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FOR THE RECORD

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Dated Material — Deliver by Wednesday, April 17

WMU speakers urge women to pursue local, global missions

By Trennis Henderson
 Editor

MADISONVILLE—Urging Christians to "get off your seat, on your feet and out into the streets," Dottie Williamson declared, "That's when the Christian life gets all exciting."

Williamson was among the featured speakers at the 2002 Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting April 12-13 at First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

Highlighting the theme, "Down the Street, Around the World," the 99th annual meeting attracted more than 680 registered participants. Coupled with a Saturday morning children's missions program, the weekend event involved more than 1,000 people from across the commonwealth.

Williamson, a multihousing church planting missionary with the South Carolina Baptist Convention, recounted ministry experiences working in inner-city apartment complexes, trailer parks and high-crime areas.

"We've got to quit saying we're not called," Williamson said. Describing the urgency of widespread missions needs, she added, "I'm here to tell you it's down the street, it's your neighborhood, your community, your Jerusalem. I want people to see missions right next door. Everybody can go."

Jesus met needs wherever He went, she pointed out. "Find your place of ministry. Do what you can to reach people for Jesus."

"Look around you and see all the lost people," Williamson said. "God says be faithful. That's all He asks you to do. Just be faithful and keep planting the seeds."

WMU participants also heard a message by a couple serving in a "Last Frontier" region who could not be publicly identified because of security concerns.

Noting that they are serving a people group located in four countries, the missionary said, "The Lord has developed within our souls a love for these people."

Serving through relief and development efforts, he added, "We work in ways and develop relationships to share our love for the Lord and the Lord's love for us and them."

Recalling his boyhood days helping clear rocks from his family's farm in central Kentucky, the missionary said he and his wife are doing similar work in the lives of the people they are serving.

□ See WMU leaders ..., page 8

Middle East turmoil



MIDEAST CURFEW A Palestinian woman walks by Israeli soldiers, as the Israeli army lifted the curfew in the Old City of Bethlehem last Friday. Christians in the region are requesting prayer for the region. (RNS/Reuters photo by Magnus Johansson)

Area Christians feeling tension of recent violence

By Mark Kelly
 SBC International Mission Board

BETHLEHEM (BP)—When fleeing Palestinian fighters forced their way into Bethlehem's Church of the Nativity April 2, Israeli soldiers found themselves laying siege to one of Christianity's holiest sites.

Approximately 200 armed Palestinians have been holed up in the church, which is surrounded by Israeli military forces.

Meanwhile, controversy continued to surround the question of whether the 60 or so Christian priests and nuns still inside the historic church complex are being held hostage there, as Israel claims, or are providing refuge to the Palestinians fleeing Israeli troops.

The standoff symbolizes the predicament of Christian believers in the Middle East and demonstrates the need for urgent prayer, say some missions workers in the region.

Israeli followers of Christ worry about the daily threat of suicide bombings and cast anxious glances at Arabs who move freely in their midst. Palestinian Christians can't travel to jobs that provide for their families and cringe when the Israeli army begins another round of shelling.

Turmoil in the always-volatile Middle East escalated rapidly after Palestinian suicide bombers began striking Israel daily, including a March 27 attack that killed 22 people during a Passover feast. Israel sent tanks to occupy Palestinian Authority



MISSILES Smoke and fire rise from Palestinian houses hit by missiles from Israeli Apache helicopter gunships, in the West Bank city of Nablus, April 5. (RNE/Reuters photo by Abed Omar Qusini)

headquarters and invaded Palestinian towns in search of terrorists.

Jewish and Palestinian believers in the region are calling Christians to fervently pray that God would intervene in the crisis, Southern Baptist workers say.

"Easter attendance at churches in the region was far beyond anything they've ever had," said Mark Snowden, a spokesman for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board. "In spite of this turmoil and incredible stress, Christian workers are finding that people are requesting 'Jesus' films and asking questions

about Jesus more than they ever have."

In one instance, an Arab man walked into an Israeli congregation—much to the consternation of members who didn't recognize him, Snowden said. After a brief conversation revealed he had no ill intentions, however, the man joined the congregation for Resurrection Day worship.

"We praise God for that," Snowden said. "Christians in Israel don't want to alienate anyone, especially Arabs who are seeking answers from Christians."

At the same time, Palestinian fighters are using a predominantly Christian town as a base for launching attacks on Israeli troops, he said. When Israeli soldiers retaliate, their shells destroy the homes of innocent Christians.

Three Israeli shells struck the home of a Palestinian who works for a Christian Bible college, leaving the terrified family thankful they suffered only cuts and bruises.

"Palestinian believers want other Christians to pray that God will provide basic necessities like food and shelter that they can't provide for themselves right now," Snowden said.

"Believers in Israel want us to pray that they would not succumb to a spirit of fear but instead would be sensitive to the opportunities God gives them to share Christ," he added. "And everyone wants us to pray for peace."

With additional reporting by Religion News Service.

Missouri leaders launch new publication

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (BP)—The Missouri Baptist Convention Executive Board voted April 9 to establish a new newsjournal as its official publication effective immediately. The action is the latest move in a three-year struggle between conservatives and moderates for control of the state convention.

The board action paves the way for MBC leaders to end the convention's 105-year relationship with the Word & Way. But the board left open the possibility of the Word & Way returning as the MBC's official newspaper.

"In the event the Word & Way trustees rescind their action to be self-perpetuating, they would once again become our newsjournal," said David Tolliver, MBC recording secretary. "Our new newsjournal will begin with an electronic version and will be accessible via the MBC Web site and via e-mail."

Tolliver said the electronic journal eventually will go into print but gave no time frame for the print version to be published.

"Word & Way is not ours," Tolliver said. "It made itself not our paper when its board of trustees voted to be self-perpetuating. They say they serve all Baptists, but they don't. This action clarifies that for the MBC."

Word & Way Editor Bill Webb said no action has been taken by the Executive Board to sever ties with Word & Way. He noted the paper still is referenced in the MBC bylaws as part of the state convention.

"Sweeping statements that Word & Way somehow operates in opposition to the Missouri Baptist Convention are more reflective of an effort to discredit or silence a cherished source of news and information that they are reflective of either our actual content or our intent," Webb said. "Our readers know better."

The MBC continues to hold \$450,000 earmarked this year for Word & Way in escrow until the trustees rescind their action.

In other action, board members narrowly approved a motion calling for future contractual agreements between the MBC and Windermere Baptist Conference Center to be contingent on the Windermere board of trustees rescinding its vote to become self-perpetuating.

Messengers to the MBC's annual meeting in October voted to place \$150,000 targeted for Windermere this year in escrow until the board rescinds its action.

The conference center, set on 1,300 acres on the Lake of the Ozarks in

south-central Missouri, attracts more than 30,000 guests a year and is valued at \$8 million. Windermere's board voted last summer to become self-perpetuating, citing concerns over ascending liability issues.

Board members also heard a report from a legal opinion task force authorized to explore legal options against five convention entities whose boards declared self-perpetuating status. In addition to Word & Way and Windermere, the entities include the Missouri Baptist Foundation, Baptist Home retirement facilities and Missouri Baptist College in St. Louis.

Attorneys reported that state convention leaders "have the legal capacity or 'standing' to seek legal remedies" against the agencies.

"We want to sit down with them and resolve this," said MBC First Vice President Kenny Qualls. "If we can't do that, the next step would be binding Christian arbitration."

James Smith, president of the Missouri Baptist Foundation, voiced concern about the MBC seeking to "argue its legal position in the media."

"I predict when our story is told and the facts about the foundation's historic relationship with our convention are known, these issues will be quickly resolved," Smith added.

Sadomasochism seminar sparks SBC opposition

ST. LOUIS (RNS)—Southern Baptist Convention leaders have parted ways with Howard Johnson Hotels after learning one of the chain's hotels in St. Louis—the city where SBC messengers will meet in June—is hosting a seminar by a group that endorses sadomasochism.

In an April 4 letter, Southern Baptist officials informed the hotel company that they were canceling their reservation of a block of rooms at a Howard Johnson set aside for their annual meeting and did not feel comfortable suggesting other Howard Johnson sites for future gatherings.

"Howard Johnson Hotels have historically supported the traditional family and solicited family business, but the current environment and philosophy has made an apparent shift dramatically against that position," wrote SBC convention manager Jack Wilkerson, vice president of business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee.

He called Howard Johnson's action "a direct attack on the fabric of traditional family values and the biblical heritage of our denomination and its churches."

The "Beat Me in St. Louis" seminar, hosted by a group called St. Louis Leather & Lace, is scheduled for April 26-28 at the Howard Johnson near the St. Louis airport.

On its Web site, the organization is described as "a group dedicated to the free expression of alternative lifestyles and forms of loving," including bondage, domination and sadomasochism.

A spokeswoman for Cendant Corp., the parent company of Howard Johnson, said it does not interfere with decisions by individual hotels concerning guests as long as they are legal.

SBTC leader: Believing the Bible 'not enough'

DALLAS—"It is not enough to say we believe every word of the Bible to be true to be a Baptist," according to Jim Richards, executive director of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention.

Richards made the declaration in his column, "Speaking the Truth in Love," in the April-May issue of the Southern Baptist Texan magazine. The magazine and a related newspaper are published by the conservative convention that broke away from the Baptist General Convention of Texas.

The Baptist Faith and Message as revised by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000 is the answer to this theological problem, Richards wrote, because it "leaves no wiggle room for neo-orthodoxy."

"The Baptist Faith and Message statement 2000 is the final expression of the conservative resurgence," he added, referencing the movement that gained control of the SBC in the 1980s and '90s and has reshaped its agencies and institutions.

Richards' column is devoted to defending the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message against criticism from the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Although he does not specifically name BGCT Executive Director Charles Wade, Richards counters what have become well-known Wade criticisms of the SBC faith statement.

Wade, for example, has called the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message a non-Baptist creed and has said he will gladly sign every page of the Bible but not any man-made creed. Wade has

championed the historic Baptist confession of "no creed but the Bible."

Those who oppose the signing of creeds by Baptists leave the door open to all manner of theological error by individuals who still might claim to believe every word of the Bible, Richards wrote. As an example, he cites Alexander Campbell, who led a major schism among Baptists in the 19th century that created the Church of Christ.

"To say we have no creed is to say we have no beliefs," Richards wrote.

The signing of documents should not be a concern to faithful Baptists, Richards insisted. "When people hide behind nuances of words or a perverted view of the priesthood of believers, then it becomes necessary to have an instrument of accountability."

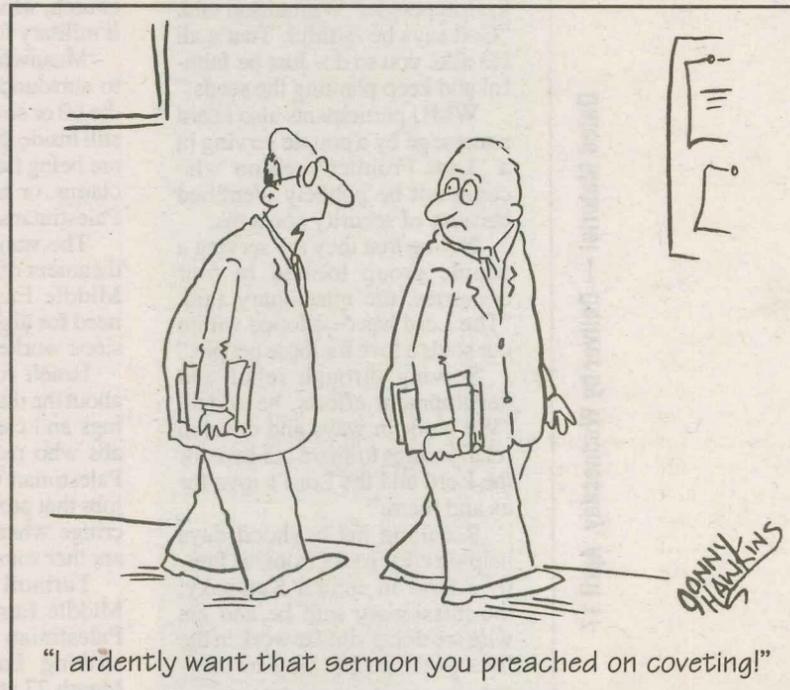
BAPTIST DIGEST

■ **Virginia Baptists hold called meeting.** The Baptist General Association of Virginia will hold a called meeting May 10 to discuss a new missions vision for Virginia Baptists. BGAV Executive Director John Upton said the proposal will offer a variety of options for Baptists across the theological spectrum. Tentatively called "Kingdom Advance," the plan will seek to fund and mobilize short-term missions workers in Virginia, the United States and around the world. It also will seek to start and strengthen churches and identify and develop a new generation of Baptist leaders.

■ **Chaplain seeks BGCT endorsement.** Col. David Park, command chaplain for the United States Air Force Space Command in Colorado Springs, Colo., is seeking endorsement by the Baptist General Convention of Texas. Park, a Texas native, is on track to become the first chaplain endorsed by the Texas convention. Once the U.S. Department of Defense recognizes a

denominational entity as an endorsing agency, hospitals and other institutions using chaplains generally recognize the endorsement as valid. Park said he believes BGCT endorsement will provide an alternative for those uncomfortable with a recent decision by the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board requiring that all chaplains affirm recent changes to the Baptist Faith and Message.

■ **Curry, Mercer to speak at SBC.** Dayna Curry and Heather Mercer, the two relief workers who were held captive in Afghanistan, have accepted an invitation to address messengers during the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in St. Louis. They will address the SBC June 11 during the SBC Executive Committee report. Curry, 30, and Mercer, 24, both graduates of Baylor University in Waco, Texas, were among eight Westerners arrested by the Taliban in August and charged with breaking Muslim law by teaching Christianity.



Kentucky Fellowship starts fund for resigning missionaries

By Trennis Henderson
Editor

LOUISVILLE—The Kentucky Baptist Fellowship has joined a growing list of moderate groups pledging to provide financial aid to international Southern Baptist missionaries who resign rather than sign an affirmation of the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message.

KBF Coordinator John Lepper said the KBF Executive Committee established a fund at the request of an anonymous donor who contributed \$1,000.

The fund specifically will assist missionaries with Kentucky connections, including those from Kentucky, those who served churches in the state and those who attended school here.

Missionaries' response to the Baptist Faith and Message surfaced earlier this year when Southern Baptist International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin requested all IMB missionaries to affirm the revised faith statement.

Critics charge that Rankin's action reverses an earlier pledge that veteran missionaries would not have to endorse the 2000 statement. They also cite concern that requiring missionaries to affirm the statement elevates it to creedal status.

Rankin counters that the affirma-

tion is not creedal because it is being done at his request rather than by trustee action. He also noted the missionaries are signing an affirmation of the Baptist Faith and Message rather than the actual document.

"Our missionaries are not being required or coerced to sign a creed," Rankin wrote in a recent letter to a retired missionary. "It can hardly be considered imposing a creed when they are just being asked to affirm what Southern Baptists have said is what they believe and work in accord with it."

Leaders of the Baptist General Convention of Texas, already at odds with Southern Baptist Convention leaders over the faith statement revisions, voted in February to establish a fund to support missionaries who resign or are fired for refusing to affirm the statement. The Texas Baptist fund was launched with pledged totaling \$1 million.

