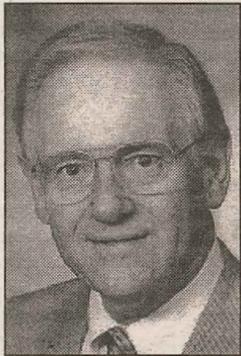


August 3, 1999  
 Vol. 173, No. 30

**FOR THE RECORD**

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**Kentucky Baptists join others to oppose gambling growth**



**GAMBLING OPPOSITION** Nancy Jo Kemper, moderator of Citizens Against Gambling Expansion, speaks last week at a Frankfort press conference in the Capitol Rotunda. Kentucky Baptists are among those joining efforts to oppose gambling expansion in Kentucky. The group, however, isn't solely organized just to oppose gambling, Kemper said. "CAGE is an organization that is for the best interest of Kentucky."

By Trennis Henderson  
 Editor

**FRANKFORT**—Seeking to halt the spread of legalized gambling in Kentucky, a broad-based coalition of religious and social-concern groups has announced the formation of Citizens Against Gambling Expansion.

CAGE was established primarily to combat the possible introduction of casinos and video lottery terminals into the state. Its formation was announced during a July 27 press conference held in the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort. The action comes in response to a recent proposal by Gov. Paul Patton that Kentucky study the options of gambling expansion.

CAGE has attracted the support of more than a dozen denominations including the Kentucky Baptist Convention as well as Catholics, Churches of

Christ, Disciples of Christ, Episcopalians, Methodists and Presbyterians. Other groups involved in the effort include the Family Foundation and the Temperance League of Kentucky.

Nancy Jo Kemper, moderator of the coalition and executive director of the Kentucky Council of Churches, described CAGE as "an organization that is not merely against expanded gambling" in Kentucky.

"CAGE is an organization that is for the best interest of Kentucky," she said.

Calling for "the elimination of the distraction that ... the whole issue of gambling expansion is presenting to our state," she said the current debate will prevent state leaders from focusing on "the deeper and far more important matters that concern us as a people."

Urging immediate action to curb gambling expansion, Kemper added,  See State religious groups ..., page 3

**Bolton elected as new Kentucky WMU leader**

By David Winfrey  
 News Director

**CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Joy Luebbert Bolton was elected July 31 to become the new executive secretary-treasurer for Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union.

Bolton, who will turn 46 next week, has been a Women on Mission/Adults on Mission consultant in South Carolina since 1995. She also has worked with WMU in the Maryland/Delaware and Pennsylvania state Baptist conventions.



Bolton

In a written biography presented to Kentucky WMU's executive board, Bolton said she was honored to be considered as Kentucky WMU's new leader. "I believe that my experience at all levels of WMU work—church, association, state and nation—will be a strength I bring to the position."

Bolton has a wide range of missions and ministry experience and has published several books and articles on those subjects.

A native of New Orleans, Bolton was born while her parents were attending seminary. She grew up with her parents serving as missions educators in churches in Alabama and New Orleans.

After graduating from Mississippi College, she first attended New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary but soon transferred to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville to study church music.

See Kentucky WMU ..., page 3

**School days**



Vacation Bible School

**Churches using Bible school for outreach & evangelism**

By David Winfrey  
 News Director

A growing number of Kentucky Baptist churches are heeding the call for more evangelistic and outreach-oriented vacation Bible schools, according to KBC staff.

"It's 1999 and kids still perceive (VBS) as something cool," said Wendy Dever, a children's Sunday school specialist with the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "I think

it's very significant that vacation Bible school is something that children still want to take part in and something that parents want to spend so much time preparing."

Dever and KBC evangelism team leader Dan Garland both are encouraging churches to make the most of vacation Bible school, and they say that message is getting a response.

"One of the most exciting things that I'm seeing is they're beginning to use the materials with younger children," Dever said.

Age-appropriate vacation Bible school lessons are being used with children as young as 4, and games, songs and activities are being used with those even younger, she said. "It's not babysitting, it's actual teaching."

Garland is encouraging pastors to be more evangelistic in their vacation Bible school strategy.

"The attendance and the number of decisions in the associations that I've talked to appear to be up," he  See Kentuckians use ..., page 7

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** Fifth grader Daniel DeMoss (center) takes part in vacation Bible school activities at First Baptist Church in Nashville. Approximately 60,000 people made professions of faith last year as a result of vacation Bible schools in Southern Baptist churches, according to LifeWay Christian Resources. In Kentucky, more churches are using age-appropriate vacation Bible school activities to lay a foundation with preschool children, according to Wendy Dever of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Sunday school team. (BP photo by Morris Abernathy)

Moving? See page 4 (0803)

# BAPTISTS

## Seminary president admits 'misappropriation of anger'

**Trustees required Coppenger to follow specific steps to aid "repentance and restoration" for what has been described as a chronic problem with anger.**

By Bob Allen  
Associated Baptist Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (ABP) — Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary President Mark Coppenger confessed "misappropriation of anger" to trustee leaders July 30, and promised to seek reconciliation with people he has offended.

Trustees also required the 51-year-old Coppenger, who has been president of the Kansas City, Mo., seminary since 1995, to follow specific steps to aid "repentance and restoration" for what has been described as a chronic problem with anger. Officials would not say what specific steps Coppenger would take, but a knowledgeable source said they include counseling.

In a four-hour executive session in Kansas City, the trustee executive committee discussed leadership concerns with Coppenger raised during a two-month investigation by trustee officers. The report's findings reportedly included other concerns, but the focus of the called July 31 meeting was anger.

Two members of the executive committee, Kent Cochran of Kansas City, Mo., and Tony Mattia of Wamega, Kansas, reportedly filed a complaint about repeated reports that Coppenger became enraged and in at least some cases used profanity in discussions with seminary employees.

After lodging the most recent complaint, the seminary's dean and vice president of academic affairs, James Cogdill was reportedly fired by Coppenger, but the trustee executive committee reinstated him the following

day. Cogdill declined comment.

Trustee officers interviewed both current and former staff and developed a list of leadership concerns presented to Coppenger when he returned from a two-week mission trip to Africa July 27.

During the closed-door meeting with trustee leaders, Coppenger acknowledged the "problem" of his anger and "embraced" the committee's recommended steps for "repentance and restoration," according to a brief written statement read to reporters.

Trustee chairman Carl Weiser, pastor of Hyland Heights Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., said the committee would "not elaborate on specifics" since the discussion involved a personnel matter.

Coppenger also declined to discuss the agreement, citing privacy issues.

Asked if he believed the investigation would hinder his ability to lead the seminary, Coppenger said he would trust in God.

"All you can do is just take your step," he said. "If you try to chart the whole thing out, you are playing God."

A trustee statement said the committee is praying "that the example of this biblical process will serve as an example to the students, faculty and trustees of Midwestern and others."

"It is our sincere and prayerful desire that God will use these events to work revival in this place," the statement said.

Weiser said the executive commit-

tee would give a fuller report to the full trustee board when it meets next fall. He said that report will be in executive session.

An informed source said the agreement protects current employees who cooperated with the trustee investigation but predicted it would make it more difficult for certain staff members to work with the president.

Coppenger was the only candidate interviewed by a presidential search committee that nominated him to the post in 1995.

He is the school's third president, and the first elected since conservatives gained control of the school during the 1980s and early '90s.

At the time, the search committee cited Coppenger's conservative theology and his "vision and leadership" as qualities that won him the job.

Coppenger came to the post from Nashville, Tenn., where he was vice president for convention relations at the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. Before that he was executive director of the Baptist State Convention of Indiana and pastor of First Baptist Church in El Dorado, Ark.

Before attending Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in the early 1980s, Coppenger earned a doctorate in philosophy from Vanderbilt University and taught philosophy six years at Wheaton College.

Sources interviewed by ABP confirmed that Coppenger has a long reputation of alienating subordinates with his volatile temper. One source de-

scribed it as a "life-long problem."

According to SBC Executive Committee directories from past years, three different secretaries worked under Coppenger in five years. In four years at Midwestern, he reportedly has had five secretaries.

Shortly after his election at Midwestern, Coppenger unveiled his "dream team" of four top administrators he hoped would help chart the seminary's future course. Two left within 18 months.

One person who formerly worked for Coppenger at Midwestern said he was "not surprised" that Coppenger's anger had become an issue. "I'm just surprised that it took this long."

A former coworker at the SBC Executive Committee who did not work for Coppenger directly said she had a good relationship with him and that he was often friendly with secretaries in the break room. Even in that setting, however, she recalled women being surprised by his use of what she described as "raw" language.

Another former staff member at Midwestern Seminary said she never saw one of Coppenger's angry outbursts firsthand but heard about them from others.

She characterized Coppenger's use of profanity as mild. But it was more the way the words were used that upset subordinates, she said—delivered in "extreme anger" and directed toward the person and not the situation.

The former staffer said the type of language Coppenger used in the pulpit during chapel differed from what she overheard in the hallway. "The walk and the talk don't match," she said.



Coppenger

## Korean pastor nominated for Baptist World Alliance presidency

By Wendy Ryan  
Baptist World Alliance

DRESDEN, Germany (BP)—Asian Baptist leader Billy Jang Hwan Kim, pastor of the 7,000-member Central Baptist Church in Suwon, South Korea, has been nominated by the Baptist World Alliance's General Council to serve as BWA president from 2000-2005.

The council, in its July 11-17 meetings in Dresden, Germany, unanimously voted to nominate Kim, immediate past president of the Asian

Baptist Federation, for election at the 18th BWA Congress, Jan. 5-9, 2000, in Melbourne, Australia.

If elected, he will succeed current President Nilson do Amral Fanini of Brazil next July.

Harry Monroe, president of the Asian Baptist Federation and chairman of the BWA's officers search committee, said Kim was the unanimous choice of the committee. More than 40 names were submitted from Baptists around the world.

Kim, who chaired the local arrangements committee for the 1990 BWA Congress in Seoul and who served as a BWA vice president from 1990-1995, also is an international broadcaster who is president of the Far East Broadcasting Co. of Korea. He was described by Jimmy Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, as "a pastor and man of prayer, with an ability to relate to governments and people everywhere, and a great evangelist."

Also during the meeting in Germany, council members approved an additional \$250,000 in relief assistance for Kosovo and urged Baptists in the Balkans and in member nations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to work for reconciliation.

More than \$750,000 already has been sent through Baptist World Aid and the European Baptist Federation for relief programs in Albania and

Macedonia.

A resolution on the Balkans praised BWAid and other Baptist agencies for their relief work. Karl Heinz Walter, EBF general secretary, noted Baptists had begun to help refugees in the war at least two weeks before the Red Cross arrived on the scene.

Reconciliation is needed in even greater supply to overcome longstanding ethnic rivalries, Walter said.

"If there is not the power to overcome hatred, the spirit of revenge will prevail," he said. "We must help people to show love and overcome hatred in a culture where blood revenge is part of the culture."

The council's Balkans statement praised God that the war has ended but recognized "the horrific trauma" the conflict had caused in the region. It asked Baptists "to pursue prayerfully and actively lasting reconciliation that demonstrates through practical applications the bond of Christian unity we share as the body of Christ."

Addressing racism and ethnic strife globally, the council endorsed a plan to name the first 10 years of the new decade, "A Decade of Racial Justice." The group adopted the Atlanta Declaration on Racism and Ethnic Conflict, issued after a BWA-sponsored conference in January on global racism and ethnic and tribal conflict.

BWA General Secretary Denton Lotz, who led the conference, said, "In

Jesus Christ we are one; this is the message for the BWA. When people meet us, they must meet a Christ-centric, evangelical people who are also against racism and ethnic conflict."

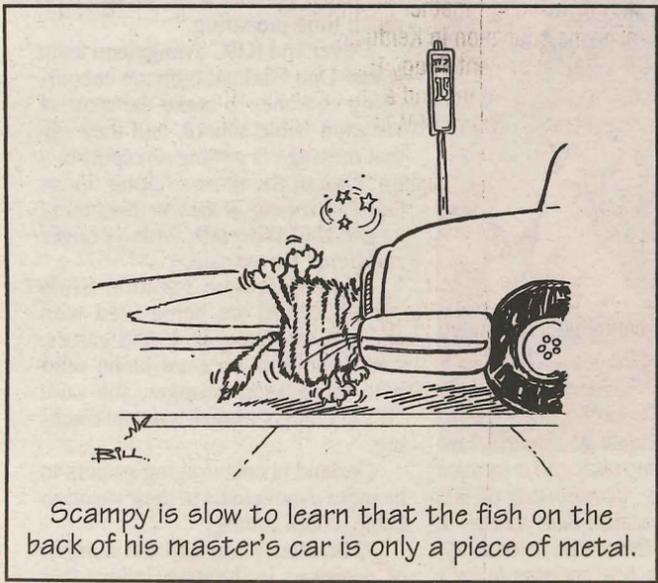
In other business, the General Council approved plans to purchase a building in Washington, D.C. The council authorized Lotz to proceed with a building purchase, approving recommendations by the council's budget and finance committee and executive committee.

Lotz said the present building in McLean, Va., home to the BWA the past 14 years, does not have enough space to meet the growing staff and ministries of the BWA.

The new building is expected to cost more than \$2 million. Council members were told funds for the purchase will come from the sale of the current facility, fund-raising among BWA member bodies and gifts from major donors.

Four Baptist bodies with a total of 369 churches and 46,000 members were accepted as new BWA members: the Khmer Baptist Convention of Cambodia; the Bengal Baptist Union and the Evangelical Baptist Convention of Manipur, both in India; and the Union of Baptist Churches of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

With the new members, the BWA represents more than 195 Baptist organizations with 43 million baptized believers.



Scampy is slow to learn that the fish on the back of his master's car is only a piece of metal.

## Owensboro & Russellville ministries stress Christian unity

By David Winfrey  
News Director

RUSSELLVILLE—Christian unity, discipleship and evangelism are at the heart of a multid denominational ministry started last year by a Kentucky Baptist church leader.

Kingdom Corps offers youth discipleship events and links churches for ministry and evangelism projects, according to founder Greg Head.

"It's all about making disciples and sending them out," said Head, a worship team leader for both Hillvue Baptist Church in Bowling Green and its daughter church, Hillvue Baptist Church in Russellville. "We want to see the churches get comfortable in getting out of the pew and going out and loving someone."

Kingdom Corps has a branch in Russellville but is actually based in Owensboro, Head said, because that's where leadership has developed. The group has conducted events in several Kentucky cities and has a third branch in Hopkinsville, he added.

Head said the ministry officially began in October 1998 but that its inspiration goes back much earlier.

A 1986 revival in Adairsville led

him to rededicate his life to God, he explained. Six months later, at age 21 and after extensive Bible reading, he began working with a prison ministry at the Eddyville Penitentiary.

There he saw a variety of Christian denominations working to impact the prison population. Despite their varied customs, they all taught about the Christian faith and Jesus, he said.

Along the way, he worked to take the gospel to unreached communities. In 1990, he led an outreach effort in a city park with a cookout, clowns and carnival games that attracted 250 people and resulted in 21 conversions.

"I felt very strongly that God was saying until his children learn to play well together, to work well together and submit to one another, he's inhibited as to how much he can do to help us in the changing of our homes, our cities, our churches," he said.

For the next eight years, Head said, he developed the idea for Kingdom Corps. During that time Head, who works for a Russellville aluminum plant, also served two years as a youth minister for Middleton Baptist Church, studied at Western Kentucky University and continued to serve in prison ministry.

Kingdom Corps has a primary focus of uniting churches of different denominations for work in their communities, he said.

"The purpose and the vision is, first of all, unity of the body and, second, discipleship of the believers and, third, evangelism," he said. "When I say unity, basically what I'm referring to is the bigger picture of God's order."

