



WESTERN RECORDER

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Casino bill 'dead'; Ky. Baptist leaders applaud opposition

By Drew Nichter
News Director

Frankfort—Failing to find enough support among state legislators, Gov. Steve Beshear admitted defeat on his proposed expanded gambling bill that would have allowed casinos in Kentucky.

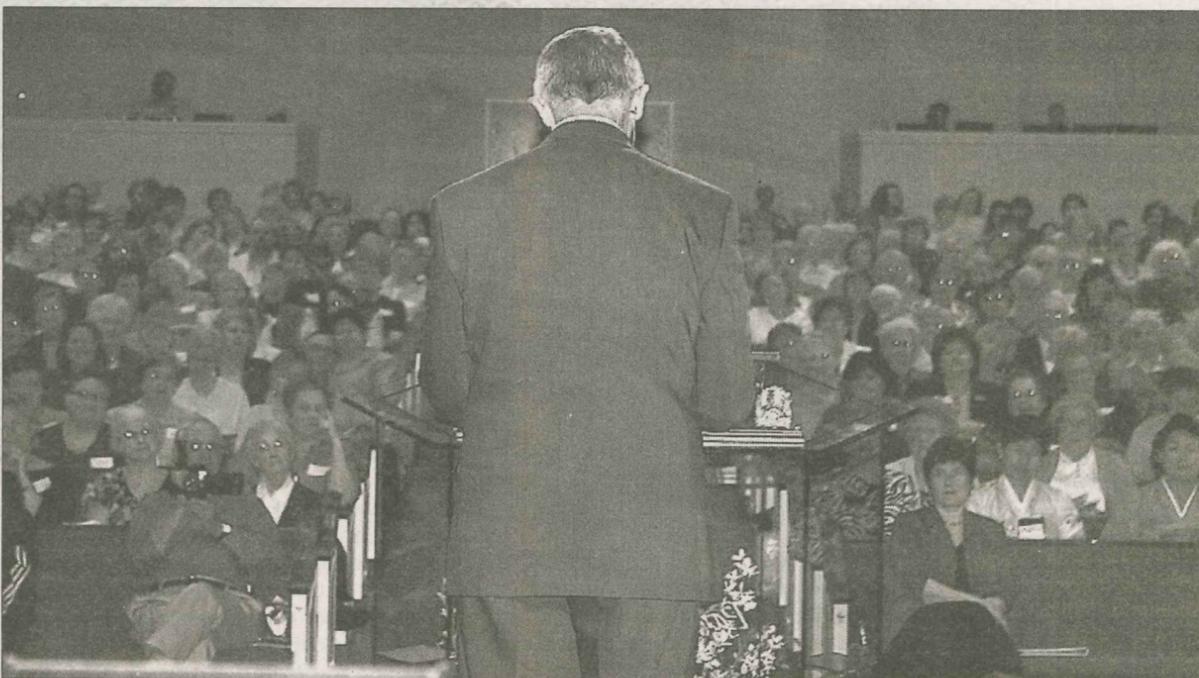
With only a few days remaining in the 2008 state legislative session, Beshear announced at a March 27 news conference that he and other House democrats had not been able to garner enough votes to pass the bill out of the House of Representatives and send it to the state Senate.

"For this session, I would say it is dead," he conceded.

At stake was a constitutional amendment that would have brought as many as nine casinos to Kentucky, five of which would have been built at the state's horse racing tracks. The bill required the support of at least 60 House members to pass, a number which Beshear said he was unlikely to get. He added that passage of the bill "turned out to be a lot harder than I think anybody thought it would."

The announcement was certainly a setback for the new governor who ran last year on the platform of bringing casino
□ See Leaders urge ... *Page 8*

'Walk Worthy'



REMEMBRANCES Members of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union and guests listen as a Southern Baptist missionary shares stories from 25 years serving in Africa and the Middle East. Last week's WMU annual meeting held at Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstown drew about 700 people. (Photos by Dannah Prather)

WMU meeting format changes but missions remains the focus

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Bardstown—This year's annual meeting of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union included hands-on ministry, a history-making celebration and heartfelt words from missionaries serving in the commonwealth, Costa Rica and areas of the world so closed to the gospel, it is risky to name the countries in print.

The ministry projects, and absence of hundreds of Girls in Action and Children in Action to close the event, changed the meeting's format, but the focus remained on sharing the gospel in word and deed at home and far away.

"Sisterhood," a drama ministry based in Kentucky, illustrated the meeting's theme based on Colossians 1:10: "Walk worthy of the Lord,

fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God." Performers portrayed "worthy" women of the Bible including Sarah, the wife of Abraham; the Samaritan woman at the well mentioned in the Gospel of John; and the wives of Noah's sons, Ham, Shem and Japheth.

During the business session of
□ See WMU explores *Page 3*

State missions offering tops \$1 million for first time in history

By Dannah Prather
Partnerships Editor

Louisville—Kentucky Baptists have given a record amount of money to the Eliza Broadus Offering that supports missions in the commonwealth.

Last week, Kentucky Baptist Convention and Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union leaders announced that, for the first time in the offering's history, contributions have exceeded \$1 million. The current tally is more than \$1.05 million. The cut-off date for the 2007-08 offering is Aug. 31, which means the total may reach as high as \$1.1 million.

"Eliza is a millionaire," exclaimed Joy Bolton, Kentucky WMU executive director, speaking to WMU members and guests attending the group's annual meeting in Bardstown. "As many of you know, that's been a dream for a long time."

The 2006-07 offering, the first with a publicized \$1 million goal, topped out at nearly \$993,000, exceeding the previous record of more than \$888,000 set in 2004-05. The 2005-06 offering fell short of its stated goal by more than \$23,000, pri-

marily because of post-Hurricane Katrina relief efforts.

The lion's share of the offering is used for evangelism and missions, including efforts to share the gospel and start congregations in non-English-speaking communities, on college campuses, in high-poverty areas or in communities where few people attend traditional churches.

Kentucky Baptists' generosity "means additional ministries can be funded," Bolton said. Projects will include Crossover Louisville, a series of evangelistic efforts scheduled for the weekend prior to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Louisville June 23-24, 2009.

Another focus for funds, according to KBC President Bill Henard, will be to help smaller Kentucky congregations host vacation Bible schools.

"If you were to list all the ways that people come to Christ and put them together as events, I would think that VBS ... is probably the primary way," Henard noted.

Collegiate ministries also may benefit from additional funds, Henard said. Sharing Christ with col-



TIME TO CELEBRATE With fireworks projecting from a Power Point display, Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union members and guests react to news that, for the first time, Kentucky Baptists have given more than \$1 million to the Eliza Broadus Offering for state missions. The announcement was made at Kentucky WMU's annual meeting last week in Bardstown.

lege students, and helping them grow in their faith, has rewards beyond today, he added. Campus ministries have "a part in empowering those students to get on the mission field."

Henard, pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, said the Broadus offering "allows us to do

more than what we're doing solely through the Cooperative Program."

Broadus led the effort to create an offering for missions in Kentucky. In 1913, the first offering was organized. In 1976, the annual season of giving was named for Broadus.

News Director Drew Nichter contributed to this story.

Dated material. Please deliver by Wednesday, Apr. 2.

CBF receives gift of \$1 million from anonymous donor

Atlanta (ABP)—The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship has received an anonymous gift of \$1 million for funding "micro-finance" loans in poor countries and other CBF ministries.

Daniel Vestal, the Baptist group's executive coordinator, announced the gift March 20.

"It is humbling and encouraging that a donor would entrust the Fellowship with this kind of gift," Vestal noted. "We are excited to be able to put these new resources to work in fulfilling our vision of being the presence of Christ among the most neglected. Lives will be forever changed because of this gift."

Half of the million-dollar gift will be used for a new finance initiative coordinated through the CBF Foundation. The group is currently conducting due-diligence research on creating a fund designed to give the organization and its partner churches and ministries a way to invest funds in micro-finance banks around the globe.

Micro-finance banks lend small amounts of money to people in developing countries as start-up funds for small businesses.

The anonymous donor designated the gift for a number of Fellowship-supported ministries, including equipping CBF field personnel with computers, supporting missions opportunities for undergraduate students, and care and wellness programs for missionaries.

Baptist Covenant leaders set 2011 meeting

By Robert Marus
Associated Baptist Press

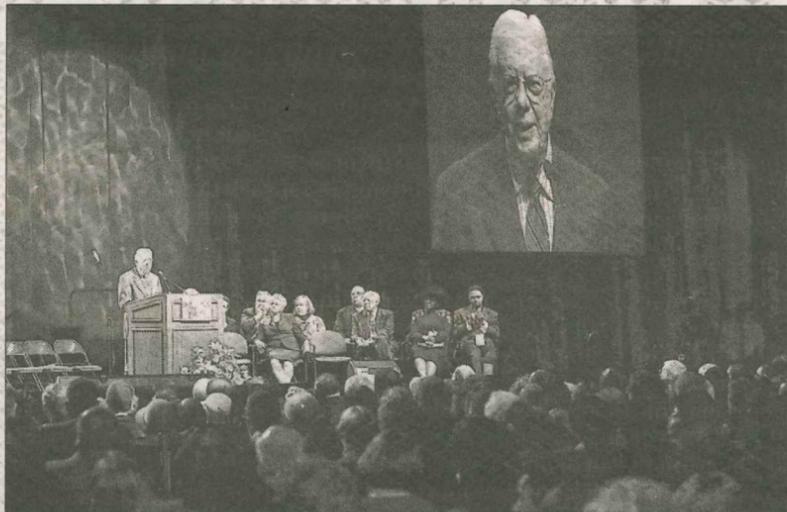
Atlanta (ABP)—Organizers of the recent New Baptist Covenant celebration are recommending a repeat of the historic pan-Baptist event in 2011, but not a new denomination or other permanent organization.

The event drew an estimated 15,000 Baptists from across denominational, ethnic and ideological lines to Atlanta Jan. 30-Feb. 1, for fellowship, worship and discussion about cooperation on evangelism and other areas about which they can agree.

The meeting was spearheaded by Jimmy Carter and endorsed by the other living Baptist ex-president, Bill Clinton. Critics alleged it was a thinly veiled attempt to stir up Baptist support for Democratic candidates in an election year. The event largely avoided partisan overtones and included prominent Republican speakers as well.

Carter, Mercer University President Bill Underwood and other event planners released a statement March 19, from a follow-up meeting held the previous week at the Carter Center in Atlanta. The document said that about 70 Baptist leaders from the groups represented at the meeting decided to repeat the event in three years "in the historic Baptist pattern of triennial meetings."

The leaders also vowed to "be as active as possible during the intervening years." They said they would expand the Covenant's steering committee from its original five members to "about a dozen" in an effort to engage a more diverse set of Bap-



LOOK TO THE FUTURE Former President Jimmy Carter addresses the opening session of the New Baptist Covenant Celebration in Atlanta in January. Organizers of this year's event have announced that they will meet again in 2011. (BP photo by Cat Norman)

tists, including more young people and women.