Rankin has indicated missionaries who decline to sign the affirmation will not be fired or forced to resign. But he added that IMB leaders have not determined the consequences for missionaries who don't sign.

In his initial letter to missionaries in January, Rankin wrote, "I cannot overemphasize how important your cooperation is in order for us to move

forward in fulfilling the Great Commission."

Despite Rankin's initial hope that all missionaries would sign the affirmation, a small but growing number of missionaries have publicly stated they will not endorse the statement.

Larry and Sarah Belew, missionaries to Asia, announced in a recent open letter that they will not sign.

"We do not want to be fired," they wrote. But they also "do not want to participate in the political power struggle of the SBC. We do not want to be used as pawns in the game either."

Actions by the Belews and other missionaries on the field have prompted the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship and other groups to seek transitional funds to support overseas workers who resign or are fired.

Lepper said the timing is right to establish the fund because "some missionaries in good conscience are not going to be able to sign the Baptist Faith and Message. It's important that some group reach out to them."

KBF Moderator Michael Duncan said he is "pleased to know that the Baptists who cooperate with the KBF are willing to stand with those who for reasons of conscience choose not to sign the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement."

"The creation of this fund signals

our willingness to stand with our brothers and sisters who have answered God's call to missions, prepared for their ministries and are serving on the mission field," Duncan added. "Freedom of conscience is always a costly stand, and it is a cost that must be borne by all Baptists who understand that we have no Lord but Jesus Christ as revealed to us through Holy Scripture."

While the KBF fund will be an independent effort for the benefit of Kentucky-related missionaries, moderate groups in several other states have announced plans to forward gifts to the fund established by Texas Baptists.

Mainstream Baptist groups in Alabama, Oklahoma and South Carolina have announced plans to collect and forward funds to the Texas Baptist effort. Baptists in Oklahoma already have pledged \$250,000, according to Bruce Prescott, executive director of Mainstream Oklahoma Baptists.

Leaders of Arkansas Baptists Committed have announced plans to launch a "Save the Missionaries Fund," noting that they will "partner with other groups establishing similar funds to collectively pool resources for these missionaries."

With additional reporting by Associated Baptist Press

"Some missionaries in good conscience are not going to be able to sign the Baptist Faith and Message. It's important that some group reach out to them."

Kentucky Baptist Fellowship
Coordinator John Lepper

Author: Parables address church attitudes today

WILLIAMSBURG—More churches should pay attention to Jesus' parables depicting the wayward and downtrodden to see how God would have Christians treat non-believers and the unfortunate today, Peter Rhea Jones told Cumberland College students last week.

"One of the things that we learn, among others, is that Jesus Himself took a certain satisfaction in His own ministry finding sinners and spending time with them," said Jones, author of "Studying the Parables of Jesus" and professor at McAfee Divinity School in Atlanta.

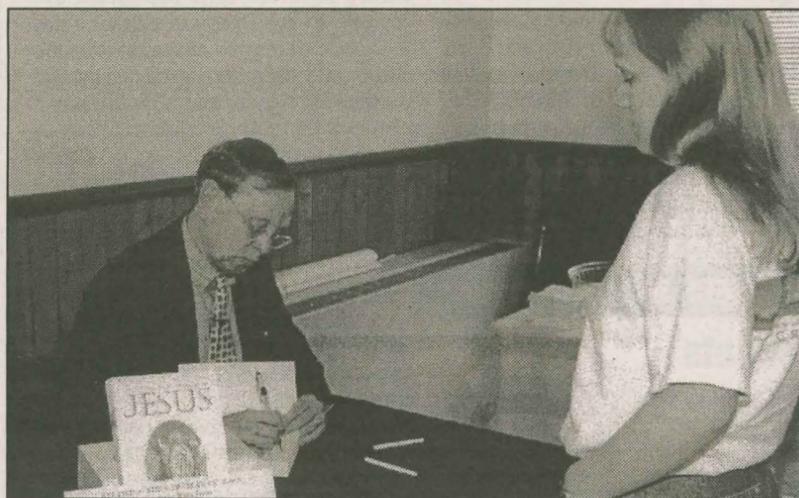
Jones was at Cumberland April 8-9 to deliver the school's annual Staley Lecture Series. He explored Jesus' parables and often compared the stories' meanings with how Christians and churches today treat people.

For the parable of the prodigal son, Jones compared the father's joyful reception of his wayward son with the resentful attitude of the elder brother. The parable contrasts two ways of receiving sinners, Jones said, "the way the father did with grace and love and forgiveness, or the way the elder brother did with a certain amount of selfishness and hostility."

Jesus told this and two other parables immediately after Pharisees criticized Him for eating and fellowshiping with sinners, Jones noted.

"Some of our churches, by the way, haven't seen any sinners in so long they wouldn't know one," he continued. "There are calls here for the church to be receiving, to be, if you please, a new kind of place to welcome and include sinners and become a new kind of community."

Likewise, Jesus' parable of the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep "was indirectly a critique of some of



BOOK SIGNING Peter Rhea Jones, a professor at McAfee School of Theology in Atlanta, signs a copy of his book for a student at Cumberland College. Jones was at Cumberland to deliver the school's Staley Lectures April 8-9.

the Pharisees themselves who may have ceased seeking the strayed and the lost," he added. "And let me say in passing there are some churches that a long time ago stopped seeking the strayed and the lost," Jones said. "Could it be that the parable itself is a sort of calling with what we are going to do with our own lives?"

In the parable of the rich man and the poor man who died, Jones contrasted the extremes of a gluttonous man who had everything and went to hell and a diseased man who had nothing and went to heaven and sat beside Abraham.

"Could it have been that he (the rich man) broke the greatest of all commandments?" Jones asked. "Love your neighbor as yourself. Maybe Jesus really thought that was the greatest of all commandments, and here is this man who just plain broke it."

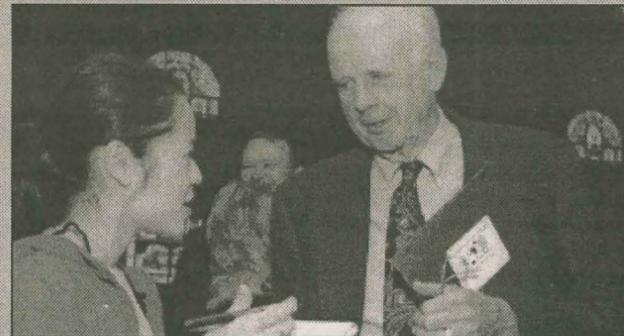
The parable has strong social implications for today's churches, he added. "We may see that we have responsibility for the poor and the hungry and the homeless in our world."

It also has evangelistic implications, he added. "Don't we need, maybe, more evangelistic effort toward the materialistic in our society, the up and outs as well as the down and outs?"

Jones challenged students to consider the personal implications of the parables. He noted that the prodigal son was about the same age as the students and asked them what self-discoveries they need to make.

In the parable of the rich and poor man, he was even more direct.

"If God were to redesign your life in the light of this parable, how would you change?" he asked. "For openers, would you ever build a Habitat (for Humanity) house?"



CHAPEL ADDRESS Wendell Berry talks with a student after speaking at Georgetown College's chapel service last week.

Georgetown hosts pastors' conference

GEORGETOWN—Pastors should take the concept of Sabbath more seriously in their ministries, a Kansas City pastor told Kentucky ministers last week.

"One of the holiest things I can do for my congregation is keep my own Sabbath," Heather Entrekin, pastor of Prairie Baptist Church, told pastors at the Georgetown pastors' conference, April 8-10.

Taking a Sabbath allows time for reconnecting with God, the source of strength for the Christian faith, she noted. "If your well is going dry, you must dig deeper," she said. "Digging deeper, growing in faith, getting in touch with the Spirit of God, ... that is our only answer."

Entrekin encouraged a complete day of rest not only for a pastor's health, but also as a model for congregations. She noted that a recent study found 32 percent of Christians report being stressed out, approximately the same percentage as the rest of the population. "These are signs of people who are not grounded in God."

A Sabbath should not just take time away from work but also include a rest from worry, a rest from commerce and a rest for the environment, she suggested.

In addition to a variety of speakers at the three-day event, pastors joined students to hear Kentucky author Wendell Berry discuss life and work at the school's chapel service.



Entrekin

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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'Narrow-minded' view

I was disheartened and appalled at how the March 18 article concerning the beginning of a new Kentucky Baptist seminary read. The tone of the article seemed biased and based on mere sentimentality rather than facts. It makes no sense to me to get statistics about a school from somewhere other than the school itself.

I am a lifelong Kentucky resident, minister and student of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. I entered fulltime ministry after 12 years in the secular work force. After much thought, prayer and scrutinization, I chose Southern and I am happy I did. Being a minister and student (third year), I am in a Monday-only tract in the school of church leadership, which gives me time for my family and ministry at church. I find that most of the Monday-only students in my classes are church-employed Kentucky ministers from all over the state. We all chose to go to Southern. To say that most Kentucky students chose schools outside of Kentucky (as Greg Earwood said in the March 19 article) seems farfetched and narrow-minded, especially if we define students only as those fresh out of undergraduate work.

I have yet to see "narrow Calvinism" taught or pushed on students as was implied by the March 19 article. In fact, what is taught is Jesus Christ, Savior and Lord, Son of God, King of all kings, who willfully gave up His life in place of mine on the cross, died and was resurrected after three days. Through Him is the only way to heaven and eternal life. I must add that all of the professors I have had are tremendous people who know their "stuff," care for the students, live the

Word and are at the top of their field. May God bless these men and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

*Doug Hamblin
Frankfort*

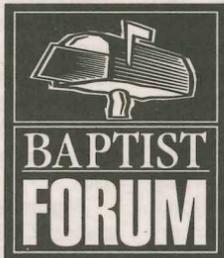
Priceless freedom

In a March 26 article, Jerry Rankin (president of the Southern Baptist International Mission Board) says that if I object to the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message statement, I deny priesthood of the believer to those who drafted it.

I do not. However, I do deny anyone the right to force me to agree with them. Freedom of conscience is priceless. We must all have the freedom to agree; we must all have the freedom to disagree.

As my husband, Charles, used to say, "We believe in the priesthood of the believer, but sometimes some of us seem to think we are more priest than others."

*Betty Jo Gaba
Louisville*



Missions support

I appreciated the emphasis given to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions in the March 5 issue of the Western Recorder. The photo feature on page 6 included a photo of my wife, Jan, teaching English as a second language.

Jan and I both are native Kentuckians. Jan was born in Corbin and born again during vacation Bible school at First Baptist Church of Corbin. She later moved to Fort Knox, where her father was a civil service employee, and then to Louisville, where we met. We met in Baptist Training Union in Valley View Baptist Church.

I was born in Louisville and born again in Eastern Parkway Baptist Church, Louisville. After Jan and I married we left Louisville for a 22-year career in the U.S. Air Force. We returned briefly to Kentucky while we both attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1980-1983). I was pastor of churches in Elizabethtown and later Linwood while in seminary. After we graduated we were appointed as home missionaries and went to Goshen, Ind., as church planters. We served there from 1983 until 1989 when we transferred to our present positions as director of missions and language missions director for South Central Baptist Association in Columbus, Ind.

Thank you, Southern Baptists, for your faithful prayer support and giving through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

*J. Stuart Cundiff
Columbus, Ind.*

Editor's Note: A feature story about the Cundiffs' current ministry was published in last week's Western Recorder.

Cartoon, puzzle fan

I just think you did a nice thing when you started putting the Kudzu and B.C. comic strips in the Western Recorder.

I especially appreciate the inclusion of the Bible crossword puzzles. I think I have correctly completed every one so far. I answer all that I can without looking the answers up in the Bible, and then start looking up the Scriptures. I try to see how quickly I can look them up. It takes me back to my sword drill days. I am 72 and a deacon at Erlanger Baptist Church.

*Joe K. Smith
Florence*

PARTNERS IN THE MISSION

Reflections on two great events

Two great events were held in Louisville recently. The Baptist Communicators Association met April 4-6, the same weekend that saw the commissioning of summer missionaries and Acteens Activators in a very moving service.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's communications/media department and the Western Recorder hosted the Baptist Communicators Association's annual conference this year. More than 100 writers, photographers, graphic designers, video producers and Webmasters from Southern Baptist entities across the nation attended for a weekend of professional development and fellowship.

Keynote speakers were Harvey Thomas, who served as press secretary for former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher; Larry Ross, public relations advisor for Billy Graham; and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Angelo Henderson.

During this annual conference several awards were presented. The KBC communications staff received the following awards:

■ Promotional Video—First place

for "Kentucky Baptists Touching the World: Europe."

■ Music Video—Second place for "The Anchor Holds," a video about disaster relief work in New York after the World Trade Center attacks.

■ Ad Copywriting, Series—First place for "KBC Web Site Redesign."

■ M.E. Dodd Award for Exceptional Achievement in Electronic Media—Grand prize for "Kentucky Baptists Touching the World: Europe."

The Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children and Prather Design, a graphic design firm used by the KBC, also received recognitions.

We are so very proud of the members of the communications/media department. Communications Specialist Denise Withers served as the coordinator for the event and there was excellent teamwork with the Western Recorder staff.

The commissioning service also was a great event. Commissioned were 112 student summer missionaries and numerous Acteens Activators. Acteens Activators are teenage Bap-

tist young women who go out in teams to do missions. For the Acteens, the commissioning service served to cap the state Acteens conference held at St. Matthews Baptist Church.

More than 800 people were on hand to hear commissioning challenges by Southern Baptist International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin and his wife, Bobbye, and Wanda Lee, executive director of national Woman's Missionary Union.

Twenty-nine of the students will serve in France, Poland, Venezuela, Cambodia and Thailand. They will provide their own support for travel but Baptist Student Unions across Kentucky raised more than \$100,000 to help support their ministries.

Again, there was great teamwork between Kentucky WMU and the KBC collegiate ministries department. LaRaine Dail, the youth and college consultant for Kentucky WMU, coordinated the commissioning, with KBC collegiate ministries associate Ralph Hopkins.

I praise God for the great teamwork that made these events possible. Please join with me in prayer for these student missionaries and Acteen Activators. Some of them will become career missionaries.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

ANNUITY

Long-term care insurance: to buy or not to buy?

By Don Spencer

Whether to purchase long-term care insurance is a major decision for many people as they get older. Medicare and Medicare supplement insurance will not pay for long-term care. Many families use their own funds to pay for this care or must rely on Medicaid.

Long-term care insurance allows you to protect some of your assets, pay for your own care and be independent from the support of others. However, long-term care isn't for everyone. The complexity of the subject and choices of plans make the decision more difficult. Each person must make his or her own decision. Here are a few reasons for and against buying long-term care insurance.

Reasons to buy:

■ Should you ever need long-term care, it is important for you to continue having control over where and how you will receive care, and you want to avoid reliance on family and friends for care.

■ You can afford to purchase an adequate policy. It should have inflation protection, adequate daily benefits and probably should provide for a lifetime coverage option in case of Alzheimer's disease.

■ Your income is sufficient, and you can afford the cost of a policy without a major change to your lifestyle.

■ You are in reasonably good health and still young enough for policy costs to be affordable.

■ You need the peace of mind of knowing such a policy can protect and preserve your financial resources for your heirs.

■ You wish to transfer the risk of incurring long-term care costs rather than assuming that risk.