Head noted that many denominations focus on evangelism, but "what we felt like God wanted us to do was focus first and foremost on unity."

"The only thing that's important is the vertical relationship first and then the horizontal relationship, which is the body or the church relationship," he said.

The group works through two programs. One is weekend "boot camps" in which mostly youth from different churches assemble for discipleship and evangelism.

The ministry uses military themes, a helpful idea because some of the youth they attract aren't exactly choir boys. "We've had an opportunity to minister to those that are less than desirable," Head said. "We got some that sheriff's officers had dealt with."

Using a disciplined approach is not

intended to exert force but to both teach servanthood and make sure the youth are willing to behave during ministry and evangelism events, he said. "It is regimented enough so that we have control so no one gets hurt."

The other project is church invasions, which unite churches from an area for ministry projects in their communities. "It's turned into a very multid denominational ministry. The group has attracted everyone from Catholics to Pentecostals," he said.

"I've been to about every kind of church you can imagine," he added. Avoiding denominational issues keeps conflict to a minimum, he said.

"I realized there had to be a balance from being baptized in prune juice to swinging from the chandeliers," he added. "I'll be very honest with you; that can be very difficult to accomplish."

One way he emphasizes unity is through shared work at ministry projects. Often, Head will hand everyone garbage bags and tell them to pick up trash for a while.

That often is followed by joint worship or singing, he said. "By the time you've done that, you've got a group that is willing to work with one another."

### BLUEGRASS BURGEO

■ **Campbellsville** University's school of theology will host a one-day seminar Aug. 5 on Southern Baptists' winter Bible study for 2000, 1 and 2 Thessalonians. For more information call (270) 789-5520.

■ **Correction:** Last week's Western Recorder included a photo of volunteers removing trees from the site in Frankfort where Kentucky State University's Baptist Student Union will be built later this year. The college was incorrectly identified. Evergreen Baptist Church is organizing volunteer construction crews for the new building. For information, call (502) 223-8364.

## Ken Murphy of KBC partnership ministries dies

LOUISVILLE—Ken Murphy, associate director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership missions office, died Saturday morning, July 31, as a result of complications from surgery. He was 60.

"It's really a shock to everyone," said Calvin Wilkins, director of the KBC partnership missions office.

Murphy, a native of Alabama, was pastor of Finchville Baptist Church, Glasgow Baptist Church and Bagdad Baptist Church before joining the KBC staff in 1996 on a part-time basis.

Wilkins described Murphy as an inquisitive person who loved to write and travel.

He recently finished writing a book

about Kentucky Baptists' partnership with Russian Baptists. "Russian Harvest," published by Woman's Missionary Union, is scheduled to be released next month.

Murphy was pastor in Finchville when he went on one of Kentucky Baptists' first partnership trips to Russia. His interest in Russian culture and experience from the trip resulted in his being called on to lead orientation for later participants, Wilkins said.

He was hired as associate director in 1996 to replace Benton Williams, who retired.

Murphy was scheduled to leave Tuesday, July 27, to lead a partnership mission trip to Poland, but he went to a hospital three days earlier

with chest pains, according to Wilkins.

An X-ray revealed a mass in his lung area that doctors thought might be a tumor, Wilkins said.

Murphy was in good spirits Friday, July 30, before the surgery. After surgery, doctors reported they had removed a malignant tumor on the lung and believed they had gotten all of it, Wilkins said. But Murphy's condition did not stabilize after surgery, and he died early Saturday morning, Wilkins said.

The funeral was scheduled for Aug. 3 at First Baptist Church of Shelbyville, where Murphy was a member. Survivors include his wife, Robbie, sons Pat and Greg, brother Ronnie and five grandchildren.

The family asked that memorials be made to the Bagdad Baptist Church building fund.



Murphy

## State religious groups unite to CAGE gambling growth

Continued from page 1

"We are in a time when our society is always looking for the easy way out, for immediate gratification of desires. ... There is no reason to involve ourselves in gambling as a means to raise revenue at a time when our economy is booming and we have enormous surpluses."

Kemper said CAGE plans to host a "grassroots training session" Aug. 21 at Severns Valley Baptist Church in Elizabethtown. She said the workshop "will seek to enlist individuals from across the commonwealth who will work in their towns and cities to inform their neighbors and fellow church members about gambling expansion issues." An additional goal is "to enlist these persons to work to bring political pressure on their legislators and other elected officials to persuade them to oppose any of the several scenarios for gambling expansion that have been presented."

Several national researchers and

consultants are scheduled to lead the workshop which will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Additional information is available by calling CAGE at (606) 269-7715.

Among those joining Kemper at the press conference were Claude Witt, executive director of the Temperance League of Kentucky, and James Hawkins, retired executive associate of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

"The state's active and direct promotion of gambling is an affront to the citizens who believe gambling is morally wrong," Witt said. Opposing what he called "Gov. Patton's thinly disguised effort to introduce casino gambling throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky," Witt warned that gambling "encourages a view of life based solely on greed and materialism."

He called on Patton to "do away with this idea of his to expand gambling opportunities for the citizens of this commonwealth."

Hawkins emphasized that Kentucky Baptists "have a long history of ministry to children and families, helping abused children and providing healing for broken families."

Citing studies which show overwhelming social costs associated with gambling in other states, Hawkins added, "Plain old common sense says forget any idea of bringing casinos and slot machines to Kentucky. Casinos and slot machines may look like the goose that lays the golden eggs, but this goose is one that lays rotten eggs."

Jane Chiles, executive director of the Catholic Conference of Kentucky, affirmed "the gospel mandate to evaluate social policy and determine how it touches the human person."

Voicing concern for individuals and families who will be victimized by the economic and social impact of expanded gambling, Chiles added, "It's time for somebody to say no to this and that's why the churches are coming together."

## Kentucky WMU elects Bolton as executive secretary-treasurer

Bolton said her years at Southern were pivotal for two reasons. Working her way through college at a nursing home gave her experience in medical missions. Also during that time she worked as an intern at the national WMU offices in Birmingham, Ala., opening doors for writing opportunities.

After graduation from seminary, Joy and her husband, Lee, moved to Pennsylvania. There, she was a member of the state WMU executive board.

They later moved to Annapolis, Md. There she worked for the state WMU office as a publications consultant.

In addition to writing articles for WMU magazines, she has written three books, "Ideas for Community Ministries," "More Ideas for Associational WMU Activities" and "Ideas for Nursing Home Ministries."

Bolton said she has an appreciation for the vision of KBC Executive Director Bill Mackey, whom she knew from his previous post as state evangelism director in South Carolina.

"We have worked together for several years in South Carolina on the women's lifestyle evangelism conference, prior to his coming to Kentucky," she said in her written biography. "Our mutual respect and friendship from a previous working relationship will help us get off to a quick start in working together for the enhancement of WMU and missions education in Kentucky."

WMU President Peggy Hicks said Bolton brings both strong qualifications and a strong commitment to the job. "She sees the future of WMU with missions education as high priority."

Bolton will fill a position that has been vacant since November 1997, when Kay Trisler resigned. Brenda Price, Kentucky WMU associate for preschool and children, has been serving as interim executive secretary-treasurer.

Ironically, Hicks said, Bolton was one of the first candidates contacted in 1998 by the search committee, headed by Jo Pelham of Hopkinsville. "At the time, it was not right for her family to move," Hicks said.

Bolton is the fourth person to come from South Carolina in recent years for a leadership role among Kentucky Baptists. In addition to Mackey and Bolton, KBC Family Ministries Director Carl Babb and Leadership Development Director Richard Adams have joined the KBC staff from South Carolina.

## WESTERN RECORDER

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

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## Living life at the level of love

By Henlee Barnette

"I love the sinner but hate the sin" is a common cliché used, especially by some religious leaders. But it turns out that many of those who love the sinner blatantly discriminate against the sinner, especially if he or she happens to be gay or lesbian. They are denied even basic human rights such as the right to work, housing and human respect by those who say they love the sinner. Relegated to the status of second class citizenship, they become marginal people in a democratic society.

This raises the question about the basic meaning of the term love in contemporary society. Love has become one of the most ambiguous terms in the English language. There is romantic love, puppy love, tough love, etc.

Jesus lived and taught agape love. It is more than an emotion, more than liking someone. You have to love someone although you do not like that individual. No definition can adequately encompass agape love, but close to it is to will and to work for the well being of all of God's creatures and creation.

Agapeic love and justice are inseparable. Love without justice is pure sentimentality. Agapeic love makes justice just and justice makes love concrete.

Justice provides love structure, direction and moral principle in decision-making and practical application.

Years ago in a Baptist church to which I belonged we would sing with gusto: "I've got the old time religion; it makes me love everybody." Right. Everybody is an abstraction. How about loving your neighbor in the concrete?

## COMMENTARY

We loved blacks—as long as they "stayed in their place." Blacks had to come to your back door; they could not enter our church singing love for everybody and were forced to use segregated public facilities. Love without justice is idealistic, insincere and hypocritical.

Agapeic love that Jesus taught is a new and radicalized love. "A new commandment I give to you that you love one another; even as I have loved you" (John 13:34). Jesus taught a non-calculating, unqualified, sacrificial love. His was an all-inclusive love, embracing enemies (Matthew 5:45-48). Here the new Israel (the church) is given a new law of love. This new love is void of emotional and saccharine sentiments.

Agapeic love remains an abstraction until it becomes incarnate in human personality and finds expression in our lifestyle. Love, justice, truth, kindness, civility and all other ideals remain theoretical, metaphysical and hypothetical

until they take on flesh.

Love is the essence of God for "God is love" (1 John 4:8). In the Bible God becomes love in Jesus Christ who Christianized and democratized the notion of God among the ancient Hebrews. He became a loving Being. God's righteousness became agape love. The fruit of the Holy Spirit became ethical: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22). And love is patient, kind, not jealous or boastful, arrogant or rude, does not insist on its own way, is not irritable or resentful, does not rejoice in wrong but rejoices in the right, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, never ends. So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love (1 Corinthians 13:4-13). And faith produces good works through love (Galatians 5:6).

The epistemological key to knowing that one is a Christian is agape love. "We know that we have passed from death to life because we love our brothers (and sisters)" (1 John 3:14). Anyone who does not go on loving has never crossed over from death. John concludes that we are not to love by lip service, but by life-service. And in this way we will be assured that we are on the side of truth.

*Henlee Barnette is an emeritus professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville*

## Casinos: core of decay

The purpose of this letter is to voice my strong opposition to the proposal under consideration to have gambling casinos in our state.

As a Christian, I know without a doubt it is totally wrong and contrary to God's teaching and will. As a lifelong citizen of Kentucky, I know without a doubt it is immoral and totally beyond any necessity one can conceive with the exception of greed for money achieved at any cost.

The proposal will be to our detriment as a state, but will also destroy lives, families and offer powerful in-

centives to future generations and a means of exposure to related vices they will invariably attract to our state. I can only see a core of decay for Kentucky if this proposal is granted. And for what supposedly gain? Money!

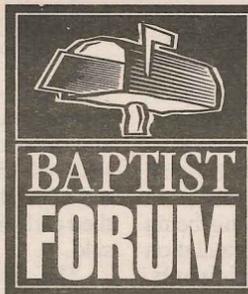
The lottery was achieved by deceiving the public as a means to benefit the schools but the money went to the general funds. We should never have permitted that to happen. Had it been presented as it

actually was, it probably would have died.

We have a surplus of \$300 million. We do not need casinos and the underworld corruption for our funds. Let Kentucky stand up for right and moral principles and pray adjoining states do the same.

I appeal to our legislators and the governor of our state to drop this whole idea and proposal.

*Mrs. Barney Q. Hopkins  
Madisonville, KY*



## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

### Unsung heroes

A large group of unsung heroes in Baptist life are our international missionaries. We see them on furlough and at World Missions Conferences and think how wonderful they are to serve God in other countries. I have always admired missionaries for giving up their culture and extended family. But after spending time with several missionaries on a recent partnership missions trip to Tanzania, my appreciation has grown even more.

The cultural challenge is far more awesome than any non-missionary can imagine. Leaving the familiar in your culture is just the beginning. Adopting a new culture and language requires a true love for the people and Holy Spirit-empowered flexibility. Adjustment requires coming to celebrate the strengths of your new culture. But even more crucial are the adjustments of spouses and growing children who might struggle with boarding schools

miles from parents. Children might grow up well adjusted to the missionary culture but have real problems adjusting when back in the United States for college.



Bill Mackey

Ralph Boyle, trained as a pharmacist, sold a lucrative partnership to answer the call to missions. He could be enjoying the "all-American" success story with his wife, Vivian, and their kids and grandkids. But God wanted a medical clinic in Mbeya, Tanzania, and Ralph was God's man. As I shared in an earlier column, 184,000 patients have been treated in four years, and thousands of lives have been saved. Even more importantly, hundreds have come to a faith in Jesus Christ.

Baptists have a strong witness in Mbeya and the whole region where Ralph has served. When asked what makes him willing to make the many adjustments he has made, Ralph replied, "a clear call from God and love

for the people." He added that his greatest fulfillment as a missionary is in knowing "people who have come to Christ and developed as leaders." It is obvious to me that Ralph loves the Tanzanian people and that they have a great love and respect for him.

Please view Ralph as just one example of thousands of missionaries who have served and who serve today. I could have written about others who have equally exciting stories.

There is another group of unsung heroes I would also like to mention. These are Kentucky Baptists who have faithfully and sincerely prayed for missionaries. They creatively promote missions education and financially support missions through the Cooperative Program, missions offerings and special gifts. Thank you, Kentucky Baptists, for being faithful to the Great Commission so that the Ralph Boyles among us can respond so effectively and creatively to God's call to missions and thousands can receive ministry, healing and eternal life in heaven!

*Bill Mackey is executive secretary-treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention*

## CHARITIES

### Careful planning needed to make an effective will

By Laurie Valentine

A person's last will and testament "works" if it accomplishes its purposes—smooth estate administration, distribution of assets as the maker desires, provision for special needs of beneficiaries and death tax savings and/or reduction.

Smooth estate administration is achieved by naming one or more executors who can handle the tasks of determining what you own at your death, paying your final debts and estate administration expenses, filing all necessary tax returns and distributing your assets pursuant to the terms of your will. To ensure that someone of your choosing handles these important activities, you should name at least one alternate if you have chosen an individual as your executor.

A will should contain provisions that make clear your desires regarding who is to receive your assets and how they are to be received at your death. A will controls only assets titled in your individual name and assets that are payable to "my estate" or "my executor." Therefore, careful consideration should be given to how your assets are titled as you consider a plan of distribution.

You may wish to include specific bequests of particular assets or amounts to family and others, as well as general bequests of personal property and your residuary estate. In addition to family needs, bequests to charitable causes that you have supported during your lifetime should be considered.

Special needs of family can be met with trust provisions for young children or adult beneficiaries who will need financial management assistance. Parents with children under age 18 should also include a provision naming a guardian for their children should both parents die before all children are age 18.

Tax evasion is illegal, but tax avoidance is good stewardship. Special trust provisions can be included that will provide deferral and reduction of death tax liabilities.

Making a Christian will is an important stewardship decision. It deserves careful planning.

If you would like additional information and a helpful set of estate planning worksheets, please contact Laurie Valentine at the Kentucky Baptist Foundation (502) 244-6466 or (888) 254-5701.

*Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation*

## Some older members feel their church is leaving them behind

**Q. More than half of our church is over age 65, yet the emphasis seems to be on the younger people. What can our church do to serve older folks better?**

The church should be able to develop ministries for the entire congregation without leaving any age group underserved.

Intergenerational ministries are a new program idea in many churches. The current trend is moving toward learning the effectiveness of fitting and mixing age groups together. This is a new concept for some of those who plan the ministry activities in their church. However, this new view of understanding and valuing the older members of the church is important in a youth-oriented society.