The statement mentioned the possibility of convening several regional New Baptist Covenant events next year, but did not say if that decision was final.

The organizers and other invited leaders "reconfirmed" their earlier decision not to form a separate permanent organization or denominational group under the guidance of the New Baptist Covenant.

The statement noted that the organizers will seek expert advice on "how we can assist actively in such major social issues as global warming, health care, poverty, criminal justice, human rights, religious liberty, elimination of nuclear weapons, and peace in the Middle East

and elsewhere."

The document also included a list of suggestions for specific action items and projects compiled from feedback by participants in the celebration. It encouraged local congregations to work with other Baptist churches and organizations involved in the celebration as they felt led.

The suggested projects included enhanced giving to the cooperating denominations' mission agencies, finding ways to minister to prisoners, working for fair tax policies, offering regular joint worship opportunities with local churches of different ethnic groups, working toward reducing the abortion rate, and making churches more environmentally responsible.

Tests reveal Mohler's tumor is not cancerous

Louisville (ABP)—A tumor removed from the colon of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary President Albert Mohler has proved not to be cancerous, according to a seminary news release.

Mohler had surgery March 20 to remove the mass. Doctors discovered it during a routine colonoscopy in February. They said they thought the tumor was pre-cancerous, according to previous statements from the school. A pathological test confirmed the initial diagnosis.

Mohler earlier announced he would be a candidate for the presidency of the Southern Baptist Convention at its annual meeting in

June, but bowed out of the race Feb. 14 when he announced his need for surgery. Three other candidates have already declared their intentions to be nominated—Frank Cox, pastor of North Metro First Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Ga.; Wiley Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Buena Park, Calif.; and Bill Wagner, president of Olivet University International in San Francisco.

Mohler said he is "very thankful" for the outcome. "As it turns out, this is a tumor that turns malignant 100 percent of the time, but was found before it had turned," he said in a statement.

Speaking before a chapel service

at Southern Seminary March 20, Mohler told students and faculty, "I am now a walking infomercial for all the medical tests. We are living in an age, by God's providence, in which we have been given incredible opportunities and incredible services by medical technology and medical personnel which can make a huge difference."

Mohler went through a similar surgery in December 2006. That surgery was complicated by blood clots that formed in his lungs.

Mohler said he is slowly working his way back into his presidential duties.

With additional reporting by Baptist Press

Imprisoned Baptist pastor released in Azerbaijan

Baku, Azerbaijan (ABP)—An Azerbaijani Baptist pastor imprisoned on what his supporters have called trumped-up charges has been released, according to the Baptist World Alliance.

Zaur Balaev was freed from a prison in Baku, the former Soviet republic's capital, March 19, after a pardon from Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev.

According to BWA, a worldwide umbrella organization for national and regional Baptist denominations, that organization, the European Baptist Federation and former President Jimmy Carter all lobbied Aliyev for the pastor's release.

"Baptists from all over the world

rejoice in God's answer to our prayers for the release of our brother, Zaur Balaev," BWA General Secretary Neville Callam said in a statement. "His patience in suffering and courage in the midst of trial has provided for us a splendid example of discipleship in the modern world. We look forward to giving him a platform to talk to Baptists about his faith and his experience."

Balaev was arrested in May 2007 after police raided his church in the remote northwestern town of Aliabad. He was charged with assaulting five policemen and damaging a police car in the process. But both members of his church—made up of ethnic Georgians—and other non-

Christian locals said Balaev did not resist the arrest.

Ilya Zenchenko, president of the Baptist Union of Azerbaijan, was quoted by the Forum 18 news service as rejoicing in his colleague's release, but saying that "there is a lot more work still to be done to defend religious freedom in Azerbaijan."

The nation, wedged between Russia, Iran, Armenia, Georgia and the Caspian Sea, is overwhelmingly Muslim. However, according to the U.S. State Department's 2007 report on international human rights, Azerbaijan's government controls the registration and operation of its houses of worship.

Judge dismisses lawsuit against Baptist seminary

Fort Worth, Texas (BP)—A federal judge has ruled in favor of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, and President Paige Patterson in a lawsuit brought by a former theology professor who claimed she was wrongly dismissed from a tenure-track position because she is a woman.

Sheri Klouda filed the federal employment lawsuit alleging breach of contract, fraud and related claims last March seeking unspecified damages.

In a ruling filed March 20 in U.S. District Court in Fort Worth, Judge John McBryde dismissed "all of her alleged actions against defendants" and ordered Klouda to cover the plaintiffs' court costs.

Following the ruling, Patterson released a statement saying, "My response is simply one of gratitude to God and to a host of people. The decision of the court has implications for all of our institutions and churches."

Meanwhile, Klouda's attorney Gary Richardson said, "No one questions the fact that it's a tough call. History is, of course, against us. We knew that and we believe this case has merit. And most likely we will make the decision to appeal it." Richardson said he believes new laws are needed if "an entity can violate someone's civil rights and constitutional rights and not be held responsible ... and then hide behind doctrinal positions to justify it."

Attorneys for Southwestern Seminary had argued that the court had no jurisdiction because Klouda's tenure denial was on constitutionally protected religious grounds.

Klouda earned a Ph.D. at Southwestern in 2002 and was elected by the trustees to a tenure-track position. She left the seminary in 2006 and now teaches at Taylor University in Upland, Ind.

In the lawsuit, Klouda claimed that Patterson assured her "personally and specifically" that her position was secure.

Patterson has stated that the seminary's policy prohibiting women from teaching theology to men is drawn from its desire to "model the local church." The Southern Baptist Convention's Baptist Faith and Message 2000 states that the role of senior pastor in local churches is limited to men. Patterson, according to the suit, believes the same standard should apply to the seminary.

Klouda's case became widely known after a news story appeared in the Dallas Morning News in January of last year following her denial of tenure. The story stemmed from comments of Baptist bloggers decrying Klouda's tenure denial in 2006.

WMU explores what it means to 'Walk Worthy'

Continued from page 1

the meeting, held at Parkway Baptist Church in Bardstown, members re-elected for a third term Pat Reaves of Louisville as president, Sandra Duguid of Hopkinsville as vice president, and Cheryl Hatfield of Willisburg as recording secretary.

Missionaries share testimonies

Kentucky natives Ken and Beth were commissioned to the African mission field in 1984. Today, they serve in North Africa and the Middle East.

Ken told WMU members and guests that in 24 years of service, he, Beth and their children have moved 26 times and learned four languages. They have served in countries where political unrest is the norm and racial tensions go far beyond what is experienced in the U.S.

Adapting to different cultures and climates, battling disease, insects and other challenges, the couple persevered even after one of their sons died of an asthma attack as they served in Africa.

Adding to their grief was the loss, by death or flight, of nearly all of one country's professing Christians during a time of intense persecution. "We began with 150 and ended with four," Ken recalled.

From there, he said, the couple purposefully began seeking believers in persecution, and asking, "God, do you know what you're doing?"

Ken said they met believers under daily scrutiny and pressure to renounce their faith, yet "they beg us, 'don't pray for the persecution to cease.'"

Ken explained, "The No. 1 cause of persecution in the world today is people coming to Jesus." Instead of relief the Christian minority asks for prayers that they might stand strong under the abuse.

Ken concluded his message saying, "WMU, please know you are paying us too much." He described a scene in one African region where a group of people came to Ken and Beth saying, "We heard a rumor



SISTERHOOD (Clockwise from above) Sisters Sandra Hartlieb, Peggy Young and Nora Pritchett used drama and interpretive movement to explore the theme "Walk Worthy" at this year's WMU annual meeting. Hartlieb portrays the Samaritan woman at the well who heard about "living water" from Jesus. As Sarah, wife of Abraham, Young laughs at the idea of having a baby so late in life. Pritchett interprets a song for WMU members and guests. (Photos by Dannah Prather)



that you brought God to our country. Would you come and bring God to our village?" The joy of sharing Christ with people who have never heard the gospel before is compensation enough, Ken declared.

"What have we done to deserve such joy?" he asked.

Gary and Sis Tufts, Southern Baptist missionaries to Costa Rica, said they are grieving for their home of 23 years now that they are back in the U.S. for a three-year stateside assignment.

"We're thankful for all you've done," Gary Tufts told Kentucky WMU, "but the task isn't done. There are 244 unreached people groups in our region" between Mexico and Panama. Multiply that figure by 11 international missionary regions and it is evident, "there's a lost

world out there," he noted.

To ensure that every person on earth has the opportunity to accept Christ as their savior, Tufts challenged those gathered at Parkway Baptist to tell God, "I'll go anywhere, anytime and do anything you tell me to."

Kentucky Baptists have several options in response to that prayer including teaching English to South Korean children and teens July 31-Aug. 17. Last year, nine Kentucky Baptists led a series of language camps in South Korea, using Bible stories as the foundation of the curriculum. Members of the team reported on their experiences at the annual meeting. To learn more about the language camps, visit WMU's Web site, www.kywmu.org, or call (866) 489-3534.



HANDS-ON HELP Rachel Crump of Vine Hill Baptist Church in Clairmont labels one of hundreds of plastic bags filled with personal care items that will be given to people in need from Kentucky Baptist Disaster Relief volunteers. WMU members brought donations with them to the annual meeting. Volunteers sorted them during the first session of the meeting so the kits could be assembled that afternoon. According to Karen Smith, a member of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church WMU in Shepherdsville, it didn't take long for the women and other volunteers to assemble between 450 and 500 kits. Additional donations were collected for Jefferson Street Baptist Center in Louisville and Baptist Nursing Fellowship's Baby Boot Camp ministry. Additionally, 50 women prayerwalked eight Bardstown-area schools as part of the first hands-on missions projects organized in conjunction with the annual meeting.

Mackey, KBC executive director, hospitalized

Louisville—Kentucky Baptist Convention Executive Director Bill Mackey has been hospitalized at Baptist Hospital East in Louisville since March 13 due to an intestinal bacterial imbalance. He is expected to be in the hospital for several more days with additional home rest to follow.

Mackey is not receiving visitors at the hospital, but expressions of encouragement can be sent via the Kentucky Baptist Convention, P.O. Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253.

Another option is MissionsFEST at Boones Creek Baptist Association April 26-May 3. Kentucky Baptists will welcome volunteers from other states and undertake a series of community projects including improvements to the association's camp.

According to associational clerk Twyla Sheffield, a barber and/or hairdresser is needed, as well as volunteers who can speak English and Spanish. Additional volunteers also are needed for general labor. For details, contact the association at (859) 744-0037.

Executive director's report

"Today, first and foremost, we want to have a celebration," declared Kentucky WMU Executive Director Joy Bolton as she announced that Kentucky Baptists exceeded the \$1 million goal for the 2007-08 Eliza Broadus Offering for state missions. (See story on page 1.)

Another celebration was the demise of proposed legislation in this year's Kentucky General Assembly related to casino gambling.

Bolton and other Kentucky Baptist women joined fellow believers in publicly denouncing the plan because of the ill effects gambling has on individuals and families.

"We prayed. We wrote letters. We showed up" at the capitol, she said.

