



PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

# WESTERN RECORDER

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## FOR THE RECORD

**Baptists**  
NAMB honors top church planters for 2005.  
Page 2.

**Helping moms**  
The Infant Resource Project has new director, new location and a goal to see more ministries started. Page 3.

**Hopkinsville**  
Sinking Fork Baptist Church buildings destroyed by storms. Page 3.

**Financial Forum**  
That urge to splurge costs big bucks down the road. Page 4.

**Editorial**  
A tale of two SBC mission boards. Page 5.

**Kentucky Changers**  
College students blitz build home in Morehead. Page 9.

**Issues**  
Afghan convert isn't only Christian persecuted, observers say. Page 10.



## KBHC opens new Spring Meadows in Mount Washington

Mount Washington—Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children officials and friends last week dedicated the new Spring Meadows residential facility.

The 18,000-square-foot building will provide sleeping, eating, living, educational and recreational quarters for up to 20 boys ages 12 to 17 who come from backgrounds of abuse and neglect.

The Spring Meadows Children's Home originally was known as the Louisville Orphans' Home when it was established in 1869. In 1950, the home moved to a former farm campus in Middletown, east of Louisville. At one time, Spring Meadows cared for hundreds of children on its campus.

But KBHC officials note that most of the more than 300 children and teens in KBHC's care each day are in foster homes instead of group homes like Spring Meadows.

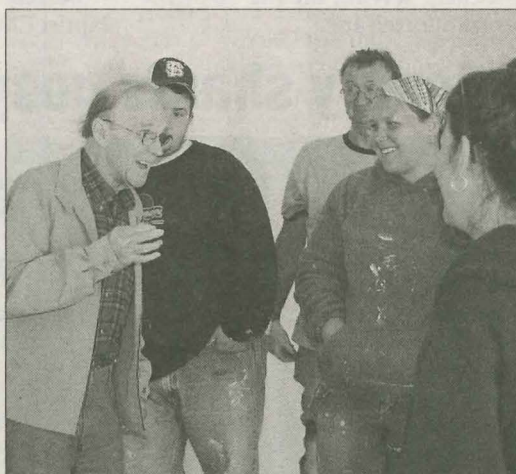
The building was dedicated in honor of Anna Lee Ensor, who was a leader for the KBHC's Spring Meadows auxiliary until her death in 2003.

KBHC also is building a ministry support center on the 10-acre tract in Mt. Washington. The center will include administrative office, KBHC's pregnancy and adoption services and the Louisville metro region's foster care office.

## Spring break ministry



**ROOF REPAIR** Morehead State Baptist Collegiate Ministry students Doug Kline (from left) and Megan Maraz work with fellow students Nikki Pergram and Sarah Fischer in Gulfport, Miss. (Morehead State University photos)



**MEETING HOMEOWNER** Students talk with a resident of Gulfport.

## Baptist students work among peers helping Mississippi Katrina victims

Gulfport, Miss.—Twenty Baptist Collegiate Ministry students at Morehead State University recently took part in a campus-wide spring break relief trip in Gulfport, Miss.

The school took 117 students, faculty and staff to help repair homes damaged by Hurricane Katrina. Both Baptist and Methodist student groups took sizeable teams on the trip, which was organized by a former Baptist Campus Ministry president who now works for the school's administration.

Baptist Collegiate Minister Gene Parr said the trip gave Christian students opportunities to relieve suffering and show Christian principles in action to unchurched students who were on the trip.

"We're not only taking care of people down there, we're also building bridges to people on campus," Parr said. "They either rub off on us or we rub off on them."

## Legally blind, Michigan missionary works by faith, not by sight

By Mickey Noah  
SBC North American Mission Board

Lansing, Mich.—Larry Woods' job would be so much easier if he worked in Tallahassee, Tuscaloosa or Baton Rouge.

After all, most students at Florida State, the University of Alabama and LSU grew up south of the Mason-Dixon Line.

If they're Baptist or Methodist, as a kid they probably attended vacation Bible school and at least know some—if not most—of the books of the Bible.

But since 1982—with the help of wife Joanne—Woods has been director for the Lansing area Christian Challenge and the state

director for Christian Challenge in Michigan. As a Southern Baptist missionary, he serves Michigan State University and Lansing Community College.

"Students coming to Michigan State come from a more secularized background," Woods explains.

"We meet more students every year who claim no religious affiliation at all. The last time surveys were done—many years ago—37 percent of students claimed to be Catholic. The next highest denomination was Lutheran at 10 percent, and then it went down from there.

"Today, most students come from a totally unspiritual, un-

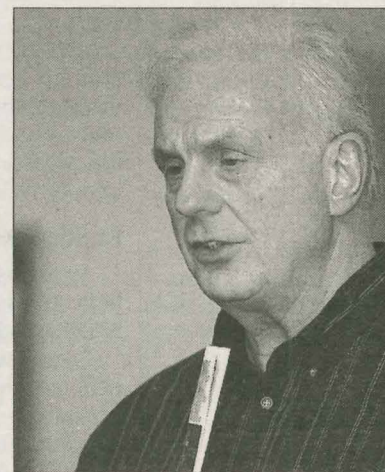
churched background. Even if they claim a religious affiliation, most say they aren't involved at all. So with these kids, you have to start a lot further back down the road," Woods says.

"The kids often don't have a clue about things in the Bible. For instance, we have to spend a lot of time in our weekly Bible study groups just helping someone find the book of Romans."

Because of their secular backgrounds, many students don't believe God exists, or if they do, they don't understand the true nature of God, he said.

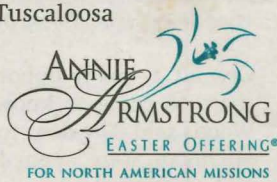
Woods says his fundamental efforts often involve persuading students that there is a God.

□ See Legally blind ... Page 2



**REACHING STUDENTS** Larry Woods, ministers to 65,000 college students at Michigan State University and Lansing Community College. (Photo by Jeff West)

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, April 5.



## BAPTIST DIGEST

**McCullough, former WMU president, dies at 81.** Marjorie McCullough, president of national Woman's Missionary Union from 1986-1991, died March 18 in Corpus Christi, Texas, after a lengthy illness. She was 81. "Marjorie was an outstanding, strong leader who was instrumental in laying the groundwork for the future of WMU," said WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee. McCullough, a graduate of Louisiana College in Pineville and the former WMU Training School in Louisville, was a missionary to Ghana and Brazil. Her funeral service was held March 25 at Emmanuel Baptist Church in Alexandria, La.

**Wayland official dies in plane crash.** Bill Hardage, executive vice president of Wayland Baptist University in Plainview, Texas, died March 25 when a plane he was piloting crashed in the mountains of California's San Benito County. Hardage, 61, had served nearly 40 years at the Texas Baptist-affiliated school. Hardage "loved Wayland and contributed to her success ... in more ways that any of us will ever know," said Wayland President Paul Armes. Hardage is survived by his wife, Nell, two adult children and several grandchildren.

**Accident kills Wyoming staff member, daughter.** A Wyoming Southern Baptist Convention staff member and his infant daughter were killed March 26 in an automobile accident during blizzard conditions. David Shane Ewen, 33, and his 6-month-old daughter, Elizabeth, were killed when his vehicle collided with another vehicle south of Lander, Wyo. Ewen's wife, Cassandra, 32, survived the crash and remains in a Billings, Mont., hospital. Ewen had served less than six months as the Wyoming convention's interim church health strategist. He previously was a pastor in Colorado.

**Harral nominated as national CBF moderator.** Texas leadership consultant Harriet Harral will be nominated in June as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's moderator-elect. Each year, the moderator-elect succeeds the moderator at the conclusion of the one-year term. This year's moderator is San Francisco Pastor Joy Yee. She will be succeeded by Emmanuel McCall, retired pastor of Christian Fellowship Baptist Church in College Park, Ga. Harral, a deacon at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, chairs the CBF Coordinating Council's personnel committee and serves on the board of Associated Baptist Press.

## NAMB honors top church planters for 2005

**Alpharetta, Ga. (BP)**—Five Southern Baptist North American Mission Board missionaries have been named "Church Planting Missionaries of the Year" for their work in starting Southern Baptist churches last year.

The five, jointly funded with state Baptist conventions, are:

**Chuy Avila** of the Tennessee Baptist Convention, named for Hispanic church planting.

**Dave Howeth** of the Montana Southern Baptist Convention as associational director of missions for church planting.

**James Jenkins** of the Louisiana Baptist Convention for African-American church planting.

**Pam Mungo** of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina for Anglo church planting.

**Jo Robledo Jr.** of the California Southern Baptist Convention for multiethnic church planting.

Richard Harris, NAMB vice president of church planting, honored the five at an awards dinner March 24 attended by more than 200 people during the four-day

2006 Church Planting Missionaries Forum in Atlanta.

"Church planting missionaries are our front-line strategists to evangelize and congregationalize North America," Harris said. "They are the most ethnically diverse group of leaders in the SBC, and model what North America looks like when you walk the streets."

Harris said the five church planting missionaries "are some of the finest of our spiritual warriors ... who are passionate about penetrating our culture with the gospel."

When Avila began working as an Hispanic Southern Baptist church planter in Tennessee five years ago, there were 23 Hispanic Baptist churches in the state. Today there are 72, including 49 planted under Avila's direction and leadership.

Howeth helped plant five churches the last two years in Montana and will launch a sixth in June and a seventh this fall. Representing Treasure State Baptist Association in Helena since 1997, Howeth serves 29 churches, three college campus ministries, two institutional min-

istries and two resort ministries in southwest Montana. Approximately 250,000 people live in this rapidly growing area of Montana, which includes 11 counties across 35,000 square miles plus Yellowstone Park.

Jenkins serves in northwest Louisiana as the Louisiana Baptist Convention's African-American church planting specialist. He was recognized for his involvement in planting more than 50 churches toward a goal of 200 new churches by 2010.

Mungo serves as a strategist for Anglo and African-American church starts in western North Carolina. She recruits church planters for new starts, working with each for at least two years, and has worked with 150 new churches since 1996.

Robledo has served as a church planting missionary with the California Southern Baptist Convention for the past 25 years. In 2005, he helped start five churches in the Silicon Valley Bay area, including an Eritrean-language church in Oakland.

## Welch names 2006 SBC Resolutions Committee

**Greensboro, N.C. (BP)**—Southern Baptist Convention President Bobby Welch has named the members of the 2006 Resolutions Committee who will serve during the June 13-14 SBC annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C.

Welch appointed **T.C. French**, pastor of Jefferson Baptist Church in Baton Rouge, La., as chairman of the committee.

Others serving on the 10-member committee are:

**Robin Hadaway**, associate professor of missions at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo.

**Gerald Harris**, editor of the Georgia Baptist Christian Index.

**Martha Lawley**, a member of First Southern Baptist Church of Worland, Wyo.

**Dwayne Mercer**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Oviedo, Fla.

**Darrell Orman**, pastor of First Baptist Church of Stuart, Fla.

**Frank Page**, pastor of Taylors Baptist Church in Taylors, S.C.

**Forrest Pollock**, pastor of Bell Shoals Baptist Church in Brandon, Fla.

**Ida South**, a member of First Baptist Church of Mathiston, Miss.

**Mike Stone**, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Blackshear, Ga.

Proposed resolutions may be submitted to the committee as early as April 15 but no later than 15 days before the SBC annual meeting.