Remember, everyone needs to be needed. Everyone needs the security and challenge of a vital relationship with Jesus Christ. Everyone is a singularly vital part of the community of any church.

Those over age 65 need exactly the same services as do any other age group. Ironically, almost any church congregation can meet these services, including spiritual growth, support services, housing, recreation, lifelong learning and counseling and pastoral care.

With prayerful planning, the church can provide cross-generational ministry for everyone who needs care and support.

What could be more Christ-like than the community being Christ for each other? Help your church assess the ministry to the entire congregation and community.—*Jon Rainbow*

**Q. My Sunday school teacher said God hates divorce. Does God hate divorced people as well?**

Malachi 2:16 concludes a passage of blistering condemnation for the unfaithfulness of God's people with the phrase, "I hate divorce." Only God could make a statement like that with integrity.

He knows the pain divorced people feel. He felt the unfaithfulness of his covenant people. (Read Malachi, Hosea and Jeremiah). He felt the pain and abandonment of his Son on the cross (Mark 15:34). Married people cannot hate divorce the way divorced people do, for they know the depths of its despair only secondhand.

The men of God's covenant were leaving "the wives of their youth" (Malachi 2:14) to marry daughters of foreign gods (Malachi 2:11). To "put away" the wife was to leave her destitute and to "overwhelm her with cruelty" (Malachi 2:15). These men (women could not divorce in Malachi's day) would then make a sacrifice to God upon the altars of foreign gods, and wonder why God was not blessing them!

The reason God spoke so strongly in this passage was because of his great love and compassion for the abandoned. This is a strong message of incentive for us to care for those who have been devastated by the ravages of divorce. This is often the case for the divorced person. It is always the case for the children of divorce.

How did Jesus treat divorced people? He sat down beside a woman who had been married five times and offered her compassion and a new way of life (John 4). How are we in the church to deal with the victims of families blown apart through conflict? A clue is found in James 1:27. True religion finds a way to care for the modern parallels of the "widows and orphans in their distress." It is the mandate of Scripture for the people of God to "pick up the pieces" and engage in a ministry of help and healing (Luke 4:18,19) for those who need it most.—*James Stillwell*

*Family Forum writers are David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; Susan Howell, assistant professor of psychology at Campbellsville University; Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; and Wade Rowatt, director of the St. Matthews Pastoral Counseling Center in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.*



## Expanded gambling is a bad bet

A recent press release from Gov. Paul Patton's office called for "experts to study the economic and social impact of expanded gaming (gambling) in Kentucky." Specific options to be studied include land-based casinos and video lottery terminals at racetracks. The most obvious question is: Why?

While Gov. Patton claims he is "not endorsing the issue one way or another," gambling opponents have described his suggestion as "a thinly disguised effort to introduce casino gambling throughout the Commonwealth of Kentucky."

From a moral perspective, there is no reason to spend state resources to conduct a study of gambling's impact. Kentucky Baptists repeatedly have gone on record in recent years opposing expanded gambling. Anti-casino resolutions approved by convention messengers in 1993 and 1995 affirm "the biblical principles which define gambling as inherently evil and grossly immoral."

Unfortunately, there are many citizens and government leaders who fail to use morality as a gauge for their decisions. That means such issues as economic and social impact are left as primary factors in their decision-making process. Even then, however, there are few reasons to justify studying expanded gambling in the state.

Numerous studies from other states clearly indicate that social costs quickly outstrip the economic gains touted by gambling advocates. The sharp increase in the number of compulsive gamblers in states where lotteries and casinos operate has been well documented. Recent estimates indicate as many as 9.3 million adults and 1.3 million teens in the U.S. exhibit some form of problem gambling behavior.

While most people would not consider themselves among the 2 to 4 percent of Americans most susceptible to becoming compulsive gamblers, what about our social responsibility to those who are? According to the National Council on Problem Gambling, two of three pathological gamblers commit illegal acts to pay gambling debts and one in five attempts suicide. Their children are more apt to have drug and gambling problems, depression and suicidal tendencies than their peers.

Is that part of the economic and social impact that will be addressed by Gov. Patton's proposed study? If so, that evidence is readily available elsewhere. How much negative social fallout is needed before state leaders agree that devastating human costs outweigh any perceived economic gain?

Of course, many people espouse the time-worn excuse that gambling is like any other recreational expense such as eating out or going to a movie. If only that were true!

The tragedy is that a significant percentage of the population looks at gambling as a simple solution to their financial woes. Many of them pour hard-earned funds into an elusive "get rich quick" dream while family members are deprived of adequate food, clothing and other basic needs. Doesn't sound much like family recreation, does it?

In addition to moral and social concerns, the economic arguments to support expanded gambling also come up short. According to statistics compiled by Citizens Against Gambling Expansion, an interdenominational coalition seeking to halt the spread of gambling in the state:

- An analysis of the economic and social impact of casinos in Florida, prepared by the governor's office, projected that annual casino tax revenue would be \$324 million to \$469 million while crime and social costs would reach at least \$2.16 billion.

- When casinos opened in Central City, Colo., city tax revenues increased to \$6.5 million. At the same time, however, the city's costs for increased police and government services created a debt of \$20 million.

- A report on video poker in South Carolina found that the state took in \$61 million in gambling revenues while related social costs exceeded \$80 million.

Is there any reason to believe Kentucky's experience would be any different? Of course not. With or without additional studies, the experiences of other states reveal that expanded gambling is a bad bet morally, socially and economically.

Don't merely sit back and allow others to set our state's moral and social agenda. Now is the time for Kentucky Baptists to let their voices be heard.

**STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR**



Trennis Henderson

## 'Do you think you will escape God's judgment?'

By Chris Platt

*So when you, a mere man, pass judgment on them and yet do the same things, do you think you will escape God's judgment? (Romans 2:3)*

Two teenagers, Donald and Karen, were angry with one another. Donald pointed an accusing finger at Karen, blaming her for what had happened. Karen snapped back, "My mom always said, 'When you point one finger at someone, there are three fingers pointing back at you.'"

Chapter two of Romans describes a similar scene, though new characters are introduced. The Jews are pointing an accusing finger at the Gentiles, but hardly realize that three fingers are pointing back at them.

In chapter one, Paul's focus was on the Gentiles' need of God's righteousness. They had rejected the revelation of God provided them and now were given over to suffer the consequences of their actions.

The Jews would have responded to Paul's words much like the people in the pew do when their pastor is preaching a powerful message: "Amen, brother. Preach it!" It has often been said that when you say "Amen!" to a preacher, it's like saying, "Sic 'em" to a dog. The Jews were saying, "Sic 'em, Paul. Make sure the heathen get the message."

Little did they know that their enthusiasm would give Paul energy for chapter two's message. Beginning in verse one he clearly states that the Jews needed God's righteousness too. Be careful when you point an accusing finger. Indeed, there are three fingers pointing back at you. Paul writes, "You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things."

The Jews thought they were immune from God's judgment. After all, had not God chosen them? Did they not hold a favored position? Weren't special

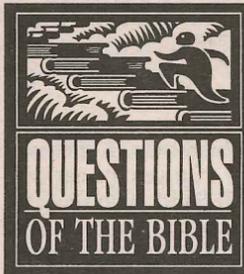
promises made to them? From their vantage point, it certainly seemed that they had a guarantee of protection from God. It didn't matter what they did. God would deliver them.

The Jews' thinking was faulty. As one commentator put it, "God's righteousness was not a guarantee of protection for Israel. ... Rather, God's righteousness was like a plumb line against which they too would be judged."

Paul posed the question to the Jews: "Do you think you will escape God's judgment?" The answer is a resounding "No!" The Jews were as guilty as the Gentiles were. The accusing finger pointing at the Gentiles was answered with three fingers aimed at them. Verse five brings the accusation against the Jews, "But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed."

The confrontation between Donald and Karen I witnessed during my teenage years in New Jersey taught me a lesson. Before we single out someone for wrongdoing, we ought to examine our life to see if we are doing the same things.

*Chris Platt is pastor of High Street Baptist Church in Somerset.*



# BAPTISTS

## Founders speaker issues call for modern martyrs

**"Why believe that our Lord spiritually and morally transforms people if we who make that claim are no different from the world?"**

Tom Ascol, executive director for Founders Ministries

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)—Focusing on missions as "the global priority of our glorious God," pastors and church leaders were urged during the 17th annual Southern Baptist Founders Conference to make Christ known to the nations, even if that means being torched alive by an angry mob or imprisoned by a hostile government.

The Founders Conference is a national meeting of Southern Baptists who embrace the doctrine historically known as "Calvinism" or "the doctrines of grace." A record registration of nearly 600 attended the July 20-23 sessions at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.

John Piper, pastor of Minneapolis' Bethlehem Baptist Church, told participants he was on "a recruitment mission for martyrs" in light of the teaching in Revelation 6:9 that Christ will return only after the full number of martyrs for the faith have been killed for his name.

A passion for missions is inherently a part of Reformed self-identity, Piper contended, because Calvinists believe God's glory as displayed in his sovereign mercy is the chief value in the universe. Piper promised unspeakable persecution for those whose passion for the gospel propels them to unreached areas.

"In my call to missions and to completing the Great Commission, I have no rosy picture whatsoever to paint," Piper said. "Not because the devil is on a rampage, but because God designs that we deliver the sufferings of Jesus in and through our own sufferings."

Piper said the Great Commission task is sidelined by pampered, persecution-free American Christians

whose affections are indistinguishable from those of their unregenerate neighbors.

Recalling Jesus' promise that his followers would be persecuted for godliness, Piper said American evangelicals have "domesticated" the word godliness.

Christians will not be persecuted for not committing adultery or refraining from stealing while living out comfortable middle-class American lives, he noted, but they will face peril if they carry the gospel overseas. He said believers must cultivate an openness to martyrdom on the mission field by finding their heart's satisfaction in God.

"If you do not find satisfaction in God and God alone, you will count him as an enemy when he hands you over to the sword," Piper said. "Get ready now not to get mad at God, but rather to say, 'I'm being counted worthy to share in the sufferings of Jesus!'"

"May it happen soon that there are going to be tens of thousands who think totally differently about dying," Piper declared, "because they say, 'To live is Christ and to die is gain. Let's go. Why should we live to age 30 when Jesus is on the other side of the sword!'"

Zane Pratt, strategy coordinator for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, pleaded for pastors to consider whether the reason they may be unable to fan missions fervor in their churches is because they personally "haven't dealt with why they fulfill the Great Commission by not going."

Pratt argued that those questioning whether God is leading them to missions should realize God's will for the lives of individual believers is not dis-

connected from his will for human history. That should spur Southern Baptists to set out for sectors of the world where the gospel is unknown, he said, with the confidence that God has published in Scripture his purpose for a worldwide harvest.

"Literally from Genesis to Revelation, God's intention is nothing less than to entirely reclaim this planet for his glory," Pratt said.

Phil Roberts, vice president for strategic cities at the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board, described the missions situation at home in terms of American infatuation with religious pluralism and trendy paganism. The "American pantheon" now includes skyrocketing numbers of Mormons, Muslims, Jehovah's Witnesses and Wiccans, Roberts said.

The antidote to this increased American spirituality is not timidity, he counseled, but the establishment of "Baptist churches, New Testament churches, built on biblical principles, genuine spiritual discipline and church discipline and encouragement, and to trust God to lead us in doing all that we can in sharing the gospel with as many as we can."

"Passion for missions demands a commitment to reformation," said Tom Ascol, executive director of Founders Ministries and pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Cape Coral, Fla. "What we must do is increase our passion to see the gospel carried to all peoples of the earth, and out of that passion we must fully embrace the call of reformation at home."

Preaching from Romans 2:17-24, Ascol contended the morally scandalous lives of so many American churchgoers has caused the name of God to be blasphemed as the world

population equates Christianity with American moral chaos.

"How can we explain that our trinitarian God is himself love when we can't even get along with one another?" Ascol asked. "Why believe that our Lord spiritually and morally transforms people if we who make that claim are no different from the world?"

Noting millions of people languish on church rolls despite not having "enough spiritual impulse even to show up among the people of God" once a year, Ascol said the chief need for reformation is the recovery of the doctrine of the new birth. Such a recovery will require bold preaching on the necessity of genuine repentance and faith for salvation both in the United States and around the globe, he added.

Greg Wills, assistant professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, argued that the practice of church discipline, though largely nonexistent in contemporary church life, is a crucial part of the Southern Baptist evangelistic heritage.

Recounting historical data from Southern Baptist churches in the 19th century, Wills contended early Southern Baptists saw the purity of a regenerate church as necessary to the Great Commission task. Southern Baptists who accept the doctrine of biblical inerrancy have no choice but to submit to its authority as they seek to evangelize the world, Wills said.

"Some will object that discipline will harm missions and evangelism, but since when was obedience to God an obstacle to conversion?" Wills asked. "How can we expect God's blessing on churches in deliberate and indifferent disobedience to his plain command?"

### BAPTIST BITS

■ **Wake Forest to open divinity school.** Wake Forest University Divinity School will open this fall with 24 full-time students from a variety of denominational backgrounds, officials at the Baptist-affiliated university in Winston-Salem, N.C., announced. Trustees at Wake Forest first approved the establishment of a divinity school in 1989, pending the raising of adequate funding for the venture. More than \$10 million in pledges and gifts has been raised.

■ **Florida mission trip ends tragically.** An uplifting mission trip ended in sudden tragedy for Aloma Baptist Church in Winter Park, Fla. During the trip home, a tire blew out on the church van July 16, causing it to flip and crash, killing the driver and injuring the seven other passengers. Even in tragedy church members said they saw victories: At least seven people made professions of faith during the July 22 funeral service for the driver, Bill Rabun. The accident occurred as the church's youth mission team was returning from a week of ministry near Marianna, Fla.

■ **Campus Crusade adopts SBC marriage stance.** Campus Crusade announced July 28 that it is adopting the Southern Baptist Convention's statement on marriage and family as its own. Bill Bright, who founded Campus Crusade for Christ with his wife, Vonette, in 1951, said, "As a movement, Vonette and I, along with the leadership of Campus Crusade for Christ International, felt it was time to step forward with our friends from the SBC by affirming the biblical standard for marriage and family." The Campus Crusade statement uses the four-paragraph SBC statement word for word and adds a fifth paragraph encouraging spouses in ways to show mutual respect and love for each other.

## Guides given for WMU emphasis on violence

By Ken Camp  
Baptist General Convention of Texas

WACO, Texas (ABP)—Violence in America literally begins at home, according to a specialist on family issues and former professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville.

Researchers estimate that 30 percent of American wives are victimized by physically aggressive husbands, said Diana Garland, director of the graduate social work program at Baylor University in Waco, Texas.

And in homes where spousal abuse occurs, the risk of child abuse is 15 times the national average, said Garland, who recently led a conference on "Project HELP: Violence," a national focus of Woman's Missionary Union of the Southern Baptist Convention.

"During the Vietnam era, 58,000 American service people died as a result of combat. During those same years, 54,000 women in the United States were killed by their husbands, ex-husbands or boyfriends. But that's a death toll that went unreported on the evening news," she said.

Some Christian women remain in violent situations out of a mistaken belief that if they leave their hus-

### 5 tips for taming your TV

Children learn violence from adults, from their own experience and especially from the mass media, according to Diana Garland.

"The most significant teacher of violence in society is TV," she said.

As a commercial medium, television is dominated by the three most effective attention-getters in modern society—violence, sex and humor, she noted. And children spend an average of 32 hours per week watching TV and playing video games.

Garland offered tips to help families tame their televisions:

■ Keep the television off unless someone specifically has made the conscious decision to watch a

particular show. "Don't just turn it on in the morning and leave it on all day as background noise."