Reasons not to buy:

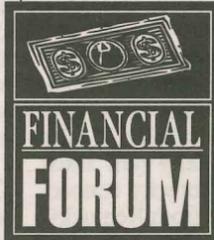
■ Your income and assets are relatively low and you likely will qualify for Medicaid.

■ You are willing to assume the financial risks of long-term care costs and your assets are sufficient to do so, realizing those costs will be more than \$100 per day.

■ The cost and availability of the insurance has become prohibitive due to your age.

■ You have poor health with some major illness already diagnosed. Therefore, you cannot get the insurance from a reputable company, or the cost is excessive.

Don Spencer is a certified financial planner and directs the Kentucky Baptist Convention's annuity department



How can churches help meet needs of aging population?

Q: My grandfather often feels that the world passed him by. I would hope that our church could help him discover otherwise. Any suggestions?

Part of the challenge is to combat ageism as it continues its march through too many churches. Another key is raising awareness of the gifts of older adults as well as their needs. Churches also need to understand older adults are a vital part of the body of Christ. It takes courage, passion and persistence to be an influential advocate for older adults.

How do you prepare yourself for this role? Begin with Scripture, looking at the prophets from Samuel to Malachi.

Understanding their call and work can help individuals seeking to be faithful advocates. How did the prophets get to the people who needed to hear the message? How was the message delivered? The biblical prophets offer models from which to learn.

It also is important to find ways to raise awareness. Understand that older adult ministry is not exclusively a generational ministry; it also is about mentoring young people, grandparenting infants and supporting new parents, as well as about young people enlivening the daily lives of homebound and nursing home residents. It also includes every aspect of a church's life from missions to education to worship. Being an influencer means speaking up about large-print bulletins and adequate lighting, mission opportunities for retirees and intergenerational Bible studies.

Seek to stay current on issues older adults face. Read about the caregiving dilemmas and health care struggles. Understand the spiritual needs of homebound and nursing home residents. Become knowledgeable about new retirees and their discipleship needs. Contact your area agency on aging or a retirement community for additional resources about emerging issues for older adults.

There is significant potential within this network. With the gifts present in the local church and the power of the Holy Spirit, much can be done to help meet your grandfather's needs.—*Jon Rainbow*

Q: I've often heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and yet my children skip breakfast or grab something on the run almost every morning. What makes breakfast so important, and what makes up a good breakfast?

Glycogen provides energy for the body—something children need plenty of. The body uses up its supply of glycogen during the time between dinner and breakfast—typically the longest time between meals. If that supply is not replenished at breakfast, the body begins to break down protein to supply energy—a process hard on health and extremely detrimental over a long period of time. In fact, Baylor University physiologist Dick Couey estimates that consistently skipping or skimping on breakfast can reduce life expectancy by five years.

Separate from the question of whether children take time to eat breakfast is the question of what they eat. Children love Pop Tarts, doughnuts and frozen waffles, which are quick and easy. However, the nutritional value of these foods often is lacking. Fitness experts tell us children need to eat more bread, whole grain cereals, bagels, oatmeal, cream of wheat and fruit. Children typically like these foods because they taste good; they also are good for them.

Make sure your children take time for breakfast, and then make sure the breakfast they eat provides the energy they need for a busy day.—*David Garrard*

Family Forum writers are Suzanne Coyle, director of Cornerstone Counseling for Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children; David Garrard, minister to children at St. Matthews Baptist Church in Louisville; Jon Rainbow, a clinical gerontologist and professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington; and Scott Wigginton, director of LifeCare Counseling at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville. Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail us at wesrec@ntr.net.



Take time to ponder 'what matters most'

It wasn't a typical communications conference. In the midst of sessions about developing effective Web sites, trends in publication design and ground rules for good writing, speaker after speaker at the recent Baptist Communicators Association annual workshop shared personal insights from their own spiritual journeys.

BCA is a professional development organization involving hundreds of Christian communicators across the nation, working in such fields as journalism, photography, public relations, electronic media and graphic design. The annual workshop, held earlier this month in Louisville, was hosted by the Kentucky Baptist Convention communications/media department and the Western Recorder.

While a spiritual emphasis might be expected in a workshop for Baptist communicators, many of the conference speakers earned their professional credentials in secular settings. Rather than limiting their remarks to the academic aspects of communications, however, they delved into the spiritual implications of their personal and professional pilgrimages.

Harvey Thomas, for example, was press secretary for former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Angelo Henderson, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, made his professional mark covering crime-ridden inner-city beats for such publications as the Wall Street Journal and the Detroit News.

Yet both men also are dedicated Christian laymen who live out their faith in the field of secular media. Thomas explained he was speaking to the Baptist crowd not as a professional Christian communicator, but "as a communicator who is a Christian." Henderson, a deacon at his church in Detroit, is earning a seminary degree to better equip himself for local church ministry.

I was reminded during the workshop that viewing one's career as a ministry isn't limited to professional ministers. Whether an individual is a newspaper reporter, a computer consultant, a salesman or a farmer, tak-

ing advantage of daily ministry opportunities involves being sensitive and responsive to God's nudging. Among the insights shared during the workshop that can apply to Christians in diverse work settings:

■ **Harvey Thomas:** "If you want to communicate effectively, you've got to start where the other person is. Otherwise, you will never get them to where you are." Why is that important for Christian communicators as well as followers of Christ in other jobs? Because, Thomas noted, "we have the message of life, salvation."

Here in the United States, "talking about Christianity is easy compared to most parts of the world," he pointed out. But even in the U.S., he added, Christians "need to be prepared to think outside the box—outside the Christian world and outside the Baptist world" in order to reach unbelievers with the gospel.

■ **Angelo Henderson:** On the journey of life, he noted, "anything that hinders instead of helps has to go." He said examples of excess baggage to dump include fear, anger, hurt, disappointment, bitterness and despair.

"Your doubt says less about you and more about your belief in God," Henderson warned.

"Leave that baggage with the Lord rather than taking it on your journey."

■ **Larry Ross,** public relations advisor for evangelist Billy Graham: Urging conference participants to "personally assess what matter most," Ross noted that professional ministers "ultimately represent the Kingdom of God, not just a ministry."

Sharing his personal struggles with balancing the priorities of ministry and family, Ross said he eventually realized that God "didn't care about how much I was trying but how little I was trusting. ... I had to restructure my priorities."

"What matters most in your life?" he reiterated. No matter what your profession is, it's a question worth pondering.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Christians in Palestine: A catalyst for peace?

By Dwight Moody

The Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem has taken center stage in the incredible drama in the Middle East.

Approximately 70 Palestinian Christian clergy together with approximately 200 Palestinian soldiers barricaded themselves in this ancient sanctuary. They have been surrounded by thousands of Israeli soldiers.

Ironically, it was the Hebrew ancestors of the Jews who introduced the use of cities and sanctuaries as places of refuge.

The Bible tells of Absalom and Joab who led a rebellion against King Solomon. When it failed and Absalom was killed, Joab feared for his life and sought safety from retaliation by clutching the altar.

The word "sanctuary" has become synonymous with a place of refuge from danger.

It was such a place that Samir Ibrahim Salman sought when he left his home and ran the 100 yards to the Church of the Nativity. As caretaker and bellringer for 30 years, he knew his place. What he didn't know was that he would be shot dead halfway between his home and his church.

The first church constructed on this site in Bethlehem dates to the fifth

century. After his Christian conversion, the Roman Emperor Constantine sent his mother to the Holy Land to identify the holy sites and initiate the building of sanctuaries. Today, the church in Bethlehem and many other holy sites are under the jurisdiction of the Franciscan order of the Roman Catholic Church.

The minister general of that order, Giacomo Bini, defended those who have fled to the church for safety, saying, "We have nothing to lose and no interests to defend except that of peace, which is everyone's right."

The Franciscan order was founded by Francis of Assisi, known throughout the world for his practice of peaceable living. "Today, we are ready," Bini said, "to give a Franciscan habit (cloak) of peace to all so that they become instruments of peace."

This attention to the Christian population in the Middle East marks a striking departure from the Muslim-driven orientation of most news and commentary.

For more than a year the eyes of the world have watched the uprising in Israel, the attack on the World Trade Center, the war in Afghanistan and now the offensive into the West Bank. We have come to regard this as

a continuing episode in that clash of cultures between the Islamic East and the Christian West.

It has created an enormous interest in the faith and practice of Islam, and rightly so.

But the camera shift from fanatical Muslims to fearful Christians has brought into the spotlight the tenuous plight of a minority within a minority. Arab Christians live in a Muslim culture within a Jewish state.

There are 50,000 Christians in the West Bank and Gaza; essentially all are Arabs, organized into Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant (primarily Lutheran) churches. They are thoroughly integrated into Arab society. Although they comprise only 2 percent of the Arab population, they constitute 10 percent of the leadership, including important positions in the Palestine Liberation Organization. President Arafat's wife is a Christian.

There are another 120,000 Christians in Israel, holding Israeli citizenship. Most of these are Arab as well.

So it is that nearly 200,000 Arab residents, those who claim identification with the Christian presence in the region, are now at the center of conflict. Perhaps they will have opportunity, given their unique ties to both Muslims and Christians, to become a significant catalyst for peace in the days and weeks ahead.

Dwight Moody is dean of the chapel at Georgetown College

RESOURCES

Wife hunting & goal setting

How Eliezer's step-by-step matchmaking plan can help your church

"When you're setting goals as a Christian, you don't look at your own resources. ... Let the size of your God determine the size of your goal."

Rick Warren

LAKE FOREST, Calif. (BP)—There are so many books and tapes on goal setting, I'm bored with them. Even many of the Christian ones have no scriptural basis.

But God has given us a wonderful, biblical model in Genesis 24, in which we can follow the steps to setting and reaching goals in the story of Eliezer, Abraham's servant, as he fulfilled his assigned project of finding Isaac a wife.

For years, I've used these 10 biblical steps in planning at Saddleback Valley Community Church:

Determine your position.

Ask yourself some questions. "Where am I now?" And, "What would I like to change?" Take the time to evaluate your present situation. I do this about once a quarter. I ask these questions: "Where am I headed?" and "Am I still headed in the right direction?"

If you were to call me from a phone booth and say, "I want to come over to your house. Give me directions," what would be the first thing I'd ask? "Where are you?" I've got to know where you are before I tell you how to get where you want to be.

That's true in any area of life. Before you can know where you want to go you've got to know where you are right now. Determine your position.

Define your purpose. You need to clearly state your goal. I suggest getting a specific image in your mind so you know exactly what you want. First, determine where you are and then determine what you want.

Abraham said, "I want you to go to my country and to my own relatives and get a wife for my son Isaac." He knew exactly what he wanted. It was clearly defined. Later on, he gave other conditions: "I want a wife of the same nationality, from the same home town, same faith, someone who is beautiful, a virgin."

The point is, you're never going to reach a vague goal. The more specific a goal is, the easier it is to reach. If you say, "God, bless my wife," how do you know when God's blessed your wife? Sometimes God blesses with a problem or a trial. Is that what you're praying for? You need to be specific. A vague goal has no drawing power.

Ask yourself three questions:
■ "What do I want to be?" (This is the most important: What do I want to be in Christ's likeness?)
■ "What do I want to do?"
■ "What do I want to have?"

You say, "I want to travel." Great. Where? "I want to have income." Great. How much? "I want a career." Fantastic. What kind? "I want to witness." To whom? Be specific. "I want to lose weight." How much? "I want to read the Bible." When do you want to read it?

In 1960, President Kennedy said, "Within a decade we'll put a man on the moon." That was a decision. Did

he try to figure out all the problems before he made the decision? No. He just set a goal. We're going to go there. Once the decision-making was out of the way, then the country moved into the problem solving. When he made the statement, it was physically and technologically impossible to do it. But he made the decision and later worried about the problems.

You need to be very specific. You determine your position, then you define your purpose.

Discover a promise. Find a promise you can claim from God's Word, and don't worry about the "how's" at this point.

When you're setting goals as a Christian, you don't look at your own resources, your own abilities. There are more than 7,000 promises in the Bible, just waiting to be claimed. They're like blank checks. Let the size of your God determine the size of your goal. We've set some big goals at Saddleback, and some people say, "Who do you think you are? Who do those people at Saddleback think they are?"

That's the wrong question. The issue is not who we think we are. The issue is who we think God is. How big is God?

Ask yourself: "What promise can I claim?"

Keep looking in Scripture until you find a promise that will help you.

Describe the payoff. Every goal must have a payoff or reward. If there's no reward, then there's no motivation to fulfill it. You've got to settle the value of the goal in your mind.

Ask yourself three questions:
■ "What is the reward?"
■ "Why do I want it?"
■ "How will I feel when I get it?"
Why is it important to describe the profit up front? Because when you settle the "Why?" God will show you the "How?"

When you know why you want to do what you want to do with your life, then you have a calling on your life, and God will show you the how.

If you delay in determining the payoff, then you'll give up when times get tough. You need to know the payoff to avoid discouragement.

Desire in prayer. The Bible says in Mark 11:24, "Whatever you desire, pray and believe and you will have them." When you pray for your goals it does two things:

First, it reveals desire. Often God delays an answer to prayer or delays you attaining a goal in order to see how badly you want it. He wants for you to distinguish whether this is a wish or a whim, or if this is a deep desire in your heart.

Second, it shows your dependence. Who are you really trusting in to see this goal accomplished? If I never pray about a goal, what is that saying? It's saying I don't think I need God's help. I can handle this on my own.

I continually ask myself: "Am I praying for my goals?"

Have I just set them, or am I really praying for them? Your goal sheet ought to be your prayer list.

They shouldn't be the only things on your prayer list, but they ought to be a part of it: "Lord, these are the things I'm trying to accomplish with my life. I want my life to count. I want my life to be worthwhile. I want to make a difference. I want to be significant for Your glory."

Diagnose the problems. With this step, you identify the roadblocks and obstacles holding you back.

When assessing your goals, you want to ask yourself two questions:

■ "Why don't I have this already?"
■ "What are the barriers?"

The barriers will vary: they may be emotional, financial, intellectual or relational.

Take a look at Genesis 24 where Abraham sends his servant to find a wife for his son, Isaac. This is a great example of diagnosing the problem.

Eliezer, the servant of Abraham, is going to go to a foreign country. Can you imagine the number of serious problems he faced to reach the goal he'd been given? He needed to go to a country he'd never been to and find a lady he'd never met.

He needed to convince her to go with him and to marry a total stranger. Mission impossible? Would you do that? Do you think you'd be successful in that?

Eliezer has all kinds of problems to reach this goal:

■ In verse 21, he has the problem of finding the right girl.

■ In verse 49, he has the problem of getting the girl's parents' consent.

■ In verse 58, he had to get the girl's consent.

Design a plan. Plan out a course of action to overcome the obstacles you've just identified. Write down some specific steps. Set a deadline, and schedule it.

As you design your plan, ask yourself these questions:

■ "How do I intend to get there?"
■ "How long will it take?"

As we look at Eliezer's story, we see his plan is a masterpiece: He sets up a test. He'll take all his camels down to the water and have them kneel down. Then he'll ask for a drink, and if the woman he asks says, "Let me water your camels, too," Eliezer will know he's found the right one.

For one thing, this would be an unusual woman with a real heart for service. The average camel can drink up to 40 gallons of water! If you add up the camels, she's offering to hand-draw about 300 gallons of water.