## Legally blind missionary shares gospel with college students

Continued from page 1

"Once they believe that God is a loving, personal God Who really cares about us and wants to be involved in our lives, then we can go on to the next level and teach them about Jesus and the gospel of Christ," Woods said. "But if you go ahead and try to share the gospel with them—and they don't even believe in God—you're just sharing information that's irrelevant to them."

For 23 years now, Woods has seen his opportunities as a campus missionary at Michigan State through spiritual eyes, not his physical ones. Woods has been legally blind since birth.

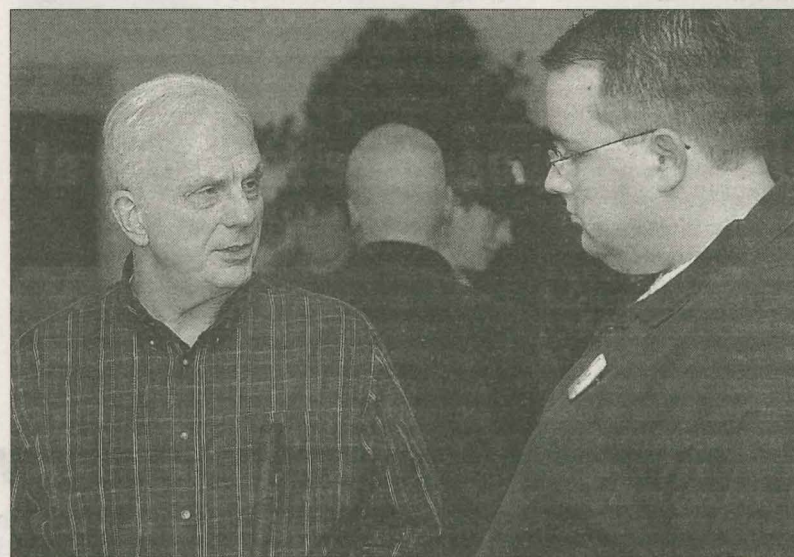
A jogger in good shape for a man his age—with white hair and a distinguished face—Woods looks no more blind than anyone else. Only his white, collapsible cane gives him away.

## Positive perspective

Stressing the positive, Woods believes his "thorn in the flesh" is really an advantage in some ways.

"Because I have to rely on people to lead me sometimes, that provides a lot of opportunities for ministry. You have to talk to people more. You pray with them. You have more contact because you're forced to be with people even more than you otherwise would."

Woods grew up in northern



**PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT** Larry Woods (left), a Southern Baptist missionary, talks with one of the 65,000 college students he and wife, Joanne, minister to in Lansing, Mich. The couple has served as MSCs in Lansing since 1982. (Photo by Jeff West)

Oklahoma and graduated from the University of Oklahoma in the '60s. After becoming a Christian as a sophomore Sooner, he worked with the local Baptist Student Union at OU. He discovered that 95 percent of the BSU directors in America were south of the Mason-Dixon Line, while 75 percent of the college students in America were north of the Mason-Dixon Line.

"I caught a vision of what I wanted to do in missions, and had a real burden to minister to college students in places where there

were not as many opportunities for them to come to know the Lord," Woods said. The door to minister at Michigan State opened for Woods in August 1982.

Michigan State is the seventh largest university in the country, with 45,000 students. It has the largest on-campus student residence, with more than 20,000 students who live on campus in dorms, fraternities and sororities, and in married student housing.

Less than five miles from MSU is Lansing Community College, a com-

muter college with another 19,000 students. Add in a local business college, a Christian school and another law school apart from MSU's, and Woods has a mission field of approximately 80,000 students.

## What is Mission Service Corps?

The Woodses are Mission Service Corps missionaries, meaning their financial support comes from churches, family and friends.

MSC missionaries make up approximately 45 percent of the 5,200 Southern Baptist North American missionaries in the United States, Canada and their territories.

While they don't receive a paycheck through NAMB, they do receive NAMB support for travel, training and special needs.

"Having the support of NAMB gives us credibility among local churches and pastors," Woods adds.

Woods loves to quote Paul's letter to the Philippians, in which Paul said: "It's not that we are seeking your gift but we seek the fruit which increases to your credit."

"Being an MSC missionary is a faith stretcher," Woods admits, "because you really have to rely on the Lord to be the provider."

"God's just really been good about helping us to hang in there and keep going," Woods said. "We trust in the fact that God loves us and has our best interests at heart."

# Serving moms, sharing Christ

*Ministry to low-income moms wants others to do likewise*

By Ken Walker  
State Correspondent

**Louisville**—A two-decade-old ministry for new moms and infants has a new director, a new home and an interest in helping other churches and groups do similar work.

The Infant Resource Project in Louisville helps low-income mothers with such material needs as clothing, baby food, car seats and high chairs while also offering spiritual guidance.

Started in 1984 by East Baptist Church, the Infant Resource Project relocated last June to Walnut Street Baptist Church, located about a mile south of downtown Louisville.

New director B.J. Hendrix said the agency also has modified some of its policies.

For example, it has expanded aid to expectant mothers who are at least 30 weeks into their term.

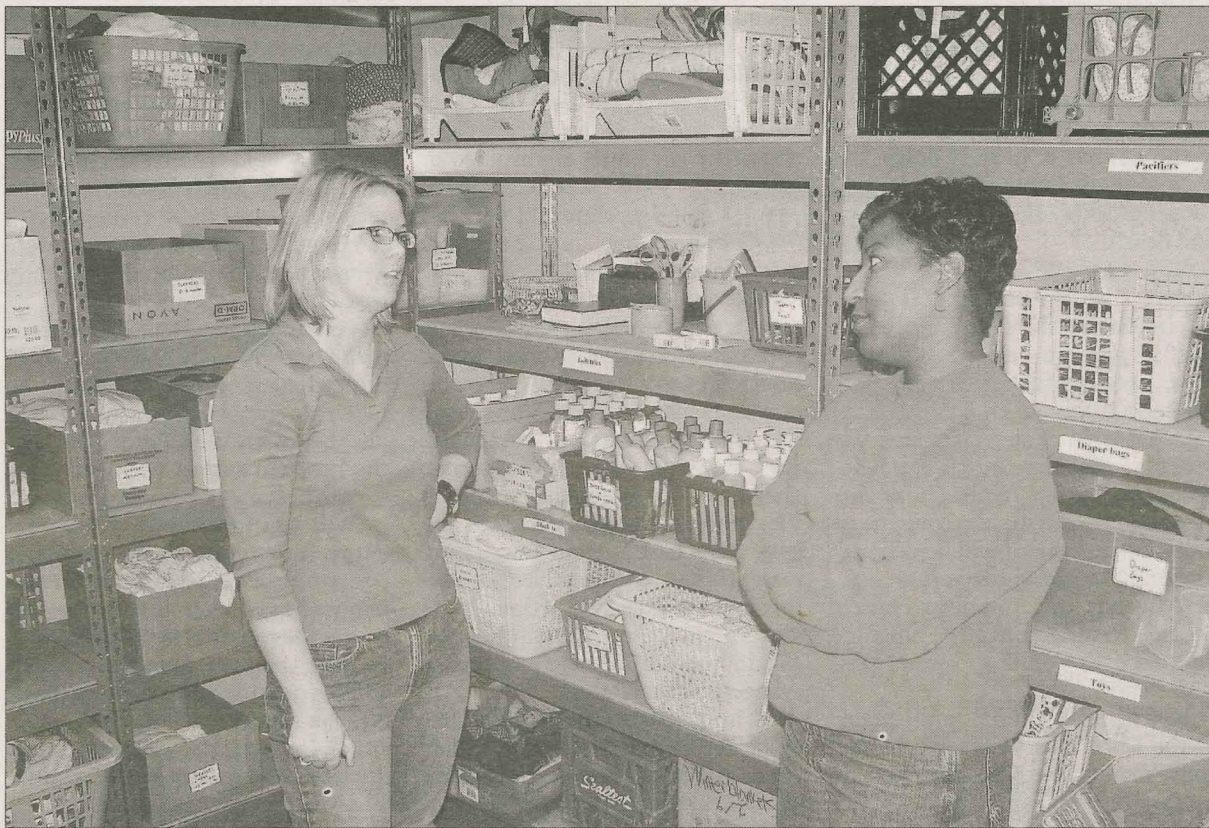
The ministry supplies the women with a kit of diapers, sleepers and other essentials needed when they come home from the hospital.

Also, instead of giving emergency rations of formula and diapers once a season, needy moms can obtain that help every other month.

## "A huge legacy"

"It's almost been like a rebirth," Hendrix said of the program, which lacked a director for three months before she started. The ministry now has 17 volunteers. "It has a huge legacy."

Since relocating from First Lu-



**MANAGING RESOURCES** B.J. Hendrix (left), director of the Infant Resource Project in Louisville, talks with volunteer Tina Lewis in the supply closet. The 22-year-old ministry provides formula, diapers and other supplies to low-income mothers in need. (Photos by Johnny Fontaine)

theran Church in the downtown area, the agency has helped nearly 400 families, according to Johnny Fontaine, a volunteer who serves as assistant director.

The ministry benefits from donations by approximately a dozen local Baptist churches, as well as several churches from other denominations.

The East Baptist Ministries Board also provided a \$25,000 grant to renovate space at Walnut Street to house the agency as well as \$2,000 a month for operating expenses for at least three years.

The board was organized to administer a \$280,000 endowment created with funds from the sale of East Baptist's property when it closed in 1992.

In addition, Fontaine said the ministry has secured more than \$9,200 in grants from companies and other agencies, including funds from associational and state missions offerings.

The grants have enabled the group to obtain cribs, car seats, clothing, diapers, toiletries, baby formula and bus tickets.

Another new element of the program is trying to steer mothers into a women's Bible study held at Walnut Street on Wednesday evenings.

Taught by member and IRP volunteer Tina Lewis, the "LOVE" (Ladies of Virtue Evolving) class strives to help women build character by incorporating biblically-based traits into their lives.

Hendrix said one of the joys of her job was seeing a client get involved in the women's class and become a volunteer, while her teenage daughter joined the youth group.

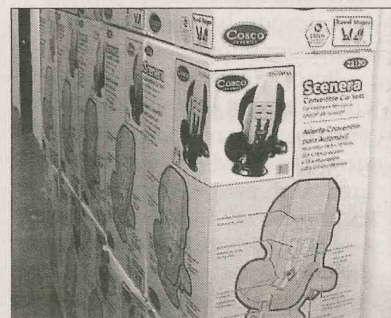
"It's not just handing out diapers and clothes and not seeing people again for six months," said Hendrix, who moved to Louisville in 2004 so her husband could attend Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. "I love seeing how God uses those things to change somebody's situation."

But the church lost its momentum after Long Run Association, where it had been meeting, sold its downtown headquarters in 1990.

Although it purchased a house for administrative and ministry offices while worshiping at First Lutheran, dwindling attendance led to the church's closing in 1992.

Holladay said one of the most touching aspects of the program was when mothers would return car seats and other supplies so they could be used by other people in need.

"That's one of the neatest things I've ever seen," he said. "They were so impressed that people would help with no strings attached. It was an incredible ministry." Ken Walker



**CAR SEATS** New car seats line a wall near the ministry office.

## A history of God supplying and people helping people

**Louisville**—The continuation of the Infant Resource Project after it floundered without a director last year reflects the miracles that helped it survive its origins as a modest, grassroots effort.

