's divinity school; and the Campbell University School of Divinity.

Bisagno takes out ad on Jewish resolution

HOUSTON (ABP)—The recent Southern Baptist statement urging more evangelism of Jews continues to stir debate, this time in Houston.

After a series of private meetings between Baptist and Jewish leaders, prominent Houston pastor John Bisagno published a large newspaper ad July 10 to counteract the criticism the statement has attracted.

A resolution adopted overwhelmingly at the Southern Baptist Convention in June calls on Southern Baptists to "direct our energies and resources toward proclamation of the gospel to the Jewish people."

At the same convention, a missionary was appointed to target Jews for conversion.

In a quarter-page "open letter" purchased in the *Houston Chronicle*, Bisagno, pastor of the 20,000-member First Baptist Church in Houston, said the resolution may have overstated the intent of the messengers who approved it.

"It was worded in such a way that it appeared to some that American Jews were being singled out above all others for Christian witness," Bisagno wrote. "... Understandably, the Jewish community was concerned."

In fact, Bisagno said, less than 1 percent of SBC mission work in the United States targets Jews—one missionary among 5,000.

"I know of none of us who intend to single out any group for either more

or less sharing of Christ's gospel than with others," Bisagno said. "To do so would be inconsistent with the ministry of our Master whose love is equal for all persons."

Bisagno and other Southern Baptists in Houston met with Jewish leaders at least twice in recent weeks behind closed doors and emerged talking about mutual respect, according to the *Houston Chronicle*.

"The need for witnessing by the Baptist community was made clear, as was the response of the Jewish community to be respected and valued for our religious integrity without need for modification," said Carol Hoffman, president of the Houston chapter of the American Jewish Committee.

Employee: Don't forget Disney Co.'s Christians

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)—Southern Baptists who are preparing to boycott the Walt Disney Co. ought to know that many fellow Christians are working for good within the company, a veteran Disney manager said.

The employee of Disney World, who agreed to be interviewed on the condition his name not be used, said he often reminds his church to pray for the Christians who are working at the mammoth Orlando theme park.

In all his years with the company, he said, there never has been more Christian activity going on within Walt Disney World. Unfortunately, he acknowledged, there has been a corresponding increase in what some consider "anti-Christian" activity.

"While Disney can be criticized, and rightly so, there are a bunch of us who need to be prayed for too," the employee said.

One of his requests is for spiritual support for many small groups of employees throughout Disney World who meet regularly for Bible study and prayer.

"I'm finding out about groups all the time that I didn't know about previously," the employee said. "I'm meeting people I didn't know were Christians. Not that they didn't act like it; we just never talked about it."

Among the resort's Christian meetings is a periodic luncheon for management personnel, which in August will be held for a third time this year. The most recent speaker was popular author John Trent, and the next guest will be a business consultant who formerly worked for Campus Crusade for Christ.

The Disney Co. also has sanctioned the organization called "Crosstalk." Aimed at younger, non-management employees, it sponsored a National Day of Prayer observance in May, he said.

Ironically, the employee said, a gay and lesbian group sanctioned by Disney World's cast division has faded from view, with no mentions of its meetings appearing lately in company employee publications.

In addition to multiple prayer groups, an employee has been sending daily entries from the Southern Baptist "Open Windows" devotional to an extensive list of Christians on the company's e-mail system.

Such activity has stirred some complaints, and in one division an executive ordered a devotional group to stop using the conference room for Bible study, the employee said.

However, those people simply joined with "Crosstalk" to expand

Elliff organizes revival events at 7 seminaries

DEL CITY, Okla. (BP)—Seven seminaries will host one-day convocations for revival this summer, according to an invitation from Southern Baptist Convention President Tom Elliff.

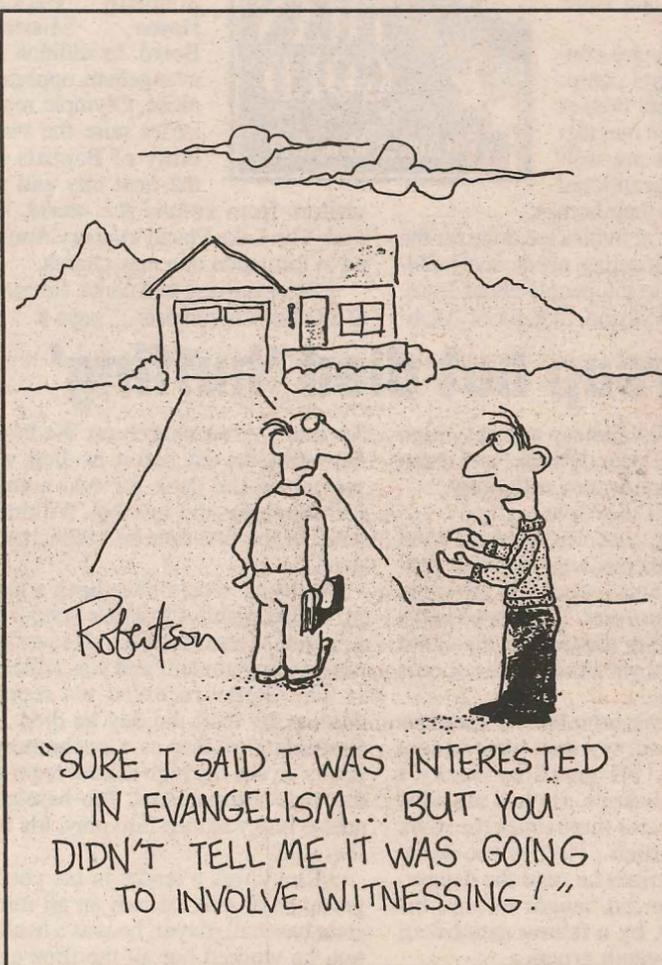
Meetings will have "praying, singing and powerful 'praying as we turn our hearts toward God,'" wrote Elliff, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Del City, Okla.

Elliff has scheduled the meetings at the six SBC seminaries, plus Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, an independent Baptist school in Memphis, Tenn.

The convocation at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville is scheduled for 10 a.m. Sept. 10.

The "cry for revival" was a theme during the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans this summer as Arkansas pastor Ronnie Floyd delivered the convention sermon.

Floyd, chairman of the SBC Executive Committee, asked Southern Baptists to make four commitments: to issue a call for prayer and fasting on Sunday morning, Oct. 27; to hold a "solemn assembly" that Sunday evening to call people to repentance for sin; to observe Wednesday, Oct. 30, as a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting for personal, church and national revival; and to use both morning and evening services on Sunday, Nov. 3, to focus on the subject of revival.



After 50 years, twins' families still run in tandem

By Joyce Sweeney Martin
Staff Writer

SHELBY COUNTY—When the children of Kenneth and Anna Mae Ashby and Bobby and Barbara Ashby planned their parents' golden wedding anniversaries in June, they knew the four would want to celebrate together.

After all, "together" best describes how they have lived these past 50 years.

The story begins in 1946 when the Ashby twins of Shelbyville began to get serious about the Edington sisters, and an aunt of the twins suggested a double wedding.

So, together, the identical twins bought identical wedding rings. Together, they furnished twin apartments in their parents' country home. And on June 8, 1946, together, they cleaned up their 1946 farm jeep, decorated it with roses, drove 40 miles from Shelbyville to Louisville with their "intendeds" and were married in their pastor's seminary apartment.

"Together" defined the next 14 years as the two tenant farmers and their growing families moved three

times, always choosing to live in the same house and work the same farm.

They owned appliances jointly. They shared a dining room, living room and parlor. They kept joint farm, automobile and gasoline accounts. The mail came marked simply, "The Ashbys."

They attended Buffalo Lick Baptist Church together.

And together, they were featured in a February 1956 Home Life magazine article titled "Two Can Live as Happily As One."

During those years, "everything was together," according to Lowell Ashby, son of Kenneth and Anna Mae Ashby and business division director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

And as children came along, each couple disciplined the other's offspring, Lowell Ashby said. "It was one big extended family," which meant "we couldn't get away with anything. All of us children had two daddies and two mommies."

In fact, the families blended so completely that school teachers often thought the six cousins were brothers and sisters, he said. Cousins Wayne

Ashby and Mark Ashby, born three months apart in 1960, were often taken to be twins.

And the fact that "everybody in Shelby County knew the Ashby twins" served to keep the reins on the children as they grew up, Lowell Ashby recalled. "We didn't want to spoil the reputation of our family."

Amazingly, the families never did have any squabbles, Kenneth Ashby said in a June 1996 interview with the Shelbyville Sentinel-News.

"There was always a lot of laughter and a lot of love," Lowell Ashby said. While they all worked hard and shared equally in the farm chores, the two families always found time to go to a ballgame or to visit an invalid grandmother on Sunday afternoon, he added.

And, most importantly, the parents laid the foundation for solid Christian faith and tight family values, he said. They taught their children there was work for them to do in the church.

It wasn't until 1960, when each couple had three children, that the two families moved into separate houses.

But that move didn't diminish the



family ties, Lowell Ashby said. Today, five of the six children live in Shelby County between Bagdad and Simpsonville, and the sixth lives in Bowling Green.

And until three years ago, when the number of families spencers topped 30, the two families spent Christmas Eve together.

"It didn't seem like Christmas when we weren't together, so we may have to find a place big enough so we can be together on Christmas Eve again," Lowell Ashby said.

STILL TOGETHER The Ashbys: Bobby and Barbara, Anna Mae and Kenneth.



JOYFUL NOISE Reed Woodson of Highview Baptist Church in Louisville performs with the Kentucky Baptist Convention's All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra at Campbellsville University. The all-state choirs held a week-long retreat and rehearsal session on campus in late June before embarking on a short concert tour. (Photo by George Allen)

Choir from Chile now booking appearances across Kentucky

Kentucky Baptists have a unique opportunity to hear a choir from Chile sing in their churches and communities early next year.