Once this has occurred, Eliezer's plan is to then share his purpose. Only then will he reveal Abraham's wealth and try to get invited to her home, and only then will he pop the question. He has a strategic plan, and he follows it.

Discipline your personality. Nothing great is ever accomplished without discipline. The bottom line in

your life is character. While you're working on your goals, God is working on you. God is much more interested in you than He is in your goals. During this planning and goal-setting process, God will work on you, making changes as you grow toward your goal.

I've said many times when I speak to pastors, "Growing churches require growing pastors." Likewise, growing businesses require growing businessmen. Growing marriages require growing husbands and wives. The moment you stop growing, you die.

You should ask yourself:

■ "Where do I need to change?" (God is more interested in your character than in the project).

■ "What kind of person do I need to become?"

When I first moved to the Saddleback Valley and set goals for Saddleback church, I was 26 years old. I thought, "There's no way I'm equipped to handle a church the size of the goal I've just set."

But here's what happened: As the church was growing, so was I. God had it all planned and knew I would grow to greater maturity before the church grew to larger portions.

Deposit the price. There is always a price tag for reaching any goal. It doesn't matter whether it's a business, or a church or any kind of dream. There's always a great sacrifice to reach your great goals. A lot of people I meet want to reach great goals or accomplish great dreams, but they only want to do it if it's convenient. It's as if they say, "I've got this dream, but I only want to do it in my spare time."

Ask yourself three questions at this stage:

■ "What will it cost me?"
■ "What am I willing to give?"
■ "Is the cause worth the cost?"

Depend on people. You never will achieve very much in life until you learn to get along with other people. John Rockefeller used to say there was one thing he'd pay more for than any other skill: the ability to work with people. There are a lot of geniuses who can't get along with others. You've got to learn to depend on people because God works through people. It takes teamwork. Success is never a one-man show. It's always a joint effort.

Ask yourself at this stage: "Who else can I involve?"

The secret of a great church is commitment and cooperation. When there is commitment and cooperation, God can do tremendous things. He can overlook all kinds of other things.

Vance Havner once said, "Snowflakes are frail but if enough of them stick together they can stop traffic."

You might not be able to do a lot by yourself, but when God's men and women get together, they can do anything.

Rick Warren is the founding pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Lake Forest, Calif., and author of "The Purpose Driven Church."

FIRST PERSON



Rick Warren

RESOURCES

'God is your boss,' speaker tells Baptist communicators

LOUISVILLE—Warning that "people can be publicly successful and private failures," Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Angelo Henderson urged Baptist communicators to "go higher" in personal, professional and spiritual growth.

Henderson was among the keynote speakers at the 2002 Baptist Communicators Association workshop in Louisville. BCA, a professional development organization for Baptist communicators, includes members from such fields as journalism, photography, public relations, electronic media and graphic design.

The April 4-6 workshop attracted more than 120 participants from Baptist-related organizations in more than 20 states. This year's event was hosted by the Kentucky Baptist Convention communications/media department and the Western Recorder.

Henderson, a special projects reporter for the Detroit News, earned the 1999 Pulitzer Prize for feature writing while working with the Detroit bureau of the Wall Street Journal. The article recounted the story of an inner-city pharmacist who shot and killed a robber and the lingering impact of that encounter.

Couching the journalism profession in a larger context, Henderson

told the Baptist communicators, "You are on a journey. Some call it journalism; some call it life.

"You can't go higher on this journey if you're carrying excess baggage," he said. "Like an airplane, we can only carry a certain amount of weight. ... Anger has got to go. Hurt has got to go. Disappointment has got to go. Bitterness has got to go. Despair has got to go."

Henderson, a deacon at his church in Detroit, emphasized the need to "keep Jesus as your role model."

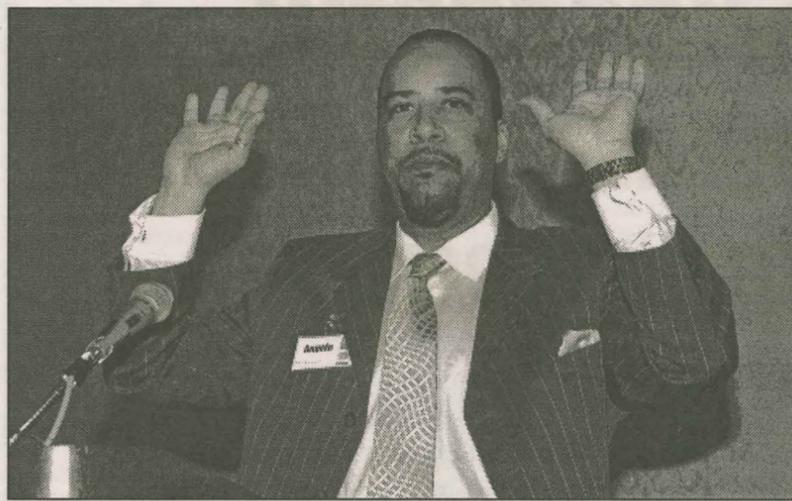
Don't look for approval from other people, he added. "God is your boss. ... You are not there to serve your job. Your job is to serve you as you serve God."

Henderson told about his first job out of college, where the newspaper's business editor told him he needed to find another job and might not be a good fit for journalism.

"That's when the Lord and I entered into a one-on-one relationship," he recalled. "Faith is what keeps us going when travel conditions are unfavorable.

"Journalism and communications remain a way to change the world," he added. "Somebody out there is waiting on you to tell their story."

Other keynote speakers during the



GO HIGHER Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Angelo Henderson motions for Baptist communicators to "go higher" in their personal, professional and spiritual lives. Henderson spoke during the recent Baptist Communicators Association workshop in Louisville.

three-day conference were Harvey Thomas, press secretary for former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, and Larry Ross, spokesman for evangelist Billy Graham.

Thomas warned that many Christians "take the attitude that people ought to listen to us because we are Christians."

"That is rubbish," he declared, noting that Christians must earn the right to be heard in a secular world.

"You need to believe in what you are trying to communicate," he said. It is important for Christian communicators to understand their message and their motivation, he added.

"If there is no response, there is no communication," Thomas pointed out. "If you want to communicate effectively, you've got to start where the other person is. Otherwise, you will never get them to where you are.

"As Christians, we have to get to the heart of the matter" through humility and faith, he suggested.

Citing Psalm 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer," Thomas said, "What gives us away is 'the mediation of my heart,' what we're thinking on the inside.

"Psalm 19:14 is to me the crux of it all," he concluded. "That's where we end up with two-way communication between us and God."

Ross asked conference participants to consider whether they are consumed by an unhealthy obsession toward their work or whether they are "motivated by the opportunity to reach out to a questioning world."

Ross recalled a time about 10 years ago when he was living on airplanes, "addicted to caffeine and stress."

Worked 60 hours a week selling brushes, and people will ask you to reconsider your schedule, he noted. But put in the same hours for a Christian ministry and people will say, "God bless you," he added.

"I was miserable," he said. "I had a drive, but I had no purpose because I wasn't doing God's will. I was doing my will in God's name."

Ross said he realized that "only a Savior can bring satisfaction."

"I learned that saving the world becomes academic if it comes at the expense of my family," he added. "I had to restructure my priorities.

"What matters most in your life?" he asked. "Do you know Jesus or are you just doing Jesus? ... We need a recommitment to what matters most."

Kentucky Baptist communicators earn 10 awards

LOUISVILLE—Kentucky Baptist communicators earned 10 awards during Baptist Communicators Association's 2002 Wilmer C. Fields Awards Competition.

Robert Reeves, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention communications/media department, and Larry Brannin, media production associate, won a grand prize for exceptional achievement in electronic media for the video, "Kentucky Baptists Touching the World: Europe." The video also won first place in the promotional video category.

Reeves and Brannin also received a second place award for the music video, "The Anchor Holds," which highlighted disaster relief ministry in New York after Sept. 11.

The communications/media department staff earned first place in ad copywriting.

Reeves shared a first place award with Michael Prather of Prather Design for the design of a KBC ad campaign.

Prather also received second place in logo design for the BCA workshop logo.

Western Recorder earned three second-place awards for writing and design.

News Director David Winfrey won a writing award for "It's Gone: Kentucky Baptists Help Flood Victims Cope," coverage of flood relief efforts last year in Eastern Kentucky.

News and feature coverage by Winfrey in the wake of Sept. 11 contributed to the Recorder's two awards for state Baptist newspaper design and special theme sections.

Dannah Prather of the Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children won a second place feature writing award for "Lawson's Legacy" which chronicled the life of KBHC alumnus and longtime janitor George Lawson.

Their name means "people with no God."

This May, let's introduce them.

Loving the Tuareg of West Africa

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May 19, 2002

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Saturday and Sunday, April 27 & 28, 2002

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10:00 a.m. Brunch		11:00 a.m. Worship
7:00 p.m. Fellowship Reunion		12:00 p.m. Celebration Luncheon

We cordially invite anyone whose life has been touched by Faith Baptist Church to please join us in our celebration as we reflect on the past, focus on the present, and look to the future.

Successful Christian Financial Management

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This seminar is being used all across our nation by hundreds of churches and can give your church a whole new perspective on biblical based principles of financial freedom. A trained consultant leads the seminar using the Sunday school time, the morning worship time and two hours Sunday afternoon and evening.

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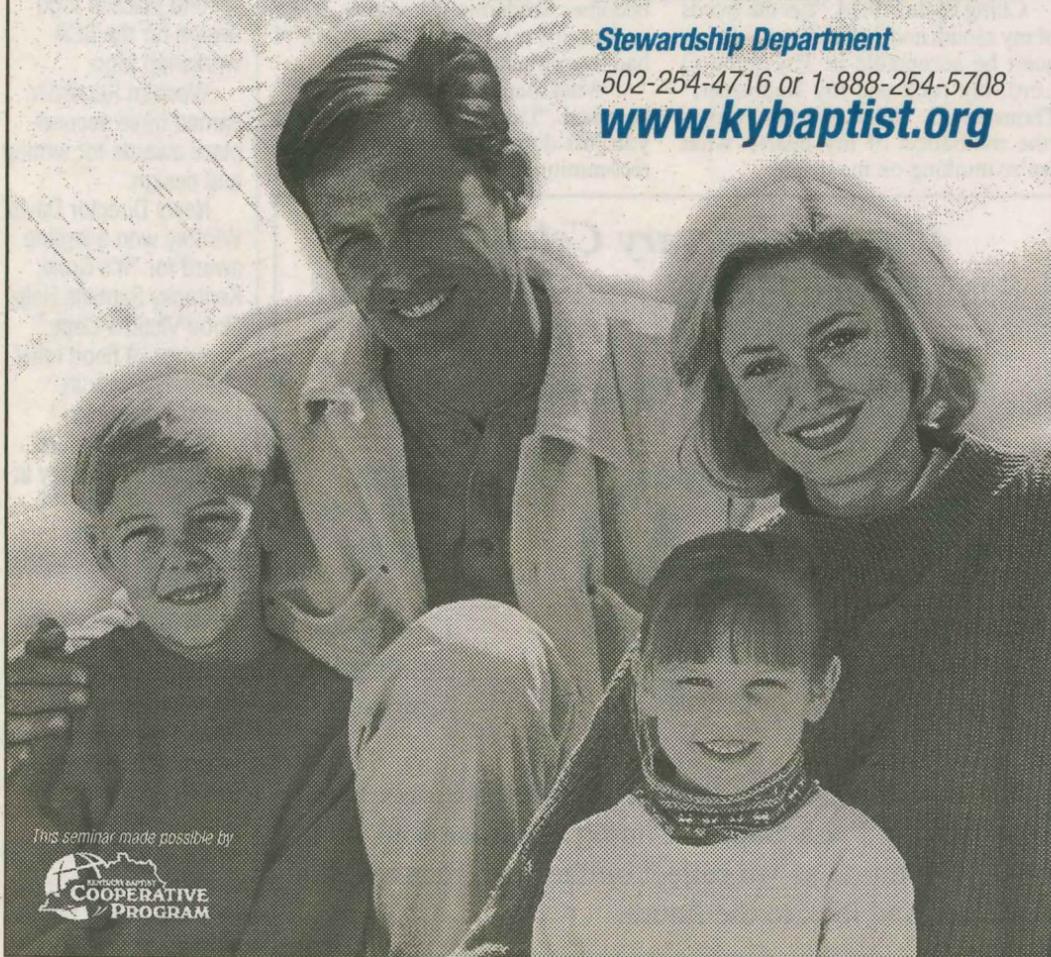
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This seminar made possible by



MISSIONS FAIR Martha Rees (left), a candidate consultant with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, visits with women attending a missions fair during last week's Kentucky WMU annual meeting in Madisonville.

WMU leaders: Do missions 'down the street and around the world'

Continued from page 1

"We're clearing rocks and plowing ground and sowing seeds," he said. "We're just going to continue to be faithful and press on to that which God has called us to do."

Carl and Martha Rees, candidate consultants for the Southern Baptist International Mission Board, highlighted international ministry needs in Middle America.

Noting that their missions career is a product of prayers by WMU members and other Christians, Rees said, "When WMU prays, God responds and we thank you for that."

Urging prayer for mission workers in Mexico and other Middle American nations, he said Mexico is "a land so close to the U.S. but so far from the Savior."

"As long as there is one lost person left on earth, we have not done enough," Mrs. Rees said. "Have you talked to that lady in the market? Have you talked to that man on your street who's Mexican? Pray that God might reach many of these people for Christ."

Other missions speakers included:

■ **Kendale Moore**, literacy consultant for the Southern Baptist North American Mission Board. Noting that more than 40 million Americans are functional non-readers, he said literacy missions seeks to teach writing skills and spiritual truths to participants.

"It's so easy to get caught up in the demands of our lives that it's easy to forget the people down the street," he said. "Down the street are people in need. Down the street are people God has called to meet those needs."

■ **Charlie Simmons**, Missions Service Corps volunteer chaplain at Wrangler Campground and Kentucky restorative ministries coordinator. Describing how he became a chaplain at a horse camp, Simmons said he bought a horse several years ago after "the Lord put a desire in my heart to want a horse."

As his interest in horses and riding grew, he eventually started a worship service at Wrangler Campground. Noting that the campground was "rough" with lots of drinking and

drugs before he became chaplain, he said the atmosphere has begun to change in recent years, including the weekly worship service that often attracts 100 to 150 people. "God is doing some wonderful things," he said, "and I'm happy to be a part of it."

■ **Etta and Jerry Butcher**, MSC volunteers in New England. Mrs. Butcher said they have had the opportunity to help open a free medical and dental clinic in Boston. Her husband also has been involved in helping organize a disaster relief ministry in the wake of Sept. 11.

Noting that "God is doing mighty things in New England through a variety of ministry projects," Mrs. Butcher said, "We need workers who will come and commit a week, two weeks, a year or two years."

■ **Cathy and George Chinn**, MSC volunteers serving as directors of the Wendell Belew Appalachian Training Center in Stanton. "Our biggest prayer is for a new building to house our vocational training," Mrs. Chinn said. "We have such needs in Eastern Kentucky."



Dottie Williamson

"There's a lot of work going on in Eastern Kentucky," Chinn added. "You don't have to look far to find work God would have you do."