In an effort to keep Kentucky Baptists informed about the work of WMU, Bolton encouraged members to visit the organization's page on Facebook.com and to read Bolton's personal weblog and additional blogs about missions and news, including prayer needs in South Korea.

Absent from this year's meeting was a Saturday event for Girls in Action and Children in Action. According to Kentucky WMU Associate Executive Director Brenda Price, leaders decided not to have the children's event, in part, because of the strain it places on the host church's resources.

More WMU news will be in next week's edition of the 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 obedience looks like

By Erich Bridges

Mexico City (BP)—Warren Hunter used to drink—"real bad," as he describes it.

Who better to pray over a concerned father and his young adult son struggling with alcohol addiction in the heart of Mexico City?

"I can relate to this man and his son because I used to be alcoholic," said Hunter, a volunteer from First Baptist Church of Gray Gables in Callahan, Fla. "I know how bad it can be."

He also knows how good it can be when you take the gospel into the streets of a city of 28 million people, fewer than 2 percent of whom know Jesus Christ as Savior. Hunter and 12 other Gray Gables volunteers traveled to Mexico City in February to help Southern Baptist missionaries and Pastor Arturo, a Mexican Baptist house church leader, evangelize part of the sprawling metropolis.

In less than a week, they distributed 6,070 copies of John's Gospel. They visited door to door, fed the homeless and shared Christ with adults, youth, kids, drug addicts—even members of the bizarre "Holy Death" cult.

"I've been in cubbyhole apartments. I've knelt down with people in the street and prayed for them," Hunter recalled just before heading home to Florida. "The Holy Spirit has been so strong I had chill bumps. It's the greatest time I've ever had serving my Christ."

A muscular guy with a ramrod-straight walk, Hunter sports a white beard—the only hint that he's pushing 60 years old. He has worked with his brother for the past 40 years rebuilding car and truck parts in Callahan, his hometown.

Hunter gave his heart to Jesus when he was 12, but "I didn't understand until about nine years ago what it means to be a Christian," he admitted. "Jesus says, 'Take up your

cross and follow Me.'

"It's about obedience."

Two months after walking the aisle at church to rededicate his life to Christ, Hunter said the Lord "checked me out" on the issue of obedience.

How? He was asked to teach a Sunday School class. Intimidated by that spiritual challenge, he turned down the offer on the spot and headed home from church in his pickup truck. A few miles down the road, he pulled over and began sobbing.

"What's wrong?" his wife asked.

"The Lord wants me to teach that Sunday School class," he replied through his tears.

Hunter obeyed—and it transformed his life. He has since served in a variety of ministries, including several U.S. mission projects. The Mexico City visit was his first international mission trip, but the journey began with that first simple step of obedience.

"If I hadn't told Him 'yes' then, I probably wouldn't be (in Mexico) this week," he acknowledged.

Little acts of faith can lead to large ones. That's true for Hunter—and for his church. The Mexico City project was only the second international trip for Gray Gables members. But Mark Tuso, the church's pastor and a participant in the mission effort, has high hopes for the future. Last year they started with a service project in Juarez, Mexico. This year they focused on sowing gospel seeds in the hard urban ground of Mexico City. Next year—perhaps something even more challenging.

"We're just a small country church. We've only got about 400 members," noted Tuso, 33, a former Marine in his first full-time pastorate. "But this is how we're going to do it."

That's the kind of spirit David and Pam Wong, Southern Baptist International Mission Board mis-

FIRST PERSON

Celebrating Kentucky Baptists' generosity

By Billy Compton

As pastor of Severns Valley Baptist Church, I received a letter with an offering of approximately \$12. The money accompanied a note in a child's handwriting which read, "Dear Brother Billy, I had a lemonade stand to make money. I decided to give the money to our church. My mom asked if I was sure I wanted to give my money instead of buying myself something. I told her I really wanted to give my money so we could help more people know about Jesus."

I was humbled to find coins and carefully folded dollar bills inside the envelope. This simple letter and sacrificial gift taught me a lesson about generosity. It expressed a love for the Lord and a passion for helping people experience life transformation in Jesus Christ. It was a sacrificial act deserving to be celebrated.

A similar noble mindedness has been demonstrated through the sacrificial giving of Kentucky Baptists. The Eliza Broadus state missions offering recently exceeded \$1 million

for the first time ever.

I learned this history-making news while attending a prayer group when Joy Bolton, executive director of Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union, joyfully declared, "Praise God, Eliza is a millionaire!" It was an expression of thankfulness for Kentucky Baptists' generosity.

The contribution that provided the tipping point for reaching the million-dollar goal was \$81.03, given by Oak Hill Baptist Church in Sonora. The largest amount given was \$50,000 from First Baptist Church of Paducah. From \$81.03 to \$50,000, Kentucky Baptists made investments in rescuing the perishing and connecting people to the life-changing message of Jesus Christ. The partnership of both small and large gifts in helping Eliza to become a millionaire is a milestone worthy of celebration.

You ask, "Why a million-dollar goal for Eliza Broadus?" Joy Bolton would emphatically respond, "There is a long list of Kentucky Baptist mission ministries that depend on

missionaries in Mexico City, are looking for as they recruit churches to participate in Operation Gospel Outreach, or Operation GO for short. The effort is designed to mobilize hundreds of volunteers and short-term missionaries each year to share Christ's message door to door in Central America and the Caribbean.

Many Southern Baptist volunteers come to Mexico, but the Wongs say that it's hard to get church mission teams to come to the nation's enormous capital. Some fear crime and violence in the city. No recent volunteer groups have been threatened, even in rough neighborhoods. Pam said, but she spends a lot of time on the Internet assuring nervous churches that it's OK to come.

"It's overwhelming," David acknowledged. "It's overwhelming when you see so many in poverty, when you see young people taking drugs in broad daylight. But we just want to give people love, give them a hug and show them there is hope."

Mexico City desperately needs hope. Every month, 10,000 people die there—most without knowing Christ. Ultimately the city must be won to Christ by Mexican believers, but they could use some help. For more information on Operation GO's needs and opportunities, visit www.macregion.org and click on Volunteers.

What does obedience look like? For a week in Mexico City, it looked like Warren Hunter and his fellow church members, giving hope to the hopeless.

Next time, it might look like you.

Erich Bridges is a senior writer with the Southern Baptist International Mission Board

What are you thinking?

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funding from the Eliza Broadus offering. When you combine the dollars invested from the Cooperative Program, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering and the Eliza Broadus offering, you are providing essential support in building bridges of ministry for the sake of the lost in Kentucky."

In a world that seems increasingly self-centered, generosity pushes against the tide. It stands opposed to the self-serving attitudes so prevalent throughout the fabric of society. It has a transformational power supported by biblical truth. Generosity is to be celebrated, especially when such giving is "for the sake of the lost in Kentucky." The apostle Paul said, "I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings" (1 Corinthians 9:23).

Thank you, Kentucky Baptists, for the Eliza Broadus offering. You have demonstrated how to respond when a "God-sized" challenge is presented. You are a reason for celebrating generosity.

Billy Compton is the Kentucky Baptist Convention's executive associate for Cooperative Program and resources.

Bill Mackey is executive director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention

CHURCH

Sound stewardship practices found in biblical principles

By Doug Strader

Churches are always looking for new ideas for financial stew-

ardship, ideas that are good stewardship principles rather than the latest gimmick, because gimmicks have a tendency

to deter giving rather than enhance it. Churches must remember that they should be in the practice of developing good financial stewards through biblical principles; not trying to try to trick their people into giving regularly.

This list is not intended to be the final word in good stewardship practices; rather it is intended to help you think about some positive things you can do to help your church grow financial stewards.

■ Pastors need to preach on stewardship more than once a year (regarding time, talents and resources).

■ Pastors need to be good role models in the area of financial stewardship.

■ The church must use sound financial practices when receiving, counting, depositing and dispersing money received from the congregation.

■ The use of drama in the morning worship service related to financial stewardship can be effective.

■ Make the offering time more worshipful.

■ Make offering envelopes available to your members. Some churches have the Envelope Service company mail out giving envelopes to church members monthly or quarterly. This practice often increases giving in the church.

■ Make monthly financial statements available to the congregation.

■ Offer quarterly testimonies from laypersons during worship services.

■ Mail giving statements to church families each quarter.

■ Find ways for the church to say "thank you" to those who give tithes and offerings.

■ Present some type of budget promotion each year in conjunction with the adoption of a new budget.

■ Offer money management programs to church members.

■ Encourage Sunday school teachers to use every opportunity to teach financial stewardship when the scripture lends itself to the subject.

■ Celebrate milestones in giving.

■ Complete a year-round financial stewardship emphasis.

Doug Strader, retired director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's stewardship department, is pastor of Farmdale Baptist Church in Louisville.



Single & divorced adults are indeed worthy of God's love

Q: If someone is over 35 years old and has never been married, are they worthy of love? How about someone who has been divorced or has gone through multiple divorces? Is there a statute of limitation on love?

Such ideas drive us to be an age-defying culture with many people trying to be younger than they actually are.

SINGLES

We can also be a past-denying culture within our churches, often not feeling free to talk about the troubled times we have gone through when we first step foot into a new church or Sunday school class.

From the perspective of God—who is Love (1 John 4:8)—all of his children were worthy enough for Him to send his Son to die. How did God's Son treat people who had experienced brokenness? John 4 tells the story of a five-time divorcee who also was cohabitating. How did Jesus relate to her? With grace, acceptance and truth. He engaged her in a conversation that liberated her from her past and present, enabling her to walk in newness of life.

Doing an in-depth scriptural and theological analysis of the right to remarry requires looking at New and Old Testament passages in the context of the biblical world. Many who have done such studies point to the Christ who "makes all things new" (Revelation 21:5) and gives everyone "a future and a hope" (Jeremiah 29:11).

It is not easy to be single in a coupled world. God calls his church to rise to the task of wrestling with these issues in order to clearly communicate the Good News of Christ for all.

Do an in-depth scriptural study on these subjects and ask God to lead you to a congregation that truly affirms single adults. In the midst of a thriving community of faith, you will know love and will find opportunities to connect with others using the wisdom and direction that God gives to those who happen to find themselves unmarried within his forever family.—James Stillwell

Q: There is a young woman in my congregation who attends faithfully but participates only by her physical presence. She seems afraid to share her thoughts or insights. I continue to try and draw her out, but she withdraws and keeps others at a distance. How can I help her feel a part of our church community?

There are many adults who carry a wounded child or adolescent inside themselves. Too often there has been a critical voice in their lives that has belittled, discounted, minimized, dismissed or criticized their thoughts, ideas, feelings and desires. Eventually that external voice is internalized and the individual will minimize, discount or criticize her own thoughts and feelings.

I am grateful that you notice her and want her to experience a faith community. Help her to claim Scripture that declares she is God's unique creation formed in the womb by God's loving attention. Although others—often family members—have not regarded her, her Lord God has highly regarded her.

When Jesus said, "Let the little children come," he acknowledged them. His actions declared that they matter. Remind her of Christ's actions with those whom the world had discounted. The truth is that what a person thinks and feels has value to God.