The Faculty Choir from Temuco Baptist Academy in Temuco, South Chile, will be touring Kentucky Jan. 11-27, under sponsorship of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's church music department.

The choir is made up of 26 faculty members from the Baptist academy.

"The group can present two different programs," explained Jim Cordell, KBC church music department director. "The first is a sacred music concert of up to 60 minutes in formal dress, and the second is a secular program of folk dance and song in folk dress."

"Some group members will share their testimonies. Most of them speak some English," Cordell said.

Cordell currently is booking engagements for the Temuco choir. They are available to sing in churches, schools, colleges and community centers, he said.

Each church that hosts the group is responsible for providing one night's lodging, breakfast and transportation to the next location, as well as a love offering or honorarium.

To inquire about the choir's schedule, call Cordell at (502) 245-4101.

Infant Resource Project moves to new home in Louisville

By Ken Walker
State Correspondent

LOUISVILLE—The Baptist-based Infant Resource Project has found a new downtown home just two blocks east of its former location.

Forced from its former headquarters by the likely demolition of St. Paul's Evangelical United Church of Christ, the ministry moved last month to First Lutheran Church, 417 East Broadway.

First Lutheran is no stranger to helping Baptists, having hosted East Baptist Church for its last two years before merging with Clifton Baptist

Church.

"We're definitely glad to be helping," said Bobbie Blackburn, pastor of First Lutheran. "We've always felt supportive of what's going on and the needs that are being met."

The new space is smaller, but director Jana Williams said it has off-street parking. The center is closer to University Hospital, where most indigent patients seek care, and next to the county health department, a primary referral source.

The project's mission remains unchanged: to supply low-income mothers clothing, bedding, bottles, car seats and other baby supplies. An immedi-

ate need exists for infant clothing, including gowns and sleepers for newborns, she said.

"Summer isn't generally a slow time since people can do OK with more casual clothing," she said. "But the babies keep on coming."

Thanks to help from a pair of summer missionaries from Florida—Rhonda Godwin and Becky Jones—the center completed its move in early June.

Youth groups and other volunteers from Broadway Baptist Church and St. Matthews United Methodist in Louisville pitched in, demonstrating the more diverse support that has de-

veloped for the mostly-volunteer effort.

Lutheran, Presbyterian and Jewish groups have provided funds; Louisville's Temple Shalom holds an annual "mitzvah crib" in observance of the festival of Purim, Williams said.

But the assistance seemingly has created the idea among potential supporters that the center doesn't need help, Williams added. Nothing could be further from the truth, she said.

"With babies' needs, we need as much help as we can get," she said. "We take seriously being good stewards of what people share with us."

WESTERN RECORDER

P.O. Box 43969
Louisville, Ky. 40253
(ISSN 0043-4132)

MARK WINGFIELD
Editor

DAVID WINFREY
News Director

MAURI SMITH
Marketing & Business
Manager

C. R. DALEY
Editor Emeritus

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

Western Recorder is published weekly by Western Recorder Inc., an agency of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Box 43969, Louisville, Ky. 40253, except for one week in July and December. For general information, call (502) 244-6470. Fax: (502) 244-6474. Send e-mail to CompuServe 102667,1300, and the Internet, wesrec@ntr.net. Periodicals postage paid at Louisville, Ky.

To subscribe: Send \$10.60 for a one-year, individual subscription. Group subscriptions on the church budget plan are \$8.50 per year. An additional church newsletter service is available for churches of all sizes. All subscriptions are payable in advance, except church accounts, which require a tax exemption number.

To register change of address: Send the mailing label from page 1, along with your new address, to the subscription department at the Western Recorder address.

To give news tips: Call (502) 244-6472, fax to (502) 244-6474 or write the editor or news director.

To submit a letter: Letters on any subject will be considered for publication, provided they do not make a personal attack on anyone. Letters are limited to 300 words and may be edited for length.

To place an advertisement: Rates are available upon request by calling (502) 244-6470. Institutional columns on an inside page are paid space. Claims made by advertisers are not necessarily those of the Western Recorder's staff and directors.

Directors: Bill Thurman, Lexington, chairman; Rusty Ellison, Louisville, vice chairman; Jim Abernathy, Covington, secretary; Mark Boes, Cecilia; Tom Curry, Louisville; Frank Hatfield, Shepherdsville; Sherry Hignite, London; Melinda Mays, Vanceburg; June B. Rice, Paintsville; John Searcy, Franklin; Kenneth Wells, Somerset; Charles Midkiff, Greenville.

Another Jewish perspective on the SBC

We Jews have a hard time with Jesus, and for good reason. For 2,000 years, Christians have been trying to convert us, at times with much bloodshed, usually ours.

Still, I see no reason to get worked up over the Southern Baptist Convention's recent decision to appoint a missionary whose task is to oversee the denomination's efforts to convert Jews.

Winning converts is exactly what evangelical Christians who take their faith seriously are supposed to do. Moreover, it's what Southern Baptists have almost always done.

Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board, explained that the denomination first appointed a missionary to evangelize American Jews in 1921. Eight years ago, the post became vacant through retirement, and was then eliminated for financial reasons.

The decision to reinstate it now, Lewis said, came about because of an improved financial outlook. Equally important was the return to the United States of Jim Sibley, who will lead the new mission effort. Sibley spent the last 13 years working to convert Jews as a missionary in Israel.

American Jews are now among more than 100 "ethnic" groups officially targeted for conversion by Southern Baptists. Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox Christians are among the others. Southern Baptists consider anyone who is not an evangelical—including members of some Christian denominations—as in need of evangelization.

Yet American Jewish leaders have largely responded to the Baptists' decision with alarm, as if they alone have been targeted for elimination.

The Simon Wiesenthal Center in

Los Angeles reacted with "shock and horror." The American Jewish Committee called the move "an extreme form of spiritual arrogance." B'nai B'rith called it "a thoroughly retrograde step in relations between Southern Baptists and Jews"—ignoring the fact that official relations between Southern Baptist leaders and the Jewish community are virtually nonexistent.

Such reactions are predictable. Jews, given their history of persecution and forcible conversion, are particularly sensitive to being evangelized, and widespread acceptance in America has not healed that psychic wound.

Ironically, it has created new concerns. Along with acceptance has come assimilation and the loss of a traditional religious connection for millions of American Jews—leaving many of them hungry for spiritual ties and ripe for conversion.

But 1996 America is not 1492 Spain. We're not talking about forcible conversion.

Contemporary America is a religious-free-trade zone where every faith—from the sublime to the ridiculous—has the right to promote its worldview. Even so esteemed an American Jewish leader as Rabbi Alexander Schindler, the recently retired president of Reform Judaism's Union of American Hebrew Congregations, has suggested that Jews should seek converts among non-Jews.

The only issue that should concern Jewish leaders about the Southern Baptist position is deception. According to traditional Judaism, one ceases to be a Jew once formal adoption of another faith occurs. Belief in Jesus as the Messiah, according to the entire spectrum of mainstream Judaism, constitutes formal conversion.

That all-important distinction is often not fully appreciated by Christians. They wonder why Jews who profess

atheism are still considered Jews, while Jews who profess belief in Jesus are not.

But Christians who say that Jews can believe in Jesus and yet remain Jews are, according to mainstream Judaism, being deceptive.

But rather than worry about what Southern Baptists are up to, Jewish leaders would do better to concentrate on creating "intentional Jews"—Jews who take their faith as seriously as Southern Baptist leaders take theirs. Jews who are knowledgeable about their faith and are spiritually nourished by it will not be easily converted.

In the wake of Sibley's appointment and the SBC's resolution on strengthening Jewish evangelism, most Jewish groups have reacted emotionally. But not all.

Phil Baum, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, said the nation's diversity of religious belief "is testimony to the poignant struggle human beings have had in trying to define a proper relationship to their God." Some believe their religious viewpoint alone constitutes truth and therefore have a duty to share it with the world, he said.

"They have a right to believe it," Baum continued. "We have a right to disbelieve it. The First Amendment accords them the right to try to sell their notion of exclusive access to God. It accords us the right to say that view is misguided, and that no matter how we try to make allowances, it smacks of offensive doctrinal arrogance."

That sounds like a pretty good recipe for religious pluralism. Let Baptists practice their version of Christianity and let Jews practice Judaism. And may the theological tensions that result serve to sharpen each group's understanding of God.

Ira Rifkin
Religion News Service

COMMENTARY

Russia revisited (Final part)

These few years of our Russian partnership have confirmed what I suspected from the beginning: The challenge of Russia is far too great to imagine that Kentucky Baptists and the Foreign Mission Board would be the only major players. In fact, FMB leadership has already come to recognize its own limitations in such a challenging mission.

One of the most formidable challenges to evangelical groups—both resident Russians and the hordes of international (mostly western) evangelicals flocking to Russia from outside—is the Russian Orthodox Church. Each may be in danger of seeing the other as "enemy" rather than potential ally.

Western evangelicals have, for the most part, neither understood nor been very sympathetic with the Orthodox Christian tradition throughout the world. Outnumbering world Protestantism by scores of millions, Orthodox have too easily been categorized by some western mission

groups as "lost" or, at best, "mostly lost."

That may be helpful fodder for promoting the evangelical world mission, but such statistical "evidence" smacks of religious imperialism. Who but God can determine whom in a given Christian faith group has fewer or more "lost" persons within it? Baptist preachers will readily tell you they suspect that some of the members of their own churches are "lost." But they don't really know ... only God does.

The Russian Orthodox Church, which celebrated its 1,000th birthday in 1988, has its roots in the Greek Orthodox Church, the faith which then-pagan Prince Vladimir "selected" as his own. It would be, I think, insensitive and biblically unsound to presume that God is not also at work within the Russian Orthodox Church.