Mrs. Chinn also was elected Kentucky WMU president, succeeding Sara Billups who has served the past two years. Officers re-elected for the coming year are Pat Howard, vice president, and Gayle Horn, recording secretary.

WMU participants also launched plans for next year's 100th annual meeting April 4-5 at Central Baptist Church in Winchester.

Reflecting on Kentucky WMU's history and future, state WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton noted, "We must be very mindful that we are impacting the future today."

Affirming the meeting's focus on missions involvement from the local to the international levels, Bolton said her goal was for participants to gain practical insights and motivation to do missions "down the street and around the world."

Report: Alcohol has impact at colleges

WASHINGTON (BP)—A deeply ingrained culture has developed on American college campuses that promotes the drinking of alcoholic beverages, with thousands of deaths, injuries, sexual assaults and health problems among the results each year, according to a new report.

The study, commissioned by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, found that on a yearly average at schools:

- 1,400 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die from alcohol-related injuries.

- 500,000 students are accidentally injured while under the influence of alcohol.

- More than 600,000 college students are assaulted by other students who have been drinking.

- More than 100,000 students say they were too drunk to know if they willingly had sexual relations.

- 2.1 million students drive under the influence of alcohol.

The report is at www.college.drinkingprevention.gov.

Pastors' housing tax exemption at issue in lawsuit, legislation

WASHINGTON (RNS)—A Minnesota congressman says he will introduce legislation to protect an 81-year-old tax exemption for church parsonages after a federal appeals court questioned its constitutionality.

Rep. Jim Ramstad, a Republican on the influential Ways and Means Committee, said the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco has "hijacked" the case of a megachurch pastor to push its own agenda.

The case involves Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church outside Los Angeles, who used the law to deduct \$79,999 on his house in 1998. Warren relied on a 1921 statute giving clergy an exemption for their housing costs.

According to the Washington Times, the Internal Revenue Service disputed Warren's deduction and said he could deduct only \$59,479, which they determined to be the "fair market rental value" of his home. Warren appealed to a federal tax court, which ruled in his favor.

The IRS, however, took the case one step higher to the San Francisco court, which asked a University of Southern California law professor to

draft arguments why the 1921 law should be reviewed and possibly overturned. Two of the three justices supported reviewing the law.

Justice Stephen Reinhardt, in his order, said the law may violate the Constitution's separation of church and state and result in "an unconstitutional windfall at the public's expense." He said he was not making a definitive ruling, but merely looking for more information.

Justice Richard Tallman, in his dissent, said the review is "wholly unnecessary" and argued that the court had overstepped its bounds by "inflating this case to constitutional stature."

Ramstad said he will file legislation that blocks the court from revoking the parsonage exemption. "Thousands of American ministers need our help to stop this travesty," he said.

Removing the exemption could result in clergy paying \$2.3 billion more in taxes during the next five years, Ramstad said. "Rather than deciding the narrow issue present in the case, which is whether the IRS had the authority to limit the allowance, the court hijacked the case and turned it into a challenge of the very constitutionality of the allowance."

Graham discharged after sinus surgery

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (RNS)—Evangelist Billy Graham was discharged from a Jacksonville, Fla., hospital April 7 after undergoing surgery for a sinus condition.

"At Mr. Graham's request, they kept him an additional day in order to help him recover from the anesthesia," said Larry Ross, Graham's spokesman.

Ross said the 83-year-old evangelist's doctor said there were no complications with the procedure to relieve symptoms associated with chronic sinusitis and bronchitis that have plagued Graham since November.

As part of his regular biannual checkup, doctors recommended a procedure to reduce fluid buildup in Graham's right ear. The two-hour procedure, performed under general anesthesia, is fairly routine, said Graham's Mayo Clinic doctor, David Pearson.

Ross denied a report that Graham was going deaf. The evangelist had experienced temporary hearing loss as a result of the fluid buildup, Ross said, and that already had begun improving after the surgery.

Earlier in the month, Graham's daughter Anne Graham Lotz told a Knoxville, Tenn., radio station that her father is "doing very well, although I'd say in the last month he's just gone totally deaf."

Ross also confirmed that Graham's wife, Ruth, fell at home about two weeks ago and suffered a fracture to her pelvic bone. Ruth Graham, 81, underwent hip replacement surgery 18 months ago and has been in frail health for the past few years.

Graham still plans to conduct two "missions" in Cincinnati and Dallas-Fort Worth later this year, Ross said.

NATIONAL NOTES

- **Moral decline concerning many adults.** Almost one out of five American adults cite a moral decline in the nation as a cause for concern, ranking it third after the war on terrorism and economic issues, a Barna Research Group survey shows. The research firm found that 52 percent of Americans cited the war and related fears about terrorism as the national issue of greatest concern. Thirty percent cited issues related to the economy, including its strength, taxes and the cost of living. Nineteen percent cited the moral decline of the nation, 15 percent cited unemployment and job issues and 14 percent mentioned national security.

- **Missionary's family to get \$8 million.** The federal government would pay \$8 million to settle the claims of the family of a missionary and her daughter killed when their plane was shot down in Peru, as well as claims by the pilot, under a settlement negotiated by the Bush administration. An attorney for the families confirmed the settlement figure March 22 but said the agreement won't be finalized until Congress approves the money. A Peruvian air force attacked the airplane carrying Roni Bowers and her daughter April 20, 2001, after it was targeted by CIA contract employees as a potential drug trafficking flight.

- **Presidential prayer team reaches 1 million members.** A group recruiting prayer support for President Bush reports it has recruited more than a million members to its effort. The program was launched Sept. 12 in Scottsdale, Ariz., by sculptor William Hunter to pray daily for President Bush, his cabinet and the nation in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. The team hopes to enlist at least 1 percent of the U.S. population—or about 2.8 million people. Leaders will try to double that number if the first goal is reached. Information is available at www.presidentialprayerteam.org.

- **Jesse Ventura proclaims June as celebration for gays.** Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura irked many Christians recently when he proclaimed June as "Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Pride Celebration Month," and at the same time refused again to issue a proclamation noting May 2 as a "National Day of Prayer," according to the Minnesota Family Council.

- **Disciples urge social action on Sept. 11 anniversary.** The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is urging churches to use the one-year anniversary of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks as an opportunity to reach out to those in need on the local level. The Indianapolis-based denomination is coordinating the "9-11: Respond to the Call" campaign to enlist congregations to work in service projects at soup kitchens, prisons and programs for youth and the elderly.

- **Gay clergy debate goes to church court.** Just one month after the Presbyterian Church (USA) rejected an attempt to allow noncelibate gay pastors and elders, a conservative California church member has filed charges against two Ohio pastors who have vowed to ordain and marry gays and lesbians. The charges filed by Paul Jensen, who lives in Virginia but is a member of a Newport Beach, Calif., church, reflect a growing concern among Presbyterians that the gay issue now will be fought in church courts after failed attempts to change church legislation.

- **Lutherans post \$3.3 million surplus for 2001.** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America ended its most recent fiscal year with a \$3.3 million surplus, a bright spot on what has otherwise been a difficult year for church finances. The denomination's revenues totaled \$86.5 million, while expenses totaled \$83.2 million, according to a church news release. Church treasurer Christina Jackson-Skelton said \$5.1 million in bequests and trusts helped buoy the church's finances. Included in the revenues were \$10.8 million in disaster response funds, up from \$2 million the year before.



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The Witness of the Christian Call

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Senior Symposium

The Witness of the Scriptures

Hebrew
Old Testament
Greek
New Testament
Hebrew or Greek Reading
One required Elective in this area
Electives

The Witness of the Church

Church History
Baptist Heritage
Theology
Ethics
Electives

The Witness of Ministry

Preaching
Worship
The Missional Life of the Church (Evangelism/Missions)
Pastoral Care
Leadership in the Church
Electives

Witness in the World

Christianity and Culture
World Religions

For specific classes offered this fall at Calvary Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky., contact Dr. Greg C. Earwood, president, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, 150 E. High St., Lexington, KY 40507, or (859) 455-8191.

Leading spirituality site files for Chapter 11

"Some of the (venture capitalists) that funded us decided not to put in more money."

Steven Waldman, chairman and editor in chief of Beliefnet.com

NEW YORK (RNS)—A co-founder of Beliefnet, a Web site devoted to religion and spirituality, said April 11 that his company intends to file for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection.

"We were actually extremely close to being acquired by another company," Steven Waldman, chairman and editor in chief of the site, told Religion News Service. "That fell through at the last minute, which put us up against a wall and so we're doing Chapter 11."

Under the rules for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, a company can attempt to reorganize. Waldman said Beliefnet soon will determine if it can be bought by another entity or if new investors

might support the company.

"Chapter 11 ... gives you a chance to get back up on your feet and most crucially, as far as we're concerned, the site keeps going," Waldman said.

He said the company will operate under a transitional financing plan in the interim. The company is working with "a little group of core folks" on staff after having another round of layoffs in March.

In November, Beliefnet and Rodale, a publisher of books and magazines on healthy lifestyles, announced a multimedia partnership.

"Nothing has changed in our relationship," said Camille Johnston, spokeswoman for the company with offices in New York and Emmaus, Pa.

Project's Web site lists 600 'great' churches in U.S.

Paul Wilkes said he found that "ordinary people in seemingly ordinary churches are doing some pretty extraordinary things."

WILMINGTON, N.C. (RNS)—Six hundred of the country's "best churches" now can be found on one Web site as part of an ongoing project that highlights innovative and welcoming churches in all 50 states.

The project, coordinated by Paul Wilkes at the University of North Carolina-Wilmington, combines 300 Roman Catholic and 300 Protestant churches that were highlighted in last year's Pastoral Summit convention in New Orleans.

The 600 churches also were featured in two books, "Excellent Catholic Parishes" and "Excellent Protestant Congregations."

"Now, more than ever, people are turning to churches for guidance,"

Wilkes said in a news release. "They realize the need for communities of faith that will be there for them, in good days and bad. That's exactly what the churches we've found can offer."

Wilkes spent five years traveling across the country visiting diverse churches. His success stories included a Denver megachurch, an inner-city Washington, D.C., church and a predominantly immigrant Catholic parish in El Paso, Texas.

His picks were small and large, urban and rural, black and white, well-established and fledgling.

Wilkes said he found that "ordinary people in seemingly ordinary churches are doing some pretty ex-

traordinary things." Common traits shared by the best churches include a welcoming atmosphere for visitors, innovative lay leadership and strong community service programs.

The Web site contains each church's name, address, phone number, Web site and a summary of programs. Wilkes hopes travelers, new residents and spiritual seekers will use the Web site as a resource. The Web site is www.findagreatchurch.org.

The first collaboration between the companies was the publication of "From the Ashes," a book offering a spiritual response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The Web site, at www.beliefnet.com, has received funding from five venture capital funds since it launched in January 2000.

"Some of the (venture capitalists) that funded us decided not to put in more money," Waldman said.

The company has about 5 million e-mail newsletter subscribers, most of whom receive daily inspirational messages, ranging from Bible passages to horoscopes and daily "wisdom" from Buddhist, Jewish and Muslim perspectives.

Falwell sues site for using his name

LYNCHBURG, Va. (RNS)—Jerry Falwell has filed a complaint against a Web site that he says violates a trademark of his name by spoofing his views on the Bible.

The Lynchburg, Va.-based pastor and evangelist filed a complaint with the World Intellectual Property Organization concerning the site at www.jerryfalwell.com and www.jerryfallwell.com, Associated Press reported.

In a recent response to Falwell's November filing, the site's owner, Gary Cohn of Highland Park, Ill., said Falwell's name doesn't deserve trademark protection because he hasn't used it "to identify certain goods and services."

The World Intellectual Property Organization, which is based in Geneva, Switzerland, will appoint a panel of three people to decide the case.

Falwell and the Liberty Alliance, a nonprofit group tied to Jerry Falwell Ministries, own the site www.falwell.com.

Mentor tributes

A mentor is a trusted counselor or guide, a tutor or a coach. Throughout our lives, we all have one or more mentors. You might have one in your personal life, another in your professional life. What you admire in your mentors may range from personal qualities to specific skills, from lifestyle habits to leadership abilities. Your mentors might include a parent, a friend, a teacher, an administrator, a church staff minister, an elected official, an employer, a co-worker or a fellow professional.

Quite often groups of individuals have the same mentor. For example, a beloved college professor may be the mentor of hundreds of students and former students. A beloved pastor may be the mentor of hundreds of church members. A parent or grandparent may be the mentor of more than one generation of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

I recently read about a group of physicians who were former residents at a hospital and decided to honor the surgeon who had trained them. They formed a society in the surgeon's name, which was designed to continue the tradition of excellence in surgery taught and

practiced by this beloved surgeon-teacher. They established an endowment named after their mentor to attract funds to assure the future of the chair of surgery at the hospital-related university. The testimonials of some of his former students were inspiring.

I wish more Kentucky Baptists, individually and in groups, would get serious and be more intentional about establishing endowments in honor of our beloved mentors. Not only would it provide a means of paying tribute to someone who has made a difference in your life, but also a means by which the influence of that special mentor can live on and enrich the lives of countless others.

We Kentucky Baptists are fortunate to have a variety of worthy missionary, educational and benevolent ministries through which our mentors' influences can be perpetuated, including our churches and associations.

Call Laurie Valentine or me for information on how you can pay lasting tribute to that special mentor in your life.

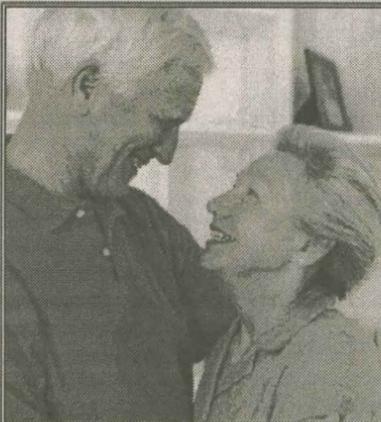
Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, 10605 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, KY 40223; (888) 254-5701; www.ky.baptistfoundation.org

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

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SMILE

2002 Pastor/Staff and Family Conference

By Robert Dunston

Cumberland College's annual Pastor/Staff and Family Conference will begin Monday, July 15, with an evening meal and conference sessions. It will end Wednesday, July 17, with morning sessions and a luncheon.

Willie Ailstock, pastor of Dry Ridge Baptist Church, will serve as our conference pastor. Ailstock has served at Dry Ridge since 1987. He also serves as an Army chaplain, a position he has held for the past 15 years. He will bring messages of encouragement for all who attend.

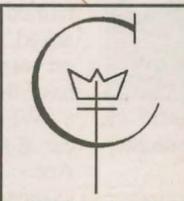
Doug Miller, an associate in the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Sunday school department, will lead four seminars on reaching and teaching young adults. Miller has served churches in Kentucky and Indiana, concentrating on youth, discipleship and evangelism. He will provide help and guidance in reaching young adults and integrating them into church life.

Mike Robinson, associate professor of philosophy at Cumberland College, will lead a preview of I Corinthians, the mid-winter Bible study book for 2003. Robinson possesses both pastoral and

academic experience, a combination that will make his Bible study incisive and practical.

Emory Riley, minister of music at First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville, returns to provide music for the conference. His beautiful voice and gift for selecting music that touches all ages will bless us again.