Jim Holladay, who was pastor of East Baptist Church when it started the ministry in 1984, said that in the early days the ministry often saw God provide resources whenever it ran short of money and supplies.

"It would be one of those things where we wondered where the next dollar was coming from," said Holladay, now pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church.

"We'd be out of formula, diapers or car seats and someone would call and say, 'We've got some car

seats. Can you use them?' Whoom! (Supplies) would come in."

The outreach originated to fill a gap left when Long Run Baptist Association reorganized its social ministries program, Holladay said.

Organized initially by a seminary student, Holladay said the program started modestly, serving 60 to 70 people its first year.

Through gradual expansion and financial support from various charitable organizations, it eventually helped twice that many people in a month.

By 1991—the year before East Baptist closed—the Infant Resource Project served 1,159 families, with 30 volunteers making 219 home visits.

## Hopkinsville church buildings destroyed by storm

**Hopkinsville**—Wind and storms Monday destroyed three buildings at Sinking Fork Baptist Church in Hopkinsville.

"The church is gone, the parsonage is gone. Their activity building is gone," said Tom Westerfield, a Kentucky Baptist disaster relief volunteer and member of First Baptist Church of Hopkinsville.

No one was injured at the church, but the local director of missions and his wife had only recently moved out of the parsonage.

Bobby Melton, director of missions for Christian County Baptist Association, said his wife had been back at the parsonage, cleaning it, when she decided to leave because of the storm.

"She said that when she got in the truck it was like balls of fire in the sky," he said. "The only thing left of the parsonage was the living room closet."

The fast-moving, intense storms cut a swath through Christian County that was about three miles wide, about four miles north of Hopkinsville, Westerfield said.

Christian County was the hardest-hit county, with at least 17 people hospitalized, according to Buddy Rogers, spokesman for Kentucky Emergency Management Division.

Damage was reported throughout the commonwealth, including Boone, Daviess, Franklin, Henry, Scott and Todd counties, Rogers said.

A Kentucky Baptist volunteer disaster relief cleanup team was expected to be serving in the area this week, according to Larry Koch, director of disaster relief for the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Disaster relief volunteers interested in serving are asked to call the Kentucky Baptist Convention's men on mission office at (866) 489-3527.

Lewis, who grew up in the church and rejoined in the late 1990s, said the class attracts 10 to 13 women ranging in age from 23 to 55.

Since becoming a volunteer in November, Lewis has invited clients to attend.

Thus far, two are attending regularly and two others have expressed interest.

## Seeing positive changes

Because of her own previous bad choices, Lewis said she tries to help women see how their decisions can lead to negative situations.

"It's not what somebody else did to them, it's what they allow people to do to them," Lewis said.

In addition to seeing other women make positive changes, Lewis enjoys her time as a volunteer at the center.

In addition to filling orders, Lewis meets privately with clients to pray with them and explain the gospel to those with no church affiliation.

Since last November she has prayed with one woman who received Jesus as her personal Savior and seen others start attending church.

While only a few express interest in her presentations, Lewis said that doesn't discourage her.

"I'm not looking for a whole busload of people coming to my group," she said. "If I can help one person get saved or get their life turned around, it would be worth it."

The group currently is compiling its first-ever ministry report, which Hendrix said will outline its history, objectives, outreaches and how other churches can start a similar effort.

Copies will be available soon and can be obtained by calling (502) 584-2493 or e-mailing [bjhendrix@walnutstreet.org](mailto:bjhendrix@walnutstreet.org).

"An Infant Resource Project is so easy," Lewis said. "If your church can do a clothes closet, you can do this."

## 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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## The dying American church

By Thom Rainer

Nashville (BP)—I am by nature an optimist. I have seen the hand of God too often in my life to live in a state of despair and defeatism. But the state of evangelism in the American church is such that I do have my moments when I wonder if the church is headed down the path of many European congregations: decline and death.

The facts of a 2004 research project I led are sobering. It takes 86 church members in America one year to reach a person for Christ. Now, I realize that such statistical studies are imperfect. But if the research is even close to accurate, the reality is that the church is not reproducing herself. In just one or two generations, Christianity could be so marginalized that it will be deemed irrelevant by most observers.

Why has the American church become evangelistically anemic? The research points to several possible factors.

■ First, the church and many of the Christians who serve in the churches have become doctrin-

ally ineffective. Repentance is often avoided as a key truth of the gospel. Hell is rarely mentioned, despite its abundance of references in Scripture. And regenerate church membership and church discipline sometimes are perceived as relics of an old and irrelevant era. When these and other key issues are avoided or even watered down, the church loses her power, and the gospel is no longer the gospel.

■ Second, church leaders are becoming less evangelistic. A survey of pastors I led in 2005 surprised the research team. Over half (53 percent) of pastors have made no evangelistic efforts at all in the past six months. They have not shared the gospel. They have not attempted to engage a lost and unchurched person at any level. They have become busy doing many things, but they have chosen through their lack of actions to be disobedient to Acts 1:8, Matthew 28:19 and many other clear passages of evangelistic mandates.

■ Third, Christians in churches often get caught up in the minor issues and fail to become passionate

about the major issue of evangelism. I served as pastor of a church that spent two hours in a business meeting debating over a 5 percent differential in the cost of two similar pieces of furniture. I wish I had seen such passion for the lost and the unchurched in our community.

The numerical evidence seems clear. The American church is dying. I guess I could blame the churches, her leaders and stubborn church members. But I must confess that I too often fall short in my own evangelistic zeal. Sometimes I get so busy that I fail to do the main thing.

Perhaps the first step for all of us is the confession of our own sins of disobedience, our own failures to take the evangelistic mandate seriously. Perhaps if we determine that the problem begins with me, then we can be a part of the solution.

Will you join me in a personal evangelistic renewal? The results of our evangelistic efforts are in the hands of a sovereign God. But we can be His instruments for this renewal. Perhaps then the American church will see new life and new hope. Such is my prayer. I hope it is yours.

Thom Rainer is president of LifeWay Christian Resources of the Southern Baptist Convention

## COMMENTARY

## KBC audit work group issues report

The audit work group of the Kentucky Baptist Convention Mission Board's Business and Finance Committee met Feb. 7, 2006, to perform its annual review and evaluation of the financial condition and practices of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's affiliated entities and its Mission Board as reflected in their 2005 audited financial statements.

This annual audit review process is an important way Kentucky Baptists receive an accountability report from the convention and its affiliated entities. Kentucky Baptists can be pleased that this procedure exists whereby the convention and its institutions and agencies can give an accounting of the stewardship of the resources entrusted to them.

These entities include Campbellsville University, University of the

Cumberlands, Georgetown College, Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Oneida Baptist Institute, Kentucky Baptist Assemblies, Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, Baptist Healthcare System, Woman's Missionary Union, Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptist Foundation and the Kentucky Baptist mission programs and subsidy.

Kentucky Baptists also can be pleased and encouraged with the sound financial condition and stability of the institutions and agencies and the level of cooperation demonstrated by them. The work group complimented the board and administrative leadership of the convention and each of its affiliated entities. Kentucky Baptists are encouraged to increase their support of these institutions and agencies

prayerfully and financially.

Members of the audit work group were: Ray Hayes (Louisville), who served as chairperson in the absence of Greg Faulls, Gary Ellcessor (Shelbyville), Wimpy Hudson (Scottsville), Jennifer Ringstaff (Louisville), Doug Strader (Louisville), Bill Steele (Bowling Green), Terry Wilder (Burlington), Business Manager Lowell Ashby, Accounting Services Director Cathi Roy-Sanders, Accounting Services Senior Accountant Becky Harris, Executive Associate Steve Thompson and Executive Director Bill Mackey. In addition, a certified public accountant met with the group. The work group's report was made to the full Business and Finance Committee on March 31, 2006, and approved.

Greg Faulls, chairperson  
KBC audit work group and  
Business and Finance Committee

## The blessings of children and learning

It is my privilege to announce the birth of a new grandson, Nathanael "Nate" Bartley Wooten, born March 28. Nate and his mother, Beth, are doing fine.

My wife, Kay, has been with Beth and her older children, Lilly, age 5, and Mack, 30 months, to help care for the children. Now we have a granddaughter and four grandsons.

I often consider my role with the grandchildren in their faith development and commitment to

God's Word, missions and biblical stewardship. We praise God for the safe delivery, health of Nate and his mother, Beth. Thank you for your prayers.

Recently, I had the privilege to speak in chapel and meet with students over lunch at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn. Some of these students have ties to Kentucky or have interest in serving in Kentucky. There are a number of graduates

now serving in Kentucky who exhibit a high value for world missions through the Cooperative Program.

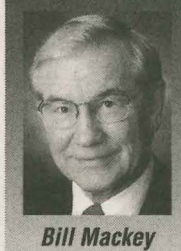
On the return trip, I had the opportunity to visit with Larry Orange, a professor at Mid-Continent University in Mayfield, who has a passion for bivocational pastors. Larry gave me a tour of the new facilities to be occupied by His House, a church plant where he serves as a leader with Pastor Chad Lamb, a former student.

It also was my privilege to speak at High Point Baptist Church in Mayfield. In recent months, this church has reached 50 youth for Christ from families who are not in church.

Don Embry, who has a heart for people, leads this evangelism ministry. During visitation on Saturday, Don and I had the privilege of hearing a mother pray to receive Christ. Please pray for her and her son.

It is my prayer that I will be able to participate in witness visitation

## PARTNERS IN THE MISSION



Bill Mackey

## FAMILY

## Urge to splurge costs big bucks down the road

By Jeremy White

During a recent review with a client, he shared how much he regretted purchasing a BMW automobile early in his career. Being single and landing his first big job, he had the urge to splurge. Now as a married father of three children, he wished he had saved more.

I suggested we find out how much that BMW cost him. Looking confused, he responded, "I already know much it cost. I bought the car in 1990 for \$30,000."

"Let's see how much it really cost," I replied. "It may be painful, but let's learn this lesson. If you had spent \$10,000 on a used car and invested the additional \$20,000 in a mutual fund, then that fund would be worth over \$100,000 today."

I pointed out that the true cost of the car was \$130,000. The total cost was the initial price of \$30,000 plus the opportunity cost of \$100,000. By not having the "opportunity" to use the excess \$20,000 on an investment, it cost him considerably more.

It's easy to see the opportunity cost of large purchases, but this opportunity cost analysis applies to small purchases as well. When checking out of a drugstore or a supermarket, have you ever bought a magazine, candy bar or something else on an impulse?

Evaluating the opportunity cost is an activity with a dual purpose: It gives incentive to stop overspending in a certain area and provides motivation to save.

Let's see how it might work on you:

Let's say, on the average, you impulsively spend \$3.75 a day on vending machine snacks and other unneeded products. If you did that every year for 40 years, you would have impulsively purchased \$54,750 worth of candy, soft drinks and other little items. However, the real cost of those impulse purchases is not the \$3.75 a day, but what you could have done with those discretionary dollars.

If, on the other hand, you had invested \$1,368 (\$3.75 x 365 days) per year in an individual retirement account, you would have more than \$273,000 40 years later if you earned 7 percent per year. In other words, choosing to spend the \$3.75 a day cost you what you could have earned: \$273,000.

Take time to count the real cost before you spend.