It is understandable that, as Baptists have sometimes done in the South, the Russian Orthodox Church would attempt to exert influence and apply

pressure on government to favor them or their causes. They believe all true Russians should be Orthodox, and they are increasingly "missionary" about it.

I was encouraged to learn from President Konovalchik of the Baptist union in Russia that he would soon attend an international gathering for dialogue with other Christian leaders, including the Russian Orthodox.

At this strategic time of change there, it appears that millions of Russians are seeking to determine if faith should even play a role in their lives at all.

If the Christian mission is to help all men, women, boys and girls come to a living faith in Christ, then Baptists and Orthodox have their work cut out for them in Russia.

For the "minority" Baptists, the road will be more difficult. Hopefully the "majority" Orthodox who, together with Baptists in Russia, suffered greatly under communism for their faith, will find their "minority" brothers in Christ as friends on mission together.

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

ON MISSION TOGETHER



William W. Marshall



FAMILY FORUM

How safe are your children?

By Jewell Nelson

Summer fun can turn to summer grief, confirmed by recent news reports. Take these tips to heart:

■ Children in recreational waters deserve a competent caregiver in the water with them at all times! Life jackets (not arm floatations) are necessary when children are in water but not yet able to swim. Even bathtubs with water, small pools, water left in buckets, and water in commodes have claimed the lives of toddlers.

■ Ask the entire family to survey your yard and house and ask, "What is here that could be a possible danger to a child?" Then remove those threats. An injury, at your neglect, to a visiting child could bring not only grief to families, but a lawsuit.

■ Going camping? Supply each family member (especially children) with an emergency whistle (on a cord around the neck). The whistle is to be used only in case of an emergency—such as getting separated from the family.

■ If you are taking your children on an outing at the mall or other public place, wear a brightly colored hat, blouse or shirt. Then tell each child: "If you should get separated from me, remember to look for this hat (blouse, or shirt)."

■ Do not have your child's name put on a shirt or other apparel. A child predator can call the name and make the child think he or she is a friend of the child, or of the family.

■ If you are in a department store and you hear "CODE ADAM" announced, know that a parent is frantically looking for a child. Store employees will immediately lock all doors and begin a search for the child. John Walsh, whose son was kidnapped from a department store (and later murdered) is establishing this policy at many stores.

■ Check local playgrounds to make sure hazards have been removed. Is there sand, or mulch, around and under play ground equipment? Are there no sharp edges, or corners and nothing loose or unstable? Is the equipment too high? Are children protected from falls by safety barriers?

■ Take a CPR course. Be sure you have a First-Aid kit handy. Learn more about safety and teach it to your children and their friends.

Jewell Nelson is associate director of the KBC's Sunday school department.

HE SAID/SHE SAID

Home is where the heart is, even if it's tiny or ant-infested

HE SAID



Mark Wingfield

There's a lot of truth to that old saying that "home is where the heart is."

Of all the houses and apartments we've lived in during our married life, my favorite is still the first. It was a dinky little triplex, part of a World War II military complex converted to seminary student housing in Fort Worth, Texas.

This was the kind of place even an optimistic real estate agent would have trouble describing in an ad. No need to get up from the table for a second

helping; just turn in your seat and you could reach anywhere in the kitchen. And an airline lavatory has more elbow room than we had in the tiny bathroom.

This house was as cold and drafty in the winter as any you can imagine, but we had enough newlywed love to warm our hearts just fine. Whether that helped guests any or not, I don't know.

I vividly remember the first time Alison's parents came to visit us. We desperately wanted to make a good impression, to let them see that we had it together and were functioning like real adults.

We had planned to grill chicken on our dinky portable grill that night. And I was determined a little rain wasn't going to stop us. It would have been a close contest to determine what or who got the wettest that night—me, the coals or the chicken. Alison's dad didn't even laugh (at least in my presence).

Despite the trials of shoebox living, I cried the day we moved out of that little triplex. As simple as that house was, I've never felt the evidence of God's provision more strongly than there.

SHE SAID



Alison Wingfield

Yes, life was simple and cozy in our triplex. How long our newlywed bliss would have lasted if we had stayed there several more years is a question best left unanswered.

Southwestern Seminary's housing was not located in the best part of town. The trek to the shared laundry building behind the triplexes was not one I undertook after dark by myself.

Some of my fondest memories came from sharing with our neighbors. Most of us were young and didn't have very much money, but we were all there together, sharing our hopes and dreams about what God was doing in our lives. This created a common bond in the neighborhood that we probably never will experience again.

Maybe our triplex seems so wonderful in Mark's memory because of our next housing experience.

When we moved "up" to an apartment, we discovered that things are not always as ideal as they seem. It was a cute place with fun colors and lots of windows. More importantly, it came with a dishwasher, and washer and dryer hookups.

Located on the bottom floor, we soon learned the trials of loud rock 'n roll neighbors with weird hours. We also were the recipients of flooding from the upstairs neighbors' washer.

And then there was the sewer overflow all over our bathroom carpet.

But the biggest trial we faced was fire ants. Apparently the complex had been built on a massive hill, and my toes are here to tell you that those suckers survived the construction.

The most important lesson we learned between our first two homes was this: No matter where you live, there are always going to be problems and trials to face. When we face those trials together as a family, with God's grace, there we find home.

Mark Wingfield is editor of the Western Recorder.

Alison Wingfield is a freelance writer.

Lessons from the past week's events

In the space of one week, life has dealt Americans competing sets of indelible memories.

First, the catastrophic crash of TWA Flight 800 off the Long Island coast burned frightful images into our minds and plunged our hearts toward despair. Two days later, the opening ceremonies of the centennial Olympic games in Atlanta again lit our minds and hearts—this time with wonder rather than horror.

While these two memorable events seem unrelated on one level, they join together to remind us of the Olympian struggle between good and evil in our world. The fiercest Olympic competition is no match for this cosmic battle.

Last Friday night, who could have missed the significance of the African-American boxer Evander Holyfield carrying the Olympic torch side-by-side with a female Greek runner—in a city that in the last century was burned to the ground in a struggle over black-white relations.

Atlanta's Olympic organizers vividly portrayed their city's historic past in dramatic form, symbolically covering the stage with a massive cloak of darkness that engulfed everything in its path. Although not cast in religious terms, this drew a vivid image of the march of sin in the world.

The voice and image of another Atlantan, Martin Luther King Jr., offered a contrast, however. His now-universally recognized words, "I have a dream," rang

out over Olympic Stadium with a meaning and appreciation even he couldn't have dreamed of in life.

And then the entrance of thousands of athletes from all over the world—the greatest procession of peace-time unity the world ever has seen—made the flame of progress burn brighter.

In moments like these, we imagine that good can prevail, that swords can be turned into plowshares, that bigotry can be buried and hatred shunned.

And then the images of TWA Flight 800 invade our minds again, reminding us that in so many ways we are no better off than when the world was at war or when blacks and whites drank out of separate water fountains on Atlanta's streets.

Despite our better moments, too many people still hate; too many resort to violence in futile attempts to control the uncontrollable. We are reminded that as long as even a minority does not want peace to prevail, it cannot.

Dismal thoughts, indeed. Yet out of this despair we see and appreciate all the more our one true hope in the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, who cheers us on as we run the race of life.

We know he already has won the victory over sin and death. As the Apostle John wrote: "Everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith."

Thanks be to God!

—Mark Wingfield

EDITORIAL

Don't quit

Have you ever felt like quitting? Have you ever begun something, then suddenly and unexpectedly your circumstances changed and you wanted to quit? I have.

The next time I want to quit I'm going to remember a little girl named Laura Payton.

As a fourth grader, Laura became a first-time participant in the children's Bible drill at church. Laura worked for weeks memorizing the books of the Bible and 25 Bible verses. She drilled with her friends and at home preparing to display her ability in handling the Bible. In short, Laura had worked very hard and was doing very well.

Then, while skating at school, Laura fell and broke her arm. It was only two weeks until the church and the association's Bible drill. Laura could have quit. How easy it would have been for a fourth grader—or an adult—to close up shop and just quit. Her left arm was burdened with a cast. This meant she would only have one hand to use in searching for the requested Bible verse. It is hard enough to find a particular Bible verse in less than 10 seconds with two hands. Can you imagine trying to find a Bible verse in less than 10 seconds with only one hand?

Laura did not quit. She persevered. On she marched, determined to finish what she had begun. It made no difference that her circumstances had genuinely changed. It made no difference that others would have quit. Laura Payton was determined to carry on. She was a

winner in the church drill, which qualified her to go to the Severns Valley Association drill. Laura competed well in the association's drill, but was unable to qualify for the state Bible drill with Amber Skees, Tyler Birdwhistell and Molly Boes.

Tears rolled down Laura's soft cheeks. They were not the tears of a quitter nor a loser. They were the tears of a winner.

Laura, you have won my heart! You have inspired me more than any champion this year. There will be some inspiring stories from the Olympics this year, but none will do more to inspire me than the story of Laura Payton competing in

Bible drill with a cast on her left arm. Thank you, Laura. You have run the race and persevered.

The next time you feel like quitting, think about Laura and her indomitable spirit. Think about a girl who could have quit with the blessing and understanding of everyone, but didn't.

Don't quit! Whatever you are considering quitting, don't! Keep the faith, persevere! And you too will be a winner, just like Laura.

Mark Boes, pastor
Cecilia Baptist Church
Cecilia

MINISTERIALLY SPEAKING

Sign of civilization

It is easy to become unconcerned with those with whom we share life. Our own troubles, obstacles and concerns can overwhelm us and leave us unable to consider the needs of others.

