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FOR THE RECORD

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Court dismisses ACLU case aimed at Boy Scouts

Chicago (RNS)—A federal appeals court has dismissed a lawsuit brought by the American Civil Liberties Union that challenged the U.S. Department of Defense's support of the Boy Scouts of America and their national jamboree.

The April 4 decision ended a dispute that began in 1999 when the ACLU filed suit claiming the "Boy Scouts' policy requiring religious oaths" violated the separation of church and state.

The ACLU objected to the Defense Department letting the Scouts hold their national Jamboree at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia every four years because the Scouts' oath reads in part: "On my honor I will do my best to do my duty to God and to my country."

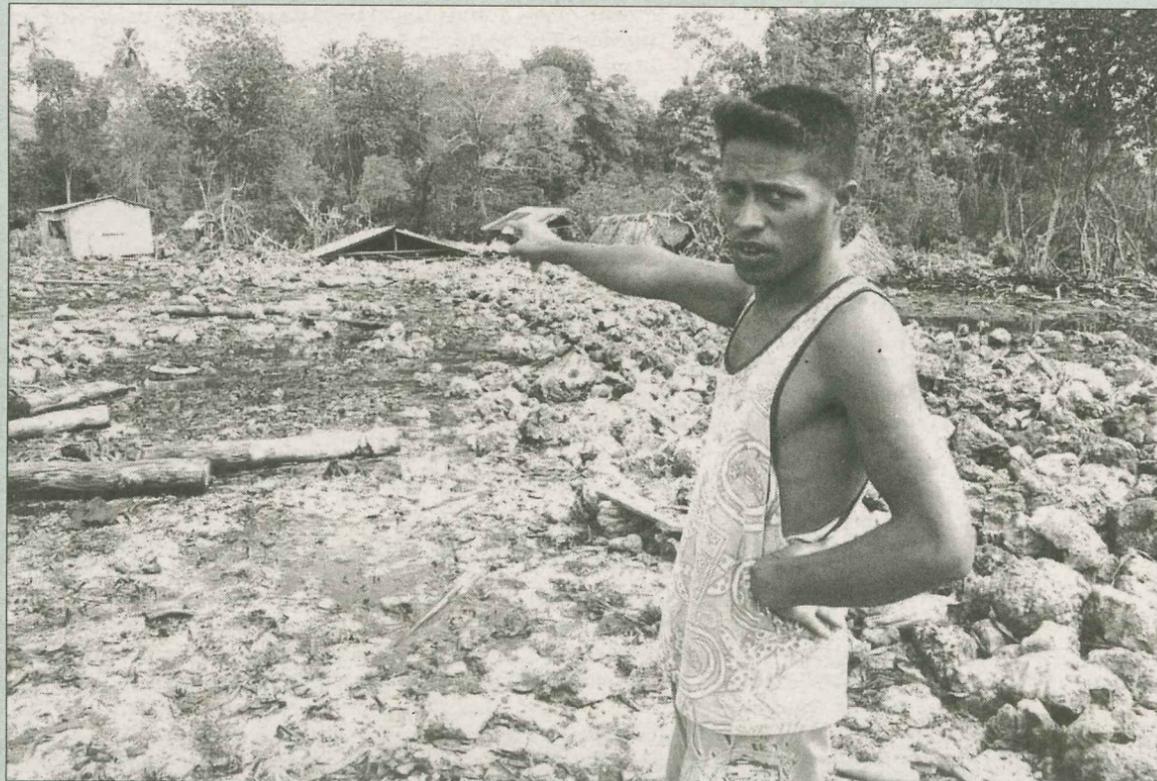
A lower court had ruled that a 1972 law that allowed the Defense Department to support the Scouts was unconstitutional because it advanced religion on government property. The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals rejected that ruling and called the statute "an exercise of Congress' powers under the military."

"Although some support of the organization does occur, the (Jamboree) statute does not turn money or services over to BSA to handle any way it wants," the court said.

The American Center for Law and Justice had filed a brief on behalf of 90 members of Congress asking for the case to be dismissed.

"We're delighted that the federal appeals court reached the proper conclusion in this case," said Jay Sekulow, the ACLU's chief counsel. "The military provides the Boy Scouts with support and services that aid both the military and the Scouts without endorsing religion."

Tsunami relief



More than 50,000 people were left homeless in the Solomon Islands when a massive earthquake triggered a tsunami in the South Pacific April 2. Initial reports indicated at least 30 people were killed. The death toll was expected to rise as communications is restored and reports are received from isolated villages. On April 3, international aid began reaching survivors of the tsunami, which reportedly was as high as 16 feet at the town of Gizo. At least 13 villages were destroyed, and government officials warned a humanitarian crisis threatens thousands of people who fled inland without food or other basic necessities. The Solomons are made up of more than 200 islands on the "Ring of Fire," a group of volcanos in the South Pacific where earthquakes are common. ■ Above: Prince Phillip, a 27-year-old fisherman, points to the scene in Gizo where the bodies of his mother-in-law and a baby were recovered under the debris of a house destroyed by the 8.1 earthquake and tsunami. ■ Left: A house in Titiana was swept more than 40 yards from its concrete block foundation. (RNS photos by Kyodo News via Newscom and by Tanya Rad/World Vision)

LifeWay effort helps expand True Love Waits message in Africa

By Don Beehler
 Baptist Press

Nashville (BP)—True Love Waits International will expand its abstinence-until-marriage message in six African countries, using \$950,000 in donor gifts to LifeWay Christian Resources' "A Defining Moment" capital campaign, LifeWay President Thom Rainer announced April 11.

"Although HIV/AIDS is a concern worldwide, the most concentrated and high-risk area continues to be the continent of Africa, where the life expectancy in some countries has dropped from age 42 to as low as age 30," Rainer said. "We are very pleased to make this announcement today because we believe True Love Waits can be the answer for the AIDS epidemic on the entire continent."

Mike Arrington, a spokesman for the LifeWay capital campaign, voiced appreciation for "gifts of generous donors to A Defining Moment," enabling True Love Waits to

expand "in a continent where AIDS is literally a life-and-death battle. God has given us a program that not only is very effective but also can easily be multiplied."

Since its introduction in Uganda 13 years ago, True Love Waits has been a catalyst for bringing people together to address the AIDS crisis and spread the message of sexual purity to schools, youth groups and communities. In the years that followed, Uganda's HIV/AIDS infection rate dropped from 30 percent to about 6 percent of the country's 25 million people.

Saving a generation in Uganda

"Some leaders in Uganda say that this turnaround has literally saved a generation," said Jimmy Hester, co-founder of the True Love Waits movement. "We believe that expanding True Love Waits to other parts of Africa has the potential of dramatically lowering the HIV/AIDS infec-

tion rate in those countries as well."

Larry and Sharon Pumpelly, the missionaries who introduced True Love Waits in Uganda in 1994, are working with Hester and the LifeWay True Love Waits team on the multi-country expansion—into South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, Swaziland, Botswana and Lesotho.

Hester noted that True Love Waits—through the efforts of leaders in communities impacted by the challenge of sexual activity among the youth population—can fight AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases as well as unplanned pregnancies and a number of emotional, social, psychological and spiritual problems by helping young people change their attitudes and behavior related to sexual expression.

Based on methodologies developed in Uganda, True Love Waits will establish an ongoing relationship with a key national champion in each African country who, in

turn, will build a hierarchy of teams within the country. Those teams will utilize a culturally appropriate teaching approach to spread the True Love Waits message of sexual abstinence until marriage.

"This is an intentional effort to learn from the experiences in Uganda and apply those principles to other African countries, taking into account cultural differences that exist between these countries," Hester noted.

A Defining Moment is a \$29 million philanthropic campaign initiated by LifeWay to seek to impact the world with the gospel of Christ.

In addition to True Love Waits International, the campaign is raising funds for a new translation of the Chinese Mandarin Bible; a Leadership Training Institute that will train 10,000 pastors and staff in effective leadership, ministry and personal life skills; and discipleship training in Cuba, India and Kenya.

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, April 18.

Proposals urge SBC to address sexual abuse

Arlington, Texas (ABP)—With increasing national attention on Baptist churches' problems with clergy sex abuse, two pastor/bloggers have said they intend to push for more comprehensive ways to address the issue in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Oklahoma pastor Wade Burleson and Texas pastor Benjamin Cole said they plan to present a motion and a resolution regarding clergy sexual abuse at the SBC annual meeting June 12-13 in San Antonio, Texas. The two have gained widespread attention in the past year for their blog-driven efforts to address a variety of denominational issues.

Burleson, pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Enid, Okla., said he will offer a motion calling for a study on the possibility of developing a database of Southern Baptist ministers convicted of sexual harassment and abuse. The motion will ask the SBC Executive Committee to report results from the study at the 2008 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

Cole, pastor of Parkview Baptist

Church in Arlington, Texas, will introduce a resolution titled "On Clergy Sexual Abuse."

"Southern Baptists have not fully explored every option to protect our churches and our children from the threat of potential victimization and abuse at the hands of predatory clergy," the resolution says. It also calls upon Southern Baptist churches to "pursue every possible avenue in determining the moral character and ethical conduct of ministry candidates."

Cole's proposal also urges convention agencies, institutions and commissions to "take bold steps to educate Southern Baptists concerning the indications associated with and the reporting of child victimization."

"20/20" explores clergy sex abuse

A segment on the April 13 edition of the ABC News program "20/20" focused on clergy sex abuse in the SBC and other denominations.

SBC President Frank Page appeared on the "20/20" segment. He wrote an open letter to Southern

Baptists addressing the issue of clergy sexual abuse, which he said is not "systemic or large-scale" in the denomination.

In the April 2 letter, Page said even one instance of sexual abuse is too much and urged local churches to take action against predators. He also called on churches to require background checks on national and state levels and to conduct "thorough reference checks" when hiring ministers and other church staff members.

"The local church is where accountability must be enforced," he said. "I call upon every local church to develop written policy guidelines for the care of children and youth. I call upon every church to have a system or policy in place to deal with any accusations made. Simply put, there is no place in the church for persons who would take advantage of these relationships."

Page has said theonomy of the local church is a biblical mandate, so local churches must take it upon themselves to avoid, uncover and prosecute predators.

Missouri Baptist leader fired in closed meeting

Jefferson City, Mo.—David Clippard, embattled executive director of the Missouri Baptist Convention, was fired April 10 by the convention's Executive Board.

Following the second closed-door meeting about Clippard's leadership within six months, Executive Board members voted 44-7 to terminate him immediately, according to the convention's attorney.