Jeremy White, a certified public accountant, is a partner with Blythe, White & Associates in Paducah



## Pray for teenagers to discover their identity in Jesus Christ

**Q: My son is turning 13 this year and my daughter will be 13 next year. How specifically would you recommend praying for teenagers?**

Let me encourage you to pray first for yourself. Pray that God will forge your character on the anvil of faithfulness, strength, love, flexibility and availability. Pray that you will be an exceptional listener as well as a wise conservationist of the family schedule.

### PARENTING

Ask God to fill you with courage so you do not react impulsively out of your fears and anxiety, but with humility and thoughtfulness bathed in confidence. Request that your teen see in you an example of real-world Christianity that balances the scales of joy and reverence.

Pray that your teens increasingly discover their identity in Christ and that they find practical ways to live out their giftedness and see their worth. Pray that they will see God in the day-to-day and will view tough times as tests that God allows to stretch them in their willingness to learn His love language of obedience.

Pray for positive peer pressure friends, for a minimum of interest in early romance and for godly mentors who are more than summertime soldiers.

While you are on your knees, don't forget to pray that God will bless your marriage or significant relationships and that He will be preparing a future bride or groom for your children even as you model daily the disciplines of love and affection.

Finally, pray that God's angel warriors will protect your family from the evil one so that your family might effectively display God's glory to the world.—Scott Wigginton

**Q: Why is it important to reach children for Christ while they are still young?**

In 2003, George Barna published "Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions." Research for the book revealed that if people do not embrace Jesus Christ as their Savior before they reach their teenage years, the chance of their doing so at all is slim because by age 13, one's spiritual identity already is pretty much in place.

Barna's results have been quoted and used to support ministry to children in general, and the particular importance of leading children to commit their lives to Christ. The urgency has been tied to a sense of "now or maybe never."

In his book, "Free at Last," Dallas-based preacher and teacher Tony Evans offers a different reason for reaching children early in their lives. Evans focuses on the results that sin produces in a person's life.

Even after a person turns away from sin and chooses to follow Jesus, the results of previous sin still exist. Christians receive forgiveness and grace, but the consequences of wrong choices sometimes continue to impact our lives in powerful and lasting ways.

The longer you live in sin, the longer sin has to work and cause problems that don't just go away. Conversely, the sooner a person links his or her life with Christ and gets serious about following Him, the less mess sin has the opportunity to make.

According to Evans, "If we can lead children to Christ early and firmly establish them in the faith, they won't have all of that junk to drag with them into adulthood."

Think about that the next time someone asks you to teach children's Sunday school or coach an Upward team.—David Garrard



## A tale of two Baptist mission boards

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times (with apologies to Charles Dickens).

On the positive side, Southern Baptist International Mission Board officials recently appointed 45 new missionaries and projected record Lottie Moon Christmas Offering receipts for the 2005 reporting year that concludes May 31. They also reported working with more than 108,000 overseas Baptist churches that recorded almost 460,000 baptisms last year.

North American Mission Board officials report that more than 12,500 Southern Baptist churches were planted across the nation in the past eight years, an increase of more than 275 per year over the eight years before NAMB was established. NAMB also has received high marks for coordinating Southern Baptist relief efforts in the wake of Hurricane Katrina and other recent disasters.

On the negative side, IMB trustees have wrestled with controversy over the effort to remove a fellow trustee from office as well as debate over new policies related to baptism and private prayer language. Board members also recently implemented "Trustee Responsibilities" guidelines that require trustees "to speak in positive and supportive terms" about adopted board actions "regardless of whether they personally support the action."

At NAMB, trustees have struggled with fallout from an in-depth critique of NAMB's ministry effectiveness published in February by the Georgia Baptist Christian Index. Concerns have included questions about the leadership of NAMB President Robert Reccord.

I realize many readers likely are growing as tired of reading about controversy at our two Southern Baptist mission boards as I am of writing about it. But the fact remains that these issues are critical to the long-term effectiveness of both boards.

Hopefully trustees and grassroots Baptists can learn valuable lessons from the conflict that will lead to positive, productive ministry efforts in the future. As a recent NAMB trustee report affirmed, "Our responsibility is first and foremost to the SBC."

As IMB and NAMB trustees seek to navigate troubled waters, what are the positive and negative results so far?

### International Mission Board

IMB trustees are to be commended for rescinding their January proposal to dismiss Oklahoma trustee Wade Burleson. Once an action is taken, it often is difficult for leaders to swallow their pride, take a step back and change directions.

But the board's announced reason for rescinding their earlier action is a mixed bag. According to trustee chairman Tom Hatley, "We have determined that we have the ability to seek management of these issues through internal processes that were not known during our January meeting." He added that trustees "have never reached this stage of conflict before and did not know of all our options until recently."

While seeking and acting on additional information is commendable, why did trustees feel the need to act so hastily in January? The adage "haste makes waste" proved true in this instance since the board could have avoided much of the public controversy if leaders had more fully explored their available options before recommending Burleson's dismissal.

Yes, the decision to rescind was appropriate. But it looks like the board's action that needed rescinding was avoidable. Southern Baptists who have entrusted our global mission enterprise to IMB trustees deserve to have confidence that each decision is thoroughly researched, reviewed and responsible.

That brings us to another decision IMB trustees might need to revisit. During the same meeting where trustees agreed to deal internally with the Burleson issue without removing him from the board, they adopted a four-page policy on trustee responsibilities.

While board officials noted that development of the guidelines had been in process long before the Burleson controversy erupted, it is obvious that the recent crisis influenced some of the document's final wording.

### STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

In addition to the requirement that trustees publicly support board actions regardless of their personal views, the guidelines specify that trustees "are to refrain from speaking in disparaging terms about IMB personnel and fellow trustees" and "must refrain from public criticism of board-approved actions."

Business consultants generally encourage organizations to create policies using positive language rather than negative. Phrases sprinkled throughout the IMB document such as "refrain from ... disparaging terms," "refrain from argumentation" and "refrain from public criticism" seem to codify the baggage of strained internal relationships.

While trustees have the right to impose restrictions on their own actions, the problem becomes how grassroots Southern Baptists can ever expect to hear anything but positive,

glowing reports from trustees—even when airing concerns could be beneficial.

According to the new policy, "Freedom of expression must give way to the imperative that the work of the Kingdom not be placed at risk by publicly airing differences within the board."

I believe a far greater concern is that the work of the Kingdom not be placed at risk by trustees refusing to air differences that Southern Baptists need and deserve to know.

I'm not suggesting that trustees publicly undermine the work of the board or launch into personal attacks. But of Burleson's supporters have emphasized the need for "principled dissent" that addresses issues rather than individuals.

Of course, this issue is much bigger than Burleson or even the current IMB trustee board. It's a matter of Southern Baptists knowing with confidence that trustees are speaking the truth in love when they report in local churches, associations, conventions and elsewhere about IMB work—rather than simply speaking "in positive and supportive terms" because they are required to do so.

### North American Mission Board

NAMB trustees, in contrast, have presented a significantly different perspective. In response to concerns published in the Christian Index, NAMB trustees established a nine-member task force to carefully examine and address each of the issues raised. The result is a detailed 19-page report that acknowledges both strengths and shortfalls of NAMB's ministry endeavors.

The straightforward report adopted by NAMB's full trustee board placed Reccord under a series of "executive level controls" related to such areas as travel, speaking engagements, competitive bidding for outsourced work and developing new ministry initiatives.

While the report found no clearly unethical behavior by Reccord or the board, it called for providing Reccord and NAMB "with greater levels of accountability to the board and the Southern Baptist Convention."

"We have chosen to err on the side of full disclosure of issues we've encountered and the assessments we've made," the NAMB report adds. "Although this is a challenging time, it presents the board with the opportunity to improve the way NAMB functions. That will be beneficial to all involved."

Such an honest, transparent report sounds like what most Baptists would want and expect from those elected to oversee our denomination's cherished mission work.

"We want the Southern Baptist Convention to know we've responded to the issues," trustee chairman Barry Holcomb told reporters, "and because of that response we believe that you can trust what we're doing here at NAMB."

NAMB trustee vice chairman Bill Curtis added that board members "acknowledge that this is a process that together we need to take ownership of and work through for the improvement of the agency and the good of the SBC."

It was the best of times—and hopefully will be again soon as mission board leaders and Southern Baptists work together to advance God's Kingdom at home and around the world.

Family Forum writers are:

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James Stillwell, minister to singles at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington. E-mail: james@ibs-lex.org

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Scott Wigginton, associate professor of pastoral ministries and counseling at Campbellsville University. E-mail: sewigginton@campbellsville.edu

Send questions for Family Forum to Western Recorder, Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253 or e-mail wesrec@earthlink.net.

## Campbellville to host Baptist heritage lecture

Campbellville—Morgan Patterson, former president of Georgetown College, will deliver the second installment of Campbellville University's Baptist Heritage Lecture Series April 10 at 7 p.m. in Campbellville's Little Auditorium.

John Chowning, vice president for church and external relations, said the lecture series was established to highlight the 400 years of Baptist history and to help 21st century Baptists understand the historic Baptist tradition of being a "free people in a free state."

Patterson, Campbellville's scholar-in-residence, was president of Georgetown College from 1984 to 1991. He previously taught church history at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and served as academic dean at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

For more information, contact Chowning at (270) 789-5520 or jchowning@campbellville.edu.

## Cumberland unveils monuments, emphasizes moral leadership

Williamsburg—Unveiling a pair of monuments engraved with the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, University of the Cumberland officials highlighted the school's focus on moral leadership March 28.

The campus event included a moral leadership convocation that featured former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Roy Moore as keynote speaker.

Moore was removed from office in 2003 for refusing to comply with a federal court order to remove a 5,280-pound Ten Commandments monument he had installed in the Alabama judicial building. He currently is a Republican candidate for governor of Alabama.

"If you're going to be a leader, you don't follow blindly the path of others," Moore told a crowd of nearly 2,000 people gathered last week in Cumberland's Rollins Center.

"I can't talk about moral leadership without reference to God," he added.

Declaring that "moral leadership always is a combination of factors," Moore noted that when moral leaders have a choice to make, "that choice must be guided by moral principle."

Prior to the convocation, Moore joined university officials in dedicating the Ten Commandments and Beatitudes monuments on the school's Williamsburg campus.

The convocation also featured a number of recognitions, including a presentation to Terry and Marion Forcht who endowed the school's First Corbin Financial Corporation Center for Excellence in Leadership. The March 28 event was the first in a series of leadership programs.

Cumberland officials presented

moral leadership awards to five recipients:

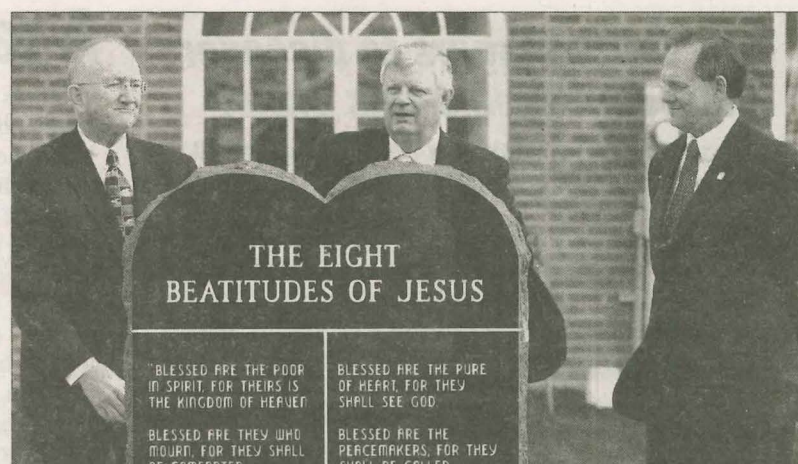
**Nelda Barton-Collings** of Corbin, president and chair of the board of the Bretara corporation.