CUMBERLAND COLLEGE



The conference includes four sessions with Tuesday afternoon as a time for rest and relaxation. Housing will be in air-conditioned facilities on the Cumberland College campus, and a total of six meals will be provided. The cost is \$30 for one person or \$50 for a family.

To register for the conference, contact Wes Roy at Cumberland College, 7934 College Station Drive, Williamsburg, KY 40769, or call (606) 539-4154. We would love to have you join us for a time of worship and study.

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

Kudzu



Doug Marlette

Bible Crossword

By Rebecca Souder

Across

- "Divided the light from the ____" (Genesis 1:4)
- "He causeth his wind to ____" (Psalms 147:18)
- Indiana State University, abbr.
- Angers
- "Sat upon ____ of them" (Acts 2:3)
- Village, abbr.
- "The earth brought forth ____" (Genesis 1:12)
- Nazareth College and Academy, abbr.
- Chemical suffix
- Eastern seaboard state
- "Being understood by the things that are made, even his ____ power" (Romans 1:20)
- Iron, chem. symbol
- 9th through 12th grades, abbr.
- "Let my people ____" (Exodus 5:1)
- "Voice ____ like the sea" (Jeremiah 6:23 NAS)
- "And darkness was upon the face of the ____" (Genesis 1:2)
- "In the beginning ____" (Genesis 1:1)
- Son of Peleg (Genesis 11:18)
- "God called the light ____" (Genesis 1:5)
- "Yielding ____ after his kind" (Genesis 1:12)
- "____ I have done this" (Psalms 7:3)
- Fifty-four, Romans num.
- "Thou mayest freely ____" (Genesis 2:16)
- "She took some and ____ it" (Genesis 3:6 NIV)
- Articles
- "____ that may fly above the earth" (Genesis 1:20)
- "Thou shalt ____ eat of it" (Genesis 2:17)

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- "Let there be ____ in the firmament" (Genesis 1:14)
- "Planted a garden in the ____" (Genesis 2:8 NIV)
- Fellow of Entomology Society, abbr.
- American Association of University Professors, abbr.
- "The ____ was without form" (Genesis 1:2)
- "And the ____ yielding fruit" (Genesis 1:12)
- "Any taste in the white of an ____" (Job 6:6)
- Rest, as a bird
- "And the ____ God planted" (Genesis 2:8)
- "And the ____ of righteousness is sown in peace" (James 3:18)
- "Thus the ____ and the earth were finished" (Genesis 2:1)
- Of age, Lat. abbr.
- Revise
- Dover's state, abbr.
- "The God which ____ me all my life" (Genesis 48:15)
- "The moving creature that hath ____" (Genesis 1:20)
- Suffix meaning to the utmost degree
- "Thou shalt make an ____" (Exodus 30:1)
- "Why beholdest thou the ____" (Matthew 7:3)
- "____ which we did eat in Egypt" (Numbers 11:5)
- King of Bashan (Numbers 21:33)
- "Said unto the woman, ____ is this?" (Genesis 3:13)
- "____ there be light" (Genesis 1:3)
- "If any man will ____ thee" (Matthew 5:40)
- Preposition
- Romance language, abbr.
- Sweaty class

Down

- "God ____ the light from the darkness" (Genesis 1:4)
- "I will now turn ____, and see" (Exodus 3:3)
- "The greater light to ____ the day" (Genesis 1:16)
- "And the darkness he called ____" (Genesis 1:5)
- "A people that do ____ in their heart" (Psalms 95:10)
- "Have dominion over the fish of the ____" (Genesis 1:26)
- Selective Service System, abbr.
- "Let there ____ light" (Genesis 1:3)
- "Let the dry ____ appear" (Genesis 1:9)
- Ozark Christian College, abbr.
- "God created great ____" (Genesis 1:21)
- "I saw a ____ fall from heaven" (Revelation 9:1)
- Catch sight of

Last week's solution

1	W	O	R	K	M	A	N	5	S	W	O	R	D
2		10	A	M	I	11	E	T	A	12	P	R	O
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43	I	R	H	A	44	T	H	A	N	45	L	E	
47	N	O	D	48	E	I	G	H	49	U	L	E	
52	O	N	53	A	B	A	S	E	55	S	L	V	A
57	E	S	T	H	E	R	58	D	A	M	P	E	N

A world without teddy bears

In one year, 14,000 Kentucky children went without necessities like adequate food, clothing or medical care. During that same time, 6,100 children were physically abused; more than 4,000 were sexually, emotionally or psychologically abused. Eighteen died from maltreatment. For these children, there were no teddy bears, slumber parties or Vacation Bible Schools. There was no safety, laughter or love. This April, wear a blue ribbon on your lapel, or tie one to your vehicle's radio antenna. Find out how you can do more by contacting Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Do it for all the children who never got their teddy bears.



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Since 1869 'We'll Be There'

Deaf more receptive to gospel from their own, leaders say

"Deaf-to-deaf witnessing is most effective because of the understanding of the language and the culture that deaf people share."

Phillip Easterling, pastor of Birmingham Community Deaf Church in Alabama

By Mark Kelly
SBC International Mission Board

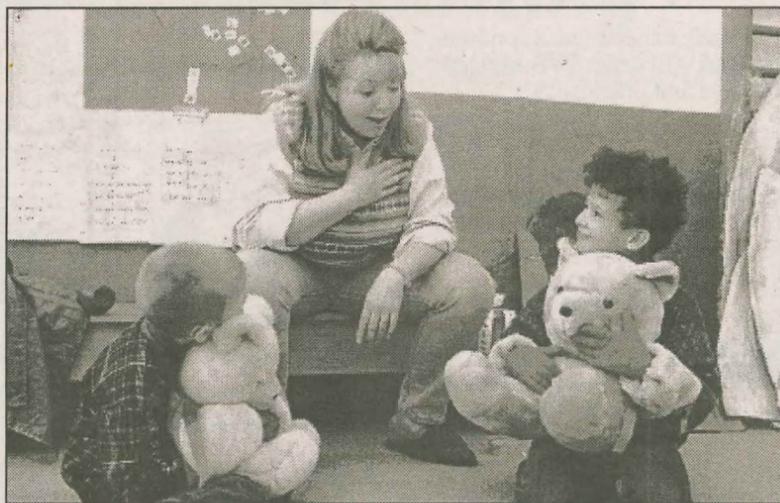
RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—One people group—numbering 30 million worldwide—will never hear the good news of God's love, even if a missionary knocks on their door.

They will never hear because they are deaf. Isolated socially and immersed in a culture radically different from the hearing world, the deaf have little hope of learning about Christ, much less understanding the gospel and accepting Him as their personal Savior.

That's why five leaders from the Southern Baptist Conference of the Deaf met with leaders from the Southern Baptist International Mission Board March 7-13 for the first global summit meeting on deaf church planting.

In that meeting, leaders from both groups forged a partnership to direct more missionary outreach to deaf populations worldwide. They discussed developing training methods and creating a center to prepare hearing people to witness more effectively to deaf people. They also talked about setting up a network that could match missionary requests for outreach teams with church teams ready to serve.

Members of the 73 deaf Southern Baptist congregations and 555 deaf ministries probably don't realize how powerful their witness overseas would be, said Phillip Easterling, pastor of Birmingham Community Deaf Church in Alabama.



HOW WILL THEY HEAR? Vesta Sauter, a Southern Baptist missionary to the deaf in the Czech Republic, teaches sign language to deaf children, using teddy bears as teaching aids. (BP photo by Mike Creswell)

"Deaf-to-deaf witnessing is most effective because of the understanding of the language and the culture that deaf people share," Easterling said. "Sometimes it's hard for a hearing person to win deaf people to Christ, but when it's a deaf person to another deaf person, it's much quicker. It's like a magnet; something draws them."

"I have been to Romania six times for missions projects," he said. "Each time, deaf people would listen to our Bible teaching for four or five hours on a Sunday morning, then eat lunch with us and come back for more teaching. They would follow us to our rooms at night and sit on the floor and listen to our stories, stay until the ear-

ly hours of the morning, sometimes even sleeping on the floor, because we were all deaf."

Deaf people have a credibility with other deaf that hearing people never will gain, no matter how well they speak sign language, said Jeff Jackson, pastor to the deaf at First Baptist Church in West Palm Beach, Fla.

He noted, for example, that a hearing missionary who served among the deaf in Haiti saw a dozen people saved in more than 10 years. When an outreach team of deaf Christians came from the United States, however, 100 deaf people in the community became Christians in just one week.

Members of a deaf club in the

Czech Republic were fascinated when a wheelchair-bound American Christian came to visit them and share her testimony in sign language, Easterling said.

The Czech group was stunned that 90-year-old Lillian Beard would travel all the way from Houston, Texas. They wanted to see her passport to prove her age and took pictures of her because they knew others wouldn't believe them.

Several of the deaf people noticed Beard demonstrated an unusual spirit of joy. One of them, an older woman named Anna, knelt in front of her and asked, "Why do you have that glow on your face? Older people here don't have that."

When Beard replied that her joy came from having Jesus in her life, Anna said, "I want that," and prayed to receive Christ.

"We want to encourage deaf churches to move up to a new level, become more focused on missions," said Aric Randolph of New Life Deaf Fellowship in Fort Worth, Texas. "We want them to move past the stage of supporting missions and learn how to work in missions themselves."

"Deaf Southern Baptists can reach their own people through their own language," added Daniel Johnson, a minister to the deaf at Forest Hills Baptist Church in Wilson, N.C.

"The deaf are empowered to witness to their own people and plant churches," he said. "They don't have to depend on hearing people to do it. They can do it themselves."

'Before I came to Oneida, I was making horrible grades'

This senior essay was written by "Jake" (not his real name) who came to Oneida two years ago from north central Kentucky. Jake came from a Christian family but had been having typical teenager problems. He had been spending too much time with the wrong crowd. His drug use strained his relationship with his father.

Most of Jake's grades prior to enrollment at Oneida Baptist Institute had been D's and F's. His parents had him tested to see if there were problems that needed some special attention. His teachers said he really didn't apply himself and did only enough to get by. Yet he was a pleasure to have in class and did not cause problems for the other students.

When I interviewed Jake, he told me that his main goals to achieve at Oneida were to earn better grades and to "learn to be a better person." Jake had the typical reservations any student would have about going away to a boarding school, but he was intrigued by our farm program. Here is part of what Jake wrote in his senior essay:

"I came to Oneida in the summer of 2000 for summer school because I had failed English III. My family and I didn't know if I would end up staying for the next year, but I did. I ended up wanting to be here more than I wanted to be at home. Oneida became just what it should have been for me. I was put in a dorm room with Matt and Tri. Matt taught everything I needed to know about Oneida, and I looked up to him. I became involved and started going to free time and going to the campus grill to do things the regular students would do. I think that I like almost every aspect of Oneida. ... I have remained here for graduation because I had to. I want to go to col-

lege, and this school is the only school I feel I can succeed at.

"School life started going better for me here at Oneida. I started getting along with my teachers better and making friends that made good grades. I even started making good grades. By the end of my junior year I had a 3.8 grade point average. Before I came to Oneida I was making horrible grades. I was making F's in almost every class.

"I think the most important aspect of Oneida is chapel. I spent a lot of time inside the chapel. I would write music, or just sit and play and sing by myself. I was already a Christian before I came to Oneida; I just increased my knowledge of God and improved my journey through life with God.

"While at Oneida I worked for the dorm cleaning crew. ... Later, I became a hall monitor and then a supervisor. For my senior year I ran the dorm crew. It was my responsibility to make sure the supervisors and their crews and the hall monitors were doing what they were supposed to be doing.

"After I graduate I want to get started with my life. I want to attend college either at UK or Spalding University. ... Coming to Oneida Baptist Institute was the single most important and best decision I have made in the history of my entire life. I have managed to change my whole life. I have stayed clean (no drugs), developed my Christianity, earned trust at home ... and learned a lot about myself. ... Oneida will always be in my mind and in my prayers."

W.F. Underwood is president of Oneida Baptist Institute, P.O. Box 67, Oneida, KY 40972. www.oneidaschool.org; e-mail: president@oneidaschool.org

THIS IS ONEIDA



W.F. Underwood

A tear-stained notebook

In a recent chapel testimony, student body President Charles Dean reflected on points of his life where God spoke to him.

"As a small child I experienced severe seizures. At age 4, in a seizure, I crawled to Daddy's bed and woke him. They rushed me to the hospital and the doctor said I would have died within 10 minutes. Each December I went to Lexington for tests, and each time my parents were told the spot on my brain was still there. The trip at age 7 amazed the doctors; the spot was gone. They didn't know why, but I believe God healed me. I was fortunate to be shown at an early age God loved me and had a purpose for my life," Dean said.

Thanks to a godly grandmother and women in the church, Dean accepted Christ as his personal Savior at age 15. "As I grew older, I pushed God aside. I wanted my fun," Dean said. At age 24, he became a police officer. "In the department I had a reputation for coldness. Other officers knew I wouldn't care to pull a trigger on anyone." He transferred to another city and was made a firearms instructor, "because you're very good with a gun."

God used Dean's wife, Pat, and the birth of two daughters to turn Dean back toward God's purpose. "He also set us among the godly people of New Hope Baptist Church in Versailles. They raised us in the Lord and disciplined us for five years. True obedience will bring blessings from God. I had the joy of leading my girls to Christ and baptized them," Dean said.

Like most ministerial students, Dean came to Clear Creek with high expectations. "I found some of the most godly people, but I also saw sin. I've been hurt and discouraged and didn't want to leave that way," Dean said. "When my father was arrested, people reached out to us. Dr. Lucas asked the class to gather around me to pray. Afterward I found a tearstain on my notebook, dropped by a student while we prayed. I can leave the campus knowing God is working here. The people of God really love and care. Our ministry is never, ever about us. It is love God and love others."

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

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Bill Whittaker

A Globetrotter's gospel

Meadowlark Lemon aiming for new goal of helping youth

By Yvonne Betown
Religion News Service

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (RNS)—Six-year-old Isaiah Harris rambled around the Whitesburg Baptist Center gymnasium, oblivious to the other 130-plus children who were bouncing or shooting basketballs one Saturday morning.

Although he was taking part in a daylong basketball camp, Isaiah was more intent on discovering how the light switches worked.

But that was OK with the camp's director, George Lemon, known to most of the world as Meadowlark Lemon.

Today, the former Harlem Globetrotter is more interested in lighting a path for children than teaching the game he played. He just uses his famous hook shot to get them interested.