"This was obviously a very painful process," said Bruce McCoy, the investigative committee's chairman. "I think the vote will speak the volume of the rest of the details."

David Tolliver, a member of the convention's executive staff, was named interim executive director.

Although Clippard was hired in 2002 by conservatives who control the Missouri Baptist Convention and its Executive Board, several decisions in recent years indicated he was out of step with the majority of those leaders. In an emotional, closed-door showdown last September between Clippard and Baptist powerbroker Roger Moran, board members reportedly argued over Clippard's leadership but took no vote.

Clippard drew criticism for settling a harassment lawsuit filed against him by former convention controller Carol Kaylor. He later opposed the Executive Board's decision to contribute \$100,000 to a political coalition against embryonic stem cell research and \$200,000 to Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Southern Baptist school in Kansas City.

The executive director also drew criticism in 2004 for firing Bob Baysinger, managing editor of the convention's state Baptist paper, after the paper revealed details of a secret contingency contract to sell the Baptist Building property to Cole County for the site of a new justice center. The deal fell through when county voters turned down a proposed tax increase to fund the project.

Clippard was associate executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma when he was hired by the Missouri board to replace Jim Hill, who resigned in protest of actions taken by the Executive Board.

Because the investigative committee's report included some le-

gally sensitive matters, the board appointed MBC legal counsel Michael Whitehead as spokesman for the MBC.

The investigative committee "presented its report, making a finding of lack of confidence in the continued leadership of David Clippard as executive director" and recommended "the termination of his employment, effective immediately," Whitehead said.

The board approved severance pay equal to about four months of salary and benefits. However, discussion about the severance and other transition details are still in progress, Whitehead added.

Whitehead also noted that Clippard's termination didn't translate into a "rejection of David Clippard and his conviction to plant churches worldwide," noting that the same gifts and talents that attracted the board to Clippard in 2002 he still possesses.

"This is a hurtful time," Whitehead told board members, "but not a funeral for a man and his ministry."

Compiled from reporting by Associated Baptist Press and Baptist Press

College students serve in Cleveland PowerPlant effort

Cleveland (BP)—While many other students swarmed U.S. beaches, 120 collegians ventured to Cleveland, Ohio, for the Southern Baptist North American PowerPlant Board's first-ever PowerPlant project for college students.

PowerPlant volunteers from Kentucky, Florida, Massachusetts, Mississippi and Tennessee paid their way to Cleveland to conduct surveys, make door-to-door outreach visits and do servant evangelism.

PowerPlant is a NAMB ministry designed to engage high school, middle school and now college students in church planting and evangelism. Participants learn basic principles and skills each morning, then put them into action through ministry team activities.

PowerPlant partnered with Cleveland Hope, one of NAMB's Strategic Focus Cities initiatives, with a church-launching network that supports 19 church plants.

Jonathan Wilson, NAMB's student volunteer mobilization associate, said Cleveland's diverse population provided an international flavor for missions without having to leave the U.S.

Participants stayed at a downtown hotel and then fanned out across the city to work with seven church plants.

A number of students grappled with northeast Ohio's spiritual climate, realizing how much more challenging it is compared to their home turf, Wilson said.

"While out surveying, many doors remained closed and people were found to be unreceptive," he said. "Still, some learned that passing out doggie treats to Clevelanders with dogs opened up conversations that easily led to why the students were showing the community they care."

Sarah Edwards, the project's local ministry coordinator, said the teams saw God use them during the week.

"The seeds the students were planting during ministry time, the knowledge imparted during teaching sessions and the divine appointments that were encountered encouraged the students and blessed the church planters and their ministries," she said.

"We in Cleveland were blessed by these students and are excited to see what kind of long-term impact this week will have. Hopefully, the seeds planted in each student will make them blossom into mission-minded individuals, even future church planters."

This summer, 15 more PowerPlant projects are scheduled across North America. For more information, visit www.powerplant.net.

BAPTIST DIGEST

Southwestern seeks to dismiss lawsuit. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary has filed a motion to dismiss the gender-discrimination lawsuit filed by former professor Sheri Klouda. The motion, filed in federal court April 9, argues that the suit should be dismissed because seminary officials' decision to dismiss Klouda is protected by the First Amendment. "Any decision the seminary may take regarding the employment of one of its professors is an ecclesiastical decision, which this court is bound to accept out of deference for the free exercise of religion, protected by the First Amendment," the motion noted. It also refuted each of Klouda's claims of breach of contract, fraud and defamation. Klouda, who was hired in 2002 to teach Hebrew at the Fort Worth school, lost her job last year, allegedly because of her gender.

Wade to retire as Texas Baptist executive. Charles Wade, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas since 1999, has announced plans to retire effective Jan. 31, 2008. During Wade's tenure, the BGCT went through its most thorough reorganization in more than a half century. Governance changes streamlined decision-making processes and vested more authority in the Executive Board, which was reduced from 230 to 90 members. In his retirement announcement, Wade made no mention of a scandal involving the mismanagement of BGCT church-starting funds in South Texas. Independent investigators discovered 98 percent of the 258 new churches reported by three church planters in the Rio Grande Valley between 1999 and 2005 no longer exist, and some never existed—except on paper. Those churches had received more than

\$1.3 million from the BGCT. Wade pledged to "clean up the mess," and a special oversight group reported significant progress to the BGCT Executive Board in February.

Professor accused of investment fraud.

An economics professor at a South Carolina Baptist university was charged with fraud April 5, after federal authorities discovered \$134 million missing from investment funds he managed. Charleston Southern University economics professor Albert Parish has since claimed amnesia and reportedly checked into a nearby hospital. He and two of his investment companies face five counts of civil fraud filed by the Federal Securities and Exchange Commission. Charleston Southern trustees reportedly had invested more than \$10 million with one of Parish's firms.

KBC's first Adult Changers team renovates Baptist camp

By Erin Roach
Kentucky Baptist Convention

Winchester—A group of 32 adults from seven Kentucky Baptist churches completed extensive renovations at Boone's Creek Baptist Camp near Winchester in just three days as the first-ever adult Kentucky Changers project in the state.

Sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention, the project was held from Thursday evening to Sunday afternoon, March 22-25. The volunteers completed renovations started by a group of students the previous week during a collegiate Kentucky Changers project.

"The volunteers were amazing," noted camp manager Becky Duvall Abney. "They were here because they wanted to be, and they did so much work. It's going to affect so many children and families because the camp is here to provide a safe place for families to come and hear about the Lord Jesus Christ."

Project aids camp's ministry

The 80-acre camp was started in 1954 and is supported by the 37 churches of Boone's Creek Baptist Association. Abney said the facilities are used year-round for camps, basketball programs, roller skating parties, retreats, lock-ins and other forms of community outreach.



RENOVATION Steve Kibbons of Living Faith Baptist Church in Hartford works on a renovation project at Boone's Creek Baptist Camp during the KBC's first-ever adult Kentucky Changers project.

Volunteers from churches in Louisville, Richmond, Russellville and other areas of the state saved the camp thousands of dollars in repair costs by providing free labor and using materials donated by the association's churches.

"We put in new fixtures—new shower heads, new commodes, sinks, vanities, countertops—and painted the whole bathrooms," said Peggy Murphy, a ministry assistant for the KBC Baptist Men on Mission department and one of the volunteers. "We built a new front porch on the main building at the camp. We tore out both the boys' and the girls'

showers in the building and made new partitions for the showers.

"In the chapel, they didn't have an outside exit for the upstairs. We knocked out an opening and made a door," Murphy said. "We built a deck coming out from the second story, another deck about halfway down and a third deck from the bottom story. We cleared out probably 300 feet of brush for a picnic area around the lake, and the electricians rewired half the building."

Abney cited the renovated bathrooms and the emergency exit from the chapel as two of the most significant improvements. The bathrooms had been in need of renovation for several years, she said, and building codes had kept her from using the upstairs portion of the chapel.

Heating the gym in the winter months had been a challenge, so volunteers installed heaters that will keep children and spectators warm for the children's basketball program hosted by the camp, Abney said. This year they've had 35 kids and their families in the gym on Thursday nights for practice and Saturday mornings for games.

Each evening, the group of volunteers had a worship time at Corinth Baptist Church next to the camp. Two of the volunteers led music, and KBC youth strategist Joe Ball deliv-

ered a message.

Murphy said the KBC has been exploring ways to involve more volunteers in missions throughout the state, and adult Kentucky Changers may prove to be an effective way to accommodate work schedules.

"By having it from Thursday night to Sunday, it didn't take in everybody's work week," Murphy said. "It's a chance to do missions for the working class."

Volunteers live out faith

Kentucky Changers provides a weeklong missions experience for teenagers, college students and adults. Participants have the opportunity to live out their faith while completing light construction work for low-income families or other projects. Since the program's inception in 1994, thousands of volunteers have participated.

Feedback from the first adult Kentucky Changers project has been positive, Murphy noted.

"All we did was announce we were going to have adult Kentucky Changers, and we ended up having a plumber, an electrician and a carpenter," Murphy said. "We had about one-third skilled people" as well as several volunteers who "had never been on a mission trip in their life."

Ashland church reaches out to inmates, families

By Lee Ward
The Ashland Independent

Ashland—Ava Marie Hall is a kind of local celebrity—she's well known in the drug community as an addict.

Hall, 45, of Russell was an IV drug user for decades, shooting up any drug she could score—heroin, crack, oxycodone.

"I was pregnant at 13 and they took away my baby," she said. "I prostituted myself for food. I've lived in a cardboard box. I've been in car wrecks and I've been beaten. I lived in my car for three months."

That life of drug abuse also led to prison time. "I've been in and out of jail for years," Hall said.

Her last conviction led to her salvation. After being out of jail for just two weeks, she was arrested again in June 2005 and sentenced to 14 months in jail for trafficking LSD.

"I was very rebellious," she said of her time in jail. "I had no respect for authority and was always stirring up stuff."

In September 2005, she was saved, she said, because this time, she was ministered to by the jail ministry from Fairview Baptist Church.

"They brought in a horse trough to baptize me in," she said.

The church's 3-year-old jail ministry program has had much success. Pastor Mike Rice said the church has groups that visit with men and women in the Boyd County Detention Center as well as the federal prison. For some services and programs, there's a Spanish interpreter. Rice said more than 60 people have been baptized as a result of their work.

There's also the Celebrate Recovery program that is a crucial extension of the jail ministry program. It's not just for those who have been

in jail—it's for anyone who has a "hurt, habit or hang-up," which is just about everyone, says Richard "Butch" Kiger, senior associate pastor at Fairview Baptist and pastor of Celebrate Recovery. The program is a good follow-up to jail ministry; many former inmates have problems that led to their jail time that are addressed in Celebrate Recovery.