If I have learned one thing as a pastor for the past six years, it is that people are in constant need. We come into contact with people every day who are

hurt, scared, lonely, depressed, mad, bitter and hopeless. Sometimes the need is so overwhelming we simply choose to do nothing. We do not know what to do or where to start.

A student of the famous anthropologist Margaret Mead asked her, "What was the first sign of civilization given in culture?" The student expected to hear an answer like a clay pot or perhaps a grinding stone.

Instead, Mead said the answer was a healed femur. Mead went on to explain that no healed femurs are found where the law of the jungle, survival of the fittest, reigns. A healed femur shows that someone cared. Someone had to do that person's hunting and gathering while the healing process occurred.

The evidence of compassion is the first sign of civilization, according to Mead.

Compassion is not only the first sign of civilization. Compassion must be evident in the church if we are going to be pleasing to God. The Gospel of Matthew says, "When Jesus saw the people, he had compassion on them, for they were harassed like sheep without a shepherd." The Apostle Paul in Colossians 3:12-15 writes, "Therefore as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourself with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."

Who needs you to show compassion toward them today?

Jeffery Roberts, pastor
First Baptist Church
Middlesboro

Baptists compete for Olympic message

Kentucky Baptists ministering in Atlanta

Volunteers from more than 30 Kentucky Baptist churches and statewide ministry teams are participating in Olympics-related ministries in Atlanta. Among them:

- 18th Street Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Berea Baptist Church.
- Bethany Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood.
- East Baptist Church in Paducah.
- Highview Baptist Church in Louisville.
- Mount Vernon Baptist Church.
- Sunnyside Baptist Church in Shephersville.
- First Baptist Church in Richmond.
- Monterey Baptist Church in Owenton.
- Murray State Baptist Student Union.
- West Side Baptist Church in Berea.
- First Baptist Church in Hopkinsville.
- Kentucky Baptist Convention's student ministry teams—Son Bound, Son Burst, Son Share, Son Praise and Atlanta Expressions.
- Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Somerset.
- Calvary Hill Baptist Church in Stanford.
- Erlanger Baptist Church in Erlanger.
- First Baptist Church in Shelbyville.
- High Street Baptist Church in Somerset.
- Union City Baptist Church.
- Immanuel Baptist Church in Paducah.
- North Benson Baptist Church in Frankfort.
- Oak Ridge Baptist Church in Covington.
- Rhodes Creek Baptist Church.
- Southern Baptist Church in Mortons Gap.
- South Elkhorn Baptist Church in Lexington.

Continued from page 1

was a missionary for 13 years in Florida, where she specialized in resort ministries. There she learned about relating to international guests, working with corporate and government leaders and promoting a Christian message in a secular setting.

"We're really geared to non-Christians," she said of Baptist resort and special-events ministry.

The strategy for Olympic ministry is simple. Meet the need of a visitor, be it with a free cup of water or a face painting for a restless kid. The service provides an opportunity to make a positive impression and to explain that the service is rendered freely as a way to share Christ's love.

"I may be naive, but I think we're only doing what every church ought to be doing," Johnson said. "We go out where the world is. We're part of the world instead of hiding from it."

In Orlando, Fla., Johnson learned that the professional quality of Disney World forced other businesses to raise their standards to meet the high expectations of visitors. Christian activities, whether in Orlando or Atlanta, are no different, she said.

"We know the competition is stiff. We're up against people who spend \$200 million" to get their messages across, she said. "The things that we hand out have to be attractive and they have to be relevant to the people who are here."

Two products resulted from this understanding: a pocket guide to the games and a Christian trading pin.

The guide lists Olympic events and world records and provides space to write in this year's winners. It also has an explanation of Christianity that can be read while waiting for the competition to begin.

The pin has the AIM '96 theme, "More Than Gold," and five stars of



OLYMPIC MINISTRIES Baptist volunteers greet Olympic visitors at the hospitality center of AIM '96 (above) where a variety of services and information are offered. Shannon Cheatham and Amy Wainscott (right) of Erlanger Baptist Church in Erlanger staff one of the AIM '96 information tables.



different colors to represent a simple way to understand the Christian gospel. Volunteers explain the stars to people trading Olympic pins. Even if the listener doesn't want to trade, volunteers have been encouraged to give the pin as a gift.

With 197 countries represented at the Atlanta games,

Lee said, the Olympics offer Baptists an opportunity to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission to make disciples in all nations. "It's foreign missions in reverse," he said.

Johnson said Baptists have risen to the occasion. "There hasn't been one opportunity that we've had to pass up because we didn't have people or interest or money," she explained.

About 70 foreign missionaries are in town to provide translation assistance. Members of Woman's Missionary Union groups from all over the country have donated thousands of care bags with sun screen, mints, tissue and sports-themed witnessing material.

About 500,000 pocket guides and 300,000 pins have been produced and bought by volunteers or churches planning to use them during the Olympics.

As the Olympics continue this week and next, Johnson asked that Baptists continue to pray for volunteers to have opportunities to share their Christian beliefs.

She also asked that Baptists pray for the safety of all in Atlanta. "We still have a concern of terrorism," she explained.

Kentuckian Beth Ann Mauney a key player

By David Winfrey
News Director

ATLANTA—Atlanta International ministries '96 will leave a legacy of strong relationships, inspired volunteers and trained leaders after the Olympic games are done, predicted an organizer and Kentucky native.

"From the beginning, we tried not to focus on the 17 days of the games, but what can we do to make this go on," said Beth Ann Mauney of Williamsburg, who has worked three years as assistant director for AIM '96. "We're going to leave behind about 500 to 1,000 people trained to do local ministry."

Mauney, a graduate of Eastern Kentucky University, is responsible for ministries at the equestrian park and in Stone Mountain Park, site of archery, cycling and tennis competitions.

"What's been encouraging for me is to see the local people get behind resort ministry," she said.

AIM '96 has linked local Baptists with event organizers, she said. As a result, churches can use their Olympic experience to get involved in other events and to maintain a visible witness to their communities after the Olympics, she suggested.

Event organizers "trust us," Mauney said. "Now they know that we have good volunteers and can help them. We've proven that Baptists can be quality volunteers in so many ways, and we can work outside the walls of the church."

Also important are the lessons learned about resort missions by volunteers from other states. "Resort ministry is moving a lot into the cities," Mauney said. "Special events are everywhere."

Much of Mauney's education in such ministry came from working two summers on the Son Burst creative arts ministry team of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's student department.

Some churches volunteering in Atlanta asked if it compromised their Christian witness to perform non-religious music, she said.

The answer is no, Mauney said. "They've learned that the performance is a bridge to ministry. You attract them with the music, and then you use that as an opportunity to minister."

Mauney said she's glad to know people from countries closed to missionaries could get a chance to hear about Christianity while in Atlanta. "People are walking the streets that we would never get to talk to, but because they're walking on American soil we can."

After three years of planning, Mauney said she's excited the games are now here. She also asked that Baptists pray for the staff to have strength during the 17 days of the games.



Mauney

Olympics make big impression on Kentuckians

By David Winfrey
News Director

ATLANTA—Kentucky Baptist volunteers said they learned to be flexible in ministry, gained confidence to talk about their beliefs and practiced creative outreach during their work in Olympics ministries last week.

Four Acteens—teenage girls volunteering through Woman's Missionary Union—came from High Street Baptist Church in Somerset. Supervisor Glenda Burton said their biggest lesson did not come from work with Olympic tourists. "Dealing with the homeless has made a greater impact on them," she said. "In our town, they've been pretty much sheltered from that."

Acteen Katie Brinnson, 15, said she encountered several people who knew very little about God. "They've heard about him, but they really don't understand what the Bible means."

The Acteens' ministry last year was performing with puppets at a beach, but their work in Atlanta—face painting and handing out Olympic pocket guides—forced them to have longer conversations, said Helen Williams, 16. "Once you see these people, you want to get personal with them," she said. "You want them to have what you have."

Westside Baptist Church in Berea sent 27 volunteers, who performed and handed Christian materials to visitors to Stone Mountain, site of the archery, tennis and biking competitions.

Crystal Settles, a student at the University of Louisville, said the experience has made her more confident.

"I think it will make me a stronger Christian at U of L," she said. "If I can reach people in Stone Mountain, Ga., I think I can reach people at home."

Student volunteers from Erlanger Baptist Church in Erlanger conducted kids clubs at two hotels, offering games, refreshment and Bible stories to guests.

Much of their volunteer time was before the games began. During show times, team members helped local employees and talked about their faith, said Amy Wainscott, summer ministry intern at Erlanger.

Kevin Jones, one of the adult supervisors, said the students learned how to adapt their work to the conditions that occur. "We came in here blind," he said. "The biggest thing is creativity and flexibility."

Riddle said her team was surprised by the openness they experienced. "It seems like a very spiritual time," she said. "I would have thought we would have faced more rejection than we did."

Hearings resume on religious liberty proposals

WASHINGTON (RNS)—Public discussions about a proposal to amend the U.S. Constitution to address religious freedom issues were scheduled to resume this week with a hearing July 23 before a House of Representatives subcommittee.

The hearing comes more than seven months after two Republican members of Congress proposed different versions of an amendment aimed at reducing alleged discrimination against religion in public institutions and allowing greater religious expression in public places.

Some Republican leaders and groups, such as the National Association of Evangelicals, support a modified version of language originally proposed by Rep. Henry Hyde, R-Ill.

That language, which has been through numerous drafts, now reads:

"In order to secure the right of the people to acknowledge and serve God according to the dictates of conscience, neither the United States nor any State shall deny any person equal access to a benefit, or otherwise discriminate against any person, on account of religious belief, expression or exercise. This amendment does not authorize government to coerce or inhibit religious belief, expression, or exercise."

Rep. Ernest J. Istook Jr., R-Okla., proposed different language, which would specifically support student-sponsored prayer in public schools.