**David Carr**, pastor of Somerset Baptist Temple and CEO of King of Kings Radio Network.

**Paul Chitwood**, president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention and pastor of First Baptist Church of Mount Washington.

**Trennis Henderson**, editor of the Western Recorder.

**Michael Smith** of Abingdon, Va., president of Living Faith Television.



**DEDICATION** Roy Moore (right), former Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice, joins University of the Cumberland's President Jim Taylor (center) and Cumberland board chairman Jim Oaks in dedicating a pair of monuments honoring the Beatitudes and the Ten Commandments.



# Developing and Managing People

**April 24-25, 2006**

1 p.m. Monday through 5 p.m. Tuesday at the Kentucky Baptist Building

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This new training from **Next Level Leadership Development** is required by the North American Mission Board for those who supervise missionaries but is also very helpful to DOM's, campus ministers, and pastors that supervise staff.

**Registration is \$15.00 per person** and includes all materials, Monday dinner, Tuesday lunch, and breaks.

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 or [Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org](mailto:Eric.Allen@kybaptist.org)



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 P.O. Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433

## Williams, DOM of Blood River, leaves strong missions legacy

Hardin—Harlan Williams, director of missions for Blood River Baptist Association, died March 26 after a battle with cancer. He was 59.

Williams, a graduate of Belmont University in Nashville and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, is former pastor of Second Baptist Church of Russellville as well as churches in Tennessee and Louisiana.

Bob Morrison, president of the Kentucky Directors of Missions Fellowship, recalled that Williams "was always an agreeable, missions-minded person," noting that he was involved in resort ministry, disaster relief and overseas mission projects.

"Harlan never was about giving attention to Harlan," said Morrison, director of missions for Little Bethel Baptist Association. "He was always about getting the work done."

Williams "was always upbeat, even in the midst of his struggle with cancer," Morrison added. "He was a joy to be around."

Larry Baker, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's new work/associational missions department, noted that Williams "was well liked and respected by other DOMs."

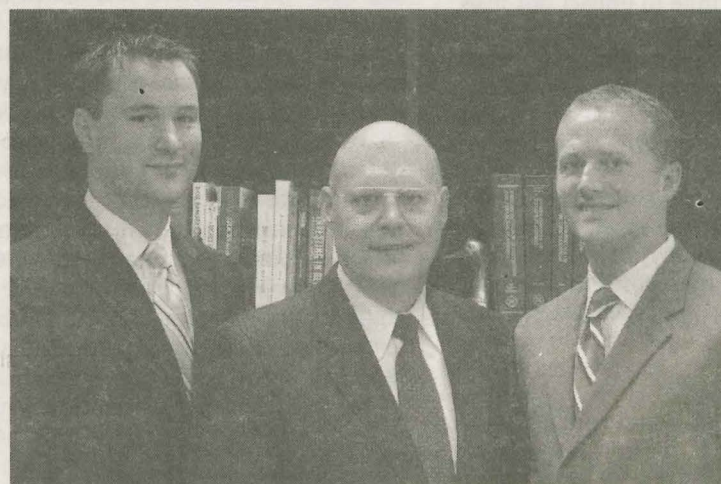
"Harlan was consistently a real Christian gentleman," Baker added. "He will be greatly missed, but his legacy will live on."

Williams is survived by his wife, Brenda, two sons and one grandson.

Memorial services were held March 27 at Collier Funeral Home in Benton and March 28 at Buckner Funeral Home in Cleveland, Tenn.

Memorial gifts may be made to the building fund of West Fork Baptist Church in Murray or Blood River Baptist Association.

## Comfortable with your future?

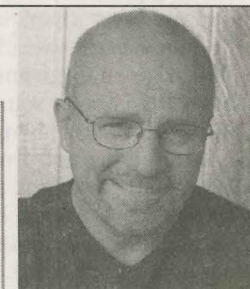


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**DAVE RAMSEY**



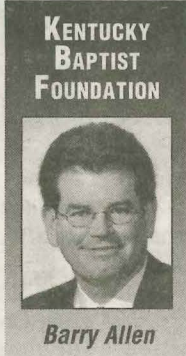
Kentucky WMU and me

Missions legacy continues through WMU Heritage Fund

On Feb. 1, I completed my 35th year of service to Kentucky Baptists, 25 of which were through the KBC Mission Board and the past 10 of which were through the Kentucky Baptist Foundation. Watch-out, Anna Mary, I may surpass your 37 years!

Among the joys and blessings of these years of service have been my relationships with Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union leaders throughout the commonwealth and the privilege of serving the mission of Kentucky WMU. My col-

leagueship with each of the executive directors has added meaning and value to my years of service. From Kathryn Jasper Akridge to Dee Gilliland, Kay Trisler and Joy Bolton, I have been blessed by their friendship and their partnership in the gospel of Jesus Christ. I even had the pleasure and blessing of knowing Mrs. George Ferguson, although she already was retired as the executive director.



Barry Allen

had, my fondest memories are those times she had the YWAs at our house. Hers and my late father's love for missions were bequeathed to me through what they taught me by their examples. Even today, I am connected to our church's WMU through my wife's involvement. She and I are looking forward to participating in the Kentucky WMU annual meeting in Harrodsburg, April 21-22.

What a privilege it is for me, as KBF president, to be involved with the constituency cultivation and the investment management of the Kentucky WMU Heritage Fund. My wife and I are regular contributors, and I want to encourage every Kentucky Baptist prayerfully to consider becoming a contributor and leaving a legacy of your missions commitment by making a legacy gift through the Heritage Fund. What a wonderful way "to keep the message alive" and "to make a lasting difference" for Christ's mission in the world now and beyond your lifetime.

Let Laurie Valentine and me assist you by calling us toll-free.

Barry Allen is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; (866) 489-3533; www.kybaptistfoundation.org

Before I was born, I was actively involved in WMU because my late mother was a WMU leader in our church in Grenada, Miss. Of all the WMU responsibilities my mother

Kudzu

Doug Marlette



For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Bible Crosswords

Evelyn Boyington

Across

- 1 Poetic contraction
- 4 "The \_\_\_\_ of the mountains is his pasture" (Job 39:8)
- 9 \_\_\_\_ fried
- 12 Linking verb
- 13 "The \_\_\_\_ of Egypt shall be moved" (Isaiah 19:1)
- 14 Inlet
- 15 "Behold a man gluttonous ... a \_\_\_\_ of publicans and sinners" (Matthew 11:19)
- 17 "Charity ... is not \_\_\_\_ provoked, thinketh no evil" (1 Corinthians 13:4, 5)
- 19 Joke
- 20 Brownish gray
- 21 Liturgical season that coincides with spring
- 23 \_\_\_\_ sum (Chinese dumplings)
- 24 Man, for example
- 27 Printer's measures
- 28 "Every \_\_\_\_ that a man doeth is without the body" (1 Corinthians 6:18)
- 29 "When thou prayest, \_\_\_\_ into thy closet" (Matthew 6:6)
- 30 \_\_\_\_ out (tennis term)
- 31 "The \_\_\_\_ went before, the play-ers on instruments followed" (Psalm 68:25)
- 33 Movie rating
- 34 "Pay that which thou hast \_\_\_\_" (Ecclesiastes 5:4)
- 36 Singing syllable
- 37 About
- 38 Pitcher
- 39 James Herriot, for short
- 40 Driven group
- 41 "But \_\_\_\_ foolish questions, and genealogies" (Titus 3:9)

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44	45					46			47	48
49				50		51			52	
53					54				55	

- 43 Blue
- 44 "Pharaoh was wroth ... against the chief of the \_\_\_\_" (Genesis 40:2)
- 46 "The wicked shall be \_\_\_\_ in darkness" (1 Samuel 2:9)
- 49 Be in debt
- 50 "Aeneas, which had kept his bed \_\_\_\_ years" (Acts 9:33)
- 52 Years and years
- 53 Skin tumor
- 54 Grown-up gadgets, collectively
- 55 Ran into
- 21 Make a getaway
- 22 "He shall surely \_\_\_\_ her to be his wife" (Exodus 22:16)
- 23 Noise level
- 25 Disdained individual, in Bible times
- 26 Energy unit
- 28 Caesar
- 29 TV series
- 31 "If any man \_\_\_\_ me, let him follow me" (John 12:26)
- 32 "Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to \_\_\_\_ the passover?" (Matthew 26:17)
- 35 "O Lucifer ... which didst \_\_\_\_ the nations" (Isaiah 14:12)
- 37 "I will \_\_\_\_ them from death" (Hosea 13:14)
- 39 Call on
- 40 Masculine nickname
- 42 Swedish coin
- 43 Tends to tots, tersely
- 44 Half a canine call
- 45 Reverence
- 46 Less than, with "of"
- 47 "As it was in the days of \_\_\_\_" (Luke 17:26)
- 48 Terminator, in a way (abbr.)
- 51 Matthew 28:19 verb

Down

- 1 Boor
- 2 Stumble
- 3 Royal eras
- 4 American humorist Lardner
- 5 "\_\_\_\_ to your faith virtue" (2 Peter 1:5)
- 6 Negative
- 7 Shine like the sun
- 8 More hirsute son of Isaac
- 9 "Jesus, made an high \_\_\_\_ for ever" (Hebrews 6:20)
- 10 Fare poorly
- 11 Negative, old style
- 16 Sup
- 18 Twirls
- 20 Got goosebumps

Last week's solution

1	A	M	A	N	A	6	K	I	T	E	S		
11	R	E	F	I	N	E	S	N	E	E	Z	E	
14	M	E	T	N	L	H	I	E	R	A			
18	S	T	D	U	S	T	O	F	F	A	L		
23	B	E	L	I	E	V	E	R	S				
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38	F	O	L	L	O	W	E	R	S				
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# GEORGETOWN

COLLEGE

## Ministry Reunion 2006

"One generation shall praise your works to another and shall declare your mighty acts."

Alumni and friends of Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, will gather on campus April 24-26, 2006, to celebrate the College's heritage of Christian ministry. This once-in-history event will unite one generation of students with another, drawn together by the common call to gospel ministry.

Reunion events include a *Worship Celebration* featuring Jim Henry and Karen Thomas Smith; a *Reception for Campus Ministers* Glenn Yarborough, Bob and Edie Fields, Jack Birdwhistell, and Sharon Felton; a *Scholars Forum* featuring GC alumni Jim Somerville, David Wheeler, Joe Price, Frank Birch Brown, Jason Springs, and Terry Clark; a *Reunion Choir* featuring the music of Mary Ellen Kerrick, and a *Reception for Missionaries*.

**Don't be left out!**  
**Learn more and register online:**  
<http://ministry.georgetowncollege.edu>  
 Or phone: (502) 863-7047

## Students use spring break to blitz build Morehead home



**PLENTY TO DO** Volunteers work on the roof and dig holes for the porch. This summer, Kentucky Changers will operate projects in Russellville, Lawrenceburg and Louisville.