"We're not there to fix them, but we're there to listen to them and support them as they're going through the dark valleys of their life," Kiger said.

The evening begins with dinner together. Then, those participating adjourn to the sanctuary for a praise and worship program. Next, they divide into smaller groups for a more intimate support group setting in which each participant has the chance to talk about his or her issues, whether they're recovering alcoholics or drug addicts or their problems are codependence or eating disorders. Between 40 and 50 people attend on a typical Thursday night.

"We have a lot of family members of drug addicts who are looking for support," Kiger said.

The program is based on the concepts of "A Purpose Driven Life" by Rick Warren and makes use of the 12-step program with the addition of Scriptures that relate to each step.

The need in Ashland made itself known through concerns of members of the congregation.

"There were people who were aware of people in the community who were addicted to drugs," Rice said. "There were people who knew people who were incarcerated."

Kiger said nearly everyone who is involved with Celebrate Recovery is recovering from something. Kiger said his "hang-up" was an eating dis-

order. He underwent gastric bypass surgery and has lost more than 200 pounds.

"The people here encourage me to keep on my program," he said, "to keep my eyes on my goals."

Much has changed for Hall since she joined the church. "I have never felt more joy and peace," she said. "This is a great life."

She said she enjoys going to church and participating in Celebrate Recovery, which have been sources of strength.

"I look forward to being with positive people who lift you up and give you so much support," Hall said.

Her husband, who remains in the Greenup County Detention Center on drug charges, also joined a church.

"The day after I was baptized I got an envelope in the mail and it had pictures of him getting baptized," she said. "I didn't know he got saved and he didn't know I got saved, but we both did within a week on each other."

Hall said attending the Celebrate Recovery program following her release from prison has helped her in many ways. For one, she is learning about the origins of her problems.

"Drug use stems from the past, some trauma in your upbringing," she said, adding she was repeatedly abused as a child. "Drug use was a way to deal with the trauma of that abuse."

Hall is proud that she's living independently now, clean and sober, and is even able to help others find the lifestyle she has found.

"I want to help educate people about what their life can be," she said. "There is a way to pick up the pieces."

Reprinted with permission of the Ashland Independent

Bill Jagers, former KBC president, dies at age 75

Louisville—William Jagers, former evangelism director and past president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, died April 6. He was 75.

Jagers served as KBC president in 1981-82. He joined the KBC Mission Board staff in 1984 as direct missions associate, responsible for church planting and language missions for the KBC.

In 1988, Jagers was named the KBC's director of evangelism. In that role, he provided leadership for statewide evangelism outreach and training events until his retirement in 1997.

During his 1982 KBC presidential address, Jagers highlighted the ministry priorities of commitment to Christ, cohesive love, compassion for souls, the command to be holy and consistency in Kingdom work.

"Christ should have the priority in our churches, in our pulpits, in our singing, in our preaching, in our witnessing, in our theology and in our denominational work," he declared.

Prior to his work at the KBC, Jagers was pastor of several Kentucky Baptist churches, including Rowletts Baptist Church, First Baptist Church of Jackson, Irene Cole Memorial Baptist Church in Prestonsburg and Cynthiana Baptist Church. He also served several years as the chaplain for the Floyd County Rescue Squad.

Jagers' son, Len, recalled that his father "was well known and loved in the communities where he served. He established and fostered the growth of countless Baptist churches throughout Kentucky and beyond."

Len Jagers added that his father "was a man who spoke the truth in love and was able to speak to people of all walks of life with confidence and compassion."

Jagers served in a number of leadership positions, including four terms on the KBC Executive Board. He also served on the board of trustees of the Magoffin Baptist Institute and Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, as well as the board of directors for the Western Recorder.

Jagers was a graduate of Georgetown College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He received an honorary doctorate from Cumberland University.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Dodie Jagers, five children and nine grandchildren.

His funeral service was held April 10 at Westport Road Baptist Church in Louisville. Memorial gifts may be made to the University of the Cumberlands.

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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What language does God speak?

By **Erich Bridges**

Richmond, Va. (BP)—It was no sin to be uneducated in the red-dirt countryside my Georgia kin farmed generations ago.

Many rural folks worked too long and hard in those days to get very far in school, assuming there was a school to attend. If, however, you got the precious opportunity to learn and you let it pass by ... well, that was considered just ignorant in those parts.

That's about where Americans stand today when it comes to the study of languages other than English: willfully ignorant. It's hurting our future—and our participation in spreading the gospel around the world.

In a recent column, I quoted a Time magazine story about the skills students need in a globalized world. "Kids are global citizens now, even in small-town America, and they must learn to act that way," Time reported. "Mike Eskew, CEO of UPS, talks about needing workers who are 'global-trade literate, sensitive to foreign cultures, conversant in different languages'—not exactly strong points in the U.S., where fewer than half of high school students are enrolled in a foreign language class."

Well-documented benefits

The personal and social benefits of learning to speak another language are well-documented: better overall academic scores, better career prospects, increased cross-cultural understanding, greater potential to contribute to an interdependent world.

After the Sept. 11 attacks, strategic analysts talked about how important it was for Americans to study foreign languages to strengthen national security and represent U.S. interests abroad more effectively. College-level language studies spiked—at least for a while.

But foreign language study at the

high school level continues to limp along. Of the students who pursue any foreign language at all, more than 90 percent choose Spanish, French or German. Relatively few achieve real fluency. Non-Western languages? Many schools don't even offer them.

We're not alone in our linguistic isolationism. Two years ago, the British government dropped its requirement that public school students ages 14-16 study at least one foreign language. "Of course, the numbers (studying a language) went into a free-fall," reported The Economist magazine in an editorial on the sorry state of language skills in England.

The writer sarcastically added: "Brainy Britons may master several tongues; the others will continue to converse with mankind in God's own language, English."

We know God speaks other languages, of course. But if we don't bother to learn some of them, how serious are we about communicating His saving love to all nations?

True, English still dominates international communication in many fields—science and technology, transportation and trade, popular culture. Besides hundreds of millions of native English speakers, an estimated 1.5 billion people speak it as a second language. It continues to spin off fresh dialects across the globe as new English speakers mix in words and idioms from their native tongues.

However, the status of English as a "global language" may be peaking, predicted British linguist David Graddol in a major study on the future of language, published in the journal *Science* in 2004.

Most global population growth is occurring in Asia and Africa. In the mid-20th century, nine of every 100 people in the world grew up speaking English as a first language. That number is expected to fall to five in

100 in 2050. By then, English, Spanish, Hindi/Urdu (major languages of India and South Asia) and Arabic will claim about the same number of native speakers—roughly 500 million each, according to Graddol's study. Mandarin Chinese, by far the most-spoken native language today, will continue to be the global leader with more than 1.3 billion native speakers.

More and more people will find it essential to speak several languages in order to participate in the global economy and communicate with others in their own countries and beyond.

"Native English speakers—particularly monolingual ones—have been too complacent about the status of their language and the lack of need to learn other languages," Graddol said.

Direct impact on missions

What does this mean for mission-minded Americans? It's high time many more of us committed ourselves to learning the "heart languages" most of the world's people use when they speak, listen, think and learn. That challenge applies not only to international missionaries, but to you and me. If we make the effort, God will open the minds and hearts of immigrants next door and lost peoples across the world to us as we share the good news of Jesus.

I'm ashamed to admit that after many years of international travel and trying to understand the world, I have yet to learn a second language with any degree of fluency. If they were still around, my rural Georgia kinfolks would call that ignorant.

But it's not too late for me, I hope. And if I have anything to do with it, my children and their children will speak at least two languages fluently. I urge you to set the same goal for yourself and your family.

In today's borderless world, it's basic training for life and ministry. *Erich Bridges is senior writer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board*

Bill Jagers remembered as pastor-missionary

Kentucky Baptists lost an outstanding pastor-missionary with the passing of William Deller "Bill" Jagers on April 6. Bill and I knew each other from our early years in Eastern Kentucky and serving together on Kentucky Baptist Convention boards and committees.

Bill served in Eastern Kentucky as a pastor-missionary at First Baptist Church of Jackson for five years and then for 15 years at Irene Cole Baptist Church (now First Baptist Church) in Prestonsburg. Mission opportunities were abundant.

In Prestonsburg, there were six mission churches and Bill often preached three times on Sunday. Three of these missions became churches, including Lancer and Fitzpatrick.

There were so many needs and opportunities for missionary work. Bill was chaplain for the local rescue squad and chair of the Christmas basket and toy distribution. His son, Dell, remembers traveling with

Bill to remote areas on Christmas Eve to make deliveries.

Bill's philosophy was that ministry begins and ends with caring. Dell noted that people wanted to hear Bill's sermons because they knew he loved them.

Monty Carter, a former associate, wrote before Bill's death, "Bill is a precious man of faith, and a faithful servant of God who never put himself, or his interests above sharing the gospel. ... I served under a director who was a godly man who has introduced more people to Christ than anyone I personally know. His sense of humor and love for the church are unequalled."

Bill did not seek the limelight but was willing to serve either behind the scenes or publicly as needed. Such was the case when he was elected to serve as president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention in November 1981, and it became his responsibility to appoint the search committee for a new executive director. Bill felt Kentucky needed a

strong missions emphasis and later the committee was led to Bill Marshall who had served with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board.

Because of his vision for missions and for starting new churches, Bill was willing to leave Cynthiana Baptist Church in 1984 to join the KBC staff as an associate for new work in what was then the Direct Missions Department. Under his leadership, hundreds of churches were started.

Even after Bill became the KBC's evangelism director in 1988, he continued his involvement with a new church right on into retirement.

It was a high privilege for me to hear Bill's last sermon at Buckner Baptist Church. It was an awesome message calling people to Christ and believers to renewed commitment.

Bill knew that all of his service was made possible by God's grace. The best way to say thanks to God for such godly mentors and faithful servants is to become more godly individuals ourselves and live out our lives in faith and service for our Lord.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

GIVING

Balancing stock sale & charitable gift can cut taxes

By **Laurie Valentine**

As stock values have rebounded in recent months, you may have discovered you have too many eggs in one basket—one stock holding has grown to be too large a share of your overall portfolio.

As a result, you may be considering how to better diversify your assets. However, the thought of the capital gains taxes you will have to pay if you sell that stock may be dampening your resolve to keep your portfolio well diversified.

If you find yourself in such a position, a "balanced sale" might be the ideal vehicle to achieve your desire to diversify without incurring capital gains taxes. Through a balanced sale, you make a charitable gift of enough shares of the appreciated stock to generate the necessary tax savings to offset capital gains tax due on the sale of the remaining shares.