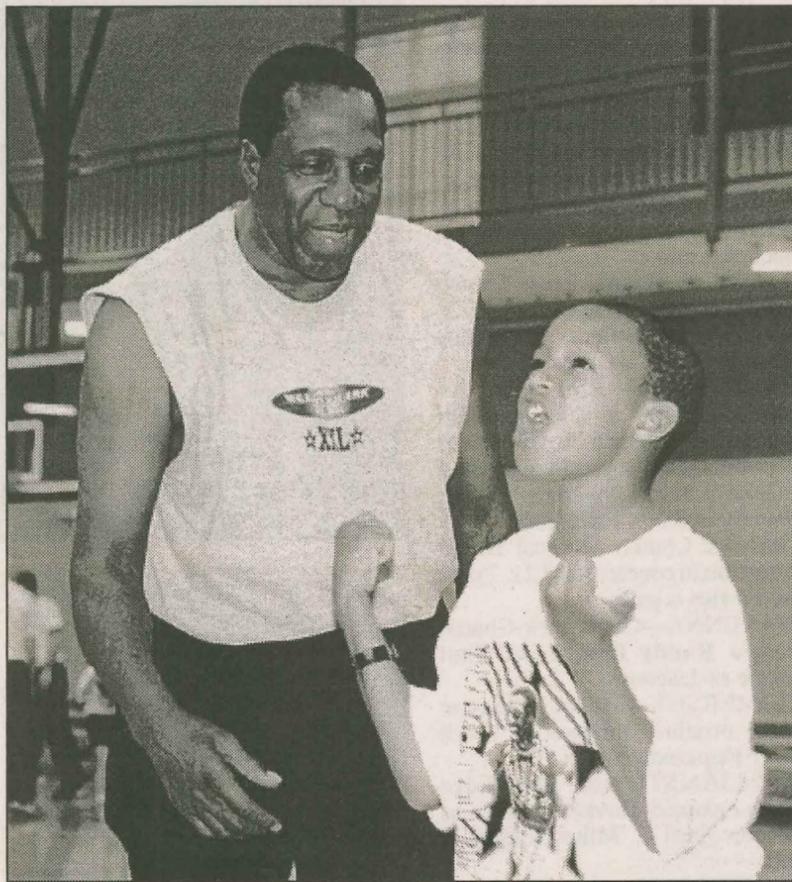
"We're not just teaching basketball skills, but life skills as well," Lemon said. "It's more important that they take them (life skills) to the next level, because many are not prepared to do so."

Born Meadow George Lemon, he changed his name to Meadowlark Lemon while an understudy for "Rookie" Brown with the Harlem Globetrotters. Lemon later was dubbed the "Clown Prince of Basketball," a title previously held by Reece "Goose" Tatum until his retirement from the Globetrotters.

Unlike his zany on-court persona, Lemon is a soft-spoken man. And while he still spends much of his time on the basketball court, it is usually conducting camps, especially for indigent children.

Wearing a T-shirt with the words "You Won't Lose When You Shoot for This" and an image of a cross, Lemon walked among the campers, picking out some kids for individual instruction while his assistant, John Mayberry, led much of the camp.

Lemon said many young people, even athletes, get into trouble by mak-



MEADOWLARK LEMON The former Harlem Globetrotter gives tips to Erin Hobbs, who is thrilled about making a basket at the Whitesburg Baptist Center gym in Huntsville, Ala. Lemon uses his reputation as the "Clown Prince of Basketball" to minister to children. (RNS photo by Ellen Hudson)

ing bad decisions. Several current Globetrotters recently were in the home of ex-NBA star Jayson Williams when, authorities believe, Williams shot and killed a man. Though the shooting is assumed accidental, Williams faces criminal charges of reckless manslaughter and tampering with evidence.

"It upsets me very much," said Lemon. "Jayson put himself in a bad position because of a bad decision he made. He had everything people strive for in their lives."

"We just want to stop kids from making those same kinds of bad decisions."

A native of Wilmington, N.C., Lemon was 11 when he saw a newsreel of the Globetrotters and immediately set his sights on becoming a member of the team.

He was invited to join just before high school graduation but served in the armed forces for two years before

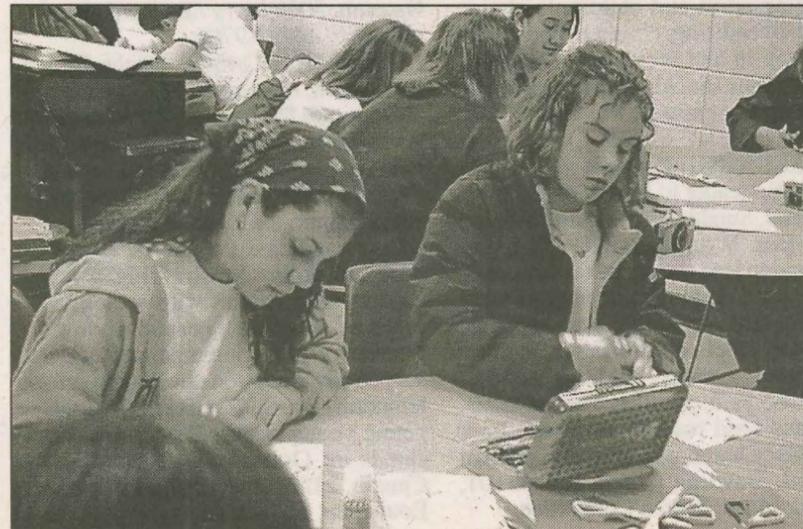
finally realizing his dream.

Lemon left the Globetrotters in 1979 after 22 years. He became a Christian in 1982 and went into the ministry in 1986, but often appeared with the team until 1995 when he left for good to pursue other avenues, including appearances in films, television shows and commercials.

He also formed the Meadowlark Harlem All Stars and expects to play in his 10,000th basketball game this fall.

Lemon is the father of 10 children, ranging from age 7 to 42, three of them adopted. He and his wife, Cynthia, live in Scottsdale, Ariz., with two of their children. His ministry, the Meadowlark Foundation, is based there.

Today, Lemon said he is more interested in "spreading joy" than happiness. "Happiness is only brief and on the outside," he said, "but joy comes from within."



ACTEENS ON MISSION Kentucky Acteens and other Kentucky Baptist teenage girls participated in missions work during Exalt, the meeting sponsored by Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union April 5-6. Girls decorated bags to be used with a ministry next Christmas for parents who pick up a new outfit, a school uniform, toys and treats for their children. (Photos by LaRaine Dail)

'Great Race' couple chooses integrity instead of \$1 million

By Lonnie Wilkey
Tennessee Baptist and Reflector

CLINTON, Tenn. (BP)—Would you do anything to win \$1 million?

That's a question Hope and Norm Davis had to answer. The Davises were one of 11 two-member teams who participated in "The Amazing Race 2," a reality television program on CBS.



Norm & Hope Davis

In the program, teams race from one destination to another using clues they obtain along the way. During each episode a team is eliminated. Over the course of the show the race totaled 52,000 miles in 28 days.

The Davises had to do it all in secrecy with only their parents, who kept the kids while they were gone, and their employers knowing the real reason behind their month-long absence.

Both said they made the trek with the attitude that it would be a "win-win" situation regardless of the outcome.

For the Davises, deciding between the \$1 million or keeping their integrity and value system in tact really was no choice.

"We knew that our boys would be watching the show," Hope said.

Because of that and other factors, the Davises said they could not bring themselves to depart from the Christian values and morals that are part of their everyday life. They say that was why they were eliminated in the second episode, which aired March 13.

Acknowledging that some of the teams in "The Amazing Race 2" bent the rules and didn't try to help each other, the Davises said they refused to sacrifice their principles.

"We didn't want to send conflicting messages (to sons Jared and John Luke) that in some cases it is OK to cheat and lie," Hope said.

The couple said they put into practice what they had learned all their life—do unto others as you would have them do unto you. "We really believe that and try to live that way," Norm said.

They say that honesty came with a price. Other competitors sometimes laughed at them. Despite helping other teams along the way, they did not receive help when they needed it. They also refused to "stretch" or bend the rules, which many of the other teams had no trouble doing. "Everyone says we were too nice," Norm said, laughing.

During the initial episode, they helped a team that had run out of money by allowing them to ride on their boat to get to a destination. "They basically stayed in the race because we helped them," Hope said.

But in the next leg of the race, that same couple refused to share a map with the Davises.

Hope noted that some of the team members would tell them, "Any other time we would be like you."

The couple is convinced that if the rules which were established by the show's producers had been enforced, they could have won the race. "We were penalized for playing by the rules," Norm said.

Yet, they said they would not have done it any other way. "I'm proud of how we appeared on TV," Hope said. "To compromise just to stay longer would not have been worth it."

And, though the other teams made fun of them for playing by the rules, the Davises did earn the respect of the crew and other cast members.

"Everyone in the crew and cast expressed gratitude for our friendliness," Hope said. "They called it 'that Southern hospitality.' We were the grounding for the whole group. We did not let the show change us."

The couple's attitude did not go unnoticed by viewers. After the first episode, the Davises were voted most popular team by viewers on an Internet poll. The couple also said CBS told them they received lots of e-mails praising their honesty.

PRAYER PARTNERS

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

■ Five new believers who were baptized in March in a small Baptist church in Czestochowa, Poland, as they face much opposition from family and friends.

■ Missionaries Buddy and Sherry Gregg in Warsaw, Poland, as they continue language lessons three days a week.

■ A Bible study group that began in March among several Russian Christian women in Khabarovsk, Russia, who had become discouraged with their church and its leadership.

■ A new home-based Bible study cell group in Playa Blanca on the Canary Islands. Pray for wisdom for leaders Joe and Chari Vasquez as they help those who attend in their search for the truth. Many have been involved in spiritism and the occult, missionaries report.

■ Church planting efforts across New England.

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by staff

■ **DYCUSBURG**—Dycusburg Church will hold revival services April 22-27, 7 p.m., with **Carlton Binkley** as evangelist. **James Oates** is pastor.

■ **EAST BERNSTADT**—Hazel Patch Church called **Lynn Parman** as assistant pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Central Avenue Church will hold revival services April 21-24, 7 p.m., with **Dewey Dick**, pastor of Union Ridge Church in Benton, as evangelist and **Ken Bingemer**, minister of music at Brookview Church in Louisville, as music director. **Bob Hamilton** is pastor.

■ **FALMOUTH**—Trinity Southern Church ordained **Troy Wolfe** and **L.T. Varner** as deacons April 7.

■ **FORT THOMAS**—Highland Hills Church called **Rob Roy** as pastor. He previously was minister of youth.

■ **HARRODSBURG**—Harrodsburg Church recently honored **Eddie Russell** for his 15 years of service as minister of music. **Robert DeFoor** is pastor.

■ **HENDERSON**—Watson Lane Church called **Michael Thompson** as pastor.

■ **HICKMAN**—East Hickman Church will hold revival services April 21-24 with **Troy Doster** as evangelist. **Ben Stratton** is pastor.

■ **HOPKINSVILLE**—New Barren Springs Church called **Jimmy Stewart Jr.** as pastor. He previously was youth pastor at Pembroke Church.

■ **HORSE CAVE**—Pleasant Valley Church will celebrate its 100th anniversary April 21. Former pastor **Ferrill Gardner** will preach at 11 a.m. and former pastor **Billy Compton** will preach at 2 p.m.

■ **LONDON**—Laurel River Church will hold revival services April 21-26 with **Clyde Eversole** as evangelist. **Calvin Hibbard** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Ron Sisk** resigned as pastor of Crescent Hill Church effective June 30, to become professor of homiletics and supervised ministry at North American Baptist Seminary in Sioux Falls, S.D.

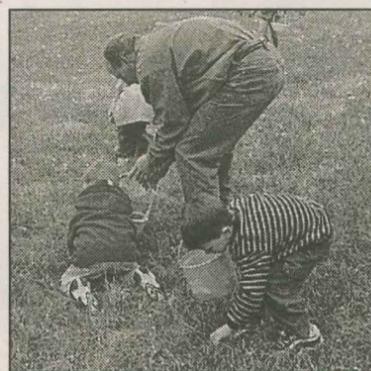
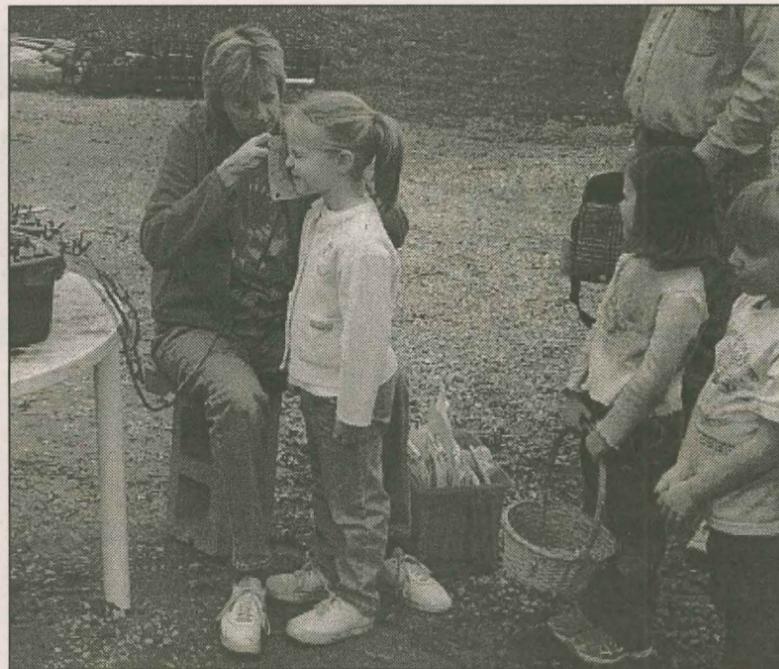
Hillcrest Church will host **David Livingston** in concert April 21, 7 p.m. **Ron Towles** is pastor.

■ **RAVENNA**—Cow Creek Church ordained **Randy Powell** and **Paul Muncie** as deacons.

■ **SOMERSET**—Mount Pleasant Church ordained minister of youth **Jamey Epperson** March 17.

■ **WILLIAMSTOWN**—Oak Ridge Church ordained **David Menefee** as a deacon April 7. **Mike Beasley** is pastor.

■ **WINCHESTER**—**John Ryder** resigned as pastor of Providence Church.



EASTER CELEBRATION Egg hunts (left), other children's activities and refreshments attracted more than 600 people March 30 to an Easter celebration hosted by Warren Baptist Association in Bowling Green. Leeza Glisson, associational children's director, planned a range of activities, including story times related to Easter, puppet shows, clowns, face painting (above) and a petting zoo. Director of Missions Jerry Oakley said the event gave church members an opportunity to share fun and fellowship as part of the Easter weekend.

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Ordained Southern Baptist pastor seeks a full-time position. Four years experience with baptisms exceeding 85 people—all credit due to God. Please call (502) 839-0796.

FOR SALE: New and used buses and shuttle vans. Call American Bus and Accessories, Inc., (800) 582-7118.

SEEKING: Fairview Baptist Church in Mt. Vernon, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resumés to: Pulpit Search Committee, Fairview Baptist Church, Rt. 3, Box 347, Mt. Vernon, KY 40456.

SEEKING: Liberty Baptist Church in Leitchfield, Ky., is seeking a part-time youth minister. Interested candidates may submit resumés to: Gladys Duvall, PO Box 88, Millwood, KY 42762-0088.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for East Cumberland Avenue Baptist Church. Located in Middlesboro near the entrance to historic Cumberland Gap National Park in Southeastern Kentucky, ECABC averages 150-180 in morning worship. We are a mission-minded church ready to grow. The church has a minister of music, minister of education, minister of preschool and children and a growing youth ministry. Send resumé by May 25 to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 1332, Middlesboro, KY 40965.

SEEKING: Monte Vista Baptist Church in Maryville, Tenn., is seeking a full-time minister of youth and young adults. We are affiliated with CBF and SBC. Send resumés and recommendations to: Monte Vista Baptist Church, 1735 Old Niles Ferry Road, Maryville, TN 37803.