**Morehead**—Fifty-five students from four colleges traveled to Morehead earlier this month to build a home for family.

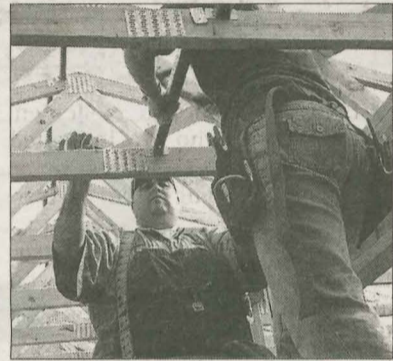
The "Kentucky Changers College Blitz" was organized by the Kentucky Baptist Convention's men on mission department.

It was coordinated with the local chapter of Habitat for Humanity, a Christian ministry that builds homes with "God's people in need."

Each summer several hundred teenagers take part in weeklong home renovation projects as part of Kentucky Changers. KBC officials launched the spring break collegiate version for Kentucky Changers in 1999.

In addition to recruiting new missions volunteers, it allows summer program alumni to continue the missions work and friendships they developed during the summer as high school students.

This year's project involved students from the University of



**TRUSS WORK** John Marc Hensley (left), the director of University of the Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach ministry, works in the rafters.



**RAISE THE WALLS** Volunteers put an exterior wall in place during the Kentucky Changers Blitz Build in Morehead, March 8-18. Volunteers from four colleges took part in the effort. (Photos by Elaine Koch)

Louisville, Alice Lloyd College in Pippa Passes, University of the Cumberlands in Williamsburg and Hopkinsville Community College.

Teams worked a minimum of three days during the "blitz build," March 8-18. After busy days at work, the students gathered in the evening for worship.

When students arrived at the home site, only the foundation was poured. By the time they left, the exterior walls had been raised, siding had been installed, many interior walls had been built and the structure was ready for electrical and plumbing work.



Organizers said participation was down compared to last year because many colleges took volun-



**SIDING** Josh Price (right) secures vinyl siding. He is the son of Valerie Price, the new homeowner. The project was done in cooperation with Habitat for Humanity.

teers to the Gulf Coast to help families affected by Hurricane Katrina.

This summer, Kentucky Changers will operate projects in Russellville, Lawrenceburg and Louisville. For more information, call the KBC men on mission department toll-free at (866) 489-3527.

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## Meet some of the class of 2006, part 3

### Student learns responsibility and that he can make good grades after all

It is not often that we meet a student who has had legal problems, but "Shane" (not his real name) was just such a boy. His court-designated worker knew that Shane was spiraling out of control and would have a crash landing if something did not change quickly.

After hearing about Oneida Baptist Institute, his parents called us and told us why Shane needed to be here. They said, "Shane is not doing his schoolwork, his room is always messy, he is disrespectful and was skipping some classes at school." None of this was much different from some of our students. Shane's parents had separated, and he was not making good decisions without the support of a complete family.

His parents told us Shane had not been using drugs. But when we talked with him, Shane readily admitted to using drugs, though not often, for the past year. Asked about his suspensions, he told us he had many in-school suspensions and even a couple of home suspensions. He also told us he wanted to bring his grades up and to improve his behavior. He has been with us for three years now, and here is part of what he wrote in his senior essay:

"My first impression of the school was like most people's: 'Where in the world am I?' Still I was happy to be in this school. ... I remember why I ended up coming to Oneida. ... I was always a troublemaker, and proud of it. When I got to high school I went a little overboard. I hung out with the worst of the crowds and I never went to school.

"My counselor told my parents of a school

called OBI. She knew a friend who had her son at OBI and he straightened up. ... After about two months of thinking about it, I realized that I didn't want to end up like my friends. So, I made the decision to come to Oneida. During the last three years I have learned a lot about myself. I have learned that I am actually smart. In my old school some of the teachers told me that I was stupid and would never amount to anything. After so many teachers told me this, I started to believe them, until I came here. The faculty here is really something special. OBI teachers actually cared about me and were willing to sacrifice their time to help me. They told me that everybody has the potential to succeed. At first it was hard to make good grades, but after a while I made good grades.

"I really looked up to 'Mr. J.' (Oneida's work program supervisor). I loved working for him. While on the work program I eventually became a supervisor and was in charge of other workers. It was a great feeling to know that things were getting done because of my supervision. During my senior year I had two jobs.

"Another person I would really like to thank is Mr. Saldaris. ... He is one of the most caring people I have ever met. I am not sure if he realizes it or not, but if it were not for him many students would not make it. He has helped us to not get into trouble. This school has changed me. I now have good grades and my GPA has gone from a 1.0 to a 3.0. I have also changed as a person. I know I will always think of Oneida and remember the times I have enjoyed here."

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



W.F. Underwood

## Ready to work until Christ comes again

### Two Clear Creek students' sister comes to Christ

Tennessee students Paul and Kirk Kirkemide often asked us to pray for their sister Shirley. Here is some of her testimony she wrote to share at church.

"Last year my house in Mancos, Colo., sold, against all odds, and I thought that must be a miracle from God, even though I wasn't a Christian and didn't believe God particularly cared for me.

"My brothers, Paul and Kirk, were constantly witnessing to me of the miracles and joy in their lives. They had both been saved from the gates of hell—lives of drugs and destruction. After I sold my house, one of them said, 'Just wait; you ain't seen nothing yet!' I thought, 'OK' and went on about the business of my unchristian life.

"Last year, I had unsuccessfully searched online for an old friend, a helicopter pilot in the Vietnam era. A veteran saw my e-mail query and offered help. At the time, I was heavily burdened with mental and physical illness; my heart was full of deceit. My family life and work were in shambles.

"With the help of the veteran, I learned my pilot friend had died

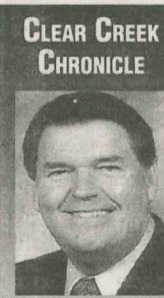
in a plane crash 26 years ago. This news pushed me into even greater despair. This veteran, a Christian, was sent by God to guide me through this first part of my journey.

"For eight days I struggled in turmoil and unrest, reading the Bible, asking questions, praying; not getting much sleep or food.

On Jan. 8, 2006, I let go of my fears, confessed my sins to God and let my miserable unchristian body and life die. I spent the rest of that day reading my Bible, praying, talking with the Christian man online and feeling waves of God's love and peace.

"Then I saw the light of God's love shining through all the people God had used to guide me, all who had witnessed to me and had never given up on me. Now everything is different. I see God's world with different eyes.

"So here I am, standing on my wobbly new Christian legs, ready to start the work I will need to continue until Christ comes again."



Bill Whittaker

Bill Whittaker is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, Pineville, KY 40977; (606) 337-3196

# Worldwide persecution

*Afghan Christian not the only one punished for converting, observers say*

By Hannah Elliott  
Associated Baptist Press

**Jacksonville, Fla. (ABP)**—As Afghan Abdul Rahman seeks safety in Italy after dodging a death sentence for converting from Islam to Christianity, other Christians worldwide continue to face extreme persecution from countrymen who oppose their beliefs.

Rahman's case gained national media attention, but thousands of others facing similar plights go unnoticed, according to organizations like Voice of the Martyrs, a non-denominational agency devoted to helping persecuted Christians.

Todd Nettleton, director of news services for the Oklahoma-based group, said Rahman's case gained an unusual amount of media attention partly because of how it emerged. In Rahman's case, the presiding judge explained the situation on national TV in Afghanistan, which garnered media attention. International protests soon followed.

"From there, it just sort of exploded," Nettleton told Associated Baptist Press, noting that the presence of U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan added to Americans' interest. "It just sort of stuck in everybody's craw."

## Constitutional confusion

The new Afghan constitution, drafted since the American invasion in 2001, protects religious freedom. But another section establishes Islam as the supreme law of the land. That ambiguity, coupled with local Afghan leaders wielding additional authority, leaves Christian converts vulnerable.

Although Rahman escaped execution, other Christian converts do not, says Carl Moeller, president of California-based Open Doors.

"In most places where Christians face persecution for their faith, it's by mobs or their family," Moeller said. "Honor killing ... is a cultural phenomenon. We know of hundreds of Christians who die in this way every year."

Some persecution goes unpunished—especially in Muslim areas like the Sudan and Saudi Arabia—because of the dishonor families face when a family member converts. To avoid that deep disgrace, non-Christian families or neighbors often take it upon themselves to kill the new Christian, Moeller said.

## Other countries

Although the gravity of Rahman's ordeal sparked international interest, Afghanistan doesn't top most organizations' lists of countries most dangerous for Christians. That distinction goes to such hot-spots as North Korea, Saudi Arabia and China, according to private and government organizations.

Experts estimate roughly 200 million Christians worldwide suffer interrogation, arrest or even death for their faith, while 200 million to 400 million more face discrimination and alienation on a regular basis.

Besides North Korea, Saudi Arabia and China, most groups list Iran, Afghanistan, Somalia, Vietnam and Yemen as particularly dangerous for Christians.

But just because a nation doesn't make the top 10 doesn't mean it's



safe for new converts.

Indonesia remains a dangerous country for Christian converts as well. Open Doors reported more than 600 churches were destroyed and more than 20,000 people were killed in Muslim-Christian clashes in Indonesia in recent years.

## First step: Pray

In the face of such maltreatment, Moeller said, concerned Christians should pray for their foreign brothers and sisters.

Nettleton agreed. "I think the first thing that we can do is pray. That's always the first step," he said. "The next step is to educate yourself."

Both Nettleton and Moller encourage those who are interested to write and call government representatives on behalf of the incarcerated.

In some cases, concerned parties can write directly to those who are jailed. Several organizations, including Voice of the Martyrs, publish names and addresses of incarcerated Christians.

Observers say such an outpouring for Rahman made a difference.

"Thousands of people actually sent letters and called the Afghan embassy for the Rahman case," Nettleton said, "so much so that they actually posted on their Web site, 'Yes, we have heard you.'"

**SENTENCED TO DEATH**  
Afghan Abdul Rahman gained worldwide attention when a court sentenced him to death for converting from Islam. Under mounting international pressure, the government released him and he is seeking asylum in Italy. Rahman said he became a Christian while working for an aid group helping Afghan refugees in Pakistan 15 years ago. (RNS/Reuters photo)

## Eco-palms for Palm Sunday celebration?

**Washington (RNS)**—Combining ecology and theology, hundreds of churches are choosing "eco-palms" for their Palm Sunday services this year.

Lutheran World Relief is promoting palm fronds that preserve the environment and livelihood of Mexican and Guatemalan harvesters.

Agricultural experts at the University of Minnesota are working with an exporter that has taught harvesters how to procure the crop with less waste and fewer middlemen, in hopes that the plants and the harvesters' jobs can last for years.

Proponents of eco-palms say typical harvesting led to a focus on quantity, not quality, leaving harvesters with small earnings while threatening wildlife that thrive in the shaded forests where the palms grow.

The 22-cents-per-stem price is more than double what other stems can cost, but it includes 5 cents that helps the Latin American communities with development projects such as providing health care.

## Study: Intercessory prayer has no major effect on recovering cardiac patients

**Oklahoma City (RNS)**—A major study of Christian intercessory prayer for cardiac patients has found no significant effect on reducing complications, but patients who knew they were receiving the prayer had a slightly higher rate of complications.