Here's an example: Richard James owns stock with a current market value of \$15,000. He paid \$5,000 for the stock 10 years ago. James thinks the stock has reached its peak value and it represents too large a portion of his investment portfolio. He wants to sell the stock, but doesn't want to pay \$1,500 of capital gains taxes.

James also has been considering how he might make a gift of \$6,500 to his church's building campaign. He is in the 15 percent income tax bracket and hopes a gift to the campaign can provide some tax savings.

A balanced sale can accomplish both of his objectives—diversification and tax savings. If he gives his church \$6,500 of the stock and sells the remaining \$8,500, the \$900 of capital gains tax he will incur on the sale will be offset by the \$975 of income tax savings from the charitable gift. His tax liability on the sale portion of the transaction is "balanced" by the tax benefit from the charitable gift portion.

A balanced sale also can involve the sale of one asset and a gift of another—a gift of stock and the sale of a bond; a gift of real estate and a sale of stock. The key is to "balance" your capital gains tax liability against the tax savings of making the charitable gift.

You can take advantage of the incentives provided by our tax laws and make a significant gift to one or more charitable causes that are important to you with a balanced sale.

Laurie Valentine is trust counsel for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation



Watch out for 'red flags' to evaluate dating relationships

Q: I would like to be married. My friends tell me to watch out for "red flags" as I go out with people. What would be some reasons to stop dating someone?

Dr. Neil Clark Warren, in his book, "How to Know If Someone Is Worth Pursuing in Two Dates or Less," lists several "red flags" that do not portend a positive future and where dating should end as early as possible.

SINGLES

Emotional health is necessary to have a successful marriage. Things to look out for:

- Significant communication problems. Inability to make eye contact, control anger, talk or listen; talking too much; never asking about you.

- Neuroses. Be careful of someone filled with anxieties and fears.

- Character disorders. If you see examples of cheating or extreme self-centeredness in the courting relationship, be assured that it will be worse in marriage.

- Addictions. A romantic relationship is no substitute for a rigorous 12-step program of recovery.

The "veto factor" is your ability to be in touch with your own deepest values and that which you will not permit in a lifelong partner. A veto early in the process will prevent much pain and lost time.

Severe differences. While "variety is the spice of life," if the person is too different from you there will be severe strain at some point in the relationship. Similarities are deposits in the emotional bank account; severe differences are deficits.

Do your research. Date with your eyes and ears open. Touch base with your deepest values. Walk in the Spirit as you walk through the maze of dating and you will be less likely to go down a road filled with regrets.—James Stillwell

Q: Our church is looking for some opportunities for our couples groups. Are there any marriage workshops coming up soon?

Yes, there are several opportunities in the Kentucky area. Many of the events are posted on MERCY's Web page: marriageeducationandresourcecenterky.com.

Additional sources to check are local churches in your community as well as the Kentucky Baptist Convention. MERCY hosts donation-based marriage seminars monthly.

April 28, 9:30 to 11 a.m. For Women Only: "What You Need to Know about the Inner Lives of Men."

May 26, 9:30 to 11 a.m. For Women Only: "Marriage and Menopause."

June 22-23, "How to Avoid Marrying a Jerk(ette)." Penny Hudson is certified in this program and will be leading these sessions.

July 28, 9:30 to 11 a.m. a.m. "Dealing with Those Angry Feelings in Marriage."

August 25, 9:30-11:30 a.m. "The Trouble with Marriage: A Christian Perspective."

Other opportunities in the state or nearby include:

Marriage Encounter: Upcoming dates for the Louisville area are: June 1-3 and Oct. 12-14. For more information for the Louisville, Owensboro or Indianapolis areas, contact Jack and Kathy Gotting at (502) 895-8997.

Embrace Seminar with Mike and Amy Smalley. Crestwood Baptist Church in Crestwood will host the Smalleys May 11-12. For more information, visit www.crestwoodbaptist.org or call Bill Ellis at (502) 241-8534.

Song of Solomon Conference. Tommy Nelson's popular "Song of Solomon" conference will be held at Trader's Point Christian Church in Indianapolis April 27-28. For more information, visit www.tpcc.org.

Family Dynamics. Family Dynamics offers a variety of seminars, such as "Dynamic Marriage," "Love, Sex and Marriage," "A New Beginning" and "Dynamic Love." For more information, visit Web familydynamics.net.—Valerie Vincent

Family Forum writers are:

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



Racism, abuse demand Christian response

Most people undoubtedly have heard or read about radio talk show host Don Imus' outrageous and offensive characterization of the Rutgers University women's basketball team as "nappy-headed hos"—and his subsequent firing by CBS.

For the blissfully uninformed, "ho" is street slang for "whore." You can understand why the Rutgers players and much of the nation are offended by Imus' racial-ly and sexually charged putdown.

When I started writing this editorial last week, Imus hadn't been fired yet—but the public groundswell clamoring for his dismissal was multiplying rapidly.

Despite Imus' repeated apologies acknowledging that his comments were "thoughtless and stupid," it was much too little too late in the court of public opinion.

According to Bishop T.D. Jakes, a prominent African-American megachurch pastor in Dallas, "On behalf of decent moral people of all backgrounds, and specifically for women of color, we heard the so-called joke. But now the entire media advertisers and industry executives should deliver the punch line." And they did.

Of course, Imus isn't the only public figure to use such inappropriate language. Comedian Michael Richards of "Seinfeld" fame shocked the nation last November with a tirade during a comedy club routine in which he repeatedly used the racially charged "N-word" to lash out at a pair of hecklers. Four months earlier, actor/director Mel Gibson captured headlines for an anti-Semitic outburst after he was pulled over for drunk driving.

Degrading racial and sexual slurs also frequently are heard in rap and hip-hop lyrics as well as in popular movies and among so-called "shock jocks."

As appalling as such coarse sexual language is, even more troubling is the rash of sexual predators who act on their feelings and victimize innocent people around them. An ABC News "20/20" report

last week zeroed in on "Preacher Predators," focusing primarily on Southern Baptist ministers.

Southern Baptist Convention President Frank Page agreed to be interviewed for the program in an effort "to provide some kind of balance to a program which may well be overwhelmingly negative." It was.

In a commentary published in last week's Western Recorder, Page noted, "For years the press has complained that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church has enabled the hiding of sexual predators. Now, they are stating that the lack of our hierarchy is helping hide sexual predators. The truth is that people can abuse any system."

Even with that said, there is a growing call among Baptist bloggers and others for SBC leaders to explore establishing a database of Southern Baptist ministers convicted of sexual harassment and abuse. A proposed resolution by Texas Baptist pastor Benjamin Cole will call for Southern Baptist churches to "pursue every possible avenue in determining the moral character and ethical conduct of ministry candidates."

What do Imus' "thoughtless and stupid" comments have to do with Baptist ministers convicted of sexual abuse? Both are tragic symptoms of a society that for far too long has winked at sexual immorality and racism.

"Even one instance of sexual molestation is one too many," Page emphasized. The same is true of racial slurs.

"Let us be people of integrity," Page urged. "Let us be men and women of the gospel who provide an atmosphere where trust will not be abused."

The starting point is for individual believers to carefully guard our own thoughts, words and actions. Additionally, SBC messengers have a timely opportunity this summer to take strong public stands against both sexual abuse and racism. Being people of integrity requires being people of action.

STRAIGHT FROM THE EDITOR



Trennis Henderson

Let's get out of the gambling business

By David Crosby

New Orleans (BP)—I am in the gambling business. I don't like it, and I want to stop.

But I am a citizen of Louisiana. My state is reaping a financial windfall from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. Some of the FEMA checks and insurance money that were given to help our citizens recover are pouring into the state treasury by way of our state-sponsored gambling business.

As a citizen of this state, I am prospering in some measure because 200,000 of my fellow citizens have a serious problem with gambling. And I am profiting because the gambling addiction is even more pronounced in the wake of the storms.

The fact that my state encourages and sponsors this predatory business makes me sad. I'd rather we paid for state government in some other way. State-sponsored gambling is a regressive tax that funds government largely through the broken dreams and financial distress of our poorest citizens.

Louisiana promotes the financial ruin of vulnerable individuals in times of crisis with alluring television advertisements that promise

big rewards for gambling. Most of us, including the gamblers, know that the odds of attaining wealth through the state-sponsored lottery are miniscule. But the same people keep giving us their dough because they are chained to a pipe dream that will not die. For some people, gambling is the only hope they see for restoring their fortunes after the storm.

I know it is easy money for us. They form long lines at the convenience stores every payday and give our state their hard-earned cash. Many of them do without life's necessities so they can answer our tease and take their long shot at the pot of gold.

For my part, I'd prefer they buy their medications and diapers and pay the rent. Surely that money so easily redirected into the state treasury represents a tangible cost to our families and our society. Who picks up the tab when gambling addicts spend their wad on lottery tickets instead of groceries? When you're in the gambling business, as we are, you can't just ignore that.

I feel a little better about it all now that we have our gamblers' helpline. I understand their phone is

ringing off the wall since Katrina—calls reportedly are up by 40 percent. It is a little like operating an emergency room for a sickness we are spreading. I guess this makes sense to somebody.

Once you set up this business, it's hard to get rid of it. It's a lot easier to start than to stop—sort of like gambling itself. We have state employees now whose jobs depend on our gambling games. Everyone knows that the real winner in gambling is the house—and that means our state government. Even if you see the carnage, it's hard to stop. When the easy money starts pouring in, your conscience can justify just about anything.

The terrible hurricanes and their aftermath have helped us change some fundamental mistakes in our governance, including the consolidation of levee boards and Orleans Parish tax assessment.

I think state-sponsored gambling is a fundamental mistake for our state. I cringe every time I hear our happy gambling songs. As a pastor, I see the ugly underside of this lie more than most. If we can't wean ourselves completely, could we at least stop the state-sponsored recruitment program?

David Crosby is pastor of First Baptist Church of New Orleans

COMMENTARY

“Well done...”
MATTHEW 25:21

Don't wait —
start saving
more for
retirement
today!

Retirement contribution increases can reap benefits

Will you get a pay raise this year? Remember, that as your income increases — your retirement contribution needs to increase too. Financial planners suggest a retirement contribution should equal at least 10% to 15% of your salary. And the earlier you start making incremental increases to reach this goal, the more compounding will work for you.

John makes \$30,000 a year. He decides to increase his retirement contribution by 1% or \$25 a month. If he does this from age 30 until 65, how much more will he add to his retirement account? What if he delays increasing his contribution 10, 20 or 30 years?