Massive welfare overhaul passes House

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The House of Representatives has passed a new welfare proposal that would save an estimated \$53 billion by 2002. The Senate is considering a similar bill.

The reform measures would force people on welfare to go to work within two years or lose benefits and would allow states to contract with religious organizations to provide some social services.

President Clinton said July 16 that he likely will sign the measure. Clinton has vetoed two welfare proposals, and Republicans want to send him another measure before the 1996 elections.

Clinton said he was pleased with improvements in the latest bill. The new measure would add \$4 billion in child care and would include a \$1 billion work-performance bonus to reward states for moving people from welfare to work.

If Congress does not pass a welfare proposal, Clinton said he will

issue an executive order to allow states to take away benefits from people who fail to work within two years.

The measure would be paid for mostly by cutting social services to legal immigrants and scaling back food stamp benefits.

These cuts have raised voices of opposition from religious and charitable leaders.

David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World, said the measure was "not about ending welfare as we know it," but about "child poverty as we've never seen it."

"We are appalled by indications that President Clinton, former Sen. Bob Dole and many congressional leaders are supportive of nutrition and welfare cuts that would likely push an additional 1 million U.S. children into poverty," Beckmann said.

Robert Parham, head of the Baptist Center for Ethics in Nashville, said while welfare reform is "long

overdue," it is unrealistic to expect the private sector to take up the slack for a \$53 billion cut.

"It has been estimated that the nation's 350,000 churches would have to spend an average of \$150,000 per church to make up for the cut," said Parham, noting the measure illustrates "the disconnect between politicians and congregations."

The welfare measure under consideration would give states several block grants to provide services. One such grant would allow states to contract with charitable, religious or private organizations to provide services for the poor.

It would prohibit direct grants from being used for sectarian purposes, including proselytization by the religious organizations, but does not prohibit such activity when funds are in the form of a voucher.

The House measure passed July 18 by a vote of 256-170.

The Senate is considering a similar measure.

NATIONAL NOTES

■ A former treasurer of the Episcopal Church in the United States has been sentenced to five years in prison for embezzling \$2.2 million from the church. A Newark, N.J., judge found Ellen Cooke guilty of embezzling the funds over a five-year period. Judge Maryanne Trump Barry imposed a stiffer sentence than guidelines suggest because Cooke's crimes involved a church.

■ The U.S. House of Representatives on July 12 passed legislation designed to make it easier for corporations to donate food to soup kitchens, food pantries and other groups helping the hungry and homeless. The Bill Emerson Good Samaritan Food Donation Act would protect organizations and individuals from liability when they donate food in good faith to help the hungry.

■ The Democratic Party, while reaffirming its commitment to abortion rights, has included in its draft party platform a "conscience" plank that acknowledges Democrats have differences of opinion over abortion. However, the draft platform calls abortion a "fundamental constitutional liberty."

Court asked to strike down Ohio vouchers

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Religious, educational and civic organizations are asking an Ohio court to strike down the nation's first educational-voucher program that would use public money to pay tuition at religious schools.

At issue is a pilot voucher program that will pay tuition at Cleveland private schools beginning this fall. It would provide quarterly tuition checks of \$2,250 for state-approved private schools, most of which are religious. To date, 1,500 students in grades K-3 have been approved for vouchers. Under the program, students approved for vouchers can receive them through the eighth grade.

A group of parents, taxpayers, clergy and the Ohio Federation of Teachers is challenging the constitutionality of the plan.

That challenge is being supported by 24 organizations, including the Baptist Joint Committee, which joined a friend-of-the-court brief filed by the National Committee for Public Education and Religious Liberty.

The groups argue that using tax dollars to pay tuition at religious schools violates the separation of church and state required by the U.S. Constitution.

The Ohio voucher program, enacted by the state legislature after the Cleveland public school system went into receivership, violates the First Amendment "because it has the primary effect of directly advancing religion," the brief states.

Most of the schools benefitting from the \$5.3 million program, the brief argues, are pervasively religious. Forty-four of the first 54 private schools approved for the program are

religious schools, including 30 affiliated with the Cleveland Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church. Of the 10 non-religious private schools approved, six will be opening for the first time in September.

The brief also disputes claims by Ohio officials that the tuition payments are made to parents, not the schools. While the parent is named as payee, the checks are mailed directly to the private schools where the parent must "endorse the check payable only to the school," the brief states.

Even if the tuition checks were paid to the parents, the First Amendment problems would not be eliminated, the brief states.

"Subsidies to parochial schools, even though channeled through children or parents, violate the establishment clause no less than do direct cash grants."

CLASSIFIED ADS

NEEDED: Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Boone's Creek Baptist Church, 197 Cleveland Rd., Lexington, KY 40509.

BOOK FOR SALE: Reading the Old Testament through seem difficult? This new book helps. "Old Testament Chain of Events" by Isabel Cummings uses archaeology to prove the Bible is right. Secular ancient history makes reading it more interesting; you can read the Old Testament as a continuous story. Many unique features, 8 years spent in research and writing. Supply limited—order today. Send \$24.95 plus \$3.75 postage and handling to: OTCOE Press, 1114 Girard Dr., Louisville, KY 40222.

SOUND: System problems? Need consultation, training? Call Jim Cottrell, professional church sound engineer. Serving as sound/media engineer for KBC annual meetings, technical director, Severns Valley Baptist. (502) 862-9586.

SEEKING: Part-time music director. Salaried position. Send resumé to: Kento-Boo Baptist Church, 634 Kento-Boo Ave., Florence, KY 41042; Attn: Larry Simpson.

SEEKING: Preschool and/or parent's-day-out teachers for Fern Creek Baptist Child Development Center. Send resumé by July 23, 1996, to: CDC Committee, Fern Creek Baptist Church, P.O. Box 91146, Louisville, KY 40291.

FOR SALE: Conn 552 Theatre Organ, two manuals, foot pedals, extra pipe speakers, voices, features. \$1,200. (502) 267-9517.

SEEKING: A diverse suburban congregation (750 resident members) seeks dynamic senior pastor. Seminary degree required. Minimum of 6 years experience. Must be effective communicator with strong preaching skills. Submit resumé and videotape to: Pastor Search Committee, Lyndon Baptist Church, 8025 New LaGrange Rd., Louisville, KY 40222.

NEEDED: Christian person to help me to clean homes. Must know Louisville area, south end. (502) 449-1500.

SEEKING: Computer specialist in Microsoft Office 4.3 with a strong emphasis in Word 6.0 and Excel 5.0. Relational database experience a plus. Experience required in Windows 3.1, preferably in a Novell network environment. Dedicated to excellence. Good communication skills needed to instruct and respond to user questions in all hardware/software areas. Have experience or be trainable in areas of data input, maintenance service calls and network tasks. Send resumé to: Douglas D. Hays, Kentucky Baptist Convention, 10701 Shelbyville Rd., Louisville, KY 40243.

TOUR: 10-day Holy Land tour plus Greece, departing Feb. 24, 1997, for only \$1,795. Call Jack R. Studie for a color brochure and more information at (502) 247-8331. Experience you can trust!

SEEKING: Meta Baptist Church is searching for a full-time minister of youth and music. If interested, send resumé to: Meta Baptist Church, 8807 Meta Hwy., Pikeville, KY 41501. Pastor Ron Spurgeon.

SEEKING: Northern Kentucky/Cincinnati-area Baptist church expanding from part-time youth activities director to full-time minister of youth and children. Send resumé to: Search Committee, c/o Jeff Hume, 9125 Clear Brook Ln., Covington, KY 41017.

CARE: Kinnett Care. Services include live-in and hourly care, personal care, meals, housekeeping, companionship. Free in-home assessment; insured and bonded. Call 24 hours, (502) 499-7777.

SEEKING: Minister of music/outreach for northern Kentucky SBC church. Call (606) 635-2444. Grant's Lick Baptist Church, 175 W. Clay Rd., Alexandria, KY 41001. Dr. Paul E. Broyles, pastor/teacher.

'Huffing' snuffed out life of teen active in church group

Tips for parents

NASHVILLE (BP)—"Inhalants" refers to substances that are sniffed or "huffed" to give the user an immediate head rush or high.

Users of inhalants tend to be between the ages of 7 and 17, but can also be as young as 4.

National Drug Abuse figures show:

■ In 1995, almost 22 percent of eighth-graders had tried inhalants, an 8 percent increase over 1994.

■ An estimated 359,000 kids between the ages of 12-17 use inhalants each month.

■ Using inhalants once can put a person at risk for sudden death, suffocation, visual hallucinations, severe mood swings, numbness and tingling of the hands and feet.

Clues to spot inhalant abuse: paint, marker or correction-fluid stains on clothes or skin; empty spray cans, rags or plastic bags in child's room; rashes or sores around the nose or mouth; red, runny eyes or nose; drunk, dazed or dizzy behavior; excitability; anxiety or irritability; nausea or loss of appetite; increasingly poor school performance, apathy or absenteeism.

For more information, call the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at (800) 729-6686.

Continued from page 1

Blow like me reading this article and saying, 'Oh, well, that kid was probably into all sorts of bad stuff, and his parents were too stupid to know.'

"I want Christian parents—and all parents—to know that the kids who wouldn't do the other types of drugs, the heavy drugs, are doing this."

Ricky Sr. added: "If Ricky could come back, he would tell his friends, 'Don't do this, this is crazy, this is just silly.'"

But Ricky can't come back. He ministers now through death. At least seven professed faith in Jesus Christ after his funeral, his parents said.

"Ricky was not afraid to witness to people," his mother said. "He led a lot of people to the Lord. There were over 1,000 people at his funeral, and I told all those kids, 'Look close at him in this casket. That could be you.'"