Your church member will benefit from genuine encouragement and individual counsel. Consider offering some brief counseling with her to help her share her story. Share Scripture that will bring truth to that story.

If she needs more intensive counseling, refer her to a trusted resource. Also, offer her a mentor from your congregation who can provide guidance and encouragement. Healing from old wounds can be a painful process; additional support is vital.—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.



Teacher's letter inspires care for students

We have a copy of a letter in the Bolin family archives and although I cannot remember when I first saw this letter, a framed copy of it now hangs on the wall of my history department office. I always glance at the letter before going out the door to class for the purpose of inspiration; to inspire me to value the worth of each one of my students and inspire me to care for them.

The letter was written on April 10, 1893, to my grandfather, Wesley Lafayette Bolin, a student at Clinton College in Hickman County in far Western Kentucky. Founded in 1873 by Willis "Father" White—who served as pastor of First Baptist Church of Clinton, county judge and moderator of West Union Baptist Association—as an academy for young women, Clinton College graduates often found their way to Wellesley College in Massachusetts.

The institution later became coeducational, but with declining enrollment, it closed in 1915. In 1893, however, the newly-formed West Kentucky Baptist Association had taken charge of the school and for a time, Clinton College flourished. Amanda Melvina Hicks, a cousin of Abraham Lincoln, both taught there and served as president from 1880 to 1894, a remarkable achievement for a woman at a denominational college in Western Kentucky in the 1890s.

In the spring of 1893, President Hicks wrote the letter to my grandfather. Although she sent it to him, the missive actually concerned my Great-Uncle Eugene, a student at Clinton College and the "character" of the Bolin family. I grew up listening to stories my Baptist minister father would tell about "Uncle Gene," and despite his uncle's shenanigans, my father, another Wesley, had a twin brother named Eugene after his Uncle Gene. So, my Great-Uncle Gene must have had some qualities worthy of emulation. Either way, Mrs. Hicks seemed to be especially concerned about the prospects

of one Eugene Bolin. Read the letter and see for yourself:

Clinton College, Apr. 10, (18)93

Mr. Wesley Bolin—
My dear pupil.

I am very anxious that Eugene should hear the lecture tonight. The subject is "God's Message to the World." It may do Eugene a great deal of good to hear it. He told me he would stay at home and that you were coming. If you can so arrange that he can come I shall be much pleased even if you have to stay at home. I say this because I am so much concerned about his soul.

Your friend and teacher.

Amanda M. Hicks

A great deal of mystery surrounds this letter. I never found out if my Great-Uncle Gene made it to the lecture that evening. And I never knew what the speaker said during his lecture, "God's Message to the World." There is a great deal that I do not know.

I do know, however, that here was a teacher who cared so much for one of her students that she took the time to write to the student's brother—my grandfather—asking him to make a sacrifice for the sake of his brother. In short, the teacher wanted young Eugene to come to the lecture because she was "so much concerned about his soul."

I don't know if Amanda Hicks inspired Eugene to come to the lecture, or to attend to his schooling or his soul, but I do know that she inspires me today. She inspires me to care for my students more, to recognize in them seeds of worth and even greatness.

For more information on Clinton College, see R. Charles Blair's entry in *The Kentucky Encyclopedia*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1992) on page 208.

Duane Bolin is a professor of history at Murray State University. He also is the author of "Kentucky Baptists, 1925-2000: A Story of Cooperation."

GUEST EDITORIAL



Duane Bolin

Tips for connecting with schools, part 1

Recently, I sat in the North Bullitt High School gym as my son, Jordan, and the rest of the school's junior class received their senior class rings. The students were dressed nice; most of the girls wore dresses and half the guys wore a tie, but we were in a gymnasium. Try all you want, it is hard to make a high school gym anything but a high school gym. There were some fancy chairs and the program was printed in a font too small for my aging eyes to read, but in the midst of it all it hit me: Where were the local churches?

Don't get me wrong, it was a great ceremony. The students were excited to be there. Parents and grandparents took pictures while some of us who graduated from North Bullitt years ago recognized how far the ceremony had come.

But I couldn't help but think how much nicer it could have been if someone would have offered to invest in these students. If some church would have stepped up and said, "We want to help make this event memorable." Lest you think I am calling out any particular church, I am not. This scenario could be repeated at any high school in Kentucky.

I have been trying to remember conversations I've had about churches impacting their local schools, as well as trying to recall some things I have seen or done. So, I came up

with a list of ideas that have been used to connect with students and schools.

Do you want your baked potato loaded? At Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, we hosted

a dinner on prom night for my daughter, Karen, and some of her friends. We decorated the fellowship hall, put together a simple menu, had background music and served as the cooks and waiters. The students paid for the meal, we just provided the venue. It takes the worry out of getting reservations at a restaurant and arriving to the prom on time. We also had the opportunity to meet some students that had never before darkened the doors of our church.

Hitting the fence. This time of year, baseball and softball season is in full swing and coaches and booster clubs are looking for sponsors for those outfield fence signs. The cost in most places is \$100 to \$150 per year to promote a church or youth ministry. It is a small investment, but it shows that you care.

Baccalaureate services. I used to dread this event. I knew that every year Christian County High School was going to call and ask our network for two things: money for greenery and volunteers to line students up around the gym. It was a task that gave us very little exposure and no recognition. But looking

back on it, this was an act of service we provided for the school. They had a need that was unmet and we were willing to help out. Only a couple of us were ever asked to speak, but this simple act of kindness was, I believe, a sign of things to come.

Lining fields and jumping hurdles. I don't know how many times I have passed ball fields and school tracks and seen countless volunteers raking and lining a baseball field before a game, or pulling hurdles on and off a track in preparation for a meet. What a wonderful opportunity for a church to impact an athletic team and a group of parents who can enjoy their child's competition without having to be concerned with the logistics of the event.

Snow cones and face painting. Like many Kentucky schools, Bates Elementary School in Louisville holds a fall festival fundraiser. For the past few years, its neighbor, Cedar Creek Baptist Church, has been running the snow cone booth. It has not only proven to be a simple way for the church to help the school, it is also a great way to connect with students and parents. Many of you already are serving in these same simple ways, through face painting and balloon animals.

I have many more ideas but am out of space. The trick is to be creative, find a need and then meet it. The schools are open and in need of community involvement. It is up to us to be part of that community.

Joe Ball, a former youth minister at Edgewood Baptist Church in Hopkinsville, is youth strategist for the Kentucky Baptist Convention

YOUTH MINISTRY CORNER



Joe Ball

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Stetzer: Leadership is key to guiding a Comeback Church

By Drew Nichter
 News Director

Bowling Green—The statistics tell the tale: North American churches are stagnant or in decline. While churches in other parts of the world are growing in record numbers, research shows that congregations in the United States are shrinking.

"If God is still faithful, then it must be something about us," suggested Ed Stetzer, director of LifeWay Research.

Pastors from across Kentucky gathered at First Baptist Church of Bowling Green March 25, as Stetzer led a Comeback Churches seminar, featuring lessons from his book, "Comeback Churches: How 300 Churches Turned Around and Yours Can Too," which he co-authored with pastor and church strategist, Mike Dodson.

Encompassing several months of study and interviews, Stetzer described the research as a way "to help churches come back after a decline."

"The big question is: What principles from comeback churches could guide pastors and churches down the path of revitalization?" he noted.

It was a question Matthew Perry, pastor of Boone's Creek Baptist Church near Lexington, was eager to have answered. He has served the 222-year-old congregation since 2003. He noted that following a boom in the 1950s and '60s which saw the church grow to around 400 members, it declined steadily over the next few decades. Currently, the church is "growing slightly, but we're just a little lax in reaching the community we're in," Perry acknowledged.

"Change is painful"

And knowing the community is crucial to making a comeback, Stetzer noted. He pointed out those churches that are either stagnant or in decline need to reexamine their community outreach strategies in order to experience revitalization. But, he added, "Most churches don't want to be revitalized. They want to do the same thing, but for it to actually work."

"Change is required, but change is painful," Stetzer admitted.

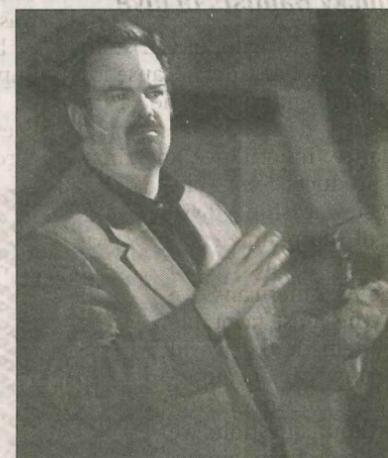
Part of that change, he said, is to become a missionary church and "live like missionaries."

Perry agreed.

"If we're not out there trying to do that then we're a stereotypical Baptist church," he said. "I don't want to turn into a club. I want to actually turn into a place that's salt and light making a visible difference in the community."

Perry said that Boone's Creek's focus in recent months has become more outward than inward. A door-to-door campaign Easter weekend saw copies of the New Testament given to nearly every home within a one-mile radius of the church. He also noted that many of the participants were doing community outreach for the first time.

"Looking different from the world is not our goal," Stetzer pointed out, adding that the biblical com-



Ed Stetzer

mand to churches is "to look similar and live differently."

In order for a church to "stage a comeback," Stetzer explained, "the congregation has ... to be part of the turnaround." But not everyone needs to agree on everything.

"The people have to be a part, but that does not mean they have to be unanimous," he added.

However, when compiling the research for the "Comeback Churches" book, Stetzer said the research team came across an obvious parallel among all of the churches: "Leadership really matters."

"Comeback leaders took the initiative for change," he said.

Norm Brock, pastor of South Fork Baptist Church in Hodgenville, knows first hand the importance of leadership and a congregation involved in a turnaround. In fact, the 225-year-old congregation was one of the churches surveyed for the book.

Brock came to South Fork in July of 2002, ready to lead a congregation which was in "crisis mode."

"The church had to absolutely depend on God to keep things going," he noted, adding that several interim preachers helped lead South Fork through a tough stretch until Brock was called as pastor. By that time, the church was eager for leadership.

"They were ready for a pastor," Brock recalled. The church had "a desire to really make an impact in the community."

With only 120 people in worship and 90 in Sunday school, the new pastor set an attendance goal during his first sermon and "we've never looked back," Brock declared.

These days, the church averages 360 in worship and 210 in Sunday school. On Easter, 710 people gathered for worship, the "most people who have ever worshipped together here at South Fork," Brock said.

While South Fork is a glowing example of a comeback church, Stetzer pointed out that these types of churches are out of the ordinary. However, once a congregation recognizes that change is necessary, it takes three principal "faith factors" to spark revitalization: A renewed belief in Jesus Christ and the mission of the church; a renewed attitude for servanthood; and a more strategic prayer effort.

"At the end of the day," Stetzer noted, "we have to be known as people who live like Jesus ... showing a transformed life of Christ."

