

Western Recorder

June 14, 2016 — *Shine Like Stars* ✳ Philippians 2:15 — Volume 190, Issue 12

'Jesus in fur' brings comfort to veterans, children

By Myriah Snyder



Fort Campbell—Molly, a military missionary's therapy dog, shares the love of Christ with those in need by being "Jesus in fur" through the ministry Canines for Christ. Molly recently made her 1,000th visit.

"Twenty-two veterans tragically commit suicide in the United States every day. But when we get a therapy or service dog involved, it drops to almost zero," Ron Leonard, a North American Mission Board MSC missionary to the military at Fort Campbell, said.

At three weeks old, Molly and her mother and brothers were left out in 18-degree weather to die. Someone found them and took them to a shelter.



At six weeks, Molly was adopted by the Leonards and her mother and brothers were adopted across the United States.

A few years after adopting Molly, the Leonards began searching for a way that they could use her to serve Christ. In 2012 they found Canines for Christ.

The organization has 500 volunteers in 29 states and exists to "use ordinary people and their beloved dogs to share God's message of love, hope, kindness and compassion to the community," its website states.

Since 2012, Molly has traveled 20,000 miles. She even has her own business card, complete with John 3:16 and the sinner's prayer printed on it.

The visits that Molly and the Leonards make open doors to the gospel because people ask about their Canine for Christ vests. The team has seen hundreds of opportunities to share the gospel and dozens of people come to know Christ.

"Ron Leonard and Molly are wonderful ambassadors for Christ. Each day they go out into the community and bring comfort, joy, love, compassion and happiness along with hope to the many people that they visit," Larry Randolph, a Canines for Christ leader, said.

"Ron and Molly specifically visit the veterans in various facilities and minister to those that have PTSD," he continued. "The visits from Ron and Molly release anxiety, tension, help with depression and bring calmness and

❑ *See Molly... Page 3*

KBC's Smith to lead Mid-Atlantic Baptists

Columbia, Md.—Kentucky Baptist Convention President Kevin Smith was unanimously elected June 7 as executive director of the Mid-Atlantic Baptist Network.

The General Mission Board of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware voted to call Smith, assistant professor of church history and Christian preaching at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and teaching pastor at Highview Baptist Church in Louisville, during a special called meeting in Columbia, Md.

"Simply stated, we believe Dr. Smith is the man God has chosen for us. He has outstanding people skills, and has a deep passion for reaching the lost," said Michael Trammell, board president.

"We are excited that Dr. Kevin Smith has accepted the call of our board to serve alongside Mid-Atlantic Baptists," added Trammell, senior pastor of Mt. Airy (Md.) Baptist Church.

Smith, a native of Washington, D.C., grew up in Prince George's County, and he has fond memories of attending YMCA summer camps in Edgewater, Md., as well as many teenage nights at the Inner Harbor and the Woodlawn Mall.

He earned a bachelor of science degree from Hampton University, a private, historically black college in the Tidewater, Va., area, where he met Christ.

"I have the most boring testimony," Smith told the Maryland/Delaware mission board, noting he had grown up in church, but not in a Christian family. His grandmother picked him up every Sunday and took him to church, but it wasn't until he was attending Hampton that God became real to him.

"My life was changed my freshman

❑ *See Smith... Page 2*



Bill Warren, President of the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware (left), and Michael Trammell, president of the Convention's General Mission Board (right), congratulate Kevin Smith on his election as the executive director.

Dozen states suing Obama administration over transgender directive

By Bonnie Pritchett

Austin, Texas—Kentucky has joined 11 other states and two school districts that filed a lawsuit May 25 challenging President Barack Obama's directive demanding all federally funded schools apply a controversial interpretation of Title IX requiring schools to define a student's sexual identity based not on biological traits, but on feelings.

Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin called the directive for schools to accommodate transgender students an "absurd federal overreach" into a local issue and recently told school districts to ignore the guidance from the White House.

"The federal government has no authority to dictate local school districts' bathroom and locker room policies," Bevin stated in a news release from the Governor's Office.

"We're not going to do it," Bevin said, according to WDRB News reports. "...I encourage every single one of our administrators, every one of our principals, every one of our superintendents, disregard that unlawful suggestion until this has sorted itself out."

Other plaintiffs in the lawsuit include Texas, Alabama, Wisconsin, West Virginia, Tennessee, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Utah, and Georgia; Maine Gov. Paul Lepage; the Arizona Department of Education; Harrold Independent School District (HISD) in Texas and Heber-Overgaard Unified School District in Arizona.

On May 13 the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Justice issued a "Dear Colleague" letter giving guidance to all federally funded K-12 schools and universities in their application of Title IX. The one-sentence regulation passed in 1972 as part of the Higher Education Act prohibits discrimination in public education based on sex. The Obama administration interprets "sex" to include "gender identity"—a student's perceived gender.

Declaring the federal demands "unlawful" and "capricious and arbitrary," the lawsuit calls for a permanent injunction preventing the Obama administration from implementing and enforcing its rules.

In announcing the lawsuit, Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said,

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Smith

Continued from Page 1

year at college... in the chapel there," he recounted, crediting a chaplain's sermon. "My life really changed when he was preaching John 3:16!"

Later, Smith moved to Kentucky to study tax law and sat under the ministry of Elder D.J. Ward, pastor of Lexington's Main Street Baptist Church, where he was called into ministry and met his wife, Patricia.

Smith earned a Master of Divinity degree at the Church of God Theological Seminary in Cleveland, Tenn. And, after nearly a decade of ministry in Tennessee, he moved to Louisville to attend Southern Seminary, where he is completing doctoral studies. In 2006, Smith was appointed to Southern's faculty, after having served as the Martin Luther King Jr. Fellow.