SEEKING: Green River Memorial Baptist Church in Campbellsville, Ky., is accepting resumés for full-time pastor. Send to: Tommy Wright, 37 Birdie Ave., Campbellsville, KY 42718.

SEEKING: Immanuel Baptist Church is seeking a full-time youth minister. Please send your resumé to: Immanuel Baptist Church, 800 Rhodes Drive, Elizabethtown, KY 42701, Attn: Youth Minister Search Committee.

SEEKING: Baptist Seminary of Kentucky invites applications for a faculty appointment in the area of biblical studies to begin in the fall term of 2002. Responsibilities include teaching in the area of New Testament and/or Old Testament, along with one biblical language plus an administrative role commensurate with gifts for a seminary in its first year. Candidates must be Baptist; MDiv and PhD are required. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. Send a letter of application, curriculum vitae and three letters of reference to: Dr. Greg C. Earwood, Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, 150 E High St., Lexington, KY 40507.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of music. Send resumé to: Grant's Lick Baptist Church, 175-W Clay Ridge Road, Alexandria, KY 41001, Attn: Harold Hornsby.

SEEKING: Edgewood Baptist Church, Nicholasville, Ky., is seeking a full-time youth minister. Please send resumés to: Edgewood Baptist Church, 717 South Main St., Nicholasville, KY 40356, Attn: Personnel Committee Chairman.

SEEKING: East Louisville Baptist church seeks part-time minister to students. Active, growing church affiliated with SBC, CBF. Send resumé to: Personnel Committee, Melbourne Heights Baptist Church, 3728 Taylorsville Road, Louisville, KY 40220. (502) 454-4681.

SEEKING: Bellevue Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky., is seeking to fill two positions: Part-time children's ministry coordinator and part-time preschool ministry coordinator—both to work under the supervision of the children's ministry director. Send resumé by April 15 to: Personnel Committee, Bellevue Baptist Church, 519 W Byers Ave., Owensboro, KY 42303.

SEEKING: Growing Baptist church in Lexington prayerfully seeks a full-time minister of music, children and youth. Responsibilities include leading worship through music, directing adult and children's choirs, and overseeing children and youth education and recreation. Interested candidates should submit resumés to: Search Committee, PO Box 22113, Lexington, KY 40502.

SEEKING: Permanent, part-time worship leader to lead adult choir rehearsal, Sunday morning and evening services. Worship leader will be required to lead the praise team, coordinate with pastor in planning services and coordinate other choirs. Applicant should feel comfortable leading blended services. Additional duties will be paid on an as-needed basis. Please send resumé to: Forest Park Baptist Church, 520 Old Morgantown Road, Bowling Green, KY 42101, Attn: Music Search Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth. Send resumé to: Cornerstone Baptist Church, 4451 Winchester Road, Lexington, KY 40509, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of students (children and youth). Send resumés to: Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 373, Glenwood, AR 71943.

SEEKING: Salem Baptist Church in Salem, Ky., is prayerfully seeking a full-time pastor. Please send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, c/o David Kelley, 785 Condra Road, Smithland, KY 42081, or e-mail to: davdwkey1@aol.com.

SEEKING: South District Association is seeking a full-time director of missions. South District is located in the Danville, Ky., area, serving 23 churches in Boyle, Garrard, Marion and Washington counties. Please send resumé by April 30 to: Robert F. Bausum, 5055 Perryville Road, Danville, KY 40422-9706.

SEEKING: Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, Louisville, Ky., is receiving resumés for the position of minister of music. This position is full time with the possible addition of a second ministry area (education, missions, administration, etc.) to be determined by the candidate's interests, experience and skills. Ormsby Heights is a conservative church with a blended style of worship (gospel, hymns, praise/worship, contemporary) and a very strong interest in developing contemporary worship opportunities targeting young adults. Please send resumés to: Ormsby Heights Baptist Church, 2120 Lower Hunters Trace, Louisville, KY 40216.

Lasting memorial

Christus Gardens draws thousands each year to see life of Christ

By Cecile Holmes
Religion News Service

GATLINBURG, Tenn. (RNS)—Like so many hallmarks in the history of human ingenuity, Christus Gardens in Gatlinburg, Tenn., traces its roots to one man with a vision. And that man traces his outlook to a life-changing experience.

Ronald Ligon, Christus Gardens' founder, was a student at Vanderbilt University in Nashville when he was stricken with tuberculosis. For a time, he and his family wondered if he would recover his health.

As he convalesced, the young Ligon, a native of Franklin, Tenn., did some serious thinking. He vowed that, if restored to health, he would erect a monument of gratitude to God.

At the millennium, that monument—Christus Gardens—celebrated its 40th anniversary with a series of special events and new additions to a place already known for its series of dioramas, three-dimensional scenes. Additions to the gardens include a new gallery of a series of life-size paintings depicting Christ's parables and a 900-square-foot mural of biblical history from Adam and Eve through the prophets who Christians believe foretold the life of Jesus.

The parable paintings and the mural are noteworthy, in part because such an undertaking is unusual these days. They were painted by Mark Pedro, the gardens' artistic director, who describes their creation as the realization of a long-time dream.

Yet the dioramas remain the most well-known part of Christus Gardens. Remarkable in their detail and lifelike quality, they trace the life of Jesus from the Nativity to the Ascension. Visitors are escorted in, but then allowed to experience each life-size, three-dimensional portrayal with a backdrop of meditative music and narration. The scenes also include the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus' temptation in the desert by the devil and His baptism.

Christus Gardens attracts visitors



DIORAMAS Three-dimensional scenes from the life of Christ fill Christus Gardens in Gatlinburg, Tenn. Ronald Ligon built the attraction more than 40 years ago as a monument of gratitude to God. Scenes range from Jesus in the temple as a child to the Crucifixion and Ascension.

at all seasons, but is particularly popular at religious holidays.

At Easter, the gardens celebrate with special events and displays.

In the midst of the holiday hustle-bustle, Christus Gardens is wonderfully quiet and peaceful. The stately marble structure near downtown Gatlinburg is nestled amid towering trees along the banks of the Little Pigeon River.

Touring the grounds, Pedro explains that the outdoor and indoor decorations change with the seasons. "In November, we had all the buildings covered in stars and red, white and blue stripes," Pedro says. Three large wise men take center stage during the winter Christmas season.

But more meaningful for most Christians is quietly touring the gardens' indoor dioramas and their surrounding patio gardens.

Native trees that flame red and gold in autumn and seasonal flowers such as azaleas and rhododendron grace the outdoor section. Perhaps most famous is the intaglio, or concave sculpture, in the meditation garden. Carved from a six-ton block of marble, it depicts the face of Jesus, carved in such a way that the face seems always turned toward the onlooker, no matter where one stands.

Inside, the dioramas are striking in detail. The three-dimensional depictions are the centerpiece of the vision Ligon developed so many years ago. After recovering from tuberculosis, Ligon determined he

needed a broader and more comprehensive understanding of religious art to fulfill his dream. Consulting with his parents, Ligon decided his best recourse was to research religious art, Christian history and Jesus' life if he wanted to build as authentic a memorial as possible.

He embarked on a series of trips to Europe to view existing religious memorials. He visited England, France, Switzerland, Italy, Spain and Portugal, in addition to places in Canada and the United States. In one particular year, he traveled more than 80,000 miles. His travel brought him into contact with museum directors, medieval scholars and other experts.

The results of all Ligon's work are dioramas with figures so real that their faces contort in pain, wonder, sorrow and joy. Even their body language is lifelike. They shrink in horror, bow in prayer and cradle small children with tenderness. When the figures were made, they were created with human hair inserted one strand at a time and eyes like those used to replace human eyes lost from illness or accidents.

Over the years the gardens' attractions have expanded to include the new mural series of the parables. There is also an adjoining rotunda housing a collection of coins from biblical times. The 168 coins date from the 6th century B.C. to 1192 A.D. Among them are the "shekel of Tyre," the type of coin that made up the 30 pieces of silver paid to Judas when he betrayed Jesus in the New Testament account.

But the technology that makes the gardens so unusual an experience—the music, the narration, the sense of theater—has been the same for four decades.

"The same machinery that operated this place in 1960 is still running," Pedro said. "Whenever I ask about replacing it, people say they can only guarantee (any new equipment) for three years. So we keep what we've got."

More information about Christus Gardens is available at the Web site www.christusgardens.com.

Kyrgyzstan's Habitat ministry faces some unique challenges

By Frank Brown
Religion News Service

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan (RNS)—When Lena Kligunova and her son Denis Kligunov recently moved into their brand new home, they found an abundance of bathroom facilities. They have both a standard porcelain indoor toilet and, in the yard, a simple wooden outhouse.

The Kligunovs' toilet surplus is not a mark of affluence or special medical needs. Rather it illustrates just one of the problems encountered by Habitat for Humanity International in building its first batch of 10 houses in Kyrgyzstan's capital.

As Habitat's local American leader, Tanya Weaver, explained, "The government promised us sewage infrastructure but then they backed out of it, so we built outhouses as well as bathrooms."

The Georgia-based Christian charity started building in mostly Muslim Kyrgyzstan in 2000. It hasn't been easy.

Five months after embarking on her first-ever house purchase, Kligunova lost her \$19-a-month job as an accountant at the Red Cross.

Then, when neighboring residents got wind of the new housing development on land where they had been grazing sheep and cows, they staged two public demonstrations demanding compensation.

Finally, through part of this winter when the homes were not ready for legal occupancy, each homeowner had to visit the site every day to stoke the coal stoves that kept water pipes from freezing and bursting.

But in the end, Habitat, hundreds of local and foreign volunteers and the future homeowners themselves completed the 10 simple whitewashed homes. The homeowners bought the one-story, three-room houses for the cost of materials—\$6,000—which takes the form of a 10-year, no-interest mortgage.

Denis Kligunov never believed it would happen.

"I thought to myself, 'This is not possible,'" said Kligunov, 22, an unemployed carpenter who was incredulous that some group would want to provide him and his mother with a new house.

Lena Kligunova, a member of Bishkek's largest charismatic Protestant church, first heard about the planned Habitat program in 1998 during a service.

"Even before that, I prayed to God for a house. I didn't have the means to buy a house or build one with my own hands," said Kligunova, who, despite being recently divorced from her husband, still lives with his parents for lack of alternatives.

Unlike the majority of ethnic Russians who have left this city of 670,000 in recent years for Russia, the Kligunovs have stayed put despite a local economy in steady decline since the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union. They don't have the money it takes to make the move and find a place to live in Russia, where jobs in western Siberia are not hard to find.

One of the goals of the Habitat for Humanity program in Bishkek is to keep professionals—like the Kligunovs' neighbor, a doctor—in Kyrgyzstan, where they are needed. Another is to promote volunteerism, a tall order after 70 years of communism, when authorities threatened those who did not 'volunteer' to work for nothing.

"In post-Soviet countries, one of the biggest problems we have is getting people to volunteer. They'll say, 'Work for free? How much will you pay me?'" explained Weaver, a 32-year-old from Carlisle, Pa., who worked in Romania before coming to Bishkek in April 2001.

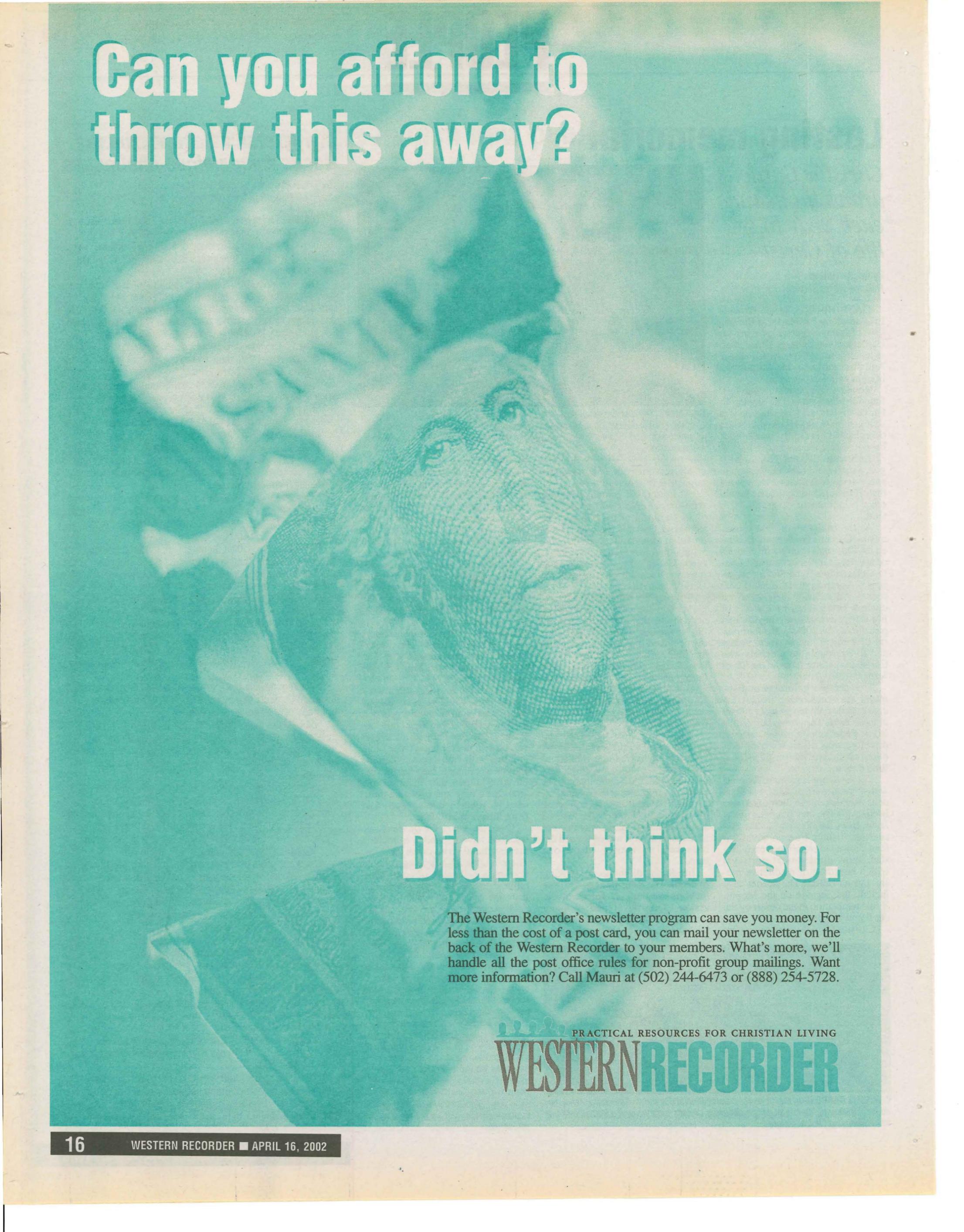
Habitat for Humanity International, based in Americus, Ga., has operations in 83 countries and has built more than 100,000 houses since 1976.

Although governed by Christian principles, the organization does not choose those it helps based on faith or try to convert them.

"We don't preach," said Weaver, a lively woman who attends the International Church of Bishkek. "We don't evangelize but we build houses for the needy, help the needy, just as Jesus taught."



CHRISTUS GARDENS In recent years, the attraction in downtown Gatlinburg, Tenn., has added a gallery of life-size paintings depicting Christ's parables and a 900-square-foot mural depicting biblical history.



**Can you afford to
throw this away?**

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