Start at Age	Additional Monthly Contribution	Additional Accumulation at Age 65
30	\$25	\$53,909
40	\$25	\$22,871
50	\$25	\$8,494
60	\$25	\$1,835

This hypothetical illustration assumes continuous monthly investments until age 65 with a single rate of return (8%) compounded over time. It does not predict the future performance of any investment fund.

Why not give yourself a raise?

If you participate in one of GuideStone's retirement plans, consider joining GuideStone's 1% Club and raise the potential amount of your future retirement income. Every year you will receive a reminder about the benefits of increasing your retirement contributions. Sign up for the 1% Club by enrolling online at www.GuideStone.org/retirement/onepercent or calling 1-888-98-GUIDE (1-888-984-8433).


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Church arsonists sentenced to prison, \$3.1 million restitution

Birmingham, Ala. (RNS)—Three former Birmingham college students are headed to federal prison after a judge ordered them April 9 to serve sentences ranging from seven to eight years for a series of rural Baptist church fires last year.

U.S. District Judge David Proctor sentenced Matthew Cloyd, 21, and Benjamin Moseley, 20, to eight-year prison terms for setting fire to nine churches in west Alabama. Russell DeBusk, 20, who confessed to setting five fires, received a seven-year sentence.

In addition, the judge ordered combined restitution of \$3.1 million, with Cloyd and Moseley bearing a greater share of responsibility for those payments than DeBusk.

The sentences came after an emotional hearing in which pastors from burned churches spoke of forgiveness, defense lawyers urged leniency and the judge quoted Scriptures assuring the trio that good can come from bad.

“You harmed a lot of people, but with God’s grace you have ... opportunity to do good still,” Proctor said.

The first series of fires on Feb. 3, 2006, in which all three participated, damaged two churches and destroyed three. Cloyd and Moseley set a second batch of fires four days later that destroyed four churches.

DeBusk said the three decided to break into a church and set fire to plastic flowers after not having much luck spotlighting deer. He said the fires fed off each other, and a “snowball effect” happened as they decided to set more fires.

One by one, the three young men, wearing orange jail jumpsuits and leg irons, apologized and expressed regret for the harm and destruction caused during a night of drinking.

DeBusk said the magnitude of the arson attacks hit him after he sobered up the next day and became physically ill.

“I’m ready to accept the consequences of my actions and move forward, your honor,” Cloyd said.

Moseley said he knew he did wrong and was aware there would be repercussions. “I sincerely apologize for what I’ve done,” he said.

They faced a minimum of seven years in prison because two firefighters were injured battling a fire at Ashby Baptist Church.

The 10 rows of seats in Birmingham’s largest courtroom were filled with relatives of the three men and members of the burned churches.

Walter Hawkins, pastor of Dansby Baptist Church, was among the pastors who urged justice tempered with mercy.

“We love them,” Hawkins said. “The Bible teaches us about forgiveness. If we don’t forgive, our Heavenly Father will not forgive us for our trespasses.”

Proctor also ordered the three to undergo drinking and substance counseling while serving their time, and to perform 300 hours of community service work at the churches once they are released.

Proctor said it was hard to understand why such promising students would burn houses of worship that mean so much to church members. He praised the congregations for their acts of reconciliation and urged the young men’s parents not to feel responsible for their actions.

“This isn’t your fault,” Proctor told the parents. “By all indications, you raised these boys well and they knew better.”



Theological Decision-Making

If you are involved in ministry, you likely face situations in which making the right decision is difficult. If you would like to gain more insight into how to make decisions that are theologically grounded, this course is for you. You will examine the process of theological reflection as a tool for decision-making in your ministry context. You will develop theological reflection skills for decision-making in active ministry and increase your understanding of your own theology.

The 4-week online course Theological Reflection is highly interactive and provides opportunities for online discussion with the facilitator and other study participants.

• Course dates: May 14–June 10, 2007

Registration is \$150 — Scholarships are available to cover 50% of the registration fee

For more information, visit www.btsr.edu/theo_reflection.html, call 1-888-339-2877 (toll free), or email scminfo@btsr.edu.



Recognition of givers

True generosity isn't based on gaining public accolades

I have not been a big proponent of public recognition societies and groups related to one's level of giving to support the missions of charitable organizations. I know that goes against the conventional wisdom in the world of fund raising, and my wife and I have been recognized at times by various charities for our giving even though we did not give to be recognized.

My hesitance to public recognition for giving is based primarily upon some biblical perspectives and my experience as KBF president in assisting individuals and families in the realm of estate stewardship and legacy giving.

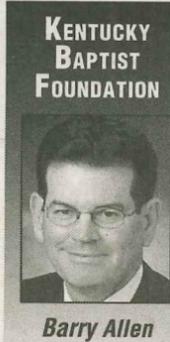
Surely we want our giving to please our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His is the only recognition we need. Remember the incident in Jesus' life recorded in Mark 12: 41-44? In terms of the coins she used that day, the widow gave the smallest amount. However, Jesus recognized her as having made the most significant and worthy gift of all.

To Jesus, the gift that counts is the gift that costs. It's not the size of the gift that matters, but

the size of the sacrifice. It's not the amount, but the proportion. The truth is no one is excluded from making a gift to our Lord worthy of His recognition.

In 1 Timothy 6:17-19, the Apostle Paul reminds us not to be arrogant nor to put our hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put our hope in God who richly provides everything for our enjoyment. He goes on to insist we be rich in good deeds, generous and willing to share. For it is in that way we lay up eternal treasures for ourselves, a firm foundation for the coming age so we can take hold of life that is truly life.

Arrogance is the antithesis of humility. We should consider the financial resources God has entrusted to us as a stewardship responsibility because true riches consist of generosity toward others, and regardless of any public recognition.



Barry Allen

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

Kudzu

Doug Marlette



For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Bible Crosswords

Kenda Turner

Across

- 1 "Being justified freely by his grace through the _____ that is in Christ Jesus" (Romans 3:24)
- 9 "I will sift the house of Israel ... like as corn is sifted in a _____" (Amos 9:9)
- 10 Annoy
- 11 "Jesus said ... 'If thou canst _____, all things are possible to him that believeth'" (Mark 9:23)
- 14 "I _____ no pleasant bread" (Daniel 10:3)
- 15 "_____ the knot" (get married)
- 16 7, Romans num.
- 18 "Man shall not _____ by bread alone" (Matthew 4:4)
- 19 Fervor
- 20 Delegate, abbr.
- 21 A swine
- 22 Jacob
- 26 Fifth letter of Hebrew alphabet
- 27 Fruit of the Spirit
- 28 Undergraduate degree
- 29 Southern state, abbr.
- 30 James and John, to Zebedee
- 31 One of two faithful spies sent to search Canaan
- 34 A preposition, meaning to the same degree
- 35 Biblical weed
- 37 Weird
- 39 What Boaz plucked off to signify redeeming Ruth
- 41 Southern continent, abbr.

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39		40			41		42		
43					44	45			
	46			47					

- 42 Possessive pronoun
- 43 One of four seasons
- 44 Roman poet
- 46 Support group for alcoholics, abbr.
- 47 Sect of Jews during time of Christ
- 21 "And the _____ of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7)
- 23 An orderly way of getting things done
- 24 Stomach muscle, for short
- 25 "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you _____" (John 8:32)
- 26 Exclamation of amusement
- 27 One of two faithful spies sent to search Canaan
- 30 What disrespectful children do
- 32 "Therefore shall a man _____ his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife" (Genesis 2:24)
- 33 "And the Spirit and the _____ say, 'Come'" (Revelation 22:17)
- 36 Unusual
- 38 Pronoun
- 40 Suffix for a growth
- 41 International signal of distress
- 45 Opposite of out

Last week's solution

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U.S. Senate OKs stem cell bill, President Bush promises veto

Washington (RNS)—Conservative Christian groups joined President Bush in lamenting the U.S. Senate's passage of a bill April 11 that would use federal tax dollars to support embryonic stem cell research.

The bill, similar to one that Bush vetoed last July, would ease restrictions on federal funding for research on embryonic stem cells that Bush approved in 2001. It passed 63-34 in the Senate, but Bush has promised to veto it when it comes to his desk.

"The bill crosses a moral line that I and many others find troubling," Bush said.

Many religious and conservative

groups oppose embryonic stem cell research because embryos must be destroyed to harvest the stem cells.

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., summed up the conservative Christian position on the bill: "The embryo is not potential human life," he said. "It is human life."

Proponents of the bill, led by Sen. Tom Harkin, D-Iowa, argue that the embryos in question would be discarded in any event, and that they should be used to research treatment and possible cures for conditions such as Parkinson's disease, diabetes and spinal cord injuries.

Pro-life advocates expressed dismay at the Senate action, which fol-

lowed 20 hours of debate over two days, but were grateful the vote fell short of a two-thirds majority.

"I am disappointed that the vote was that close to two-thirds," said Richard Land, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, "but I am gratified that there is still not a veto-proof majority in the United States Senate in favor of legislation that would use federal tax money to destroy the lives of our tiniest human beings to seek potential treatments and cures for older and bigger human beings."

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said in a written statement, "Rather than

defend human dignity, a majority of senators approved legislation to force taxpayers to fund research that requires the destruction of human life."

A second stem cell bill, promising alternative stem cell research methods, was also passed in the Senate 70-28. That bill would allow funding on research of "naturally dead" embryos. The White House said it would support that bill.

Neither the House nor the Senate is expected to have the two-thirds majority necessary to override Bush's veto on Harkin's stem cell bill.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

Disney announces plans to allow same-sex ceremonies at parks

Orlando, Fla. (BP)—Walt Disney Parks & Resorts announced April 6 it now will allow homosexual couples to exchange vows in its public wedding spots that previously were reserved for people with valid marriage licenses.

"Bottom line, our business is all about hospitality," Donn Walker, a spokesman for Disney, told the Orlando Sentinel. "Our commitment at Disney is to welcome all guests in an inclusive environment and to make them feel respected. We think this is consistent with that long-standing policy."

Disney hosts about 1,500 weddings each year, mostly through its Fairy Tale Wedding packages.

With the \$28,000 average cost of a Disney wedding, just one homosexual ceremony a week would earn Disney another \$1.5 million a year, Bob

Witeck of a Washington-based public relations firm catering to homosexuals told the Sentinel.

"I think for years, Disney has reflected the values of America," said Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council. "Now, I think it could be argued they are trying to shape those values in a very radical way."

Because gay marriage is not legal in Florida or California, the homosexual events won't be marriage ceremonies but will be commitment ceremonies.