■ Limit the number of hours of television time per day or per week.

■ Watch television with children. "It can be a meaningful, shared family activity when it's 10 minutes of plot followed by several minutes of discussion."

■ Prohibit TV watching during family meals, except as a rare treat when there is a special program the family can enjoy together.

■ Keep TV sets in shared family space, not in bedrooms. "Keep it down to one shared television in the house—and maybe one in the closet, in case somebody comes down with the measles."

bands, they are guilty of breaking their marriage vows and violating the Bible, Garland said.

"We need to teach a theology that says God does not like violence, and he does not like people using violence and power to control others," she said. "Breaking covenant happens when the

violence is perpetrated."

Garland said violence in America is at its heart "a spiritual problem."

In a nation where the sense of community has broken down, she added, "The community of faith can be the community—not just for our own children, but for all God's children."

## Kentuckians among those getting creative this summer

By Pat Cole  
Staff Writer

MARION—Prayer walks and mountain climbing were among the ways Kentucky Baptist churches got creative during vacation Bible schools this summer.

Youngsters at Marion Baptist Church took a mission trip without leaving the building.

On a prayer walk through the church facilities, they learned about the mission of their congregation and about the mandate to share the gospel with the world.

Director Marjorie Yandell said she got the idea for the prayer walk while reading a prayer walk bulletin from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. "I was sitting and looking at that and trying to think up something for Bible school that would acquaint children with the church and prayer," Yandell said. "The two just seemed to gel."

The trek began at the front door of the church, where the children's 88-year-old guide, Louella Tibbs, told them about the people around the world who do not have a church to attend and led the group in prayer.

The group proceeded to the library and prayed for people who do not have a Bible and then to the baptistry, where they prayed for new Christians around

the world. Leaders also explained the meaning of baptism to the students.

Next, the children walked to the church office and talked with Darrell Clark, the church's pastor. He prayed with them about the needs of the community and the church.

The prayer walk concluded in the prayer room, where students completed a puzzle that depicted a map of countries where Southern Baptist missionaries work.

Tibbs, whom friends describe as a prayer warrior and longtime missions supporter, said the children enjoyed the prayer walk. "I think it showed them how their church participates in missions and how they can help."

After the prayer walk, each student received a PUSH (Pray Until Something Happens) bracelet and was encouraged to wear it to vacation Bible school each day. "The emphasis was on prayer and the value of prayer and how you can pray even as a small child," Yandell said.

First Baptist Church of Shelbyville also put a creative twist on vacation Bible school this summer. They developed the "Mt. Extreme" theme in the LifeWay Christian Resources curricu-

lum by erecting a 25-foot repelling wall made of simulated rock.

In order to draw attention to vacation Bible school, the church put the wall up the day before Bible school started and invited the community to an ice cream social. At the social, children could climb and rappel from the wall.

The goal was to attract older children, who sometimes think of vacation Bible school as an activity they have outgrown, said director Amanda Conlon.

Students in the first grade and older were given access to the wall. On the final night, kindergarten students were allowed to climb under the supervision of their parents.

The adventure theme was continued in worship as students gathered in the basement amid surroundings that resembled a forest. Youth accompanied contemporary worship music with guitars and drums, said Conlon, who described the music as "loud and good."

The challenge of the wall helped reinforce the school's message that living the Christian life is a difficult but obtainable pursuit, Conlon said.

"Making the decision to go against the grain is hard work," she said. "But

this is where you need to be."

Around the country, other churches reported a variety of creative activities to the Web site for LifeWay Christian Resources. Among them:

■ At First Baptist Church in Bothell, Wash., Richard Kirk made an entry that students won't soon forget.

Kirk, minister of education, rigged cables from a tent hanging in the air at the top of the church's balcony to the front of the auditorium. When it came time for the VBS pledges, Kirk came out of the tent yelling, "Don't start without me; I'm coming down from the mountain," and was lowered to the floor.

"I led the pledges in the harness and helmet," Kirk said. "It was a riot. Then our music minister came down the same way, playing the theme song on his guitar. ... I think they should offer VBS survival classes in seminary."

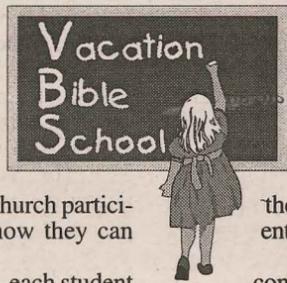
■ Members at Park Place Baptist, an inner-city church in Houston, used scaffolding and paper to create a 35-foot peak in its sanctuary.

"Houston isn't exactly known for mountains, so we built our own," said Jerry Wooley, minister of education at the church. "Each night, the pastor spoke from a different level."

With additional reporting by Chip Alford of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

**"I think they should offer VBS survival classes in seminary."**

Richard Kirk, minister of education at First Baptist Church in Bothell, Wash.



## Special needs classes get enthusiastic responses

PADUCAH—If churches desire enthusiastic vacation Bible school students, some leaders in West Union Baptist Association can recommend a ministry that will exceed all expectations.

In July, the association conducted its first vacation Bible school for youth and adults with special needs. Six students from ages 15 to 45 attended and brought with them a zeal for life and learning, said Linda Spees, one of the school's organizers.

In anticipation of the evening sessions at Lone Oak First Baptist Church in Paducah, students began gathering 15 minutes before the starting time, Spees said. They were greeted by teachers who used a curriculum produced for special needs adults by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention.

The literature is written on a third-grade level but can be adjusted to the learning abilities of class members, said Spees, a special education consultant with the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

## Habitat for Humanity involved in Bible school curriculum

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (ABP)—The "drillers," "painters," "nailers" and "dump trucks" showed up at Hendricks Avenue Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla. But these 3-year-olds through sixth graders weren't on hand for a construction project. They came for Bible school.

The church was among early users of a new vacation Bible school program, "Under Construction," produced by Smyth and Helwys Publishing in Macon, Ga., in partnership with Habitat for Humanity. It not only uses a construction theme for teaching kids about God and his love but also helps

"The message is that everybody needs to know Jesus Christ," Spees said. "And we try not to talk down" to students.

Spees teaches a special needs Sunday school class for adults at Lone Oak. Another church in the association, 12th Street Baptist, has a special needs class and a third church, Bellview Baptist, plans to start a special needs class.

"It just seemed that the time was right" for a special needs vacation Bible school "and people were praying about" it, Spees said. "Six students is a start. I am excited."

Now that leaders have conducted a successful special needs school, Spees said she believes they will be able to more aggressively promote future Bible schools in the community.

At Trinity Baptist Church in Lexington, special needs vacation Bible school has been a yearly event for three decades, according to director Helen Brown.

This year about 50 adults attended the vacation Bible school, which is part

of an ongoing ministry the church has with special needs adults. Between 50-70 adults attend a special needs Sunday school class.

The church also has a class for children with special needs, but attendance is much smaller, in part because many children are mainstreamed into traditional classes, Brown said.

Trinity began its special needs ministry because some Lexington parents were having difficulty finding a church that would welcome their special needs children, Brown said. The class began with two students and quickly grew.

"The church is for people and the church is for everyone," Brown said. "All you have to do to realize that is to come to one Sunday school class or one VBS class" for people with special needs.

People with special needs are among the most overlooked in society, Brown said. Churches that begin a ministry with them would benefit by knowing "they are spreading the love of Jesus and helping people who might just sit and be lonely."

build new homes.

Curriculum coordinator Tom Harrington said the concept is to combine biblical principles with real missions. "The overall goal is to offer a ministry-minded vacation Bible school that is extraordinarily relevant to where we are today."

Along with their daily Bible stories and some Habitat-related activities, children get daily snippets of the Habitat story, said Betsy Van Deusen, director of church relations for Habitat for Humanity International. Curriculum segments include "Blueprints" (Bible activities), "Hard Hat

Area" (craft projects) and "Survey" (community stories).

Instead of actually participating in the construction of a Habitat home, those attending the Bible school are asked to give an offering construction projects. Habitat also receives a percentage from the sale of the curriculum.

Van Deusen said getting word out about Habitat and encouraging the next generation of Habitat house builders was the organization's main goal, but getting the kids' parents involved also is important. "We know that behind every little kid, there is a big kid, so introducing Habitat to adults was a goal."

## Kentuckians use vacation Bible school for outreach, evangelism

Continued from page 1

said. "I've heard from a lot of pastors that this year they've been very much more intentional in making VBS much more evangelistic."

Garland is producing a video for churches that will present a five-point plan to make vacation Bible school more evangelistic. The points of the plan are:

■ **Prayer.** Garland urges churches to recruit prayer partners who will pray for workers, the children and the school in general.

■ **Time.** Both Garland and Dever advocate that churches host vacation Bible school during a time when it will attract youth from outside the church. According to reports by Kentucky Baptist churches, three-quarters of them host evening vacation Bible schools, Dever said.

■ **Promotion.** Promotion also should be aimed to attract people outside the church, Garland said.

■ **Presenting the gospel.** Garland recommends that staff make an intentional, clear presentation of the gospel, preferably toward the end of the event.

■ **Properly trained staff.** "They have to know how to talk to a child about Christ." Children who say they want to become a Christian should be able to answer "What is sin?" and "What does it mean to be become a Christian?"

"If they can't answer those two questions, we don't want to pick green fruit," Garland said.

Well-trained staff also will avoid statements that would manipulate children who aren't ready to respond, he added. "If you've dealt with kids much, you can tell if they're sincere, if they know what they're doing."

Nationally, nearly 60,000 professions of faith were reported in 1998 in Southern Baptist vacation Bible schools. According to the Annual Church Profile, an annual statistical report compiled by LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention, vacation Bible school attracted more than 3.2 million people across the country.

According to these records, 59,185 decisions for Christ were reported, up from the 1997 total of 53,606.

With additional reporting by Chip Alford of LifeWay Christian Resources

## Hunger can be solved, Christian advocacy group claims

By Kenny Byrd  
Baptist Joint Committee

### Numerically speaking

The following statistics are from the report "Grace at the Table: Ending Hunger in God's World":

- 828 million people in developing countries are going hungry "in the stark sense of lacking food to sustain normal activity."
- 1.3 billion people, or 20 percent of the human race, survive on less than a dollar a day.
- 35 million people, one out of every eight, live in U.S. households that are "food-insecure" or hungry.
- 2 million people in the United States suffer severe hunger.
- 13 percent of the U.S. population fell below the official poverty line in 1997.

WASHINGTON (ABP)—Hunger is a solvable problem, but lawmakers lack the political will to end it, Bread for the World leaders said recently.

As the anti-hunger advocacy group celebrated its 25th anniversary in Washington, leaders warned proposed federal spending cuts could threaten funds for food programs.

Art Simon, who founded Bread for the World in 1974, said experts then were saying that population growth was rapidly overtaking the ability to produce food, and it seemed "implausible" to make any headway on hunger.

"Dramatic progress has been made," Simon said, "but not in the United States." Since 1974, the number of hungry people around the world has dropped from one-third of the globe's population to one-fifth, Simon added.

"It's much clearer now than it was then that hunger is a solvable problem," he said.

Bread for the World President David Beckmann said at the meeting that hunger could be solved for roughly \$50 billion a year. "That's a lot of money, but Americans spend that on movies," he said, adding that "the government ran a surplus of well over \$50 billion this year."

During a conference breakout session, Lynette Engelhardt, congressional advocate for the organization, said the United States has the money and the programs to end hunger, but lawmakers "lack the political will."

Pointing to the first federal budget surplus in decades, she asked, "If not now, when?"

Another Bread for the World con-

### Groups debate personal & legislative response to hunger

WASHINGTON (ABP)—The "soup-kitchen syndrome"—defined as "a feeling that if you're not handing soup to someone, you're not helping end hunger"—makes it harder to involve church members in legislative advocacy for anti-hunger and poverty programs.

So said Bread for the World activist Harold Stanton at a breakout session during the organization's recent 25th anniversary.

Bread for the World asks congregations to become covenant churches that educate members on hunger issues. Those that agree to become covenant churches also participate in an annual "offering

of letters," written by church members to urge lawmakers to vote for specific anti-hunger legislation.

Participation in the anti-hunger advocacy organization varies by denomination, said Tom Murphy, who works with Bread for the World's church relations. He said roughly 350 Southern Baptist individuals and 14 churches are members. Presbyterians, meanwhile, have more than 5,000 members and 226 covenant churches.

Steve Nelson, director of hunger concerns for the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, said Southern Baptists respond to hunger directly

through the Southern Baptist World Hunger Fund. The Southern Baptist Convention spent \$10.4 million on domestic and international hunger relief last year.

"We don't think our primary thrust needs to be legislative on this issue," Nelson said, adding that a "direct response" is sometimes more effective. Nelson, who said the welfare system over the past 50 years has largely failed, said government aid is not as effective as personal involvement. "We do the poor no favors if we share bread for the body and don't share the Bread of Life for hungry souls," he said.

gressional advocate, Kim Wade, said food programs face cuts due to spending caps set by Congress in recent deals to balance the budget.

The two advocates said Bread for the World is calling for a \$181 million increase in a program that is also celebrating its 25th year of existence—the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

The WIC spending level passed by the U.S. House of Representatives is \$45 million short of what is needed to maintain the current caseload of 7.4 million women, they said.

A Senate committee has approved the minimum amount needed to maintain 7.4 million people, but Bread advocates expressed fear that the House and Senate spending conflict might be resolved by splitting the difference.

Increasing the minimum wage is another provision sought by Bread for the World leaders to combat hunger.

Engelhardt said about 10 percent of the American workforce earns minimum wage, which is \$3,000 below the official poverty line.

"People can afford to pay their workers a fair wage," she said. "If you believe in a minimum wage at all, shouldn't it be a living wage?"

Also speaking at the conference were current and former lawmakers.

"When we are generally in good times as a society it is much more difficult as a society to focus on social problems," noted U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman. Many of the "working poor" do not realize they are eligible for food stamps, because they confuse stamps with welfare, he said.

"It's our responsibility to, in fact, let people know that there is help for struggling families to get proper nourishment," Glickman said.

Rep. Marge Roukema, R-N.J., said it is "absolutely criminal to let chil-

dren go to bed hungry, in this the luckiest country in the world or in any country in the world."

And Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, said, "We've paid attention to a few at the top and not the many on the bottom."

In the meeting's keynote address, former Illinois Sen. Paul Simon said, "Religion can be a powerful force for healing or a powerful force for harm."

Simon, the brother of Bread for the World founder Art Simon, lamented that "the wealthiest nation" would tolerate mass poverty and hunger abroad. While the United States acted to halt ethnic cleansing in Kosovo, he said, more than 1 million people died in genocide in the Sudan and more than 900,000 in Rwanda.

Simon said the question that should be asked about the future of the U.S. government is "not really whether government is large or small, but whether government is good or bad."

### NATIONAL NOTES

■ **Church arsonist suspect indicted.** Accused arsonist Jay Scott Ballinger was indicted by federal authorities July 27 for burning 29 churches in Kentucky and seven other states since 1994. Ballinger, 36, of Yorktown, Ind., faces this most recent in a series of indictments since he was arrested in February after an Ohio church fire. If convicted, he could face up to 215 years in prison and a \$3.25 million fine.

■ **Opponents seek to ban vouchers.** Groups opposed to school voucher programs have filed a federal lawsuit seeking to ban a three-year-old voucher program in Cleveland. The groups said the program violates the U.S. Constitution by funneling tax dollars into religious schools. This is the second time groups have challenged the constitutionality of Cleveland's voucher program. The Ohio Supreme Court ruled in May that the program didn't violate church-state separation clauses in the U.S. and Ohio constitutions. But the program was shut down on a state law technicality. The Ohio Legislature revived the program in June.