Give to God and Caesar

Love, not taxes, motivates Kentucky Baptists to give

Planned giving for us Christians is unique and distinct because it is a spiritually-motivated—not a tax-motivated—decision. However, tax avoidance, inheritance and financial products, not biblical stewardship, drive most of the planned giving done in the United States. As Americans, we enjoy the most favorable tax system in the world in terms of encouraging charitable giving. So without question, we should seek to maximize the available tax benefits in our giving. However, we also must recognize,

KENTUCKY BAPTIST FOUNDATION



Barry Allen

at the end of the day, we shall be held accountable for how we steward what God has entrusted to us.

It is important to remember charitable giving in America preceded all of our current tax systems. Many charitable organizations were created and continuously funded through generous outright gifts, bequests and life income gifts before the establishment of the modern federal income tax in 1913, the federal estate tax in 1917 and the federal gift tax in 1935.

I am pleased to acknowledge those whom we have had the priv-

ilege of assisting have demonstrated their primary motivation to give was not the tax savings opportunity, but the opportunity to make an impact, to make a difference and to be involved in changing people's lives in the name of Jesus Christ through the missions and ministries of the charitable organizations in which they were involved, including their churches.

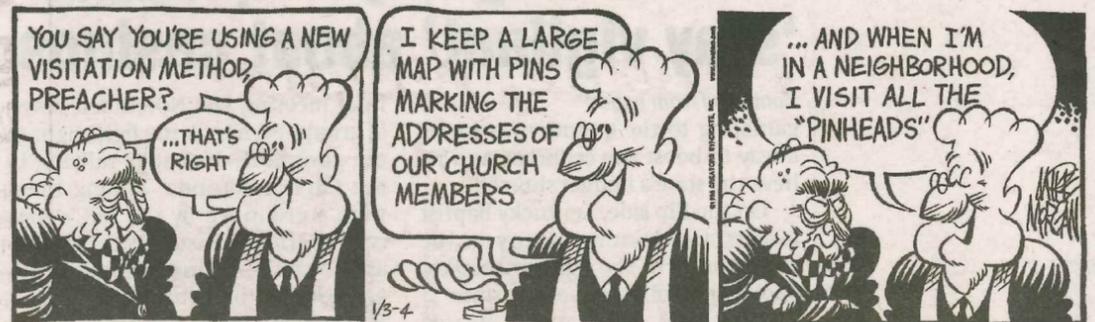
Having said that, taxes can and do play an important role in the size, form and timing of planned gifts. Inherent in the mission of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation is to facilitate the giving of planned gifts by simplifying the process and ensuring that each person is maximizing the tax savings opportunities available. To that end, the KBF makes available to all Kentucky Baptists confidential estate and charitable gift planning consultation.

Call Laurie Valentine toll free so she can assist you in fulfilling the teaching of Jesus to "give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's" (Matthew 22:21).

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

For Heaven's Sake

Mike Morgan



Church of the Covered Dish

Thom Tapp

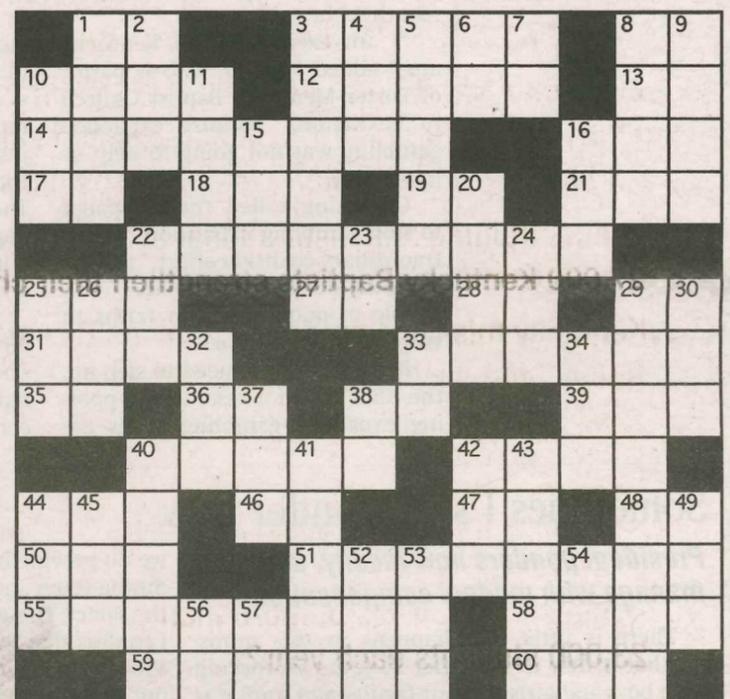


Bible Crosswords

By Teri Grottko

Across

- 1 The great I _____
- 3 Stay and chat
- 8 Article
- 10 Son of Dishan (Genesis 36:28)
- 12 Son of Shemaiah (1 Chronicles 26:7)
- 13 Santa's sound
- 14 "Today shalt thou be with me in _____" (Luke 23:43)
- 16 "_____ paint"
- 17 "I see"
- 18 Minor prophet (abbr.)
- 19 Electrical abbr.
- 21 Linking verb
- 22 "_____ hath good report of all men" (3 John 12)
- 25 Single bill
- 27 Hence
- 28 Hospital inits.
- 29 Continent (abbr.)
- 31 Brother of Shoham (1 Chronicles 24:27)
- 33 Middle Eastern crop
- 35 Capital of Moab
- 36 Exists
- 38 Chemical symbol for tin (abbr.)
- 39 Acorn tree
- 40 Ooze
- 42 Handles clumsily
- 44 Grain named in Isaiah 28
- 46 City near Bethel
- 47 Commercial spelling of a word that means facile
- 48 Preposition
- 50 Retirement acct.
- 51 Returning Jew from exile (Nehemiah 7:7)



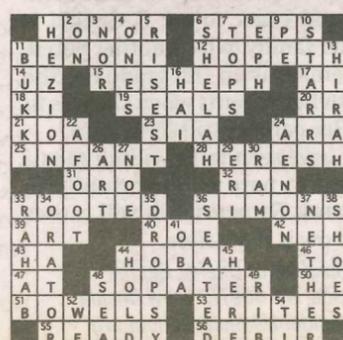
- 55 The Holy Spirit wouldn't let Paul and Silas go here
- 58 Manna measure
- 59 Understanding
- 60 Masculine nickname

- 29 What a veteran is
- 30 Question
- 32 Slick or skin
- 33 Atop
- 34 Promise
- 37 "Of Keros, the children of _____" (Nehemiah 7:47)
- 38 Dir. _____
- 40 Box _____
- 41 Nation God called against Babylon (Jeremiah 51:27)
- 42 "The Princess and the _____" (classic fairytale)
- 43 "The border shall fetch a compass from _____" (Numbers 34:5)
- 44 It may stick out on Olive Oyl
- 45 Son of Bela (1 Chronicles 7:7)
- 49 Christmas tree
- 52 A city of Judah (Joshua 15:32)
- 53 Minor prophet (abbr.)
- 54 Church denomination (abbr.)
- 56 Masculine pronoun
- 57 "_____ cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24)

Down

- 1 Son of Ulla (1 Chronicles 7:39)
- 2 Disfigure
- 3 Expresses
- 4 Possessive pronoun
- 5 Cut off
- 6 Preposition
- 7 Electronics giant (abbr.)
- 8 "Ir, and Hushim, the sons of _____" (1 Chronicles 7:12)
- 9 Memo
- 10 Away from (prefix)
- 11 "That at the _____ of Jesus" (Philippians 2:10)
- 15 Unclear
- 16 Used to be
- 20 Sky, to Simone
- 22 Family room
- 23 Dressed _____ the nines
- 24 Eastern U.S. uNiversity (abbr.)
- 25 Minor prophet (var., abbr.)
- 26 Abner's father (1 Samuel 14)

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Leaders urge Ky. Baptists to 'stay vigilant' about casinos

Continued from page 1

gambling to the commonwealth as a way to boost the economy and relieve the state's budget shortfall.

On the flip side, Kentucky Baptist leaders are claiming victory in the latest round of the fight to keep expanded gambling out of the state.

"Certainly, we're very pleased with the outcome and that the bill is dead for now," remarked John Chowning, chairman of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Committee on Public Affairs.

Chowning, who also is vice president of church and external relations at Campbellsville University, commended Kentucky Baptists for their efforts to "express their oppositions and their concerns, and to articulate those concerns in very positive and constructive ways."

KBC President Bill Henard echoed Chowning's affirmation of other KBC leaders in helping "to mobilize Kentucky Baptists like myself, to stand for what's right and to help defeat this," he said.

"I am excited for all Kentuckians," added Henard, who is pastor of Porter Memorial Baptist Church in Lexington, "because expanded gambling was not going to help us in any way."

Chowning called the campaign to stop gambling expansion "an extraordinary coalition effort," adding that Kentucky Baptists united with people of many different faiths to voice their opposition.

Recognizing the need to step up, the KBC passed a resolution opposing expanded gambling at its an-

nual meeting last November. Several groups even took the fight right to the governor's door step, rallying in the Capitol Rotunda. Among them were a group led by the KBC's African-American Pastors' Fellowship and Women Against Gambling Expansion, led by Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Joy Bolton.

Henard acknowledged that while the governor's casino plan may have stalled this time, the gambling machine is unlikely to slow down.

"They've already invested quite a bit of money in the state and I would assume that they're still going to invest more to try to get gambling here," he said.

Chowning agreed, saying that gambling interest groups likely will band together with the horse racing industry to continue "to raise the banner of why they need" casino gambling.

"I think they will pour money in (and) target select legislative races that they think they can win to elect proponents of expanded gambling," he said.

Chowning also noted that this most recent fight against casinos is just the latest in a long line of battles that has continued the past 15 years. Therefore, he encouraged Kentucky Baptists and all expanded gambling opponents to "stay vigilant and alert on this issue."

"I don't think expanded gambling is dead long term," Chowning said. "We can't just say we fought the fight and the battle is over. ... It will come again."

Sometimes I still wonder how

President ponders how faculty, staff manage with modest compensation

There is little that happens in this ministry that is new to me. After 24 years of working with boys and girls and our faculty and staff, it is rare that something occurs that I have not experienced before. Even so, I still wonder how some things happen.

During the next 10 days I will interview three families who are interested in ministry positions here at Oneida. When these families expressed an interest in serving here, I either told them on the phone, or I sent them a letter explaining a little more about the Oneida ministry and other important information, including compensation.

On the fourth page of that letter, just after the paragraph explaining the salaries of our faculty and staff—\$5,000 for faculty and \$6,000 for all of our support staff—I wrote: "If you have not already thrown this letter away, you are at the very least wondering how anyone can survive here financially."

More than a few people have told me in the interview that the latter was the very thought going through their minds when they read about the compensation. Some have said that they did think about throwing the letter away without even reading the rest of it. Others have told me they actually threw the letter away but later were convicted to get it out of the trash and finish reading it.

All three families are fully aware of the salary being offered. I am sure they have some legitimate doubts about whether it is possible to live on such a modest income. As many readers know,

we do provide housing, utilities, meals from our dining room and health insurance, in addition to the salary. These are very big household expenses. I confess that when Kay and I came to Oneida in 1984, we had some of the same doubts about being able to survive financially on \$4,500 for each one of us—a total of \$9,000—with three children still at home and one in college.