The study comes after at least five previous studies that found varying results. Three did not report success with intercessory prayer but two did.

The latest study, released last week, was the most extensive. It involved 1,802 coronary artery bypass graft surgery patients from six hospitals who were divided into three groups: 604 received intercessory prayer after learning they might or might not be prayed for by others; 597 did not receive prayer after being told they might or might not receive it; 601 received intercessory prayer after learning they would receive it.

Investigators found that complications occurred in 52 percent of the first group, 51 percent of the second group and 59 percent in the third group.

"Our trial cannot be generalized to all forms of intercessory prayer,"

cautioned Dr. Charles Bethea, a principal investigator from Integris Baptist Medical Center in Oklahoma City. "But the role of awareness needs careful further study."

He said it is possible that patients' knowledge that they were the subject of intercessory prayer "might have induced a form of performance anxiety or made them feel doubtful about their outcome."

Dean Marek, director of chaplain services at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., said another possible cause for the different results is that patients who were prayed for "thought they were home free and discounted the traumatic effect that surgery has upon the body, so were ill-prepared for it."

The study, published this week in *The American Heart Journal*, analyzed patients between January 1998 and November 2000. Two Catholic groups and one Protestant group were given patients' first name and the first initial of their last name and asked to pray for them for two straight weeks, starting the night before the scheduled surgery.

## Barna finds highest rate of 'born again' Americans in 25-year history

**Ventura, Calif. (BP)**—The proportion of adults who fall into the "born again Christian" category based on their beliefs is at the highest rate ever measured in the Barna Group's 25-year history.

"The same tracking survey shows us that people's faith is not at all deep, but at least more people are becoming attuned to the importance of the life, death, resurrection and message of Jesus Christ," George Barna said.

The organization found that 45 percent of all adults met the criteria the research group uses to classify people as "born again," meaning they have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in their life today and believe that when they die they will go to heaven because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as their Savior.

In 1983, the number of born-again Christians was just 31 percent of the total adult population, Barna said.

"The percentage hovered in the 36 percent to 43 percent range from 1992 through 2005, (but) the current figure represents the largest single-year increase since 1991-1992," the Barna Group reported.

"Faith is a progressive journey, so we are hopeful that the recent surge in the number of adults who say they have committed themselves to following Jesus Christ is the first in a series of steps toward maturity in their faith and relationship with Christ," Barna said.

Evangelicals represent 9 percent of the adult population, non-evangelical born again adults make up 36 percent, notional Christians stand at 36 percent and adults aligned with other faiths comprise less than 10 percent of the population, according to Barna.

## HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Bob Morrison

The most cherished Christian truth lies in the Easter Resurrection.

Although the world has tried to divert attention from the truth of Easter, the best description of how we are redeemed still lies in that single event. Christians alone claim a resurrected Savior who demonstrated power over death, hell and the grave.

**The crucifixion was not what it seemed.**

While some may say it was an unceremonious end to one's life, it was in fact the only way to victory. The Bible teaches that "apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin" (Hebrews 9:22) and that only the "blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

**The power of Christianity's claim is clearly seen in the risen Christ.** Christians alone can say that Jesus reigns on the throne of God, He reigns in the believer's heart and He will reign forever in eternity. The Bible clearly teaches that Jesus has prepared a place for us so that we can live with Him forever. This salvation is by God's grace. Nothing says that more clearly than the Easter celebration.

**Easter is the culmination of God's great plan to provide for us, save us and redeem us.** Jesus saw us in our sin and came to rescue us with His own life. He freely laid down His life in death so that we could gain redemption.

He provided the means—grace. He provided the motive—love. He provided the act—crucifixion. He provided the method—His blood. He provided the result—salvation. He provided the place—heaven. And all He requires of us is to repent of our sins and trust Him. What a Savior. Easter should be the easiest time of year for Christians to share their faith. Go *joye* therefore.

Bob Morrison, director of missions for Little Bethel Baptist Association, is president of the Kentucky Directors of Missions Fellowship

## MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BENTON**—John Shultz recently resigned as pastor of New Bethel Church to serve a church in Florida.

Walnut Street Church recently called Aaron Harper as youth director.

■ **BEREA**—Silver Creek Church will hold revival services April 9-12 with Kenny Felty as evangelist. Tim Roberts is pastor.

■ **ELIZABETHTOWN**—Severns Valley Association recently called Raymond Ward as interim director of missions.

■ **FLORENCE**—Greenview Church will hold revival services April 23, 10:50 a.m. and 6 p.m., and April 24-26, 7 p.m., with Dave Simpson of Fort Thomas as evangelist.

■ **HARLAN**—Kelly Street Church will hold revival services April 10-13 with Dave Hammond, pastor of Faith Church of Myra, as evangelist.

■ **IRVINE**—Thomas Church recently called Ricky Kirby as interim pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—Ann Tatum, longtime secretary and receptionist for the Western Recorder, died March 29. She was 72. Tatum, a member of Crescent Hill Church, retired in 1998 after more than 40 years on the Western Recorder staff. She is survived by three sisters and one brother. Her memorial service was held April 1 at Crescent Hill Church. Memorial gifts may be made to the Alzheimer's Association.

South Jefferson Church called Thomas Francis as pastor effective June 4. Jim England is interim pastor.

### Spotlight on ...

#### Frankfort



Crestwood Church will celebrate its 64th anniversary and homecoming April 23 with worship services at 8:30 and 11 a.m. and homecoming celebration at 3 p.m. For information, call (502) 695-2088. Wallace Kent is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Oaklawn Church will host Gold City in concert April 23, 1:30 p.m. For information, call (270) 442-1513. Thomas Williams is pastor.

Park Avenue Church recently called Chris Bolt as pastor.

■ **PEMBROKE**—Pembroke Church will present the dramatic Easter musical, "More than Just a Man," April 14-15, 7:30 p.m. For information, call (270) 475-4125. Jack Studie is pastor.

■ **PILGRIM**—Mount Beulah Church will hold revival services April 7-9, 7 p.m., with Lloyd Hopper as evangelist.

■ **WEST PADUCAH**—Harmony Church recently called Stephen Seaford as interim pastor.

■ **WINGO**—Higher Ground Church recently called Tim Whitley as Christian education director and Esther Whitley as children/youth director.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### April

7-8 Collegiate Leadership Training, Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville.

7-8 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Northside Baptist Church, Mount Vernon.

10 Connecting with Guests and New Members, Crestwood Baptist Church, Crestwood.

13 Connecting with Guests and New Members, First Baptist Church, Prestonsburg.

21-23 All-State Children's Choir, Cedarmore.

21-22 Kentucky WMU Annual Meeting, Harrodsburg Baptist Church.

22 Girls in Action/Children in Action Missions Event, Harrodsburg Baptist Church.

24-25 Developing & Managing People Workshop, Baptist Building, Louisville.

28 Children's Bible Drill, Immanuel Baptist Church, Lexington.

28-29 Literacy Conference, First Baptist Church, Somerset.

29 Children's Bible Drill, Rose Hill Baptist Church, Ashland; and St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.

29 Regional Keyboard Festival, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

### May

1 Adults 50+ Living Celebrations, Central Baptist Church, Corbin.

2 Adults 50+ Living Celebration, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.

4 Adults 50+ Living Celebration, First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

4 "Next Level" Ministry Workshop, Broadway Baptist Church, Lexington.

5 Children's Bible Drill, Lone Oak First Baptist Church, Paducah; and First Baptist Church, Somerset.

5-7 Equestrian Trail Ride, Mammoth Cave.

6 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green; and First Baptist Church, Madisonville.

6 Woman's Missionary Union Leadership Training for Associational Leaders, First Baptist Church, Central City.

13 Regional Keyboard Festival, St. Matthews Baptist Church, Louisville.

15 "The Word Became Flesh" Workshop, Second Baptist Church, Madisonville.

16 "The Word Became Flesh" Workshop, Long Run Baptist Association Office, Louisville.

17 "The Word Became Flesh" Workshop, Allen Baptist Church, Prestonsburg.

18 "The Word Became Flesh" Workshop, Trinity Baptist Church, Lexington.

22 Women of Worth Lifestyle Evangelism Conference, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.

22-24 Kentucky Baptist Youth Ministry Association Spring Retreat, Bullittsburg Retreat Center, Petersburg.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit [www.kybaptist.org](http://www.kybaptist.org)

## CLASSIFIED ADS

**BOOKS:** We buy quality used Christian books. Christian Book Nook, 2116 South Preston St., Louisville, Ky. (502) 637-8881.

**FOR SALE:** Christian and patriotic neckties; retail value: \$12-\$15; your cost: \$6; great fundraiser; postage paid. Humor book: "500 Laughter Doeth Good Like a Medicine" \$8. (606) 285-3051.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth pastor for Stanford Baptist Church. Interested candidates send resumés to: Search Committee, Stanford Baptist Church, 204 Church St., Stanford, KY 40484.

**SEEKING:** Full-time associate minister for youth for Thalia Lynn Baptist Church. Send resumé to: TLBC, 912 Ashbrook Court, Virginia Beach, VA 23462. E-mail: Youth@ThaliaLynn.com.

**SEEKING:** Immediate opening for full-time director of music and children (through 5th grade) for Elkton Baptist Church located in Todd County, Ky. Applicants should be experienced and dedicated. Resumés may be sent to Elkton Baptist Church, PO Box 547, Elkton, KY 42220.

**SEEKING:** Part-time children's minister for Brookside Baptist Church. Primary duties would be to lead activities on Sundays and Wednesdays. Send resumé to Pastor Jason Glenn, Brookside Baptist Church, 1351 Wilmore Road, Nicholasville, KY 40390; or e-mail to Jason@brookside-baptist.org

**SEEKING:** Supervisor of safety and security. Responsible for daily security, alarm systems and other related duties. Law enforcement, college degree or similar supervisory in security experience required. Please send resumé to: The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2825 Lexington Road, Louisville, KY 40280, Attn: Personnel; or e-mail to: personnel@sbt.edu.

**SEEKING:** Full-time associate pastor with emphasis on youth for FBC of East Bernstadt, Ky. Send resumé to FBC, PO Box 266, East Bernstadt, KY 40729, Attn: Search Committee.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for Dry Ridge Baptist Church in Dry Ridge, Ky. Dry Ridge Baptist Church is a Southern Baptist church in a fast-growing community. Average weekly worship attendance is 200-plus. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 14, Dry Ridge, KY 41035; or e-mail to: office@dryridgebaptist.com.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor of students, missions and evangelism. For a complete job description and for contact information, please visit our Web site at rykersridge.org.

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister (paid position; grades 6-12) for Mexico Baptist Church in rural western Kentucky. Average Sunday school attendance: 135. Send resumé to MBC Youth Council, 175 Mexico Road, Marion, KY 42064, Attn: Brent Highfil, or call (270) 965-2149. turnerchandler@hotmail.com.

**SEEKING:** Worship leader and pianist for Lynn Camp Baptist Church. All interested please contact pastor carl@charter.net or call (606) 528-8410.

**SEEKING:** Associate pastor with emphasis on youth and worship for First Baptist Church of Bethany, Mo., affiliated with the MBC and SBC. Some experience would be preferred. This is a full-time position with benefits. Send resumé with references to: First Baptist Church, 302 North 22nd St., Bethany, MO 64424, Attn: Personnel Committee. You may e-mail your resumé to fbc@mail.com (please use Microsoft Word or pdf for your files).