■ **Interdenominational marriages have low divorce rate.** The most successful Christian marriages are experienced by couples who come from different denominations and settle on one tradition together, a study shows. "The divorce rate in that group was only 6 percent," said Michael Lawlor, director of Creighton University's Center for Marriage and Family. Lawlor, who recently completed a three-year study of 1,512 couples, credited the success rate to the sincere struggle, decision-making or adventure of converting to one church or deciding on a new tradition.



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## Baptist school takes Christian love to Jordan's children

AMMAN, Jordan (BP)—When Paul and Virginia Smith looked out over the 29 small faces that made up the first class at Amman Baptist School, they couldn't help but wonder if this was really what God had planned.

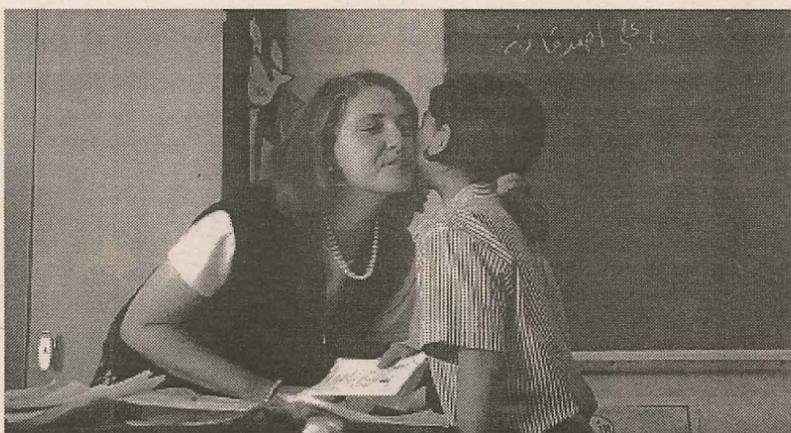
It was the fall of 1974, eight years since Southern Baptist workers in Jordan had purchased the land for the school.

In those eight years, the Smiths, Southern Baptist representatives in Jordan, said they saw God deal one by one with a multitude of problems they faced on their way to starting the school. They said they felt sure God wanted them to reach out to Jordanians in Amman through a Baptist school.

But after the school opened, it took a year for Baptists to see evidence God was at work toward that goal.

The turning point came when Jordan's Princess Bessma and her brother, Prince Hassan, enrolled their children in the school. Afterward, the community followed suit. By the time the school marked its fifth anniversary, 260 students were enrolled.

This year Jordanian Baptists celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Amman Baptist School with a week of special events highlighting the



**HEART TO HEART** Miriam Fritz (left), is a Southern Baptist who teaches science at Amman Baptist School in Jordan. In its 25 years of ministry, the school has built bridges of understanding and shared the gospel with Jordanians. (BP photo by Tobin Perry)

school's unique place in Amman, Jordan's capital. The celebration included an open house, student exhibits and an alumni gathering.

The school, operated by the Jordanian Baptist Convention, is one of two Baptist schools in Jordan.

When the Amman Baptist School opened, it was Southern Baptist workers' first attempt to reach non-Christian Jordanians in Amman with Christ's love. Until that point, Baptist work in the city had been limited

mainly to cultural Christians.

In keeping with the organizers' original intentions, the school has become a strong Christian influence in Amman. Former students talk openly about the spiritual lessons they learned at the school.

Few Christian institutions in the Middle East have kept a high public profile like the Amman Baptist School. Several members of the royal family attended the school, including one of the late King Hussein's daugh-

ters. After touring the institution in 1975, King Hussein financed construction of the wall that now surrounds the school. He also attended a chapel service there.

In the early 1990s, the Jordan Baptist Convention took over the deed to the land and assumed control of the school. Since its second year of operation, the school has been self-supporting. Some Southern Baptist representatives serve there as teachers.

One of the school's most important Christian influences is the kindergarten, where children regardless of religious background gather to sing Christian songs and listen to someone read from the Bible.

"The purpose of this school is the gospel of Jesus Christ," said Hala Haddadin, the kindergarten principal. "When we tell the children the stories of Jesus' life, they go home and share with their parents."

In Jordan, like in many Middle Eastern countries, a gulf that has existed since the crusades lies between Christians and Muslims. Satisfying needs of the Muslim community—such as education—is one way Christians have found to bridge that gap.

"When you build that bridge, you can take the gospel across to the people who need to hear it," Smith said.

## Saudi Arabia tops list of repressive countries

WASHINGTON (BP)—Saudi Arabia is the world's most repressive country for Christians, according to a new report by an organization that works to support persecuted churches and Christians.

Open Doors International rated the Middle East regime first in a top 10 list dominated by Islamic-controlled countries. Saudi Arabia easily outdistanced all other countries, based on a 51-question survey of countries.

The other top 10 nations, in order, are Afghanistan, Sudan, China, Yemen, Morocco, Iran, Libya, Tunisia and Egypt.

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**Carol Kent**

a gifted public speaker, writer & former radio show co-host, Carol is the founder of "Speak Up With Confidence" seminars



**Julie Baker**

executive producer & president of *TimeOut for Women!*, has worked in media & pr, authored a textbook, wrote music for & produced 5 recordings



**Judy Schreur**

nationally known motivational speaker & humorist, co-authored "When Prince Charming Falls Off His Horse" with her husband

# MISSIONS

## Kentuckians see results in Kenya evangelism project

By Sue Sprenkle  
SBC International Mission Board

**"When we got to the tree for church services, they were sitting there waiting on us, eager to learn more about their personal Savior."**

Volunteer Bonnie Burgess of Vine Grove

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)—Kentuckians Ron and Bonnie Burgess trudged through muddy paths to a new church meeting under a mango tree.

The couple from Vine Grove were part of a month-long evangelism project in eastern Kenya, spending most mornings sharing Christ's love and inviting people to the tree for Bible study. One day, they prayed with more than 20 people to receive Christ.

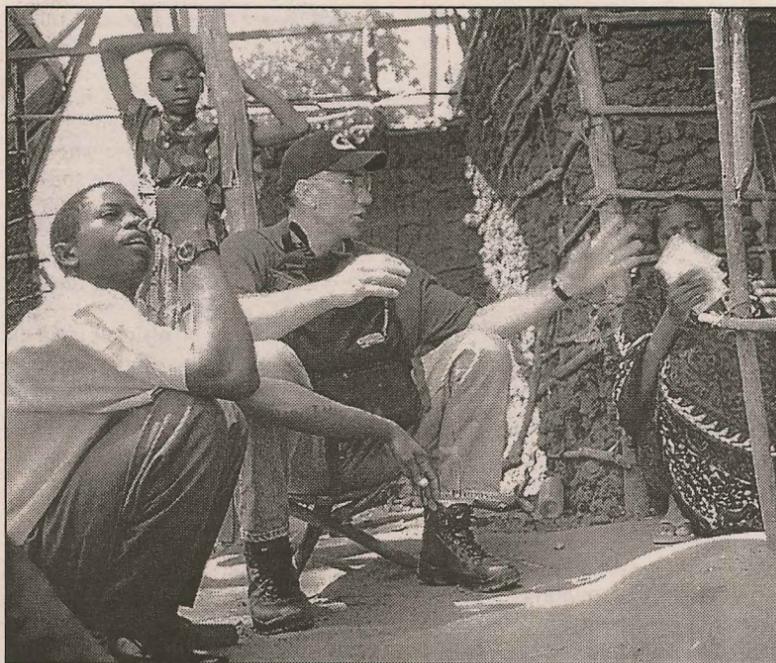
"We weren't sure how many of them would follow through and come to the Bible study," Mrs. Burgess said. "When we got to the tree for church services, they were sitting there waiting on us, eager to learn more about their personal Savior."

More than 22,000 people made professions of faith in Jesus as Savior during the Eastern Kenya Baptist Evangelistic Effort in late June and early July. The outreach drew 332 volunteers from churches throughout the United States, including the Burgesses, and resulted in 132 new congregations.

The month-long project was divided into two phases, each lasting two weeks. Teams were dispatched to seven cities or regions along the eastern coast of Kenya.

The areas of concentration included Kilifi, Malindi, Magarini, Mombasa, Mitito Andei, Ukambani East and Ukambani South.

Volunteers worked hand in hand



**KENYAN WITNESS** Volunteer Bill Arbo of Roanoke, Va., shares the plan of salvation with a Giriama woman in Malindi, Kenya. More than 22,000 people made professions of faith in Jesus Christ during the Eastern Kenya Baptist Evangelistic Effort in late June and early July. A total of 332 Southern Baptist volunteers from Kentucky and other states worked with Kenyan Baptists and Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries in the effort, which resulted in 132 new congregations. (BP photo by Sue Sprenkle.)

with local Kenyan church members to spread the news of Christ's love. Southern Baptist International Mission Board missionaries Clay Coursey and Jim Musen used the volunteers in direct evangelism and to help start churches. Some of these same volun-

teers will return in February to participate in a follow-up workshop for the new congregations.

Kenyan pastor Samuel Katana worked closely with the volunteers and team leaders. He not only saw many of his neighbors become Chris-

tians, but he also saw church members become active evangelists as they worked with the Americans.

Katana and Coursey said this zeal for evangelism is one of the most important results of the whole project.

"It feels so good to work and do what God commanded all Christians to do—to go teach and baptize," the Kenyan pastor said. "The people here are very open and receptive to the gospel right now. Our goal is to start enough churches so that everyone is within walking distance, and we are getting a good start on that now."

Loaded down with bottles of water and extra Bibles, volunteers and local church members walked through villages and talked to anyone willing to listen. Bethany Hale of Roanoke, Va., said she loved the time spent in the small villages.

At one family cluster of three homes, Hale was surrounded by 20 children and two mothers who insisted on hearing the same story she had just told their neighbors. She said that as she explained what sin was, the group was silent. The crowd hung on every word concerning Christ's sacrifice. When she asked those who believed to repeat a short prayer, she was surprised by the response.

"Every one of them said the sinner's prayer," Hale said. "I have never heard anything as joyful and sweet as 20 children praying to God at one time. Not only were their lives changed by that prayer, but so was mine."

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"Behind only with my tithe to my church, partly because my church does not expose my delinquency, or cut me off, or make it embarrassing for me; partly because the things of the world, although of lesser value, have crept into my major interest and laid hold of my willpower; partly because it is easier to spend money where my interest lies than to place it behind the ideals I do not carefully and unfailingly support; partly because I know Tom, Harry, Dick and Jane will keep the church going, and my delinquency will not be the means of destroying the church. It will still be there, thanks to them, whenever I need it. Someone will be good enough to 'bat for me' while I am dissipating my interest, energies and money elsewhere.

"And yet, when I stop to think of all of this, I know it is not right that I place my church last. My conscience, when unable to smother or dodge the real issue, disturbs me. I should be a bigger, better, more useful citizen and

Christian if actually I gave through my church, even though I had to leave some lesser things off, at least for a while.

"Behind ... behind with Christ! I'll be a better person, manager and member than if I placed myself in the rank of the 'always behind with my church.'"

Our family recently received our quarterly giving record from our church. I am so glad our church provides this because it facilitates accountability. It is easy to get behind in our giving during the summer months when we are away on vacations, camps or retreats. Let me encourage you to review your giving record to your church to make sure you have not fallen behind in your giving. Someone has said, "In the practice of giving as a Christian steward, it is better to give regularly and keep up than to give occasionally and try to catch up."

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Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223; (888) 254-5701

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- ▶ **Witnessing to Jehovah's Witnesses** - Joe Kreisle
- ▶ **Witnessing to New Age Movement** - Don Metcalf
- ▶ **Witnessing to the Occult** - Mark Terry (in Winchester)  
Jeff Eaton (in Pikeville)
- ▶ **Witnessing to Mormons** - Patience Ford (in Winchester)  
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# MISSIONS

## Cooperative effort blankets Mexican town with 'Jesus'

By Mark Wingfield  
Texas Baptist Standard

JUAREZ, Mexico (ABP)—Jesus was seen all over Juarez, Mexico, last month thanks to a Texas Baptist church, Campus Crusade for Christ and several hundred evangelical Christian churches in Juarez.

Every night from June 30 through July 30, the "Jesus" film was shown on portable outdoor screens at anywhere from 70 to 100 locations.

On city plazas, in public parks, in parking lots, even on blocked-off city streets, the Spanish-language version of the time-tested evangelistic tool was being shown to crowds averaging 200 people per showing.

An extensive media campaign saturated the city with news of the film, declaring "He Visto A Jesus en Ciudad Juarez," or "I've Seen Jesus in the City of Juarez."

"The most popular phrase in Juarez right now is 'I've Seen Jesus,'"

said Francisco Presendo, media director for Campus Crusade in Mexico.

This message—and a similar one, "Jesus is Close to You"—were painted on billboards and walls, printed on posters and fliers, sent over the airwaves in radio and television ads and even displayed on an electronic board over one of the main bridges from Juarez into El Paso.

"We want to wake up a desire in people to see the film," Presendo explained.

It would be hard not to have seen or known about the film if you were anywhere in Juarez in July, especially after dark. With 70 to 100 free screenings per night, the project aimed for a total of about 2,500 showings by the end of July.

Judging by attendance at early screenings, as many as a half-million people were expected to see the film depicting the life of Christ as told in the Gospel of Luke.

In the first week alone, 11,000 spir-

itual decisions were recorded on response cards given to people viewing the film.

Each person making such a decision was to be visited within 48 hours by volunteers from local evangelical churches. In addition to the spiritual counseling offered at the screening site, the Christian volunteers offered additional counseling, discipleship materials and prayer during the subsequent home visits.

Campus Crusade officials cited the involvement of hundreds of local churches as the key to the success of the "Jesus" film strategy for mass evangelism.

"Churches that are participating are experiencing a revival, and it's very different from a stadium crusade," Presendo said.

Churches across Juarez prepared for the July campaign for months. Campus Crusade staff trained 2,000 people in evangelism and discipleship, and also provided the expertise for church-based volunteers to run the 100 16-mm movie projectors that were shuttled around the city for each night's showings.

At some locations, volunteers handed out popcorn and snacks to those watching the film. At all locations, they handed out response cards and Christian literature.

At the conclusion of each showing, all those who wanted to know more about a personal relationship with Jesus were invited to small-group gatherings with counselors. Children huddled in one group, teenagers in another, adults

in yet other groups.

In addition to the presentations of the 16-mm film, some churches adopted a strategy of delivering videotaped copies of the film door-to-door in neighborhoods where residents were affluent enough to own televisions and video players. Campaign organizers hoped to distribute 10,000 video copies of the "Jesus" film.

The month-long film project concluded with a free concert in an 18,000-seat stadium featuring the popular Christian singer Yuri. Once called the Madonna of Mexico, she later became a Christian and now presents a testimony of how God's love changed her life.

Organizers anticipated several thousand decisions for Christ from the concert alone.

The overall project received its major funding from First Baptist Church of Midland, Texas, and Border Ministries, an affiliate of that church. The west Texas church conducts extensive year-round ministries along the border, even employing a full-time on-site coordinator.

Deborah Fikes, a layperson who chairs the Mexico missions committee at First Baptist, said cooperating with other evangelical Christians on projects like the "Jesus" film is a wise investment.

"It's also the way to build the kingdom of God, she said.

"We're really sold on the 'Jesus' film because it's a kingdom thing," she said. "It unites the churches. It's God's plan, and we're just proud to be a part of it."

## Missionary acquitted in traffic homicide

HARARE, Zimbabwe (BP)—Alicia Farnham, a Southern Baptist International Service Corps missionary in Zimbabwe, was acquitted July 19 of culpable homicide in a case stemming from a May 1998 automobile accident that killed one person.