"Kids Ricky's age think they are invincible. They think nothing can touch them. Ricky was on top of the world. He had everything going for

him," she said. "But he made a bad choice, and now he's dead."

Stem said she believes peer pressure was at the root of her son's experiment with inhalants.

"It's so important to fit in at that age," she said. "We don't drink, so we don't fit in a lot of places, but as adults, we don't give a rip. But when you are at that young age, it is important to fit in with the crowd. And even though Ricky is a Christian, he probably didn't want to seem too good."

Stem said she called to alert all the parents of the teens she later learned were huffing.

Some appreciated the information;

others denied it could be possible.

"Parents should assume their kids are doing it before they assume they are not," she said. "We had no reason to think he was doing anything."

A 1995 study by the National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education indicates parental intervention can significantly deter drug use, even among older teenagers. Drug use, the study showed, declined sharply among teens whose parents frequently discussed the subject with them. Of those whose parents "never" talked about drugs, 34 percent smoked marijuana versus 24 percent who indicated their parents talked to them about drugs "a lot."

Campbellsville University presents

"Ephesians: One Body in Christ"

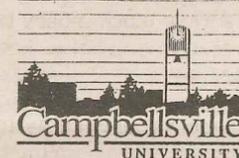
featuring

Dr. David Dockery

President, Union University

Thursday & Friday, Aug. 1-2

For registration information, contact:
(502) 789-5029 or (502) 789-5227



Church Buses Rental Buses

(New & Used)

Call Henry Headden
Carpenter Bus Sales Inc.

Brentwood, Tenn.

1 (800) 370-6180

1 (615) 371-6180

Available in 20' to 33' Models
(12 to 38 passengers)

Guaranteed Buy-Back Program • We Buy Used Buses

A Heart for Missions

by Dr. Ira "Jack" Birdwhistell

A History of First Baptist Church

Murray, Kentucky

1846 - 1996

A Heart for Missions is the history of First Baptist's first 150 years. This narrative introduces you to the pastors, leaders, members, events, and movements which shaped this faithful, mission-minded congregation.

Order your copy today!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

_____ Copies @ \$20 ea. = _____

Check must accompany this order form to take advantage of this special pre-publication price. Mail form and check to: First Baptist Church, 203 S. 4th St., Murray, KY 42071.

Delivery is expected by the first week of October, 1996.

This history is a limited printing. This book will not be reprinted. Order now for yourself, for friends, and other family members.

Building a brighter future

Any parent who has struggled to keep a growing child in jeans and shoes will tell you that you have to give that child room to grow. A children's ministry is no different.

A 25-county fundraising campaign has been launched to expand KBHC's services in Kentucky's south central region. The campaign goal is \$1.8 million with a challenge goal of \$2.6 million.

Respected area businessmen Oscar Hornsby, Cy Waddle and Joe Jackson are providing overall campaign leadership. Mr. Hornsby is the campaign chair while Mr. Waddle and Mr. Jackson are serving as honorary chairs. All of these men covet your prayers.

"Building a Brighter Future—Child by Child, Family by Family" is the slogan for the campaign. The primary goal is to replace the aging Southern Region Shelter in Somerset and to construct a lodge for the Wilderness Camping Treatment Program.

Other goals are to build an administrative and classroom facility, build an endowment for the regional Cornerstone Counseling ministry, and give the ministries of foster care, family preservation and family reunification room to

grow.

The campaign represents more than money and buildings though. It represents new hope for children who have nowhere else to turn for help.

It represents a new chance for children who have been abused and neglected.

It represents a new lease on life for children who have been told that they'll never make it.

It is our prayer that while at KBHC, each child and family will find healing and begin to move past the darkness to a brighter future.

Just this past week during Bible study one of the boys in the Wilderness Camping Treatment Program asked Jesus to come into his heart. The light of Christ became a reality to him. His journey toward a brighter future has begun.

Join with us in lighting the path of children and families who are now walking in darkness!

HOMES FOR CHILDREN



Brenda Gray

Brenda Gray is vice president for development and communications for the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Rd., Middletown, Ky. 40243. Call (800) 456-1386. World Wide Web address: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>



FINANCIAL FORUM

Plan ahead for retirement

By Doug Strader

Several years ago, a concerned layperson asked me if I was planning financially for my retirement years.

My answer was simply that I was planning to receive Social Security and my Annuity Board retirement. At that time I was not very interested in retirement; however, a few years can cause one to become interested in retirement.

There are several things to consider in making retirement plans. Of course, all these things are contingent upon your health, employment status and family needs.

■ Will your home be mortgage-free at retirement?

■ Where will you live in retirement? What is the projected cost of living there?

■ How much money will you need in retirement to keep your same standard of living?

■ Will your retirement income include Social Security income? Will you receive a retirement income from your employer? If so, what is your projected income from these sources at retirement age? Will this be enough for you to continue your present standard of living?

Most financial advisers suggest that your retirement income should be at least 75 percent of your annual income at retirement.

If you are self-employed, you may need to ask yourself a different set of questions. Are you eligible to participate in a 401(k), 403(b), or a Keogh plan?

If you do not currently have adequate plans for retirement, you have several options.

First, you can simply do nothing. That is not the most desirable option.

You could read books, attend seminars and become knowledgeable of financial matters.

You could also consult a financial adviser, banker or knowledgeable friend and get help in knowing how to plan for your retirement. Unless you have considerable expertise in financial matters, it is probably not best to mortgage your retirement on the stock market, insurance, mutual funds, etc., although these may be good retirement possibilities for your retirement planning.

This is not intended to be a final plan for retirement, but a place to begin. The key is to spend time praying about your plans, plan early, be sensible, be flexible and enjoy life one day at a time.

Doug Strader is director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department

Shively starts Financial Fitness Center

Continued from page 1

The CPA said the average American family's debt load is much higher than when he started in business 20 years ago, and Christians do not fare much better.

But believers enlightened by what the Bible says about money will be equipped to gain better control of their finances, he said.

The center grew out of a discussion last February between Diggs and Carter Shotwell, minister to adults at Lake Pointe Baptist Church in suburban Dallas.

The Shively pastor told Shotwell they had been using "Master Your Money," a Southern Baptist Sunday School Board program written by Christian financial advisor Ron Blue. But it didn't go far enough, Diggs said.

Shotwell told Diggs about Lake Pointe's center, which started a year ago and has reached more than 100

families. In May, Diggs and Fields flew to Dallas to inspect that center and take training classes.

Lake Pointe uses a program designed by the Financial Freedom Foundation. A non-profit organization based in Wyoming, it trains counselors to help others better manage their money.

The center at the Texas church has grown so fast that one member left his financial planning business recently to become the center's full-time director. In addition, he directs a separate organization established to train churches for starting an outreach in their respective congregations.

"It's great to have a practical tool to help people, more than just saying, 'We'll pray for you,'" Shotwell said. "We feel it's an avenue when we have persons or couples in a financial crisis. We can plug them into this ministry and for once in their life they have hope they can pay off their debt."

Shively's program is patterned on Lake Pointe's. It offers several plans: debt retirement, payment acceleration for those who want to eliminate mortgage and car loans, settlements with the Internal Revenue Service and retirement planning.

The program incorporates written materials and computer software aimed at helping participants track their spending and increase savings.

The cost of the counseling depends on the type of program, Fields said. Several members of Shively have made donations to assist those unable to pay, he added.

Initially, the director performs counseling on Wednesday afternoons and evenings. Additional help should be available soon; two other church members are ready to take counselor training.

A major element of the program is discipline and accountability, which are biblical principles, Fields said.

Texas church sees results of financial fitness

ROCKWALL, Texas—A year after Lake Pointe Baptist Church organized its Financial Fitness Center, success stories abound.

"We know of two marriages that stayed together because they found common ground to discuss money, and one lady was saved," said director Gary Shepherd. "There are numerous testimonies of people who feel they now have hope."

As a certified financial planner, in the past Shepherd counseled many middle-income couples and became increasingly frustrated over those who wanted to save more but were burdened by debt.

In March 1995, Shepherd attended a two-day training session offered by the Financial Freedom Foundation and was convinced their program was a good idea. He thought of doing it through his business, but a friend told him, "We need to do this through the church."

Five weeks after his first meeting with the pastor, the financial fitness center was in operation. Some clients drive 50 miles to attend seminars and counseling sessions, and one person comes from 300 miles away, he said.

The effect on the church can be seen in a survey of program partic-

ipants, he said.

Before, 28 percent of the members enrolled gave nothing to the church, but now 80 percent give systematically to the church, according to Shepherd.

Associate Pastor Carter Shotwell said the impact also may be seen by Lake Pointe entering the summer ahead of its projected annual budget.

"We usually go into the summer behind and catch up in the fall," he said. "But we're already ahead, and that rarely happens. I can't say it's exactly because of this program, but it's helped."

Scary Stats:

■ 75 percent to 80 percent of American households owe at least \$15,000 in consumer debt.

■ Consumer installment credit is projected to reach an all-time high this year.

■ More than 78 percent of the average family's after-tax income goes to debt payments, such as mortgage and credit cards.

■ Total bankruptcy filings dropped from 972,000 in fiscal 1992 to 845,000 in 1994, but they are projected to rise to 1.3 million for the fiscal year that ended June 30.

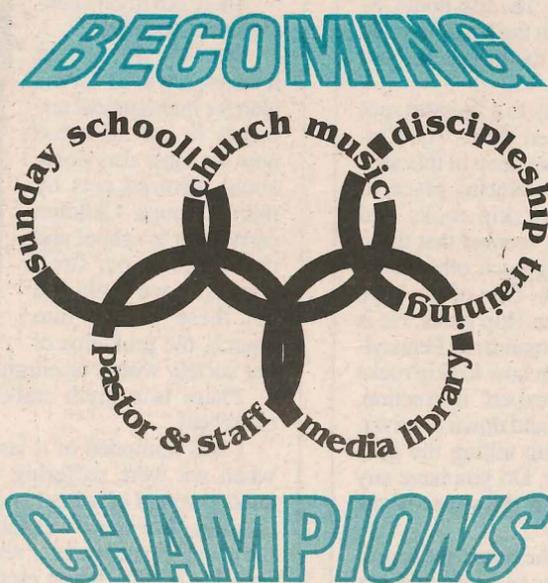
■ The average American's savings is just 3 percent of total income.