**SEEKING:** Part-time youth minister for Jeffersontown Baptist Church. Our Uptown program offers a tremendous opportunity to build relationships with unchurched youth in hopes of sharing the gospel. Strong discipleship skills needed. Contact Pastor Sanford Hill at (502) 905-3779 or mail resumé to Jeffersontown Baptist Church, 10011 Taylorsville Road, Jeffersontown, KY 40299.

**SEEKING:** Full-time pastor for growing country church averaging 160 in SS and 263 in worship. We're an extremely loving and caring body of Christ focused on reaching the lost for our Savior. Mail resumé to: Bellevue Baptist Church, 6658 Fifth St., Burlington, KY 41005, Attn: Carol Rudicill.

**SEEKING:** Senior pastor for FBC, Dixon, Mo. (300-plus members, 4 full-time staff, blended worship). Online: [www.dixonfbc.com](http://www.dixonfbc.com). Resumé: Pastor Search Committee, FBC Dixon, PO Box 269, Dixon, MO 65459; or contact hhawkins@Waynesville.k12.mo.us.

**SEEKING:** Petrey Memorial Baptist Church in Hazard, Ky., is accepting resumés for the position of pastor. Please send resumés and videotape to: Pastor Search Team, 141 Alto St., Hazard, KY 41701. Visit our Web site at petreymemorial.org.

**SEEKING:** Full-time youth director for First Baptist Church, Hayti, Mo. \$28,000 plus insurance. Send resumés to: Youth Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 201 East Lincoln, Hayti, MO 63851.

**SEEKING:** Part-time administrative assistant/circulation clerk for the Western Recorder. Mail resumé to Janet McIntosh, PO Box 43969, Louisville, KY 40253. For more information, call (502) 489-3428.

**SERVICES:** Trinity Janitorial Services is available to provide janitorial services to churches. Licensed/insured, praiseworthy references with 20 years of experience. If you need cleaning done, please call: (502) 227-4795, 229-3883; or e-mail: chrljtr@aol.com.

**SERVICES:** Christian long distance at 3.9¢/minute (24/7); no monthly service charge. Toll-free: (866) 587-8346 or [www.covenantphoneservice.com](http://www.covenantphoneservice.com).

# Fisher of men and bass

*Challenges can't prevent pro fisherman from reeling them in*

By George Henson  
Texas Baptist Standard

Rocwall, Texas—Clay Dyer has a dream job. He believes without a doubt God called him to become a professional fisherman—and not only the “fisher of men” variety.

Making his living with a rod and reel and tricked-out bass boat, Dyer's life is the kind most men would envy, except for one thing. He was born with no legs, no left arm, and his right arm stops above the elbow.

Dyer determined early to “take lemons and make lemonade,” he said. At age 4 or 5, he began to realize other children could run and do things he couldn't, but that didn't stop him from playing their games.

He played t-ball and basketball. Always he used the same equipment as everyone else because he didn't want special allowances.

The same is the case of the pro fishing tour. His reels, lures and boat are just like anyone else's with no special equipment or tailoring.

He started fishing for catfish and bream at age 5 and began fishing in tournaments at about 14.

“I've tried not to ever let adversity get me down, but push through the adversity,” he said.

“There came a time when I real-



**TONGUE TIED** Dyer admits he regularly hooks himself tying his own lures.

ized either I can choose to be independent, or I can be codependent and have someone else meet all my needs. I decided I wanted to be independent and show people that I could do things.”

One of the things he did was go to church with his family, but said like many young men, he went through a period in his teen years when he did things he regrets now.

The June after his high school graduation, he was invited to a youth rally where he made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ.

Since then, he said, he has never looked back. “When you feel that much power, that much peace, there's no words to describe it to let anyone know how I felt.”

## A vision of patches

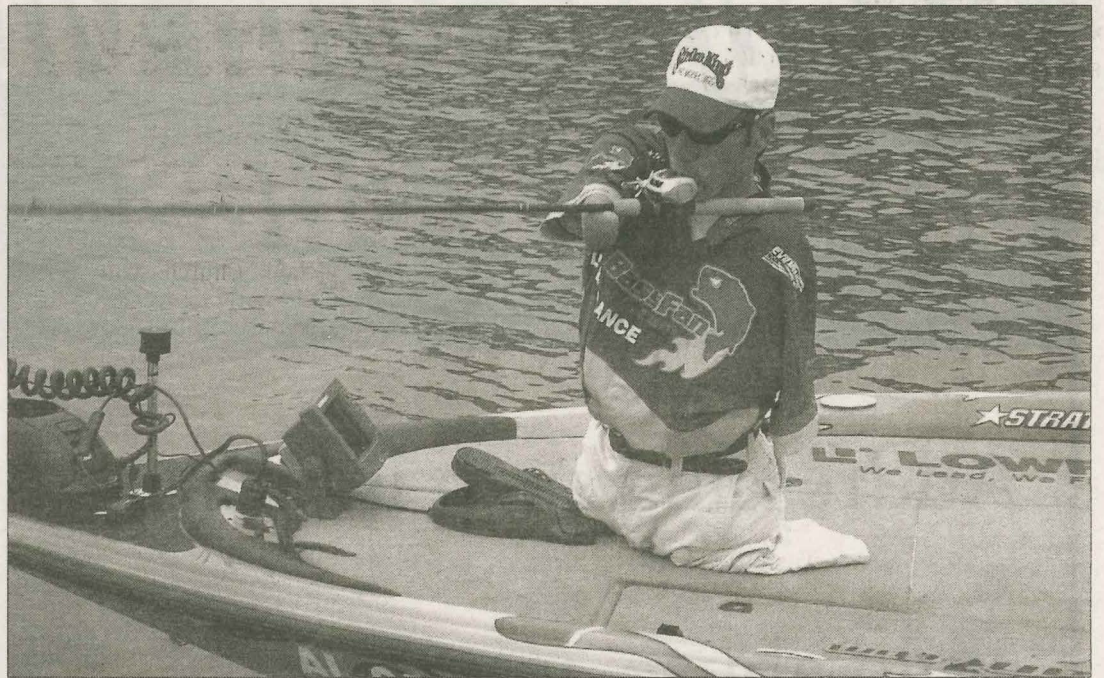
Dyer describes the last 10 years as “the most incredible ride” imaginable. Soon after his conversion, he asked God how He wanted to use him. He vividly remembers a dream in which he saw himself in a shirt with sponsor patches all over it.

“The only two types of people who I had ever seen wearing those kind of shirts were professional fishermen and NASCAR drivers, and I had a feeling it wasn't NASCAR,” he said with a grin.

But there was an obstacle.

“Pro bass fishing takes two things, one of which I did not have. It takes a whole lot of commitment and it takes a big-time sponsor, because it takes a whole lot of money,” he said.

That year, he took all the money he had and competed in the Alabama state championship bass tournament. There he found sponsors willing to back him financially.



“It's not about the national exposure for Clay Dyer, but a means of drawing people to Christ,” he said. “People ask me why I fish, and I tell them, it's my witnessing field, my platform for testifying about what God has done in my life and what He can do in other people's lives.”

While he loves fishing, he says it's more important that he knows he is in the center of God's will for his life. “I ask God each day, ‘God, is this your will for my life?’ And over and over, He has confirmed it for me.”

Not only has God allowed him to be a witness on the weigh-in stand, but also in the boats with his fellow competitors, many of whom are not Christian.

Dyer has fished primarily in the Stren fishing series, but also has competed in big-time Wal-Mart FLW events as well.

## Sharing his faith

He's had 25 first place finishes and another 25 to 30 top 10 fin-

ishes during his career—quite an accomplishment for a guy who ties on lures many times each day using only his mouth and tongue.

Dyer tells churches and men's groups that he regularly hooks himself as he constantly must retie different lures to be competitive. He does it, he says, so that he can catch enough fish to make the competition event's weigh-in stand, where he can be a witness for Christ.

“I sometimes then ask (church groups) what kind of effort they are willing to go through so that they can testify to the power of Christ.”

One question he often gets is whether he ever was angry at God for the body he was given. He replies that he honestly never has been.

“I don't like drawing attention to myself, but I've often felt like God has made me this way so He could use me the way He wanted,” Dyer said. “If I had been born differently, I probably wouldn't have the opportunities I've had.”

## DETERMINATION

Professional fisherman Clay Dyer learned determination at an early age—a lesson he often shares when he speaks to church groups. (Baptist Standard photos by George Henson)

## Missionaries to hand out solar-powered ‘Godpods’ to share gospel

By Anne Pessala  
Religion News Service

Silver Spring, Md. (RNS)—Seventh-day Adventists have found a new use for personal digital audio players: bringing the Bible to remote parts of Africa.

Adventist World Radio and the It Is Written television network have formed separate partnerships with MegaVoice, producers of an iPod-like device officially called the Ambassador but informally dubbed the “GodPod.”

The project could provide a model for religious and secular humanitarian groups wanting to distribute information to illiterate or visually impaired people.

Seventh-day Adventist officials say missionaries will give out devices loaded with Christian content recorded in local languages.

They will distribute the solar-powered “GodPods” in the Kalahari Desert—the dry, sandy swath of land covering parts of Botswana, Namibia and South Africa—as well as parts of northern Africa.

It Is Written and Adventist World Radio are the television and radio ministries of the Seventh-day Adven-



**“THE AMBASSADOR”** The digital audio players, preloaded with Christian content, will be distributed in North Africa. (RNS photo courtesy of MegaVoice)

tist Church, a Protestant denomination with more than 14 million believers worldwide.

Adventist World Radio's version of the “GodPod” will be distributed in southern Sudan and other parts of North Africa.

The recordings on the device will initially be available in four languages, and the radio network plans to add three more once the program

is established.

The device is designed to be as durable as possible. It has no moving parts that can wear out or break, runs on solar-charged batteries, and has simple controls that can be easily understood by users who may be illiterate or visually impaired.

The Ambassador costs \$23.50 to \$62, with prices varying based on the device's memory, the length of the content played and the quantity purchased.

## Durable & distributable

For missionaries and humanitarian groups, the Ambassador offers another advantage. Unlike cassettes that can be taped over, or a regular MP3 player that the user could try to sell, the Ambassador's content can be changed only by the distributor.

MegaVoice loads the initial content during production, and can add further messages for additional fees if the missionaries ship the devices back to the company. Missionaries also can purchase programming equipment from the company and reload the devices on location.

Adventist World Radio President Ben Schoun says the device encour-

ages regular contact between missionaries and listeners.

“Rather than just giving the devices permanently ... we also want to ... keep in touch with (users) so we can give them new material from time to time so we can see how they're doing and see their responses,” Schoun said.

MegaVoice marketing and sales representative Charles Cibene says the Ambassador's sturdy construction and the content controls have attracted several secular organizations trying to distribute instructional audio programs. The company has also produced a modified model, for the retail market, loaded with the Bible.

Cibene stated that while MegaVoice works with secular as well as faith-based organizations, “We just want to ensure that the messages that are put on the players ... (meet) a certain standard.”

He sees other applications beyond missionary work.

“It could be used for language training, for public health care, for tourism,” Cibene said. “It has several different applications that have come out since we first designed it.”

# Connecting Kentucky Baptists with vital current issues

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