A magistrate in Harare, Zimbabwe, dismissed the case because the prosecutor presented no evidence of wrongdoing, said Barry Robinson, another IMB missionary in Zimbabwe. Farnham's lawyer was not required to present a case on her behalf.

Farnham, 37, was scheduled to complete her two-year International Service Corps assignment in theological education by extension on Aug. 1. The decision frees her to return to the United States without any complications.

She is the third Southern Baptist missionary in Africa to face charges in traffic fatalities.

Gene Phillips, an emeritus missionary serving as a volunteer in Lesotho, was assessed a small fine and given a suspended sentence for negligence after a June 2 traffic accident that killed a pedestrian.

Mike Hutchinson, a missionary in West Africa, is awaiting trial on a charge of involuntary manslaughter arising from an April 20 accident in Senegal in which a teenage boy stepped in front of Hutchinson's vehicle.



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## Quest is coming

By Robert Dunston

Quest '99 at Cumberland College is scheduled for Friday evening, Nov. 19, and Saturday morning, Nov. 20. This year's program promises to be another excellent time for young people, ages 12 to 18, to come together for inspiration, challenge and the opportunity to accept Christ as Savior.

This year Cumberland College is tying Quest to Celebrate Jesus 2000 so that we might join with others in proclaiming Christ to a world that desperately needs to hear and accept the good news. Youth who attend Quest '99 will enjoy fellowship, music, comedy and inspirational speakers, but most important of all they will have the opportunity to respond to the work of Christ in their lives.

Ken Freeman will be the keynote speaker. Freeman comes from a background of abuse and neglect but now shares his message of what Christ did for him and can do for others with power and love.

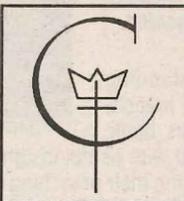
The group Images will use comedy and drama to communicate how the gospel impacts everyday life. Through their ministry, the members of Images encourage young people as they seek to live their Christian commitment.

Two groups will provide inspir-

ing music. Newsong employs the enthusiasm of their lively instrumentation and vocals to challenge young people in their relationships with Christ. Partners in Christ, two talented young men who have shared both a friendship and love for music since the eighth grade, use their gifts to lead in praise and worship.

The cost for Quest '99 is \$10 before Nov. 5, and \$12 afterwards. That includes both services, but does not include food and lodging. A limited number of tickets for a pizza blast after the Friday evening service are available at \$2.50 each.

CUMBERLAND  
COLLEGE



Cumberland College is expecting hundreds of young people from churches in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Ohio

and other states. We hope your youth can attend too. Quest '99 will be a wonderful opportunity for Christian youth to worship God and mature in their faith and for youth who have not yet accepted Christ to make their decision to follow him.

For more information, write Quest '99, 6178 College Station Drive, Williamsburg, KY 40769, or call (800) 343-1609. We hope to see you here!

Robert Dunston is chairman of the religion department at Cumberland College, 6000 College Station Dr., Williamsburg, KY 40769

## 'Led by ways I know not'

The following are excerpts from reports written by Mary A. Hollingsworth, first superintendent of the Louisville Baptist Orphan's Home, the ministry that started Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. This year marks the 130th year of Kentucky Baptists' child care ministry.

When I accepted the office of matron from this generous and honorable body of Christian workers, I trembled when I realized the confidence you had expressed in me; had I no higher sense of strength than my own feeble powers, I would not have dared to have taken a step. Through faith I have been led by ways that I know not.

My inexperience often times brought many, many bitter pangs of grief. Yet I would go to that Great Comforter who never refuses the smitten or the bruised heart to be forsaken. The first month many children were received who had been so very sadly neglected morally, physically and religiously, which required patient labor. A little child, 12 months old, had been fed on bread and water for several months. She was so starved that one had to administer a tablespoon full of milk every hour for fear she

would die by taking a larger quantity. Dr. Burton doubted her recovery even with the tenderest nursing. Tears unbidden would fall when I bathed her. She became one of our most attractive children and sang so sweetly.

I have written 50 letters of inquiry to the brethren whose names appear with the pledges and who are responsible in their churches and associations. I feel very much encouraged with the responses. Over two hundred dollars has been sent in. There is a large number of churches making collections. The tobacco localities ask five months from this time to send, as some have not sold their tobacco and some will send in after the wheat harvest.

God's promises are sure and steadfast. The letters are the most satisfactory result of my inquiry and many bearing messages of deep interest and no failure is expected.

Mary Hollingsworth directed the Louisville Baptist Orphan's Home from 1869 until 1905. Bill Smithwick is president of Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, 10801 Shelbyville Road, Middletown, KY 40243. Call (800) 456-1386. KBHC's Internet address is: <http://www.iglou.com/kbhc/>

HOMES FOR  
CHILDREN



Mary Hollingsworth

## Christian retailers say they see no end to record sales growth

ORLANDO, Fla. (RNS)—Sales are booming for America's Christian retailers in a growth trend that promises to continue into the next century.

Sales should be about \$3 billion this year with research suggesting they will keep mounting, said Bill Anderson, president of CBA, the nation's top Christian retailing association.

Anderson attributed the increase to aging baby boomers looking for spiritual meaning and cultural trends including questions among youth after recent high school shootings.

When Anderson's association met in mid-July, it attracted record numbers of participants, including 489 firms that displayed their wares.

Formerly known as the Christian Booksellers Association, CBA changed its name in 1996, partly in deference to the explosion of related retail items. Today those range from inspirational "Veggie Tales" Valentines for pint-size fans of the popular children's video series to wristwatches with Bible verses so business people can witness to co-workers.

The audience for such products has grown wider than evangelical Protestants, the group that founded the CBA in 1949. Christian retailers also find that not all their customers are frequent churchgoers.

"We're still experiencing double-digit growth," said Bev Channel, owner of Wellspring, a bookstore in Des Moines, Iowa. "A lot of people would not yet darken the door of a church, but they will come into a Christian bookstore."

Retailers such as Channel and Christian publishers are challenged by the broad interest in "spirituality" because they must reach out to the unchurched crowd and carry a diverse mix of religious wares.

"Spirituality is such a general buzzword," said Tom Mockabee, a senior vice president and publisher at Zondervan. "There is a hunger and a need for tranquility."

## Veggies dream of Disney-like impact

By David Briggs  
Religion News Service

ORLANDO, Fla. (RNS)—Disney started with a mouse, so why not build the next family entertainment empire around a cucumber and a tomato?

Tens of thousands of families across the country are expected to visit religious bookstores to buy "Larry-Boy and the Rumor Weed," the much-anticipated latest title in the Veggie Tales video series.

In conjunction with the video's July 24 release, Christian stores held screenings to satisfy the growing appetite for the talking produce that mix silly songs, biblically centered moral tales and state-of-the-art computer animation.

While Disney struggles in the Christian marketplace over issues of gay rights and sexually explicit and violent movies and CDs, Veggie Tales has mushroomed in popularity since Larry the Cucumber and Bob the Tomato made their debut in 1994. Last year Big Idea Productions sold nearly 6 million Veggie Tale videos, and this year it anticipates selling 10 million.

With Disney-like business acumen, the company has put out a host of Veggie Tale-related products, from stuffed toys to greeting cards to children's books. Its first feature film—an animated version of the story of Jonah—is due out in 2001.

At a no-alcohol coming-out par-

ty for the latest video in mid-July at the Hard Rock Cafe in Orlando, Fla., chief executive officer Phil Vischer told approximately 600 Christian retailers from around the country that Big Idea's big idea is to replace Disney as the most trusted family media company in the world.

"There is a God. He made us special. And he loves us very much. That is the hope we put in our stores," Vischer said from the Hard Rock stage. "The world doesn't need more magic. The world needs God."

It was a mission to offer values-centered programming as an alternative to the major media entertainment companies that led Vischer, a computer animator and Bible college dropout, to found Big Idea in 1991.

From the first release in 1994—"Where's God When I'm Scared?"—the Veggie Tales videos have featured short stories and silly songs that relate a biblical message with talking vegetables. The target audience is ages 3 to 10, but the campy humor and characters such as Jr. Asparagus and Larry the Cucumber also appeal to adults.

Growing at first by word of mouth through outlets in religious bookstores, Big Idea has begun to reach Rugrats and Teletubbies numbers through mass-market retailing in major department stores and drugstore chains. But the company still gives religious bookstores first

crack at selling the latest video.

Veggie Tales regularly takes all the top 10 spots in Christian video sales.

What makes the premiere of "Larry-Boy and the Rumor Weed" such a big event is that between repeated home showings and their use in vacation Bible schools and church youth groups, many fans said they are starving for fresh veggies.

With Disney branching out to R-rated movies, violent television shows and controversial albums that have made it the subject of boycotts by the Southern Baptist Convention and others, Vischer said there is a great need for Big Idea's products.

The company's 20-year goal, he said, is to become "the most trusted family media company in the world."

To that end, he told the retailers the company will never measure its success in terms of profits.

"This is far beyond a Phil thing. This is a God thing," Vischer said.

The company is privately held and does not reveal financial statements. But Bob Patin, a partner in the company, said revenue has tripled this year and the company is looking to expand its licensing arrangements as well as explore possibilities for a television show and a live theatrical production.

"We're absolutely going to change the world," Patin said. "We can be one of those embedded parts of family life that help parents parent."

## 'I have not been saved ...'

Normally, the first places visitors go when arriving at Oneida are the rest rooms located in the administration building. If you have used those rest rooms, have you ever considered who cleans them?

"Mike" (not his real name) is in charge of two or three other boys who clean those rest rooms. It is very encouraging to see Mike supervise the crew that cleans this area every day after school and on Saturday mornings. I am encouraged whenever I see Mike because of the progress he has made with us. This progress did not occur overnight, however.

Mike first came to Oneida a little more than two years ago, and was another student who came to us from a single parent family. His grades were average. He had been expelled from school, and had been getting deeper and deeper into drugs.

Like many students, Mike did relatively well the first two or three months, but when he got settled in and felt comfortable things began to unravel. From September 1995 through March 1996, Mike was suspended eight times. On more than a dozen other occasions, he had been sent to the office. We warned Mike that our patience was running out. He had already used up his "70 times seven" a couple of times over.

Finally, in April 1996 we had to send Mike home. Like a score of other parents, his mother was unhappy with us and felt we could have done more. Mike had been gone only a few days when this letter came to me:

"I'm sitting here in my room writing this letter requesting your permission to let me return to OBI. I did not fully appreciate that my being at Oneida was a privilege. I took it for granted. In my mind I thought I would never be expelled. ... I sincerely hope that you will let me back. ... Please respond to

this letter as soon as possible."

You probably think I wrote Mike a letter right away telling him to come back, right? Wrong! I did not believe that Mike had truly learned the needed lesson in such a short time. As much as I wanted to let him return, I had to say no. I knew that Mike could request to return at a later time if he were really sincere.

That second letter did come eight months later. Here is part of it. "When I was last at Oneida almost a year ago I was expelled for being suspended too often ... and generally messing up at school. ... I hope that you will please take into consideration all that I have said. One last thing is with God; I have not yet been saved or anything like that, but I am searching for God, trying to find him at Oneida. Oneida would help me a great deal with that."

Mike was allowed to return in February, shortly after this second letter was written. When we sent Mike home, his report card had some average grades including two "F's" and one "D." His latest report card had two "A's" and five "B's"—no "D's" or "F's." He is doing

much better in every area of his life and has earned the right to be in charge of the crew that cleans the administration building.

Has he invited Christ into his heart? No, but Mike says he believes there is a God and wants to know more about him. When Mike came to us he did not believe God existed, and certainly did not believe God cared about him.

Please add "Mike" to your prayer list.

Reprinted from WR Sept. 30, 1997

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. [www.oneidaschool.org](http://www.oneidaschool.org)

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

## A preacher's friend

Bill Whittaker, president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, brings a lifetime of preaching and teaching to his new book, "Preparing to Preach: A Practical Guide for Beginning Preachers."

"Filled with practical illustrations and pastoral wisdom, Dr. Whittaker's helpful study would be a useful tool in the hands of any preacher committed to preaching God's inerrant word, especially within the local church context."

David L. Olford, president, Stephen Olford Center for Biblical Preaching.

"Bill Whittaker is an outstanding preacher and a great friend to preachers, and that is reflected in his book.

'Preparing to Preach' is packed with useful insights and practical guidance that will help young preachers develop their preaching skills and experienced preachers improve their preaching. It is an excellent introduction to the art and craft of preaching."

Michael Duduit, editor Preaching Magazine

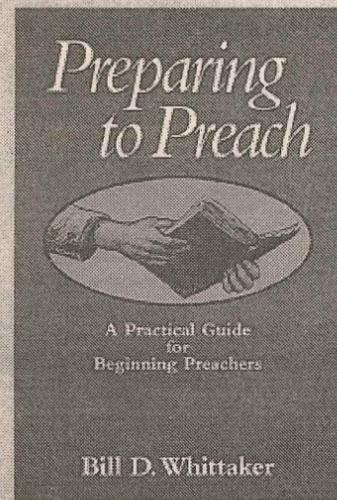
"An invaluable source for beginning preachers. Experienced preachers, too, will find many helpful suggestions and reminders. Dr. Whittaker brings years of experience as a master preacher and professor of preaching to this volume."

John Mark Terry, associate dean, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Proceeds from book sales will fund scholarships for students at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College.

Secure a copy for your pastor!

Available at a pre-publication sale price of \$15 plus \$1.50 mailing. Remit orders to: The Development Office, CCBBC, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977-9754.



# BOOKS

**Soul Among Lions: Musings of a Bootleg Preacher.** Will Campbell. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999. 63 pages. \$12. ♦♦♦♦♦ (out of five)

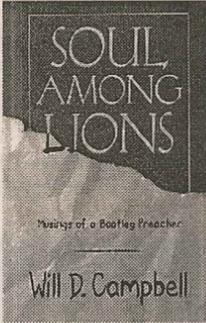
OK, I am biased. Will Campbell is one of my favorite authors. With few exceptions I have read most of his books. So no one should be surprised that I rate this book highly.

With that disclaimer out of the way, "Soul Among Lions" is Will Campbell at his best. In the 63 pages you will get a snapshot of life in the '90s through the eyes of a bootleg, Anabaptist, Southern Baptist prophet. Those who have been exposed to Will Campbell know he rarely minces words in his observations about the foibles of the religious and political elite. His descriptions and prescriptions are pithy, sometimes painful, but usually laced with irony and humor.

"Soul Among Lions" is a collection of commentaries Campbell did on the television show News Odyssey. The essays are vintage Will Campbell as he challenges us to pay attention to what is really important. Citing politicians arguing about the need for a constitutional amendment to protect the flag, he urges that some time needs to be devoted to seeing if the constitution can protect ordinary citizens against drive-by shootings or school violence. He hopes now that the Southern Baptist Convention has gotten serious about the Bible's teaching on women and the family, it will turn its attention to feeding the hungry, freeing prisoners and loving our enemies. *Jim Holladay*

**Reclaiming Your Story: Family History and Spiritual Growth.** Merle Jordan. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1999. 112 pages. \$15. ♦♦♦♦

"Reclaiming Your Story" builds on a fascinating premise and an intriguing promise. Merle Jordan's central argument is that "deep spiritual transformation may better occur when you have differentiated from your family of origin so that you harbor no ultimate loyalties that would block a total commitment to God in Christ."



He contends that the authority figures and voices we receive through our family of origin become idols that hinder authentic adult spiritual formation.

Jordan promises to help guide the reader through a process designed to "liberate yourself from ultimate attachment to earthly authorities and affections so that you can be free to orient your center of living around an eternal Loving Being." He reminds us that we need to be freed from images of God that too closely resemble our parents and liberated from those voices that diminish our true standing before God.