■ At age 65, nearly 50 percent of all Americans depend on relatives, 33 percent are dependent on charity and 25 percent are still working. Seven of 12 women will become widows by this age; the average age of a widow in the U.S. is 52.

■ Only 2 percent to 3 percent of all Americans ever reach the point of being able to live off their accumulated financial resources.

Data from U.S. government and other sources compiled by Fields & Co.

Super Saturday 1996



Training for Church Leadership

- ✓ Pastors
- ✓ Ministerial Staff
- ✓ DOMs
- ✓ Small Group Leaders

Directors, Teachers & Workers

- ✓ Sunday School
- ✓ Church Music
- ✓ Discipleship Training
- ✓ Stewardship
- ✓ Church Media Library

Coming to a location near you!

Bowling Green	August 10
Florence	August 10
Louisville	August 17
Lexington	August 24
Paducah	September 7
Somerset	September 7

Mark your calendars today!

More Information? Just call 502/245-4101 and say *Super Saturday!*

PRAYER PARTNERS

Pray for these specific needs related to Kentucky Baptist partnerships with Russia, Boston and Utah-Idaho:

- Clay and Connie Cartwright, missionaries to Tambov, Russia, as they return to the United States for a month's vacation.
- Alexey Nikitkov, assistant to Lee and Sarah Bivins in St. Petersburg, Russia.
- Russian children attending Christian camps this summer. Many will be exposed to the gospel for the first time.
- Long-term volunteers needed to assist churches in the Greater Boston Baptist Association.
- New ministries being planned by Greater Boston Baptist Association.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Ann Tatum

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Centerfield Church called **Tim Menser** as pastor. Menser began his new ministry July 7.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Church called **Billy Compton** as pastor. Compton has been pastor of First Church in Mount Washington. He will begin his new ministry Aug. 18.

■ **FONDE**—Fonde Church called **Steve McGaughey**, a student at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, as pastor.

■ **GEORGETOWN**—Faith Church called **Jim Dean**, native of Erlanger, as associate pastor, youth/education. Dean previously was minister of youth at East Sylva Church in Sylva, N.C. He began his new ministry

July 14.

■ **HAWESVILLE**—Hawesville Church called **James Wedding** as pastor. Wedding previously was pastor at Mount Carmel Church in Utica. He will begin his new ministry Aug. 18.

■ **LEXINGTON**—Chevy Chase Church called **J.R. Lawson** of Kokomo, Ind., as pastor. He previously served at a mission church in Kokomo. He will begin his new ministry July 28.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Lynn Acres Church celebrated its 45th anniversary July 21, with a message by former pastor **Larry Martin**.

■ **MAYSVILLE**—Stonelick Church will celebrate its 200th anniversary Aug. 11. **Everette Eastman Jr.** of Orlando, Fla., will bring the morning message. After dinner on the grounds, **Howard Roberts** of Auburn, Ala., will speak at an anniversary celebration.

■ **MURRAY**—First Church called **Terry Ellis** as pastor. Ellis was born in Mission, Texas, but grew up in Lexington. He previously was pastor at Mulberry Church in Houma, La. He will begin his new ministry Aug. 18.

■ **NICHOLASVILLE**—Brookside Church called **M. Keith Tingle** as pastor. Tingle previously was pastor at Owingsville Church. He began his



GARDEN GROWS Mission Friends at West Broadway Baptist Church in Louisville have planted a summer garden on the edge of the church's property. The children are learning how to care for their crops of watermelon, cucumber, pumpkins, peas, green beans, squash and cantaloupe—as well as their pick of flowers—from older, more experienced church members such as Tom and Shirley Coulter and Max Sanders. Mission Friends leaders are teaching the children how agricultural missionaries share the love of Christ and help people in other places learn how to glean the best results from their crops. When the crops are harvested, the children will experience hands-on missions as they offer the food and flowers to shut-ins and others in need, Mission Friends leader Beth McPherson explained.

NEVER FORGET AGAIN!!!

The Lifetime Reminder Service offers 7-day advance postal reminders for all the occasions you'll ever need to remember, all year long, every year for the rest of your life! Unlimited reminder notes. \$39 one-time fee per membership and no hidden charges whatsoever. Makes an incredible gift. To receive your kit promptly, send check or money order to: Lifetime Services, Box 130784, Roseville, MN 55113. Order Now!

new ministry July 1.

■ **OWINGSVILLE**—Owingsville Church called **Bruce Truman** as pastor. Truman previously was pastor at Mount Olivet Church in Mount Olivet.

■ **PENDLETON**—Sligo Church called **Robert Franklin** as minister to children and youth. He began his

new ministry July 7.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE**—Eastern Gate Church called **Jeffrey Anders** as pastor.

■ **WINDSOR**—First Church called **Eric Reynolds** as pastor. He was ordained to the gospel ministry at Popular Grove Church in Rockcastle County July 7.

A splash in the creek

While most of our students went home for the July fourth holidays, 26 stayed on our campus. Some could not afford to make the trip home for the nine-day break, some lived too far away, while others just wanted to stay here.

There was a little break from the usual routine. Chores still had to be done; students cleaned the dorms, mowed the grass, worked in the dining room, helped on the farm and did personal things like cleaning and laundry.

One nice thing about the break for the students was that they only had to work four hours per day. After completing the morning chores and eating a big lunch, the students had the rest of the day off. Some went fishing, some took an afternoon nap, others went to the gym or pool.

On Wednesday several staff and I took the students on a picnic after lunch. We went to Natural Bridge and the Red River Gorge. Our first stop was the picnic area, where we divided into two groups. Some decided to go fishing at the nearby lake. The rest of us made our way to the top of the mountain to see the arch. Some of our students had been there before, but most had not. How many times can a student ask "Are we near the top yet?" in a 30-minute period of time? A few ran ahead and had to be constantly reminded to rejoin the rest of us.

Naturally, others were well behind the main group. We made several well-timed rest stops so the "tail" could catch up with the "head." It was a cool afternoon, so the trip was not that bad at all (though there are several girls who would disagree). We did finally make it to the top.

There was much excitement as the students who had never been there before walked across the arch. Needless to say, this was an anxious time for those of us who were responsible for their safety.

We decided to go back via another route. The route chosen was a little longer, but offered different scenery. We made our way down nearly two hundred steps to an old cave that had once been used for mining. We had brought lanterns on our walk for this extra attraction. As we made our way into the cave, a few people bumped their heads on the low rocks and one girl did slip on the wet sandy floor. Some chose to exit the other end of the cave while the rest of us retraced our steps in.

When we returned to the campground, a delicious dinner of fried chicken, green beans and potato salad awaited us. After eating more than we should have and playing a few games, we boarded the bus. The trip home included going through the Nada Tunnel. Some did not think the bus could pass through, but we did.

We made our way to a favorite spot of mine along the Red River. The River is only about a foot deep in this area and provided a wonderful place to wade in the water, skip rocks and splash each other. It seemed that those who were splashing each other were having the most fun. One of the boys had been watching us skip rocks. He is a wonderful young man from Pennsylvania. He asked me to show him how to skip rocks on the water. With just a little "expert" instruction, he was soon skipping rocks up and down the river.

Other boys were having fun telling the girls there were snakes in the water. Do you have any idea how fast a girl can run in the water if she thinks there is a snake nearby?

After an hour of playing in the water, we boarded the bus where cans of pop and other snacks awaited us. The students had a lot of fun ... but not as much as I did.

W.F. "Bud" Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, Ky. 40972

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

Perpetuating the myth

By Fred Cummings
Dean of Students

There is a myth stalking our churches!

Today, I attempted to help a lady who feels as if her life is falling apart. Yesterday it was someone else, tomorrow it will be another. Our world is full of people who have disturbing needs. If we could just get these people and their families into church, their lives would be straightened out.

There is a myth stalking our churches!

Not only do we find it necessary to be on the alert for international terrorists in our land, but now we must also worry about terrorist acts by militia groups. Children carry guns to school and deal drugs on our street corners. If we could just get these people into church, the problems of our society would be eliminated.

There is a myth stalking our churches!

I was reminded of it last winter when we were suffering through another round of school and church closings. The snow was falling and the television newscaster was beginning his list of church closings for the next day. My reaction was, "Wow, there goes their average attendance." If we could simply improve church attendance, conditions in our world would improve.

One of the greatest challenges to Christianity is the need to destroy the myth that we fulfill our Christian obligation by church attendance. Jesus said, "Go into all the world" not "Go into the walls of a fortress called church."

Our myth allows us to be comfortable in the midst of suffering. Reality calls for an awakening to the realization of our identity. Church is not a place we go, it is who we are! There is a world of difference.

In order to begin alleviating our world's problems, Christians must grasp the realization that their purpose is to impact peoples' lives outside the walls of "our hallowed sanctuaries."

When that happens, we will actually have the influence that Jesus intended.

We perpetuate the myth when we measure success by attendance numbers. Instead we should measure success by the lives touched with Christ-like love as we go about our daily activities. Like taking our cars to the service station to ensure their continued service, the gathering together for worship and study should prepare us for another week of spending our lives on others. To fail at this point is to miss the point and perpetuate the myth.