Disney, which began offering partner benefits to employees in 1996 and has allowed thousands of homosexual tourists to mark Gay Days at its theme parks each spring, was the target of an eight-year boycott by the Southern Baptist Convention that ended in 2005.

Meet some of the class of 2007, part 4

Local student's senior essay is reminder of one of Oneida's ministry priorities

When Oneida was founded 108 years ago, our ministry was primarily to boys and girls up and down the creeks and hollows within a mile or two of our campus. There was no public education available to these children. It was too far to attend the county school 17 or more miles away, and the traditional one-room schools were not located in this part of our county at that time. The children who attended OBI walked or rode mules or horses to our campus every day. Three or four children riding one mule or horse was a common sight. The weather conditions seemingly had little effect on attendance. If the school was open, the children showed up. Every winter I often think of those boys and girls a hundred years ago making their way to campus. They were very eager to learn. Those children grew up in homes that stressed the value and importance of an education. Most of their parents did not have the opportunity to go to school and they wanted their children to get the education that had not been available to them.

The following "My Oneida Experience" essay is from one of our local students. I thought you would enjoy hearing from a day student. In an effort to meet the needs of our local students and remembering that they are one of our primary reasons for being here, for the past 30 years we have not charged them any fees—no tuition, no book fees, nothing! Here is part of an essay written by one of our local girls.

"I went to the local public school system during my elementary years. In middle school I enrolled at OBI. I attended OBI for two years when

I decided to return to our public school for my freshman year of high school. After attending OBI, the public school wasn't the same to me. ... I had trouble adjusting ... and faced many personal problems. My grades dropped as well as my positive outlook on life. My parents and I decided that I should return to OBI.

"Having been raised in this community I had many opportunities to learn about Oneida and see the school. The tall fence with the barbed wire was quite frightening. Not to mention the local residents told me it was a school primarily for troubled and abandoned kids.

"My first day at OBI was different. I'm from a small, white community. The diversity of the students was a new aspect for me. It's my favorite part of Oneida to meet new people from different ethnic backgrounds, different places and cultures.

"The students and staff are some of the greatest people I have ever met. Staff and students alike have influenced me. ... The daily chapel services have had the most effect on my life. As a young Christian, it helps to listen to God's words daily. It keeps me close to God's word. Also, it gives me a chance to listen to the staff's testimony and guidance.

"Through many ways, OBI has helped me. The diversity of the school introduced me to the fact that the world is much larger than the town of Oneida. I've had the opportunity to take advanced placement classes. And, I've met some of the greatest people I will ever know. Oneida has definitely been the place for me."

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

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Land's book critiques both sides of nation's God & country debate

Nashville—"God may very well have more to do with America than liberals may think, and less than conservatives assume," Richard Land declares in his new book, "The Divided States of America? What Liberals and Conservatives Are Missing in the God-and-Country Shouting Match!"

Land, the outspoken president of the Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, dares to critique his own "side" as well as those who disagree with him on the role God has played in America's past and the role God should play in the nation's future. He describes "The Divided States of America?" as "an equal opportunity offender" with a critique of all sides in the nation's societal tug-of-war.

In what he describes as the "God-and-country shouting match," Land explores the heated debate between conservative and liberal Christians as well as those hostile to religious faith.

"The country needs a new way to think about this question," Land suggests. "When neither side is interested in listening to the other, but each side responds by shouting so loudly that their opponents either can't or won't lis-

ten, you generate a lot of heat, but very little light."

At the extremes of the debate, Land adds, are those who assume that America is God's chosen nation and those who wish to purify the public square of any reference to God. Both positions are fraught with danger, he cautions.



The Divided States of America?, which includes a foreword by Sen. Joseph Lieberman, tackles questions likely to be reignited with the launch of the 2008 presidential race:

- "How should we address the concept of separation of church and state?"

- "How has religion influenced this country's past, and why does it matter now?"

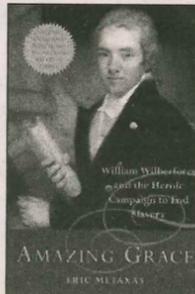
- "Does the U.S. have a special role to play in the world, and how have U.S. presidents answered this question?"

- "In a pluralistic society, how do we strike the right balance in the role of religion in American public life?"

"I believe it is possible and necessary for Americans of faith to 'practice belief in God while simultaneously practicing a rigorous separation of church and state,'" Land notes.

Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery. Eric Metaxas. Harper San Francisco, 2006. 277 pages. \$21.95. ◆◆◆◆

You probably have seen the movie trailers for "Amazing Grace," starring Ioan Gruffudd, even if you have not seen the movie. Because the hymn "Amazing Grace" forms the core of the musical score accompanied by images of 18th and 19th slave trading, you might have expected the movie to be about John Newton, the slave trader turned preacher and hymn writer. But the story is not about the hymn or John Newton (although he does play a part), but the amazing grace that is felt by William Wilberforce, which leads him to work tirelessly to bring slavery to an end in Great Britain.



This book tells the remarkable story of a man born to great privilege, who allowed his Methodist beliefs to inform not only his private but public life. Eric Metaxas writes simply but powerfully about the life of Wilberforce and how his passion for Christ propelled him to live his life modeling how Christianity makes a difference in the way one lives. The church that Wilberforce knew in England generally gave only lip service to service in Christ. Wilberforce openly attributed his actions seeking morality in society and the end of slavery to a direct result of his personal faith in Christ.

The story of Wilberforce largely has been unknown in the United States. But that was not always the case. Wilberforce University in Wilberforce, Ohio, was founded in 1856, and is the oldest private African-American college in America. This book and the movie should reestablish Wilberforce as an example of the impact Christ can have not only on an individual but on society at large. Wilberforce patiently worked as a member of Parliament to bring about change. He did it not by trying to force others to adopt his faith but by putting his beliefs into tangible actions of societal reform. *Wayne Hager*

Thy Kingdom Come: An Evangelical's Lament. Randall Balmer. Basic Books, 2006. 242 pages. \$24.95 ◆◆◆◆

Randall Balmer grew up in the home of an evangelical pastor and graduated from Trinity College in Illinois. Like many of us, he attended Sunday school every week, youth group, went to church twice on Sunday and prayer meetings on Wednesday nights. He gave his heart to Jesus as a young boy.

But Balmer, an advisory editor for Christianity Today magazine, feels the evangelicalism that nurtured him into faith and has sustained that faith well into his adult life has been hijacked by wolves in sheep clothing, otherwise known as the Religious Right. "The hard-right stance of the Religious Right represents something less than the best of Christianity, and many of its adherents' positions ... serve ultimately to diminish the faith," he writes in the preface.

He goes on to observe that the evangelical political stances and in-

volvements of such people as Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson and James Dobson hardly resemble the classic evangelical populism of the 19th century. During that period, evangelical Christians were the chief champions of abolition, women's equality, environmental protection, religious liberty and the separation of church and state, and many were key leaders in various anti-war movements. Many of today's self-styled evangelical leaders are more likely to take positions at the opposite end of the spectrum.

Balmer traces the development of the Religious Right and its close ties to the Republican Party, as well as critiques many of its positions in light of Scripture and classical evangelical social critique. He is not a happy camper: "I've developed an even greater suspicion of the bloviating preachers of the Religious Right, those who have anointed themselves shepherds of the flock ... (who) have led their sheep astray from the gospel of Jesus Christ to the false gospel of neoconservative ideology."

While, at first blush, his assessment may seem discomforting, Balmer's critique deserves serious engagement by people who claim to shape their lives as born-again believers in Jesus Christ. *Jim Holladay*

Trust: Surrendering to God and Learning to Forgive. Tamie Vervoorn. Regal Publishing, 2006. 88 pages. \$11.99. ◆◆◆◆

In what sounds like a movie trailer, ponder this question: "In a world full of uncertainty, who can you trust?"

Let's face it, who do you really trust? The world is a scary place even for adults but when the world seems to attack our teens, ouch!

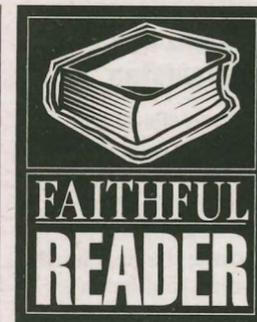
Tamie Vervoorn has put together a Bible study primarily for girls, ages 12-

18. "Trust: Surrendering to God and Learning to Forgive" features studies on how to survive and thrive in life. The book is designed as a workbook that allows the reader to draw closer to God.

The table of contents is divided into two divisions. The first one is "Surrender" with such chapter topics as "The Essence of Faith," "Time to Say Goodbye," "What It Means to Be a Follower" and "It's All about Trust." The second section, "Forgiveness," addresses "Defining Forgiveness," "Friendship and Forgiveness," "Honor and Respect" and "Forgive Because You Have Been Forgiven."

The book includes Bible studies, illustrations, stories and places to fill in the blanks from open and honest heart-searching questions. This is a book that will help students become the people God wants them to be. However, a special note here, individuals will only get out of the study what they put into it. This study is awesome as it leads the reader to become closer to our awesome God.

"Trust" is an excellent study for small groups or individuals, and is a great resource to use in a retreat setting. Youth pastors, pastors and youth workers can benefit by reviewing this study to see what is available for discipling teens. *Steve Coleman*



By Wayne Hager, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Mt. Airy, N.C.; Jim Holladay, pastor of Lyndon Baptist Church in Louisville; and Steve Coleman, pastor of education and youth at New Work Fellowship in Hopkinsville. They welcome feedback or suggestions for book reviews. Contact them via e-mail at: whager@adelphia.net; lyndonpastor@aol.com; risen4me@hotmail.com.

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Former Southern student killed in Afghanistan

Louisville (BP)—Sgt. Yoon Jang-ho, a former student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, became the first South Korean soldier since the Vietnam War to die in a foreign conflict when he was killed in Afghanistan by a roadside bomb Feb. 27. Yoon, 27, attended Southern for one semester in 2004 before returning to his native country to enter the military out of a sense of national duty. Yoon died just two months before his tour in Afghanistan was scheduled to end.

"He didn't have to go into military service, but he just felt by himself that it was kind of a national duty," said Barnabas Kim, a friend of Yoon's at Southern and a master of divinity student from South Korea. "So he joined the military in 2005."

Yoon planned to return to Southern in the fall and study to become a youth minister, Kim said.

"He was very quiet, and he was very artistic," Kim said. "He liked drawing and playing music. He was a very faithful guy as well."