While I was intrigued by his premise, I got bogged down in his application of Freudian psychology. He would have held my interest better had he simplified that discussion.

I was also disappointed in his use of obvious family pathologies (alcoholism, abuse, etc.) to illustrate how family idols could be overthrown in the quest for authentic spirituality. What about those families whose general tenor is positive, where love and support outweigh the

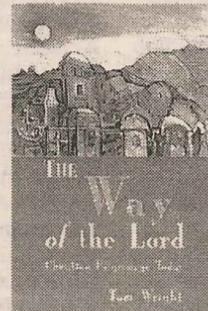
negative? It was hard to see how his method applied there. The book could profit by a better development of the theme and process. *Jim Holladay*

**The Way of the Lord: Christian Pilgrimage Today.** Tom Wright. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999. 132 pages. \$10. ♦♦♦♦

This book was written from lectures given to a group of people who were about to take a "pilgrimage" to the Holy Land. The lectures also were to serve as a refresher course in "Christian basics" from a different angle: pilgrimage.

Tom Wright (who writes academically as N.T. Wright) offers pilgrimage physically and spiritually as a way of Christian growth. Wright explores all the sites a traveler to the Holy Land likely would visit. In doing so he seeks to explore the context of faith that makes these sites important. For example, in describing the wilderness, the area between the Jordan and Jerusalem, Wright comments on spiritual wilderness and its benefit to growth in the Christian life. He likewise explores the growth through the ways to Damascus, to the Jordan River, to Galilee, to Jerusalem, up the mountain, to Gethsemane, of the cross and from the tomb.

Wright's comments are clear and insightful. The book casts a new light on what are familiar places in Bible study. An interesting twist is the book's epilogue in which Wright offers pilgrimage as a way of looking at the current political situation in the Middle East. *Wayne Hager*



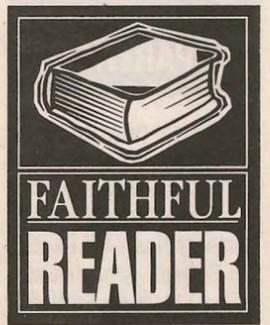
**Preaching and Intimacy: Preparing the Message and the Messenger.** Charles Bugg. Smyth & Helwys, 1999. 146 pages. \$15. ♦♦♦♦♦

In this new book for preachers, Bugg explores the relationship of intimacy and preaching. Bugg is out to dispel the idea that it is only the message that matters. Rather, he writes, the message is intricately connected with the messenger. Therefore, before Bugg approaches what is traditionally considered the "how to" of preaching, he first starts with the preacher as a person.

Following a splendid introduction in which Bugg lays out his reason for highlighting the importance of intimacy in preaching, he examines "connecting with God." Since God is the source, not just the subject, of preaching, Bugg discusses what is needed in the life of the preacher to connect with God.

In the next three chapters Bugg turns equal attention to considering connection with the listener, one's self (as preacher) and the Bible. Each connection is an important step in moving to what Bugg calls "releasing the sermon," his final chapter. "Release" conveys the passing on of what has become one's own "voice," rather than a product simply being handed from one person to another. Each chapter is followed by a sermon that illustrates the importance of intimacy in preaching.

Bugg encourages the preacher to grapple with more than preaching technique and consider the importance of preparing the messenger as much as the message. *Wayne Hager*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C., and Jim Holladay, pastor of Clifton Baptist Church in Louisville. Holladay and Hager welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: docholladay@juno.com or jwhager@surry.net

## Blaze-orange devotion booklet helps Christian deer hunters share their faith

By Jeff Huett  
Associated Baptist Press

SILVER LAKE, Minn. (ABP)—As an 11-year-old growing up in a hunting family in Wisconsin, it was natural for Tom Rakow to feel pressure to kill his first deer—whatever the means.

Rakow's first kill came using a .22-caliber rifle during a part of the season when only bow hunting was allowed.

Rakow said he became a poacher not for money but to fit into a hunting culture that pervaded his family, friends and even his teachers at school.

Rakow said that when he became a Christian he felt led to change the way he dealt with wildlife. Motivated by greediness and selfishness, his life was "out of balance."

"Deer hunting was my god," said Raykow, who is now pastor of a rural interdenominational church in Silver Lake, Minn.

To follow God's direction, Rakow stopped hunting altogether for two years. "I just gave my hunting to the Lord."

Later, however, he felt called to turn his love of hunting into a tool for spreading Christianity.

One thing was certain, however. His friends would not accept his message if they felt they had to give up hunting to become a Christian.

So he hit the woods again. This time, he

killed the biggest deer of his life—using a bow.

"An unsaved family member of mine looked at the deer and said, 'Tom, you gave your hunting to God and look what he gave to you,'" Rakow said.

Seeing a ministry opportunity, Rakow entered a doctor of ministry program at Bethel Theological Seminary. It was during a professional-development class that he began to develop his creativity and writing skills that would prove to be an evangelism tool a few years later.

"I knew right off that I wanted to write devotionals for deer hunters, and that's exactly what I did," said Rakow, who also attended Asbury Theological Seminary near Lexington. "I wrote about 15 to start with, and my wife typed them."

He then placed the bound devotional booklets around his hunting lodge and other places hunters frequented. The response far exceeded his expectations.

"We put a feedback sheet in the booklets giving readers the opportunity to tell us what they thought about the devotionals," Rakow said. "What we found was that people who would never have read a tract would read the devotionals. Even the guy running the local bar was reading them."

Seeing their increasing popularity, Rakow sought a publisher for the devotional books. After contacting 27 publishers and receiving no initial

response, he continued his ministry.

In 1994 with two of his friends, Rakow organized the inaugural meeting of the Christian Deer Hunters Association. Eight attended the initial meeting in the local public library. Twenty-five showed up at the second meeting.

"At one point someone spoke up and suggested that we set up a booth at the Minnesota Deer Classic," Rakow said. The event would last two-and-a-half days and draw more than 20,000 hunters, but because they decided to attend the show just days before the event, there was no booth space left.

There was a cancellation just hours before the event, however. Though assigned to the smallest booth in the exhibit hall, Rakow's group was in.

Doug Anderson, current treasurer of the association, remembers feeling apprehensive going into the area's premier deer-hunting event.

"A lot of us had not been exposed to direct evangelism," Anderson said. "The Classic is a big event, and we didn't know how our message would be received. But after being there a while, we all got comfortable and it got easier."

Group members manned the booth at the convention with 5,000 devotional books bound inside a blaze-orange cover. Ironically, the paper, which resembles the orange color hunters wear, was the cheapest paper they could find. It was that

colored paper that Rakow attributes to the booklet's initial appeal.

"Hunters would grab the booklets at our booth and let them hang out of their pockets," he said. "Not knowing what they were, other hunters would come to our booth and ask for the 'little orange books.'"

Now with more than 260 members scattered across 20 states, the association is ready to release its sixth volume of deer-hunter devotionals. To fund the effort, the association has become a non-profit corporation and seeks members who agree to sign a basic statement of faith and a membership application.

Rakow is aware some Christians view hunting as unethical, but he disagrees. "Some people who are against deer hunting are the same ones who eat hamburgers at McDonald's," he said. "But in Deuteronomy 14:5, Mosaic law lists deer as an animal that is permissible to eat."

Rakow said he realized early on that removing hunting from his life completely would send the wrong message.

"It would be like I was saying it was evil to hunt, when I know that's not what the Lord would want," he said. "God is the one who opened up the provision (for hunting), and he has not taken it away."

For more information about the group or its devotion book, write Christian Deer Hunters Association, Box 432, Silver Lake, MN 55381, call (320) 327-2266, or visit the group's Web site, [www.christiandeerhunters.org](http://www.christiandeerhunters.org).

# PEOPLE

## PRAYER PARTNERS

Please pray for these people and projects, which are part of Kentucky Baptists' partnerships with Baptist in Poland, Tanzania and New England:

■ **Urgent needs in Poland:** Kentucky volunteers for these projects: Sept. 7-20, six people for construction in Zgorzelec; Sept. 7-20, eight to 10 people for renovation work in Gdynia; Sept. 14-27, six people for landscaping/parking lot construction. Contact the Kentucky Baptist Convention's partnership office for details, (888) 254-5724.

■ **Kentucky volunteers needed for evangelism projects in Poland** Oct. 5-18.

■ **Ministry to Boston's international diplomatic community, and Michael Dean, Greater Boston Baptist Association's international ministries coordinator, as he decides how to begin ministry with the 37 consulates.**

■ **Missionaries Olan and Lynn Burrows as they work among the Gogo people group in Tanzania.**

■ **Replacements for retiring missionaries Will and Marie Roberts in Iringa, Tanzania.**

## Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Shirley Wooton

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE—Vanedson Ximines Santos** and several Brazilian students from Campbellsville University will lead the 11 a.m. service on Aug. 15 at Saloma Church. **John Chowning** is pastor.

■ **CORBIN—West Corbin Church** called **James Stanhope** as pastor. Stanhope is a former Southern Baptist missionary in the Dominican Republic. He also served as pastor of Highland Church in Lexington.

■ **ERLANGER—Todd Smith**, minister of youth at Erlanger Church, resigned to accept a position as youth ministry facilitator in New Castle, Penn. Smith served at Erlanger Church for 11 years. **William Crosby** is pastor.

■ **FISHERVILLE—First Church** will host **David Livingston** in concert Aug. 8, 11 a.m. **Harold Bridwell** is minister of music.

■ **GLEN DEAN—Goshen Church** (near Rough River) will host **One Accord** in concert Aug. 7, 7 p.m. (CST). For information, call (270) 257-9942. **Noel Jordan** is pastor.

■ **HODGENVILLE—Parkway Church** called **Gary Hendrickson** as pastor. Hendrickson is a native of Minnesota and a student at Southern Seminary.

■ **LOUISVILLE—An adult reading and writing workshop** will be held at Clifton Church, Aug. 21 and 28, 8:30 a.m.-5 p.m. To register, call (502) 897-1771.

■ **MIDDLETOWN—First Church** re-

cently celebrated the fifth anniversary of **John Hackworth** as minister of youth and education. **Eddie Hatfield** is interim pastor.

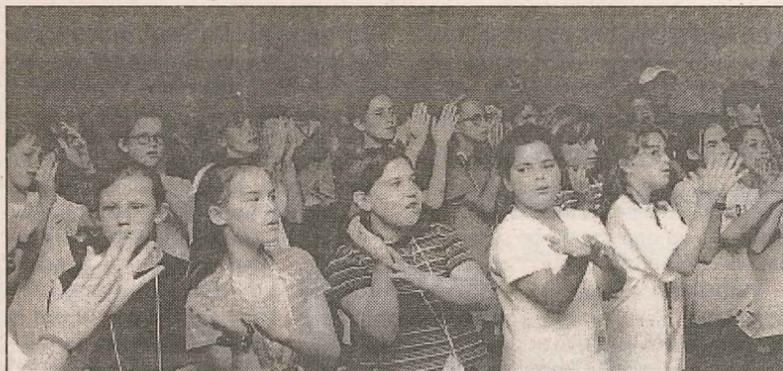
■ **MT. WASHINGTON—Homecoming and groundbreaking** for the Christian Life Center at First Church will be Aug. 15. **Billy Compton** will preach at the 11 a.m. service. Dinner will be at noon, with groundbreaking to follow. For information, call (502) 538-7361. **Travis Collins** is pastor.

First Church recently completed a mission trip to Cherokee, N.C. **Joe Armour**, associate pastor for education; **Mary Lou Mason**, mission committee chairman; and 26 other people made the trip.

■ **OWENSBORO—Buena Vista Church** will celebrate "Marvelous Mondays" in August with special services each Monday at 6:30 p.m. Speakers will be: Aug. 2: **Wyman Copass, Martha Gipson and Hugh Whittaker**; Aug. 9: **Lincoln Bingham and the Hospital Ensemble**; Aug. 16: **Ronnie Sivells, Sherri Critser and family**; Aug. 23: **Kelly and Sharon Thurman**; Aug. 30: **Franklin Skaggs and Cheri Stone. Michael Rust** is pastor.

■ **PRINCETON—Northside Church** will celebrate its 50th anniversary with special services Sept. 3-5. For information, call (270) 365-6062. **Tommy Tackett** is pastor.

■ **SHEPHERDSVILLE—First Church** called **Rich Axline** as summer youth intern. **Rich Lloyd** is pastor.



**CROSSPOINT CAMP** Youth participate in Crosspoint, a summer camp that integrates sports with Christian values, at Campbellsville University. More than 3,800 students and adults are attending 19 summer camps at Campbellsville this year. (Campbellsville photo by Jason Atkins)



**RETIREMENT CELEBRATION** Enterprise Director of Missions James Smith (center) and his wife, Jean, receive a book of letters from friends. Smith, who has served 11 years with the association, was honored at a recent retirement celebration at First Baptist Church of Prestonsburg.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**SEEKING:** People with secretarial experience and computer application skills to accept temporary work assignments. Contact: Administrative Services Department, Kentucky Baptist Convention, Louisville, Ky. Phone: (502) 244-6468.

**SEEKING:** Panther Creek Baptist Church of Owensboro, Ky., is seeking applicants for the position of full-time pastor. Located in a rural-suburban high-growth area, our church has a strong fellowship. Seminary degree preferred. Send resumé and references to: Pastor Selection Committee, c/o Donald Harris, Accounting, 2009 B Frederica Street, Owensboro, KY 42301.

**FOR SALE:** 28 golden oak church pews with white ends, 13 feet long, recently refinished. Also, matching pulpit and choir pews. \$5,000 (negotiable). (502) 454-4681.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister of music. Some experience required. Please send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Central Baptist Church, 201 W 4th St., Corbin, KY 40701.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Harmony Baptist Church. Send resumé: Pastor Search Committee, c/o Harmony Baptist Church, 9215 Ogden Landing Road, West Paducah, KY 42086.

**SEEKING:** Brentwood Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of preschool (birth-kindergarten). Accredited seminary degree preferred. Send resumé to: Brentwood Baptist Church, 409 Franklin Road, Brentwood, TN 37027, Attn: Ken Kessler; or e-mail kessler@brentwoodbaptist.com. For more information, call (615) 737-2992.

**SEEKING:** Nortonville Baptist Church is seeking applicants for the position of full-time pastor. Send resumé and current photo to: Laney Haywood, church clerk, PO Box 1057, Nortonville, KY 42442-1057.

**FOR SALE:** Kimball Organ (computer by Eelka) model EP12. Two 49-note keyboards and 13-note pedals with orchestrator. Excellent small church organ. Call (502) 231-9017.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music and part-time minister of youth/children. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Youngers Creek Baptist Church, 251 Youngers Creek Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

**SEEKING:** Minister to students, full-time staff position in growing county seat town church. Contributes to SBC and CBF. Responsibilities with large youth and children's groups, grades 1-12. Salary package commensurate with education and experience. Send resumé to: Mike Godbey, Personnel Committee, Standford Baptist Church, 204 Church St., Standford, KY 40484.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister of music. Requires direction of chancel choir, handbell choir and planning worship music. Send complete resumé/references to: Personnel Committee, Deer Park Baptist Church, 1733 Bardstown Road, Louisville, KY 40205.

**SEEKING:** Full-time minister to youth and children in a large Baptist church. Please mail resumé to: Lisa Yancey, 1516 Midland Trail, Shelbyville, KY 40065, or call (502) 633-0671.

**SEEKING:** Part-time minister to college students. Rich Pond Baptist Church. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, 200 Brad Ave., Bowling Green, KY 42104.