The only logical conclusion Kay and I could come up with was that if the other 120 faculty and staff could get by with such a modest salary, we could too. And we did.

Today, we have 150 faculty and staff and the salaries are slightly higher, but it still takes a lot of faith and adjustments in the household budget to make ends meet. The larger the family, the more challenging it can be.

Four of the people coming to interview have college degrees and are looking for ministry positions in the classroom. The other two are seeking support staff positions and are very familiar with our ministry. In fact, the husband came to me nearly two years ago and was very interested in serving at OBI. But I discovered that his wife was not quite ready to make such a dramatic commitment. Now she is ready and eager to see if Oneida is where God wants her family to be. Another potential faculty/staff member is an OBI graduate. She came to Oneida with her parents when she was in the second grade. Her parents still serve here.

Over the years I have seen folks willing to put aside monetary gain to have an opportunity to serve in Kingdom work. Sometimes it still causes me to wonder just how it is possible.

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



W.F. Underwood



Oklahoma Baptist

UNIVERSITY

Shawnee, Oklahoma

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- Ability to support and enhance OBU's excellence in teaching, scholarship and service;
- Ability to relate and communicate effectively with faculty, students, alumni, staff and prospective students, and to represent the University to a wide variety of audiences, especially in Oklahoma Southern Baptist churches;
- Aptitude and commitment to lead fund raising efforts;
- A visionary with a commitment to and experience with effective strategic planning;
- Active member of a Southern Baptist church.

The Presidential Search Committee will begin the review of applications and nominations in March and will continue to the time of selection. Applications and nominations should be sent to Presidential Search Committee, OBU Box 61241, 500 West University, Shawnee, OK 74804.

Oklahoma Baptist University welcomes applications from qualified individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, disability, age, or veteran status. To fulfill the mission of the University, the office of President must be held by an active member of a Southern Baptist church.

The Clear Creek Circle

Trustee chairman reflects on college's worldwide impact

Sometimes it is easy to lose sight of just how big an impact our work here at Clear Creek has on the world. I was reminded of that impact recently when the chairman of our board of trustees, Tim Langford of Hickman, experienced what he calls the "Clear Creek Circle."

"My wife, Karen, and I spent a week in February as part of a mission team in Puerto Rico. When we agreed to be part of this team, I had no idea of the Clear Creek connections that would become evident," Langford said.

"Our team consisted of 16 people from nine different churches in two different associations and states. Two of the team members attend Lakeview Baptist Church in Lake County, Tenn. Their pastor is Darrell Morgan, a Clear Creek graduate.

"David Mitchell, a 1979 Clear Creek graduate, and his wife, Marsha, have spent the last 22 years in Puerto Rico as Mission Service Corps missionaries ministering to the deaf through Puerto Rico Deaf Ministries," Langford continued.

"The Mitchells also have a young couple serving beside them, David and Heather Ingram, who have

a faith-based ministry. David is a 2002 Clear Creek graduate. They help transport members to church, lead Bible studies and direct youth ministries among the deaf.

"Now, about that Clear Creek circle and how it has impacted me," Langford noted. "The first time I came to Clear Creek was in 1973 as a part of a revival mission

team. I spent the week in a house on Holly Hill with Jerry Eggenburger, a 1975 graduate. When Jerry moved out of that house on Holly Hill, David and Marsha Mitchell moved in. Years later I became a Clear Creek trustee and my love for this special place was renewed. Now 38 years later, the circle was completed as my path crossed with the paths of David Mitchell and David Ingram. Clear Creek has had an important role in each of our lives."

Please pray for David and Marsha Mitchell, along with David and Heather Ingram, as they keep that Clear Creek Circle going by serving the Lord faithfully as they minister to the deaf in Puerto Rico.

Donnie Fox is president of Clear Creek Baptist Bible College, 300 Clear Creek Road, Pineville, KY 40977; toll-free: (866) 340-3196; Web site: www.ccbbc.edu; e-mail: dfox@ccbbc.edu

CLEAR CREEK CHRONICLE



Donnie Fox

Toddler's death is first test of Oregon's faith-healing law

By Jessica Bruder & Dana Tims
Religion News Service

Portland, Ore. (RNS)—The case of a 15-month-old girl who died for lack of medical treatment has become the first test of a state law that disallows faith healing at the expense of a child's life.

Ava Worthington died March 2 at home in Oregon City, Ore., from bacterial bronchial pneumonia and infection, according to Christopher Young, a deputy state medical examiner. Both conditions could have been prevented or treated with antibiotics, he said.

The child's breathing was further compromised by a benign cyst that

had never been medically addressed and could have been removed from her neck, Young added.

The girl's parents, Carl and Raylene Worthington, surrendered to authorities on March 28, and now face charges of manslaughter and criminal mistreatment. The couple is being held on \$250,000 bail and were expected to go before a judge March 31.

A grand jury recently chose to indict the couple on those charges in light of a 1999 law that was passed after several faith-healing deaths of children.

"This is the first time that they could be taking a shot at interpret-

ing the law," said state Senate President Peter Courtney, who carried the contentious bill on the Senate floor nearly a decade ago. He said the Worthington case is giving him "flashbacks."

"Kids were dying. Kids were suffering," he recalled. "Kids who have no choice over these things."

The Worthingtons are the first members of the Followers of Christ, a fundamentalist Christian denomination, to face criminal charges for failing to seek medical treatment for a gravely ill child.

Of dozens of children buried since the 1950s in the Followers of Christ Church cemetery, at least 21

could have been saved by medical intervention, according to a 1998 analysis by The Portland Oregonian newspaper. None of the deaths from that era resulted in prosecution.

According to church tradition, when members become ill, fellow worshippers pray and anoint them with oil. Former members say those who seek modern medical remedies are ostracized by the group.

Deaths associated with the church prompted a firestorm among lawmakers over religious freedom, parental rights and the state's responsibility to protect children. Since the law passed in 1999, Courtney said, he has not heard of any cases involving children who died because their parents chose prayer over medical care. "I really thought we'd resolved it," he noted.

The law eliminated the state's "spiritual-healing defense" in cases of second-degree manslaughter, first- and second-degree criminal mistreatment, and nonpayment of child support.

At the church-owned Carus Cemetery, fresh earth marked the spot where Ava was buried. Two large memorial ribbons lay against a fence. Adjacent to the site is a grave marker for "Baby Boy Worthington," dated 2001.

Officials declined to comment on how the boy was associated with the family or how he might have died.

Rita Swan, president of Children's Healthcare Is a Legal Duty, based in Sioux City, Iowa, said she had hoped that "changing the laws in 1999 would change the behavior of the Followers of Christ."

She expressed dismay at the thought of parents who rely on prayer to heal children suffering from easily treatable medical conditions.

"It means ... they're very stubborn people who have decided it's more important to act out their religious beliefs than protect the life of their flesh-and-blood child," she said.

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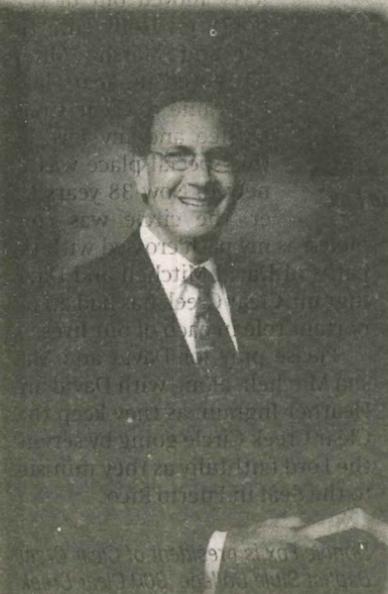
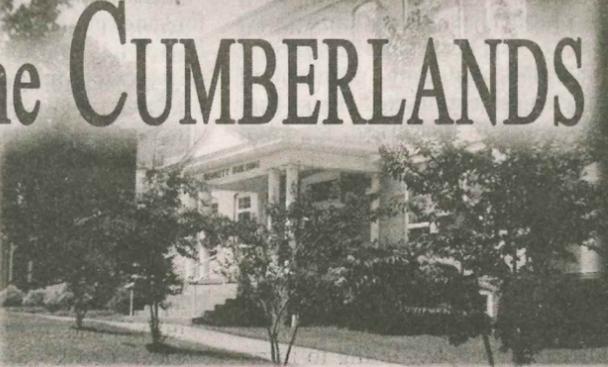


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For more information, contact **Dr. Bob Dunston** at (606) 539-4156 or bdunston@ucumberland.edu

NATIONAL NOTES

Court to reconsider home school case. The California Court of Appeals agreed March 25 to reconsider a decision that essentially outlawed home schooling by parents who are not certified as teachers. The court initially ruled against a child enrolled at Sunland Christian School in Sylmar, Calif., a private home schooling program, and decided that parents who home-school their children could face criminal charges in California. The Home School Legal Defense Association immediately began a petition against the decision.

S.D. enacts ultrasound law. South Dakota Gov. Mike Rounds signed into law last month a measure requiring a woman seeking an abortion be given the option of viewing an ultrasound image of her unborn baby before undergoing the procedure. South Dakota became the 12th state to adopt such legislation mandating abortion doctors offer a woman the opportunity to see a sonogram of the child in her womb. Pregnancy care centers have reported dramatic upswings in clients choosing to give birth after viewing ultrasound images of their babies.

School gives iPod or iPhone to freshmen. Abilene Christian University in Texas will be the first university in the nation to provide all incoming freshmen with an Apple iPhone or iPod, according to school officials. The devices will be distributed beginning this fall and will allow students to receive homework alerts, answer in-class surveys and quizzes, and check their meal and account balances, along with more than a dozen other web applications, according to Kevin Roberts, the school's chief information officer. The university is affiliated with the Churches of Christ.

HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN

By Coy Webb

Spring can be a season of sudden disasters. Tornadoes and floods can strike without warning. The aftermath of such tragedies can leave us feeling hopeless.

When disaster strikes, our greatest need is hope that this time of despair will pass; hope that the scattered debris of our lives can be put back together again; hope that there is yet life.

The good news is that God offers hope through Jesus Christ. The Bible tells us how we can possess such hope.

■ The beginning road to hope is to awaken to God's love for you. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). The whosoever means God loves you and wants to give you hope.

■ But there is a problem. The Bible says, "For all have sinned" (Romans 3:23) and "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). We have each sinned and death is the cost.

■ But God has provided a solution. "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). Jesus paid for our sins and arose to give us life.

■ We must respond by receiving God's gift of hope. "For it is by grace you have been saved through faith ... it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8-9). To possess a gift we must take the gift. I invite you to personally take God's gift of hope by claiming Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

Coy Webb is disaster relief associate for the Kentucky Baptist Convention's Baptist Men on Mission

MOUNTAINS TO THE MISSISSIPPI

COMPILED BY STAFF

■ **BUFFALO**—Buffalo Church will hold revival services April 4-6, with **Ronnie Sivells** as evangelist. **Rodney Troutman** is pastor.