Yoon's March 5 funeral in Korea was attended by several government officials including the defense minister and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Yoon's parents, Yoon Hee-cheol and Lee Chang-hee, are strong Christians, Kim said.

"Yesterday I called his parents," Kim recounted. "His father and mother are very good believers. One great thing is that they said they still absolutely believe in the sovereignty of God. They think things are in God's control and they believe there is some reason God has allowed this thing to happen."

Korean students at Southern are sending notes of encouragement to Yoon's family in Korea and request continuing prayer for the family.

"He was the youngest guy in our group of Korean students," Kim said, "and many students considered him a younger brother."

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

Spotlight on ...

Elizabethtown



Berean Church will celebrate its 30th anniversary April 22. **Steve Hadden**, the church's first pastor, will be the guest speaker at the 11 a.m. service. **Jim Webster** is pastor.

will hold revival services April 23-27 with **Jason Porter** as evangelist. For more information, call (270) 443-3714.

■ **PIKEVILLE**—Kimper Mission will hold revival services the week of April 23, 7 p.m., with **Joe Tuttle** as evangelist.

■ **PRESTONSBURG**—An interdenominational "Women for Christ" conference will be held April 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Mountain Arts Center with **Joanne Wallace** as featured speaker. For ticket information, call Pike Association at (606) 432-2660.

■ **SOMERSET**—First Church will hold revival services April 22-25 at noon and 7 p.m. daily with **Steve Ayers** as evangelist.

High Street Church will host the **Georgetown College Chorale** in concert April 18, 7 p.m. **Jammie Vance** is pastor.

■ **WEST POINT**—Stites Station Church will host community revival services for five churches April 23-27, with pastors from each church bringing nightly messages. For more information, call (502) 922-9222. **Darrell P'Pool** is pastor.

■ **BARDSTOWN**—New Beginning Church will continue revival services April 23, 7:30 p.m., with **Jack Naylor** as evangelist and April 30, 7:30 p.m., with **Randy McPheron** as evangelist. **Issac Ferguson** is pastor.

■ **BEDFORD**—**Kevin Webb** recently resigned as pastor of Antioch Church.

■ **BREMEN**—Bethlehem Church will hold revival services April 22, 11 a.m. and 7 p.m., and April 23-25, 7 p.m., with **James Wedding** as evangelist. **Leroy Rearden** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host the gospel group **Higher Calling** in concert April 29, 6 p.m. Activities will include a potluck meal at 5 p.m.

■ **CRESTWOOD**—Harrods Creek Church will host **Shaped Note Singers** April 28-29. For more information, call (502) 241-4983.

■ **DAYTON**—East Dayton Church ordained **Timothy House** as a deacon Feb. 25.

■ **EAST BERNSTADT**—Hazel Patch Church recently called **Randy Bingham** as pastor.

■ **FULTON**—Riceville Church will hold revival services April 18-21 with **David Gossom** as evangelist. **Danny Zickefoose** is pastor.

■ **LOUISVILLE**—**Winifred and Billie Keeling**, members of St. Matthews Church, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary April 18. **Les Holton** is pastor.

Rachel Lewis recently resigned as director of media ministries at Walnut Street Church. **Rusty Ellison** is pastor.

■ **MOUTHCARD**—First Victory Mission will hold revival services April 29-May 2 with **David McCollum** as evangelist. **Mark Swan** is pastor.

■ **PADUCAH**—Mount Moriah Church



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April

19-20 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Severns Valley Association Office, Elizabethtown.

20-22 All-State Children's Choir—East, Cedarmore.

23-24 Developing & Managing People/Supervision Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.

24 Senior Living Celebration, Eastwood Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

26 Senior Living Celebration, Central Baptist Church, Winchester.

27 Senior Living Celebration, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset.

27-29 All-State Children's Choir—West, Jonathan Creek.

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

27-28 Literacy Missions Conference, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green.

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

May

4 Children's Bible Drill, Beacon Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, and Reidland Baptist Church, Paducah.

4-6 Equestrian Trail Ride, Mammoth Cave.

5 Children's Bible Drill, First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, and Second Baptist Church, Hopkinsville.

For more information, call (800) 266-6477 or visit www.kybaptist.org



SPRING BREAK A team of 26 students and leaders from the University of the Cumberlands' Mountain Outreach served at Meridzo Ministries in Lynch during their recent spring break. Ministry teams constructed showers and lavatories at Meridzo Ministries' Solomon's Porch facility as well as doing painting and roofing projects and working with horses on the ministry's farm.

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SEEKING: Full-time student minister. Must be energetic and Spirit-led. Please send resumé to: First Baptist Church, 916 Main St., Paris, KY 40361, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time minister to youth and college-age students for Highland Baptist Church, Louisville—a progressive CBF congregation with 500-plus weekly worshippers in three services. Seminary or similar graduate degree with 3-5 years experience required. A combination of education and experience may be substituted when skills are demonstrated. Send resumé to Karen Park at karenkp@juno.com; or to Minister Search Committee, Highland Baptist Church, 1101 Cherokee Road, Louisville, KY 40204.

SEEKING: Music director for Clayvillage Baptist Church in Shelbyville, Ky. Duties include adult choir rehearsal and Sunday morning worship. Experience helpful; modest stipend. Contact pastor at leebolton@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Full-time director of missions for Monroe Baptist Association. College and some seminary training desirable, as is associational experience. For more information, call Rev. Ty Clenney, (270) 618-4373. Send resumé: DOM Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 302 North Magnolia, Tompkinsville, KY 42167.

SEEKING: Part-time/bivocational minister of music (approx. 20 hours/week). Duties include leading Sunday morning worship and evening congregational singing in blended music style, plus leading adult choir, youth choir and children's choir. Send resumé to: Search Committee, McHenry Baptist Church, PO Box 154, McHenry, KY 42354; or e-mail mchenrybaptist@vonageonline.net.

SEEKING: Minister of youth. Responsible for providing ministerial leadership and a comprehensive youth ministry that is consistent with the vision and mission of the church. Please send resumé to: Youth Minister Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 446, Taylorsville, KY 40071.

SEEKING: Part-time children's minister. Send resumé to: Pastor, Eastern Gate Baptist Church, PO Box 6686, Shepherdsville, KY 40165.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth. Must have strong Bible belief and enthusiastic personality. Mail resumé to Ferguson Baptist Church, PO Box 247, Ferguson, KY 42533; or call (606) 679-1690.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Erlanger Baptist Church, Erlanger, Ky. (Northern Kentucky Baptist Association). Replies treated with total confidence. Contact Arnold Caddell, 221 Beil Road, Burlington, KY 41005. Phone: (859) 586-7760. E-mail: acaddell@fuse.net.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for Lawrenceville First Baptist Church, located in Gwinnett County, Ga. Please mail a resumé with DVD, VHS or other media, to: Pastor Search Committee, PO Box 228, Lawrenceville, GA 30046-0028.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor at Piner Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist church in northern Kentucky. We provide many ministries locally and internationally. Average attendance for Sunday services is 450. For more information, go to www.pinerbaptist.org. Resumés may be sent to Wayne Diehl, pastor of administration, 15044 Madison Pike, Morning View, KY 41063.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of youth and education at Harrodsburg Baptist Church, PO Box 286, Harrodsburg, KY 40330. Primary focus is youth, but education experience is important. For more church information, see www.harrodsburgbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Part-time youth minister with focus on discipleship for rural church in NKY. Also coordinate activities and outreach events. Send resumé: Youth Search Committee, Knoxville Baptist Church, 110 E Fairview Road, Williamstown, KY 41097.

SEEKING: Part-time accompanist for Sunday and Wednesday worship and choir practices. Contact Green Acres Baptist Church, 5189 Poplar Level Road, Louisville, KY 40219; (502) 964-8165; e-mail: greenacresbaptist@bellsouth.net.

SEEKING: Community-minded senior pastor for a church with an existing community outreach presence. Morganfield First Baptist Church is located in a small, western Kentucky town, and has an average attendance of 200-250 in two Sunday morning services—one contemporary and one traditional. This is an awesome church with a strong potential for growth. Send resumé to: Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 200 North Morgan St., Morganfield, KY 42437.

Seminary doctoral student tackles youth Bible drill

By Marcia Knox
Tennessee Baptist and Reflector

Old Hickory, Tenn. (BP)—Competing in the youth Bible drill at Tulip Grove Baptist Church were three seventh-graders, one eighth-grader and a doctoral candidate.

Tulip Grove's participants included minister to students Alec Cort, who had been practicing every Sunday since Jan. 7 alongside the seventh- and eighth-graders.

Pam Reasonover, who led Bible drill practices on Sunday afternoons at the Old Hickory, Tenn., congregation with Rosie McClurkan, was impressed that Cort accepted the challenge. For 25 years, she has taught the importance of Bible drill and Scripture memorization, but Cort, 34, is the only adult who has stepped up to participate.

"I never extended an invitation to Alec. It was his idea to participate," Reasonover said. "I let him participate in the church drill, but he's not going on to the associational drill" sponsored by the Nashville Baptist Association.

Cort, who plans to graduate in December with a doctorate in philosophy and education from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, was joined in the Bible drill by seventh-graders Timothy Wier, Phillip Lundy and Daniel Mathis and eighth-grader Andrew Sepulveda.

"I'm impressed when teachers do as they say—like actions," Reasonover said of Cort, who joined Tulip Grove's staff in 1999. "I'm impressed with a minister who will get in there with the youth and study. It's hard.

"Alec is setting an example that Bible drill is important. He is practicing what he is preaching. He also sings in the youth choir. He's 100 percent, because he is doing it."

Cort said his first reason for participating was to lead by example to get more of the church's 80 students involved in Bible drill. "I'm there to pave the way for kids who might be intimidated and to inspire them to come," he said.

His second reason was "personal accountability" to memorize Scripture. "I am slack on memorizing Scripture," he admitted. "It is now a measure of accountability for me to become knowledgeable of Scriptures. It's a discipleship of sorts.

"My research in youth ministry has shown that the majority of students are not studying Scriptures," Cort said. "I support the Bible drill program, and I think it will help them."

Cort, who placed second in the Tulip Grove drill, had a perfect score and stepped out first three times to recite a memory verse.

2007 Masters champion honors the Master

By Art Stricklin
Baptist Press

Augusta, Ga. (BP)—Zach Johnson's two-shot victory at the 2007 Masters Tournament on Easter Sunday surprised those inside and out of the golf world.

But it was no surprise to those who know him that Johnson used the occasion to boldly proclaim his love and faith in Jesus Christ.

"Being Easter, my goal was to glorify God and hopefully I did that today," said the Cedar Rapids, Iowa, native.