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

'Dead men walking' gain hope from Christian counselors

ANGOLA, La. (BP)—In the shadow of the lethal injection table, 61 men—scheduled to die—eat, sleep, wait and pray. Occasionally, they sing. "I'm going home on the morning train, get right church and let's go home. Evening train might be too late, oh Lord, might be too late."

Echoing out of the darkened six-by-eight-foot cells of death row at Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, La., the light of Jesus is reaching some of the state's most hardened criminals.

Considered to be unworthy and unreachable by many, death row inmates' spiritual and physical needs nevertheless are addressed by death row counselors and chaplains.

"I'm there to love them and bring them Jesus," said Carol Morgan, a Home Missions Service Corp volunteer. "He died for them and it's up to them to accept or reject Jesus."

The story of both the inmates and

their spiritual advisers garnered national attention following the release of "Dead Man Walking," a motion picture inspired from the same-titled book written by a Louisiana nun, Helen Prejean. The title originates from the words guards at San Quentin Prison are said to have yelled when a death-row inmate was let out of his cell: "Dead man walking!"

Six years ago at age 48, Morgan saw herself starting over after the death of her husband.

With the encouragement of her pastor, she wrote what she thought should be a grief and bereavement program primarily for churches and hospitals.

Morgan prayed, "Lord, if you open the door, I will walk through it and do what you want me to do."

Several years later, Morgan found herself walking through the open iron doors leading to the tiers of Angola's

death row.

For Morgan, being consistent and meeting the men where they are is what has made the difference. "Carol is genuinely interested in us," said Glen, a death row inmate since 1989. "She has the love of God and she radiates that to us."

She visits weekly, meeting with the men in the small chapel on the row. Standing next to a chalkboard with 39 of the inmates seated around her, Morgan's weekly Bible studies give the men opportunities to pray together, discuss Scriptures and fellowship. But most importantly, they see a positive role model.

Southern Baptist Chaplain Wiley Magee spent nearly five years meeting the needs of death row inmates. Currently, there is no chaplain assigned to death row on a full-time basis. Now, Magee and other chaplains divide their time in several areas on the

vast 18,000-acre prison farm.

"Ministering on death row is very difficult," Magee said. "Teaching Scripture and putting them in an incarceration context is what you have to do. Church setting sermons don't apply here." Generally, he said, most men were receptive to hearing about Christ as long as they knew he was consistent and meant what he said.

The needs are great, Magee said. "We need people who would support us consistently, not for one time only," he said of needed volunteers.

Back at the chalkboard, Morgan listens to the men sing and constantly reminds them of Jesus' example and how he lived his life while on the earth.

"We're all fighting the death penalty, but I'm ready to meet the Lord," said inmate Larry. "Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die."

"Everyone wants to go to heaven, but no one wants to die."

Death row inmate Larry

Baptists seeking to make a difference in other Nashville

By Sarah Zimmerman
Home Mission Board

NASHVILLE, Ind. (BP)—With a name like Nashville, this Indiana town seemed destined to have a church with a fiddle in the band.

Like its Tennessee counterpart, the city hosts country music stage shows, recording studios and gift shops.

When it comes to religious life, however, the two Nashvilles are worlds apart. Nashville, Tenn., has several Southern Baptist agencies and an array of Southern Baptist churches.

Nashville, Ind., on the other hand, has one Southern Baptist congregation—the Brown County Country Music Church.

The two-year-old church, which uses a cowboy hat to collect the offering, is thriving, but leaders are quick to emphasize their priorities.

"It's not that we worship country music, and we're not here to entertain," said pastor Allan Straub.

Wife Charlotte got to the bottom line: "People are coming here who won't go to other churches, and they're getting saved."

Stuart Cundiff, director of missions for South Central Baptist Association, said he tried several times to start traditional churches in Nashville.

A small group met for Bible study in an apartment complex for three years, but nothing developed into a church until Charlie and Roxanne

Waggoner sang for the association's annual meeting. In them Cundiff found music leaders for a church with country music.

Cundiff took advantage of the town's name to find a sponsoring church—Holiday Heights Baptist Church in Nashville, Tenn.

After posting publicity flyers all over town, Brown County Country Music Church held its first worship service on Easter 1994. That Sunday 45 people attended. By the second anniversary, 80 were attending.

Worship services include prayer requests and of course a sermon, but music is the main draw. Music leadership has grown from the Waggoners to a seven-piece band.

Waggoner defines the music as "country-style gospel music." Rather than "Your Cheatin' Heart" with Christian lyrics, it's "The Old Rugged Cross" with a country beat.

Since residents are used to staged performances, Roxanne Waggoner said they have to keep the worship service from becoming a musical act. "This is not a show. It's church."

The church meets in the restaurant at Ski World, an entertainment center featuring stage shows, water slides in the summer and skiing on manmade snow in the winter. To prepare the restaurant for worship, church members take down such decorations as Santa Claus pictures at Christmas and skeletons at Halloween. They move ash-



trays and bring in sound equipment, Bibles and hymnals.

Sunday services must be finished by 11 a.m. so the restaurant staff can prepare for the lunch crowd. Discipleship programs are held on Thursday nights at the senior citizens' center.

In addition to country-style music, the church has a reputation for being a caring congregation. They recently

celebrated with a former chain smoker who had been without a cigarette for days, grieved with a woman who lost a good friend, offered housing to people without electricity during a snow storm, paid for a new roof for another church and sponsored a mission.

They wouldn't think of telling people: "Here's a quarter, find someone who cares."

OUTDOOR BAPTISTRY

Brown County Country Music Church uses Ski World's bumper boat pool as its baptistry. Phyllis Risky (left), co-owner of Ski World, talks with Charlotte Straub, wife of the church's pastor, Allan. (BP photo by Sarah Zimmerman)

From 'idiot box' to pulpit, 'Sanford and Son' actor now preaching

MOBILE, Ala. (RNS)—When former television star Demond Wilson stands behind the pulpit, he preaches the gospel like any other fiery, charismatic evangelist.

"I love the Word," he shouted during a worship service at Holy Church of God of Cottage Hill. "If you got your sword, hold it up." The worshipers lifted their Bibles. "Now shake it at the devil."

He never talked about what made him famous. He never mentioned his five-year role as Lamont on the popular television show "Sanford and Son."

Wilson was there to preach, not to talk about Hollywood—except when he told the congregation a television can be an "idiot box."

The lanky actor became famous in the early '70s for playing Fred Sanford's responsible but restless son. The show ended in 1977, and not long afterward, Wilson began preaching revivals.

Now he's 50 years old, not as lanky, and beginning to slow down his revival schedule. He's still involved in television—as a producer—and he's devoting more time to his new Christian ministry. The

Gathering of Eagles.

Later, Wilson plans to settle down with his wife and family and write books, examining subjects such as the plight of American youth. He lives in Orange County, Calif.

"I'm a renaissance man, a man for all seasons," Wilson said in an interview. He doesn't like to be labeled an actor or preacher.

Wilson said he's proud of his work on "Sanford and Son," particularly that the show was among the first black situation comedies on television. "I'm a champion of the underdog."

But Wilson said he is not proud of the sexually graphic TV shows of today.

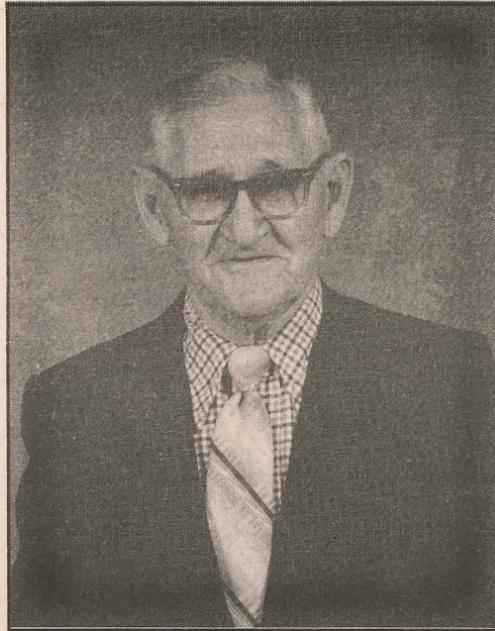
He sounds a lot like an evangelist who came from Hollywood.

One minute, Wilson talks about nudity on television and dancers who "undulate like snakes," and the next minute he imitates Woody Allen or quotes from a Mel Brooks movie.

But when he stands before a congregation, it's the preacher, not the actor, whom people see.

"It's not important that you have the Holy Ghost," he says. "It's important that the Holy Ghost has you."

A Memorial Scholarship.....One Family's Tribute



Rev. John Skeen
1899-1982

Rev. John Skeen, former pastor in Whitley and Harlan counties, passed away August 11, 1982. However, his life and ministry live today not only through his family but also through the Cumberland College ministerial students who receive financial assistance from the Skeen Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund.

Rev. Skeen was a third generation pastor and the father of twelve children, eleven of whom lived to reach adulthood. He had a limited education, but did not let that fact hinder him from encouraging his children, his grandchildren and friends to achieve a college education. At his death, two daughters Imogene Powers and Naomi Harp, both Cumberland College alumni, set in motion the beginning of the Skeen Memorial Endowed Scholarship Fund and each year during the Skeen family reunion an offering is taken for the Fund.

Rev. Skeen's grandson, Kenneth Harp, also a Cumberland College alumnus who is serving as a chaplain in the U. S. Air Force, on a recent visit to his home area, made a donation to the Scholarship Fund in honor of his Father's birthday and in honor of his Mother for Mother's Day.

"We would like to see our Scholarship Fund grow to one day be a full scholarship for students studying for the ministry," Kenneth Harp remarked. Harp is presently encouraging his cousins to honor their parents on special occasions with a tribute gift to the Fund.

If you would like information on the college's Tribute Program, please contact:

**Cumberland College
6191 College Station Drive
Williamsburg, Kentucky 40769**