■ **CAMPBELLSVILLE**—Saloma Church will host a screening of "The Wager," a film based on the novel by best-selling Christian author **Bill Myers**, April 6, 5 p.m. For more information, call (270) 789-0082.

■ **GEORGETOWN**—**Nicholas Wood**, director of the Oxford Centre for Christianity and Culture in England, will deliver the Georgetown College McCandless Lecture titled, "Playing With God: Rediscovering a Theology of Play," April 8, 11 a.m., at the school's John L. Hill Chapel.

■ **GREENSBURG**—Green Hill Church will hold revival services April 2-5, 7 p.m. **Marvin Janes** is pastor.

Greensburg Church recently called **Blake Jessie** as pastor. He previously served as associate and youth pastor.

■ **HARLAN**—Teetersville Church recently called **Roger Jordan** as pastor.

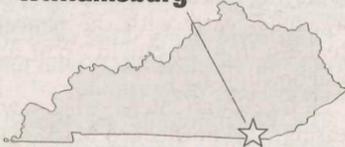
■ **LEXINGTON**—Grace Church will hold revival services April 11-13, with **Richard Gaines**, pastor of Consolidated Church in Lexington, as evangelist. **Mike Greer** is interim pastor.

■ **LOYALL**—First Church recently ordained **Ernie Hawkins** as deacon.

■ **MAYFIELD**—High Point Church re-

Spotlight on ...

Williamsburg



University of the Cumberlands will host a "Principle-Centered Leadership" program featuring leadership expert and author **Stephen Covey**, April 8, 7 p.m., in the O. Wayne Rollins Center. To reserve free tickets, call (606) 539-4432.

cently called **Rick Hatley** as pastor.

■ **MOUNT VERNON**—Clear Creek Church will hold revival services April 6-9, 7 p.m., with **John Dodson** as evangelist. **Kenny Queener** is pastor.

■ **SOMERSET**—High Street Church recently called **Ed Amundson** as pastor.

■ **WEST VAN LEAR**—West Van Lear Church recently called **Paul Grainger** as pastor.

■ **WILLISBURG**—Willisburg Church will hold revival services April 6-9, 7 p.m., with **David Kizziah**, pastor of New Hope Church in Springfield, as evangelist. **Jay Hatfield** is pastor.

KBC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

28-29 Kentucky Woman's Missionary Union Annual Meeting, Parkway Baptist Church, Bardstown.

29 RA Congress Region 7, Elk Spring Valley Baptist Church, Monticello.

31 Understanding Other Beliefs, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

31-April 1 Welcome to Kentucky Conference, Baptist Building, Louisville.

April

1 Assimilation Tour, Walnut Memorial Baptist Church, Owensboro.

1 Iron Sharpening Iron, Old Mill restaurant, Russellville.

3-4 Drawing the Net, Baptist Building, Louisville.

4-5 Collegiate Leadership Training Conference, Cedarmore Conference Center.

5 Youth Bible Drill and Speakers Tournament, Northside Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

10 Assimilation Tour, Immanuel Baptist Church, Pikeville.

15 Iron Sharpening Iron, Kentucky Lodge, Barkley State Resort Park, Cadiz.

17 Assimilation Tour, Central Baptist Church, Corbin.

17 Iron Sharpening Iron, My Old Kentucky Home State Park, Bardstown.

18-19 4:GO, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.

18-19 Exalt, First Baptist Church, Shelbyville.

18-20 All State Children's Choir, Cedarmore Conference Center.

21 Senior Living Celebration, Northside Baptist Church, Princeton.

21 Iron Sharpening Iron, Moonlite Bar-B-Q restaurant, Owensboro.

21-22 Developing & Managing People, Baptist Building, Louisville.

22 Assimilation Tour, First Baptist Church, Mount Washington.

22 Senior Living Celebration, Severns Valley Baptist Church, Elizabethtown.

24 Senior Living Celebration, Northside Baptist Church, Mount Vernon.

24-25 Quarterly Prayer Meeting for Spiritual Awakening, Northside Baptist Church, Mount Vernon.

24-26 Ministers in Transition, Hawthorne Hotel, Louisville.

25 Children's Bible Drill, Rose Hill Baptist Church, Ashland, and Calvary Baptist Church, Lexington.

25-26 Literacy Missions Conference, Cumberland Inn, Williamsburg.

25-26 Women's Missionary Union Resource Team Training, Baptist Building, Louisville.

25-27 All State Children's Choir-West, Jonathan Creek Conference Center.

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

CLASSIFIED ADS

AVAILABLE: Ordained Southern Baptist minister for pulpit supply, bivocational or full-time pastorate in central Kentucky area. Call (859) 272-7156, ask for George Bryant or leave a message.

FOR RENT: Christian-owned oceanfront condo in Panama City, Fla. Great vacation spot; sleeps four; family games and videos available. Ask for unit B2-308. Mention this ad and receive \$100 off the weekly rental. Call (800) 874-8823.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth and children. Prefer, but not limited to, married couple. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Northside Baptist Church, PO Box 129, Science Hill, KY 42553.

SEEKING: Worship pastor. Historic First Baptist Church of Somerset, Ky., will begin new contemporary worship services this fall in a newly renovated worship center. These new worship opportunities will complement the existing traditional worship services that are vibrant and growing. The church is seeking a dynamic worship pastor for the contemporary worship services only. The ideal candidate would have experience in leading worship, developing a praise band, being a team player, and connecting with the community. Interested candidates should submit a resumé, DVD that presents their giftedness, and a cover letter indicating their interest. The church will provide excellent compensation and benefits including annuity, health and life insurances. Those interested, please submit your information by June 1 to: Dr. French Harmon, senior pastor, First Baptist Church of Somerset, 128 North Main St., Somerset, KY 42501.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor, Frenchburg Southern Baptist Church, Frenchburg, Ky. Please send resumé with a DVD, CD or tape of recent sermons to: Pastor Search Committee, Frenchburg Baptist Church, 298 Hwy. 36, Frenchburg, KY 40322-8118.

SEEKING: Full-time associate pastor for First Baptist Church, East Bernstadt, located one hour south of Lexington near London, Ky. If the Lord is leading you in this direction, send cover letter, resumé and salary history to Associate Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, PO Box 266, East Bernstadt, KY 40729.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of students/recreation. Red House Baptist Church in Richmond, Ky. dawn@redhousebc.com.

SEEKING: Part-time minister of youth (15-20 hours/week). Individual will be responsible for planning, coordinating, directing, evaluating, and being personally involved in the overall youth ministry program. This position is well-suited for bivocational commitment. For more information, call the church office at (270) 325-3820. Please send resumé to Buffalo Baptist Church, PO Box 40, Buffalo, KY 42716, Attn: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Part-time associate pastor/youth minister for Fellowship Baptist Church in Harrodsburg, Ky. Send resumé to Judy Gash, Fellowship Baptist Church, 481 Cornishville St., Harrodsburg, KY 40330.

SEEKING: Full-time director of missions for Lawrence County Baptist Association, Leoma, Tenn. Accepting resúmes through April 30. Please send resúmes to: Search Committee, Lawrence County Baptist Association, 2427 Highway 43 South, Leoma, TN 38468.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister. If interested, please send resumé to Great Crossing Baptist Church, 1061 Stamping Ground Road, Georgetown, KY 40324.

SEEKING: Pianist (contemporary and traditional). Wednesday evenings, Sunday mornings and evenings. Evergreen Baptist Church, 2698 Cardwell Lane, Frankfort, KY 40601, Attn: Personnel Committee. M. Hughes, (502) 223-7166; Office @evergreenbaptistchurch.us.

SEEKING: Full-time senior pastor for Lancaster Baptist Church, a rapidly growing Southern Baptist church near Lexington (average Sunday attendance: 500), ministering to a congregation of all ages with strong participation of young adults. LBC seeks a pastor to lead the church in glorifying God by obediently making and equipping fully devoted followers of Christ in Central Kentucky and throughout the world, by the power of the Spirit. Please submit resumé to LBC Pastor Search Team, 201 Richmond St., Lancaster, KY 40444.

SEEKING: Part-time pianist for Sunday morning services and Wednesday evening rehearsals. Send resumé to Grace Community Baptist Church, 7300 National Turnpike, Louisville 40214; e-mail gbcc7300@peoplepc.com.

SEEKING: Full-time youth minister. If you share a vision to lead teens to faith in Christ and on to spiritual maturity by any and all possible means while maintaining a commitment to the authority of the Word of God, then request a church profile and prospect questionnaire at drsams@cbcheart.com. You also may send a resumé to Calhoun Baptist Church, PO Box 283, Calhoun, KY 42327.

SEEKING: Pastor for Grant's Lick Baptist Church, a Conservative congregation standing on God's Word with strong growth potential. Looking for an energetic leader with scripture-based messages. Visitation, AWANA, and outreach are vital ministries to bring others to Christ. Send resumé to: Grant's Lick Baptist Church, 941 Clay Ridge Road, Alexandria, KY 41001, Attn: Pastor Search Committee.

SEEKING: Full-time pastor for Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Somerset, Ky. Please mail resumé to Pastor Search Committee, 1685 Hwy. 3091, Somerset, KY 42503.

SEEKING: Worship leader/minister of music. Younger's Creek Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Ky., is actively seeking a bivocational minister to lead worship and choir ministries. We are an excellent opportunity for someone looking to minister in a truly blended worship setting. If interested, please send resúmes to: Search Team, 251 Younger's Creek Road, Elizabethtown, KY 42701.

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Sand, sun & servanthood

BeachReach reinforces service, evangelism among college crowd

By Chris Turner
LifeWay Christian Resources

Panama City Beach, Fla.—Waves roll in and lap gently at beer cans scattered for miles along the condominium-lined beach. Music blares as nearly-naked college students pour alcohol into funnels while other students chug it through a connected plastic tube. The idea is to get as drunk as possible as quickly as possible. It has obviously worked for the many passed out on or near their beach towels—and it's just 2:30 in the afternoon.

Stepping over and around the cans and people is Julio Bonfe, sophomore cadet at the United States Military Academy, and a couple of classmates.

"Hey are you guys going out to party tonight?" he asks a group, getting a resounding "yes." "Well, take this card with you and give us a call and we'll come get you," Bonfe tells the group. "We're also serving free pancakes in the morning all this week."

Bonfe was one of more than 800 college students who came to Panama City Beach, Fla., over a three-week period to participate in BeachReach, a ministry focused on sharing the gospel with college students who have come for spring break. The BeachReachers serve their partying peers by offering free van rides and pancakes each morning. This year, more than 8,000 rides were given, 50,000-plus pancakes served and the gospel shared countless times.

"It would be hard to say how many times the gospel has been shared but we know it is considerable," said Angel Ellis, coordinator for BeachReach. The students have lots of conversations in vans and at the pancake breakfasts. We are able to get names and information of the ones they talk with and get (the names) back to a local campus minister. Many times we have a student group here from the same college, so we can get them connected. We

also try to get them connected with a church in their city."