Johnson credited his faith in God and the counsel of longtime PGA Tour chaplain Larry Moody of Search Ministry, whose Bible study Johnson attends on a weekly basis, for allowing him to remain calm in the competitive and often chaotic final round.

The 31-year-old golfer entered the final round at Augusta National Golf Club two shots behind third-round leader Stuart Appleby and one shot behind four-time Masters champion Tiger Woods, the heavy favorite in Sunday's final round.

Johnson took the lead with birdies on holes 13, 14 and 16 and never surrendered it despite a bogey on the 17th hole and having to wait for Woods, two groups behind him.

"On the 18th green, seeing my wife and our new baby, my parents and brother, I started to get emotional," Johnson said. "I tried to stay in the moment and just started praying."

Less than a half-hour later, Johnson was wearing the green jacket presented to each year's Masters champion and was given the opportunity to share the secrets of his success with the worldwide sports media and golf fans on hand for the season's most prestigious tournament.

He became at least the second professing Christian to win the Masters Tournament on Easter Sunday; Bernhard Langer did so in the 1980s.

"Because it's Easter today, I want to say, 'Thank you, Jesus,'" Johnson said at the public awards ceremony.

Later in the Masters media center, Johnson expanded on the role his personal faith played in his Masters victory.

"I don't even know what I shot, but I know I had a lot of people giving me some good words of wisdom last week including my coach and the PGA Tour chaplain.

"Being Easter Sunday, I feel very blessed and honored and I feel like



GREEN JACKET 2006 Masters champion Phil Mickelson (right) presents the green jacket to Zach Johnson on Easter Sunday after Johnson won the 71st Masters Golf Tournament in Augusta, Ga. Johnson fired a final round three-under par 69. (Photo by Timothy Clary/AFP/Getty Images)

there was a power that was walking with me and guiding me. So that's where things stand. You know, I feel very blessed and honored to be here."

Johnson, who accepted Christ at First Baptist Church of Orlando, is characterized by the man who led him to faith in Christ as a "man after God's own heart."

The day before Johnson won the tournament, J.B. Collingsworth, president of the Marriage and Family Matters ministry, sent him a text message of Psalm 16:8: "I have set the Lord always before me. Because He is at my right hand, I will not be shaken."

"It was his time"

"I just believed it was his time, kind of like I did with Payne Stewart in 1999," Collingsworth told Baptist Press. "I felt like God spoke to my heart that he was going to be the one to take that trophy home and use the platform for God's glory. I sent him the same Scripture verse that I gave Payne, and that's the only other time I've ever done that."

Collingsworth gained a reputation as a spiritual leader for a number of professional golfers after preaching at Stewart's memorial service in 1999 after the golfing cham-

pion died in a plane crash.

Johnson, 31, lives with his wife and new son outside of Orlando where they moved a few years ago to escape the harsh Iowa winters.

He is avid about his faith and speaks openly about his participation in the Tour Bible Study and about his personal worship. Last year at the annual Masters Prayer Breakfast at Warren Baptist Church in Augusta, he shared his testimony of salvation and about his growing faith in God.

In each of his national and regional TV interviews following the traditional champion's dinner late Sunday, Johnson continued to speak openly about his faith and what it meant for him to share such an experience on one of the most important days of the year for Christians. He also expressed humility.

"I'm very normal. I'm as normal as they come," he said. "I love to play a game for a living. I love to play this game for just what it is, golf. I appreciate it and I feel honored to play golf for a living.

"Today was a day of perseverance and patience and redemption."

And now Johnson has a larger stage on which to share God's love and power in his life in golf's brightest spotlight.

PrayerFlight pilots take to the air to pray for Ohio

Nashville (BP)—A group of pilots took the mandate to pray for the salvation of their neighbors seriously on Good Friday when 10 single-engine airplanes flew over Ohio, carrying people praying for the 11 million residents of the state's 88 counties.

"A plane is a good way to cover a lot of ground," Kenneth Wortman, 73, a pilot from Lima, Ohio, told The Cincinnati Enquirer. "In the Bible, God tells us the fields are ripe for the harvest. From the air, a person can see a lot of fields."

Wortman got the idea for PrayerFlight last fall while talking with a friend about praying for non-Christians.

His love of flying helped him visualize the mission field, The Enquirer said, and he soon got others to join him for two regional prayer flights before the statewide effort April 6.

"You see rows and rows of houses, and you know they are full of people you are praying for," Samantha Ciminillo, 18, a member of Teens for Christ, noted. Ciminillo was one of six young people from the organization to join the pilots on their prayer excursion.

The pilots from various denominations donate their time and the cost of fuel. Groups pray silently and

aloud while in flight, and they pray for the state's leaders, for people in schools and hospitals, and for the salvation of people who don't know Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.

Pilots from Alaska, California, Indiana and Michigan who stopped at the Bluffton, Ohio, airport where Wortman works as a maintenance supervisor decided to join the effort by flying in their states with the specific purpose of prayer, The Enquirer reported. Wortman said he hopes the effort will be nationwide soon.

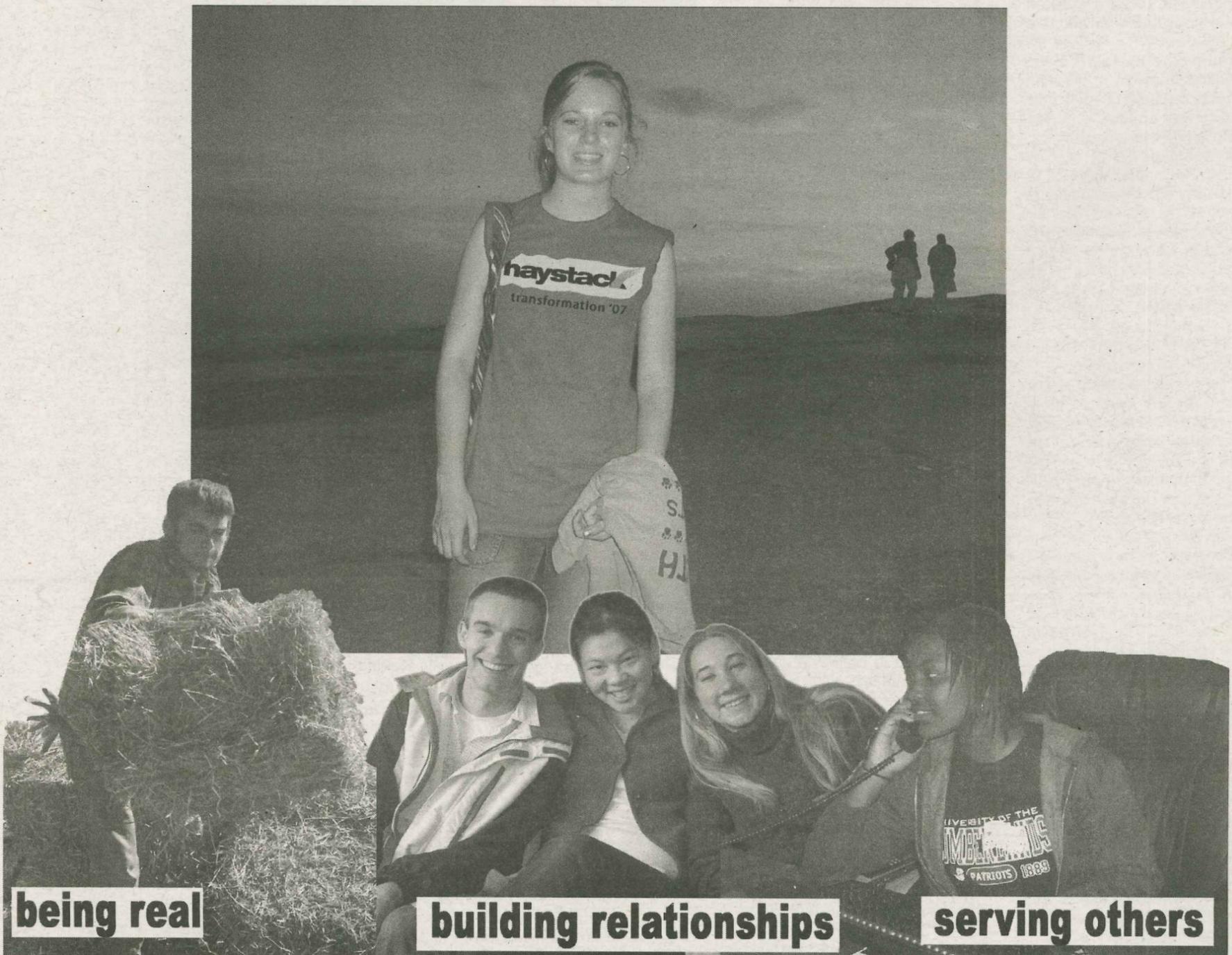
"When you have God on your side, think big," Wortman said. "That's what we're doing."

"My goal was to glorify God and hopefully I did that today."

2007 Masters champion
Zach Johnson

University of the Cumberland
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SHARING CHRIST SUMMER 2007

KENTUCKY

Kelley Baldrige, *Mountain Community Fellowship, Paintsville*
 Jennifer Belcher, *Camp Mission and Action*
 Maureen Carlson, *Good News Health Care*
 Shelby Crawford, *Crossings, Cedarmore*
 Allison Day, *First Baptist Church, Whitesburg*
 Tosha Farris, *Laurel Lake Baptist Camp*
 Brent Foley, *Jonathan Creek*
 Stuart Mack, *Jonathan Creek*
 John Steely, *Jonathan Creek*
 Sarah Wasson, *Boone's Creek Baptist Camp, Winchester*

UNITED STATES

Charlotte Abel, *New York*; Laura Bradford, *Michigan*; Clark Embree, *Woodland Bible Camp, Indiana*; Katie Faison, *Camp Joy, Ohio*; Amanda Foutch, *South Dakota*; Emily Harlow, *South Dakota*; Bethany Harris, *Grace Lutheran Church, California*; April Seay, *South Dakota*; Lexi Soucie, *1st S. Baptist, Flagstaff, Arizona*; Brandon Witt, *Tennessee*

INTERNATIONAL

Brad Bell, *Iraq*
 Sandra Freshour, *Uganda*
 Cam Hyde, *Sudan*
 Brett Martin, *Tanzania*
 Andrew Morrison, *Tanzania*
 Olivia Neeley, *East Asia*
 Chris Parrish, *Iraq*
 Shane Peek, *Thailand*
 Joshua Pollitt, *Kazakhstan*
 Josh Prewitt, *Iraq*
 Daniel Riddle, *Thailand*
 Tony Shouse, *Iraq*
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