**SEEKING:** Full-time worship leader to guide the overall music program and lead worship services—both contemporary and traditional styles. Send resumé to: Lake Shore Baptist Church, 4613 Mountain Road, Pasadena, MD 21122, Attn: Boyd Frank. Fax: (410) 255-3645; e-mail: Lake.Shore@cwix.com.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister. Work with grades 6-12. Contact or send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, Bethel Baptist Church, 8200 Owenton Road, Frankfort, KY 40601. Leave message: (502) 227-7278.

**SEEKING:** Farmdale Baptist Church at 5610 US Highway 127 South, Frankfort, Ky., is seeking a part-time children and youth minister. If you feel God calling you to this area to work with children, send resumé to: Ms. Bryan, 530 Alfa Drive, Frankfort, KY 40601.

**FOR RENT:** 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo available for vacation rental, Sanibel Island, Fla. Large pool, tennis courts, bikes, canoe, kayak, screened porch, lovely secluded beach. Weekly rates May through mid-December: \$630. Call Pat Owen, (502) 895-8752 (home), or (502) 897-5079 (office).

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Frenchburg Baptist Church, Frenchburg, Ky. Please send resumé to: James Ligon, HCR 66, PO Box 90, Wellington, KY 40387.

**FOR SALE:** 26 solid oak pews, nine chairs, communion table and pulpit. Very good condition. Asking \$4,500. Please call (502) 737-6645.

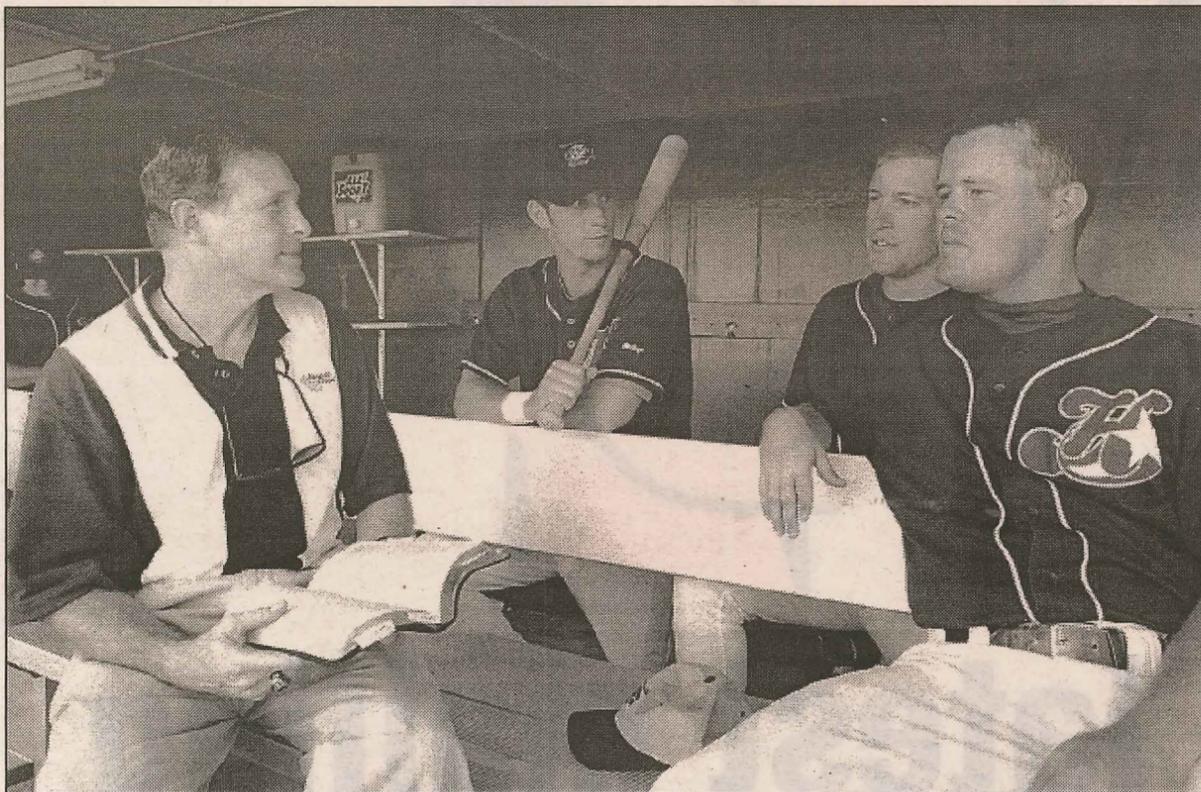
**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for First Twelve Mile Baptist Church, California, Ky. (eight miles south of Alexandria). Send resume to Linda Winkler, 8 Raintree Drive, Melbourne, KY 41059-9612.

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**SEEKING:** Director of corporate marketing and sales. Ground-level opportunity for exciting sports ministry. Responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining sponsorship packages. Must have a love for spreading the gospel and for sports. Related education or experience required. Commission-based. Work out of own home. Send resumé: Sports Reach, PO Box 4002, Campbellsville, KY 42719.

**SEEKING:** The Albermarle Baptist Association of Virginia is seeking an associational director of missions. Interested persons should send inquiries and resúmes to: Flora Greene, RT 2, Box 1425, Troy, VA 22974. Review of resúmes will begin Sept. 30, 1999.

**SEEKING:** Bayless Baptist Church, St. Louis, is accepting resúmes for a senior pastor. An experienced pastor skilled in preaching, evangelism and church growth is required. Resúmes to: Pastor Search, 8512 Morganford, St. Louis, MO 63123; www.geocities.com/~baylessb/.



**ON A SWING AND A PRAYER** Rod Steakley (left), a Baptist deacon, is the volunteer chaplain for the Huntsville (Ala.) Stars minor league baseball team. Some players credit their faith with helping them handle the pressures of trying to get to the major leagues. (RNS photo)

## Faith helps players cope with pressures

By Yvonne White  
Religion News Service

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (RNS)—The song "Taking Care of Business" was blasting over the loudspeaker at Joe Davis Stadium on a recent hot, humid Sunday afternoon.

Huntsville attorney Rod Steakley, a deacon at Whitesburg Baptist Church and volunteer chaplain for the Huntsville Stars, the Double A affiliate of the Milwaukee Brewers, had just finished leading a worship service in the Stars' locker room. Now he was rushing across the field to take care of still more spiritual business by holding a similar service for Huntsville's opponent, the Jacksonville Suns.

About a dozen Jacksonville players had gathered in their dugout 40 minutes before game time for the team's Sunday chapel service. Steakley reached in his black satchel and pulled out several well-worn Bibles to give to the players so they could follow along as he read the Scripture.

The "congregation" eventually grew to 16 as players drifted in after batting practice, some helping themselves to water from the cooler as Steakley led an 18-minute mini-service of prayer and preaching.

"It's amazing with all the intensity of preparing for a ball game—and many would think it would be a distraction from preparation for it—that so many of the young men do attend the services," said Steakley, who played football under the legendary Paul "Bear" Bryant at the University of Alabama. "A number of them are very sincere in their faith

or are searching for something of a spiritual nature."

Strong faith can be as much an asset to a ballplayer as a good swing. Steakley said minor league baseball players rank at or near the top when it comes to job pressure.

"There is probably no more difficult lifestyle than to be a minor league baseball player," he said. "There are a lot of temptations and opportunities for them, even when they are home. They have a lot of pressures such as battling injuries and family problems. It's especially tough on the married players because they are on the road 50 percent of the time."

**"This is a hard life. ... You have to have the Lord in your life to help you through your stress and struggles."**

Jay Akin, pitcher for Huntsville (Ala.) Stars

Stars pitcher Jay Akin, 25, said being a Christian and a minor league baseball player has its good points and bad points.

"The toughest part is not being able to go to church as much as I would like," said Akin. "The good part of it is that I get a lot of time to read and study (the Bible)."

"This is a hard life and it's a lot of hard work. You have to have the Lord in your life to help you through your struggles and stress. You could get released tomorrow and be out of a job. If you just ask the Lord to come into your life, though, and depend on him, you will be OK."

Akin's teammate and friend, Stars pitcher Jim Converse, agrees.

"It is tough not getting to be in a church fellowship because you can get dried up" spiritually, he said. "It's tough to find time for a regular Bible study, so we have to do a lot of reading and studying on our own."

Akin, from Memphis, Tenn., was raised to go to church regularly, but

said it wasn't until he met his wife, Jennifer, a devout Baptist, that he personally accepted Jesus as his Savior.

"I had been to church all my life and did all the church things such as Bible school, Sunday school and church camp," said Akin. "I had studied the Bible for a long time and Jesus was in my life, but not my heart."

Akin and Converse often have theological discussions while waiting their turn to be called from the bullpen.

"Sometimes we argue about (theological) things and butt heads, but mostly we stick together and talk a lot about how Christ is working in our lives," said Akin.

He credits Chaplain Steakley for helping him in his spiritual life.

"The first thing that opened the door for Rod is that he is a former athlete and that caught our eye," said Akin. "Every town we play in has a minor league chaplain, but Rod is the best I've heard. He patterns things (in the Bible) to us."

Steakley, a trial lawyer, is not only available to the team on Sundays but also counsels individual players about their professional careers and personal lives, whenever they can work it in between his court appearances and their games.

He took over the duties five years ago.

"It is a great privilege to have them ask my advice on something," Steakley said. "You have a whole spectrum of people who have the world ahead of them, yet it is encouraging to see how many really want to make the spiritual component of their lives a priority."

Steakley said becoming a Christian doesn't mean the players won't have problems such as injuries, fielding errors or batting slumps. "God's promise is not that he will save us from the fire and flood, but he will preserve us as we go through them."

## Christianity benefits pros when baseball isn't all fame & glory

ATLANTA (RNS)—Keith Lockhart was on a cell phone aboard a plane, listening closely as his wife, Lisa, gave him a play-by-play of his son's baseball game.

"I listened until we got too far away from the signal," Lockhart said wistfully. "That's when it's really tough being in this business."

His business, pro baseball, keeps players away their homes and families 50 percent of the time during the season, which can last from early March through late October.

For players who are husbands and fathers, it is especially tough. They often miss important family events such as Little League games, piano recitals or school plays. They are rarely home to help with household emergencies or to take care of a sick child.

Lockhart, an infielder for the Atlanta Braves, said he relies on his faith in God to get him through those times he can't be with his wife and children.

"Having a family and being a professional athlete is tough on any marriage," Lockhart said. "I worry about my wife having to take care of things when I'm not home. Then, when I'm home, she is always trying to make sure everything runs smoothly so I don't have to worry about

anything. She has a lot of responsibility during the season. I definitely have to depend on my faith in God to keep my marriage strong."

Braves shortstop Walt Weiss agreed.

Baseball "can be very hard on a marriage," he said. "There are a lot of temptations out there



**TRUE SPORT** Atlanta Brave shortstop Walt Weiss talks about his faith during a recent Christian sports clinic for kids. (BP photo)

for athletes, and you and your wife have to have a lot of trust in each other, plus a lot of faith in God."

Neither Lockhart nor Weiss can spend much time with family or attend church-related events during the season, but both are committed to sharing their Christian faith wherever they go.

The two players recently took part in the Southern Baptist Convention's "Arms Around Atlanta" evangelism effort. Weiss was one of the instructors at a baseball clinic in which he shared not only his knowledge of the game but also the gospel with Atlanta-area youths. Lockhart was one of several celebrities featured in a series of television commercials sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention in June.

Being a professional athlete is demanding and Weiss, Lockhart and teammate Ryan Klesko all agree their faith helps them weather tough times, whether on the field or in their personal lives.

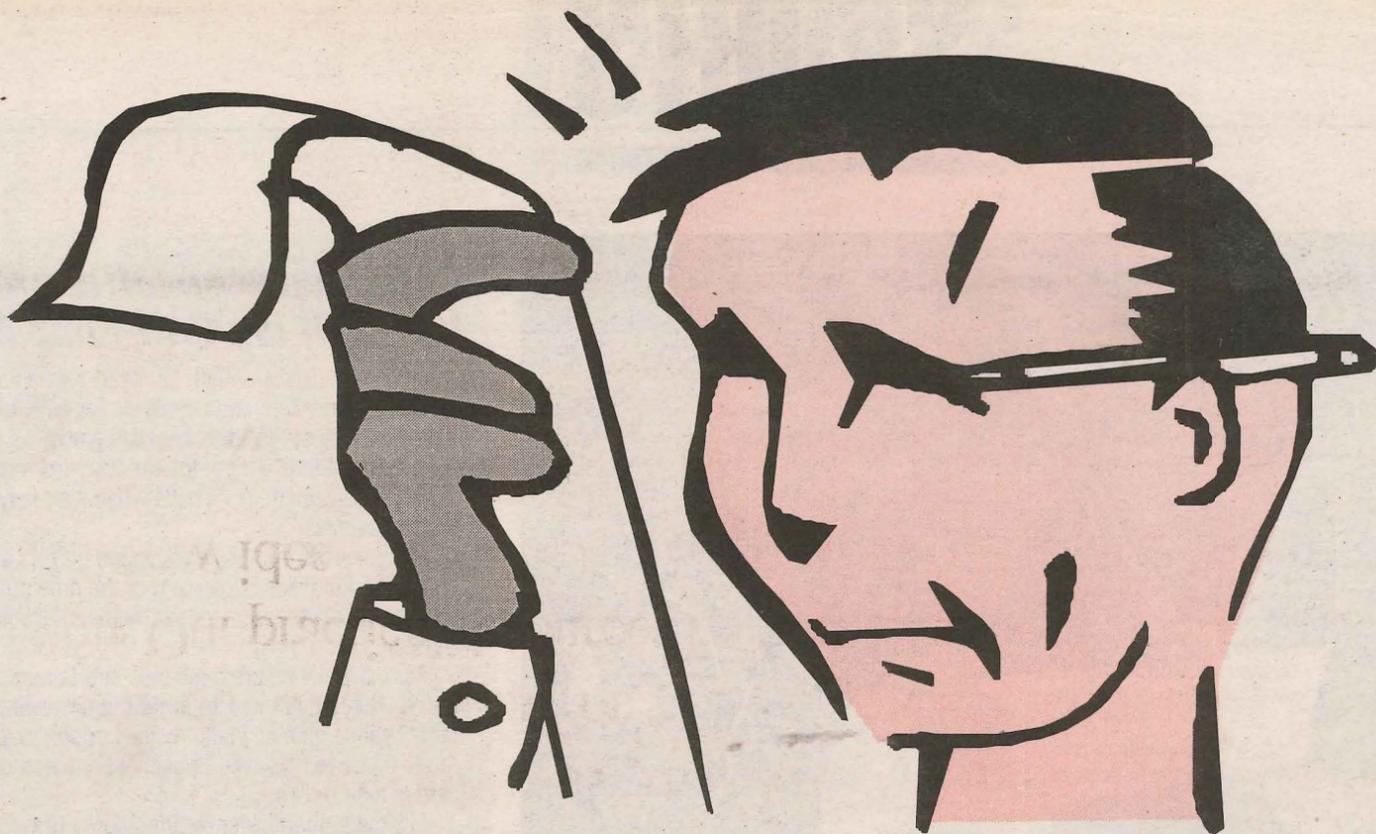
"My faith is very important to me," Klesko said. "When things are bad, you have to depend on your faith to pull you through."

Lockhart, who spent eight seasons in the minor leagues before being signed by Kansas City in 1995, is one of 22 professional athletes featured in "A Path to Victory," a sports New Testament published by the International Bible Society.

In it, he relates his struggles in trying to make it to the major leagues before finally dedicating not only his life but also his career to God. Shortly afterwards, he was signed by Kansas City and led the team in batting with a .321 average.

Lockhart, who was traded to Atlanta in 1997 to help shore up the Braves' infield, said he uses his career to help bring people to Christ.

"Many people will listen to us just because we are professional athletes," he said. "It just opens more doors for us to share our faith."



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