The BeachReach ministry is more than a decade old now but has grown significantly in the past four years. Part of that growth is due to how heavily marketed spring break has become and how intensely locations like Panama City Beach and South Padre Island, Texas, cater to the party scene on college campuses. But with the increase in revelers has come an increase in their peers who are ready to minister.

"We believe this is an important ministry because Jesus was consistently with sinners," Ellis noted. "He told the church leaders at the time that it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. The students that come here and party need to hear the gospel. I love seeing Jesus becoming alive in the lives of individuals. He is our life and our hope."

Sharing on the strip

This year, BeachReach spanned three weeks beginning March 1. Although spring break is usually considered a holiday for students, the schedule during the week can hardly be considered relaxing for the volunteers. They and their adult ministers arrive Saturday, often after a half day's worth of driving (students came this year from as far away as Utah and New York). After a meal and a worship service, students hit the streets at 9 p.m. to prayerwalk the areas along the main strip where they will be sharing the gospel and giving rides the rest of the week.

There is training Sunday morning that covers everything from evangelism to helping intoxicated people in and out of vans. That afternoon, students return to the strip and the beach to make initial contact with partiers, passing out cards with the van ride telephone number, as well as information about the daily pancake breakfast. Following worship later that evening, the volunteers take to the streets. The sched-

ule is repeated each night through Thursday, with most student workers staying out until 2 a.m. The next day comes early with the pancake breakfast from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at a local bowling alley.

"It is really an intense time of witnessing," acknowledged Mark Mangrem, pastor of Connect Church in Arlington, Texas, and the nightly speaker during the third week. "The really cool thing about BeachReach is that ... many of them have never shared their faith and Sunday and Monday are a bit awkward for them. But by the end of Thursday night, it has gotten much more natural and they are looking for those opportunities."

"This is all reproducible," he added. "When these students return to their campuses they know how to approach someone with the gospel and know how they can minister to their peers. I love hearing the stories how (the BeachReach experience) has transformed them."

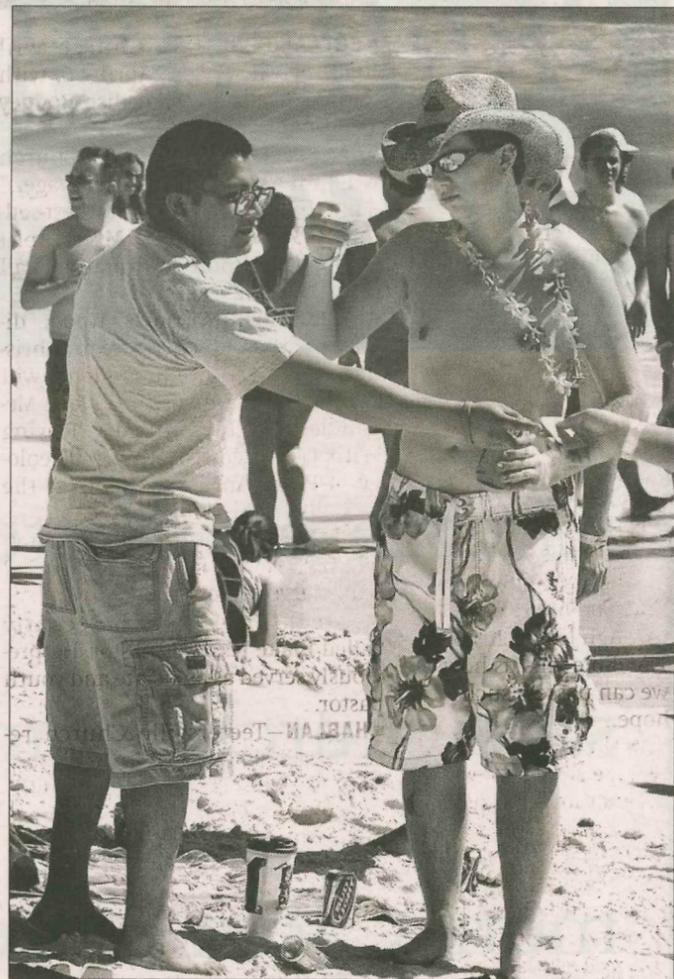
Outside the comfort zone

Makenzie Shewcraft, 24, associate campus minister at Murray State University agreed. She said last year's BeachReach experience rocked her sheltered world.

"The party scene is way out of my comfort zone," Shewcraft admitted. "I had a really hard time loving college students in this lifestyle while as a student and last year in my first year as a campus minister. It was a big step for me to come here. But God showed me they are dealing with sin, just like everybody else, and the only thing that is going to change that is if somebody shares Jesus with them."

Ellis said she believes BeachReach ultimately equips students to live a biblical mandate.

"In 1 Peter 3:15, it says to always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have within you," Ellis pointed out. "The ave-



nues of service we provide through van rides and pancake breakfasts do not negate the responsibility to pursue conversations that lead to presenting the gospel. We want to remove barriers to begin conversations and that can take place anywhere."

Lewis Hudson came prepared for just that. As the sophomore Army cadet prayerwalked the strip with classmates before the week began, he anticipated the beer cans, blaring music and the passed-out students.

"Lord, we want them to know that satisfaction in life only comes through You," he prayed. "We want them to know what a good time really is and we ask You to give us opportunities to share that with them."

SPREADING THE WORD
Julio Bonfe, a cadet at the United States Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., offers cards for free van rides to spring break partygoers. (Photos by Kent Harville)

Georgia volunteers feed thousands of college students at BeachReach

Panama City Beach, Fla.—The e-mails keep coming. Don Wood still gets them and he enjoys every one.

"I still remember those kids who came down," he said. "I love hearing from those kids who've come to BeachReach in past years that I've gotten to know."

Wood is a "blue hat," or team coordinator, for disaster relief teams connected with Baptist state conventions and associations. Wood, a member of Zion Baptist Church in Covington, Ga., is this week's leader of Stone Mountain Baptist Association's feeding unit. Three weeks earlier, the first team arrived to set up and serve meals to staffers and college students who came to Panama City Beach through BeachReach.

The unit also sets up shop Mondays through Thursdays in a local bowling alley, serving pancakes from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. More than 50,000 pancakes were served to more 5,000 students over the three-week period. Volunteers have been coming here since 1995.

"I honestly don't know what we'd do



FREE GRUB Hundreds of students line up for free pancakes. More than 50,000 pancakes are served to spring break students through BeachReach.

without their help," BeachReach coordinator Angel Ellis acknowledged. "They are a huge help and nobody does what they do better. I personally appreciate their partnership and the hard work they do, but I especially appreciate the way they interact with the students."

Wood said it is all part of a day's work. "We see it as a way to serve," he noted.

"We believe LifeWay has a really good ministry going here and we see the difference it makes in the lives of the kids who come. We consider this fun. It is a chance to be a part of something special."

Most of those who travel with the feeding unit are retired and often feel as if they are ministering to their grandchildren. Wood also pointed out that serving has its rewards.

"Seeing the students spiritually grow in such a short period of time is something I never get tired of seeing," he said. "You see them on Monday and they are timid and unsure of what lies ahead, especially the first-timers. But just in the course of a few days you see them becoming more confident and more bold in sharing their faith. They learn it here and take it back with them to their campuses."

"We've got people in our churches who haven't led anyone to Christ in 50 years. But when a kid comes down here and wins somebody to Christ, it impacts them for the rest of their lives."

Stone Mountain Association's feeding

unit is one of seven in Georgia and one of the largest. It served more than 800,000 meals in New Orleans during the few months immediately following Hurricane Katrina. Wood told the story of a despondent woman who brought her three small kids to eat.

"I walked over to her and said, 'You look like you need a hug,'" he recalled. "She just let go. Sometimes people just need to know somebody cares."

And that is why Wood said he enjoys the e-mails which likely come from students he hugged. He added that he gets a few hugs from students at the beginning of the week, but "by the end of the week if I stand out there where they come in, I get them from everybody," he claimed.

"I have several (students) who have told me that they want to do what we are doing when they retire," Wood shared. "Hopefully we are a good example to them of serving Christ and that they'll do it the rest of their lives."

And, he will likely get e-mails letting him know how they are doing.

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PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING

WESTERN RECORDER

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WESTERN RECORDER
PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
Gilead Baptist Church Edition
December 18, 2007

DECEMBER'S CALENDAR

- Dec 19 - Sunbloss's Christmas Gathering, 5:00P
- Dec 20 - 2007 Elders' Christmas Gathering, 5:00P
- Dec 21 - "A Place To Call Home"
- Dec 22 - Christmas Eve Church Service, 6:00P
- Dec 23 - Follow Only 9:30A, Combined Worship, 11:00A
- Dec 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 6:00P
- Dec 26 - No Wednesday Evening Service
- Dec 27 - Youth 3-Day Student Celebration in Pigeon Forge, TN

BUDGET INFO.

2007 ANNUAL BUDGET

Weekly Budget: 1209 Offering

Year to Date Budget Offering to Date:

DATE	OFFERING
DEC. 23	1209
DEC. 30	1209
JAN. 06	1209

IT'S THE SUNSHINER'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION!
The Sunshiners Invite Everyone To Join Them On Tuesday, December 18th @ 5:00PM
As They Come Together To Celebrate Jesus!
The Ham, Turkey, & Drinks are Provided.
Please Bring a Side Dish and A Dessert.

2007 BIBLE DRILL RECOGNITIONS
Join Us This Wednesday, December 19th @ 6:30PM
As We Recognize All Of Our Youth & Children

WESTERN RECORDER
PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
First Baptist Church Edition
Dec 23

MAY GOD BLESS YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AS YOU CELEBRATE THE GREATEST GIFT EVER GIVEN, Jesus!

On Sunday, December 23rd, there will be no 8:30 A.M. worship service. We will only have one A.M. worship service on this Sunday at 10:45 A.M. Discipleship Training will be at 5:00 P.M. on Sunday, December 23rd. A adult choir will present "Jesus, No Other Name" on Sunday, December 23rd at the 10:45 A.M. worship service.

WESTERN RECORDER
PRACTICAL RESOURCES FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
Highland Baptist Church Edition

Christmas Eve Services
Our Advent Season continues with worship services this Sunday, December 23rd. On Monday, Christmas Eve, we have a 5:00 p.m. Family Service and the 7:00 p.m. and a 10:45 p.m. Service. Please invite family and friends to join you. Children will be provided for the 7:00 p.m. service.

An Advent Word of Thanks
Remember - We will gather on December 30, for the Bible Study Hour, followed by worship at 11:00 a.m. (The 10:00 a.m. service will not be held.) Jim England will be our proclaimer.

HBC Welcomes
Please remember that the 2007 contributions must be received in the church office by December 31st. If you have not yet contributed, please contact Betty McCall at the church office at 404-1-3735.

Thinking Together...
I got an early Christmas present this morning. The challenge is a new member. He is a young man who is very energetic, vision, and a great person to have on the team. He is a great person to have on the team. He is a great person to have on the team.

Amendment Creates Interim Director of Young Adult Ministries
The Board of Directors of the church has passed a resolution to create a position of Interim Director of Young Adult Ministries. The position will be filled by Kevin B. Smith.