Prior to joining Highview's staff, he served as pastor at Watson Memorial Baptist Church in Louisville for eight years.

Smith, who made history last November when he became the first African-American to be elected president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, has served on the KBC's Committee on Committees, Mission Board, Administrative Committee and Committee on Credentials.

"(Smith) consistently models familial and ministerial integrity," said Curtis Woods, associate executive director for convention relations at the Kentucky Baptist Convention. "As a champion of gospel-centered reconciliation, Smith pursues unity in the bond of peace within the body of Christ."

In a letter recommending Smith for the Maryland/Delaware post, Paul Chitwood, KBC executive director-treasurer, said, "Kevin Smith may not be a name familiar to some members of your board but his is a name above reproach in the Kentucky Baptist Convention. In addition to his significant responsibilities as teaching pastor of one of our key churches and a professor at Southern Seminary, Kevin is currently serving as president of our state convention and chairman of our KBC Mission Board. In all of these roles, Kevin has been used of God as an agent of reconciliation."

Chitwood added, "Kevin is a very gifted preacher, being among our most sought after for speaking engagements in Kentucky and beyond. He connects effectively with churches of every size and in every setting. Kevin knows how to 'speak pew' with an energetic delivery that the Spirit of God is using to encourage saints and convict sinners."

Among his other denominational service, Smith is a member of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission's Leadership Network Council. He also has served on the SBC Committee on Resolutions on five separate occasions, most recently in 2014, and recently was appointed to the SBC African American Advisory Council.

Search Committee Chairman Victor Kirk said the committee believed that Maryland /Delaware Baptists needed someone with both administrative skills and "a shepherd's heart."

"Our staff, leadership team, pastors and churches need healing and unity," Kirk added. "We believe Dr. Smith, who previously has been a pastor for over 14 years, was the right person to aid in that mandate. His relational skills are exceptional, and he has the heart to bring the body of Christ together."

Tom Stolle, outgoing interim executive director for the Mid-Atlantic Baptist Network, said, "I'm thankful that God has called Kevin to come serve our network of churches. We, as staff, are looking forward to his leadership and are excited for our future. I know that God has great things in store for our churches, and I can't wait to see what He will do in the days, weeks and years ahead."

In his departure, Smith will resign as KBC president, and Andrew Dyer, pastor of Corinth Baptist Church in London, who is serving as first vice president, will assume the role. (WR)



Crestwood archer places among top 50 nationally

By Carey Donnell

Louisville—Trevor Becker was one of about 950 archers who took part in a national archery tournament in Louisville May 13-14.

"He is a very steady, calm young man which makes him a very good archer. He's very focused and not easily frustrated," said Larry Watkins, coach of the Crestwood Baptist Church archery team.

Becker, a member of the Crestwood Baptist team and a sophomore at Oldham County High School, placed in the top 50 among all males at the Centershot National Tournament.

"I'm very proud of myself for placing in the top 50 against players from all over (the country)," said Becker. "I'd like to improve my score in the future."

In total, churches, schools and homeschools from 37 different states and one church from Saskatchewan, Canada participated in the tournament.

"He shoots on his school team and has been involved with Centershot since January," added Watkins.

Crestwood Baptist Church placed top 25 among all schools and churches in the competition.

Becker is a second-year archer, having participated with his school last year and beginning with Crestwood Baptist this year. And archery runs in the Becker family. His younger brother, Trent, signed up for an eight-week archery class with Centershot beginning in November.

"Trevor's calm and collected mindset helps him stay focused on his goal, hitting the bullseye," said Watkins. (WR)

Motorcycle ride benefits Sunrise Children's Services

By Cary Donnell

Mount Vernon—Kentucky Baptist bikers saw their recent ride through Kentucky's scenic roads as more than just an opportunity to take in the sights and smells of the Bluegrass state.

The 96-mile ride from Mt. Vernon to Mt. Washington made by 43 bikers on a near-perfect day raised awareness and more than $1,819 for the ministry of Sunrise Children's Services, and it resulted in two salvations, reported Randy McPheron, director of missions for Rockcastle Baptist Association.

"We were grateful for the show of support from Kentucky Baptists and others who are a part of the bike rally. There is a great need for those who love helping children, and Sunrise is the best organization to do that," said Paul Chitwood, executive director/treasurer of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

Jonathan Jones, senior pastor at Salvisa Baptist Church in Salvisa, has been an avid motorcyclist for about 50 years.

"I've been riding since I was 6 years old," said Jones. "I rode to support Sunrise and their cause."

Jones is a member of the Kentucky Baptist Bikers ministry, a group of bike lovers who also love Jesus. "Our motorcycle ministry is a tool to reach those who don't know Christ," added Jones. "We love Christ first above motorcycles. It's a way of connecting with people."

The event was organized to encourage prayer for Sunrise and all proceeds went to Sunrise and their mission to help less fortunate children.

"Our purpose for this ride was to support Sunrise Children's Services by raising awareness to this ministry. Also, we wanted to raise financial support and offer our prayers for this important work," said DOM McPheron.

"We believe in the ministry of Sunrise which is helping hurting children," he said. "I pray that as our motorcycles rolled in to Sunrise that it greatly encouraged these kids and the Sunrise staff." (WR)







Top: *Kentucky Baptist bikers meet for their May 28 ride at the Rockcastle Baptist Association building in Mount Vernon.*

Middle: *Bikers take time to pray with kids during their stop.*

Bottom: *The 43 motorcyclists raised more than $1,800 for Sunrise Children's Services in Mount Washington.*

No regrets as Louisville pastor leaves statehouse seat

By Kristen Lowry



Democratic Rep. Tom Riner, a Baptist pastor in Louisville, speaks to colleagues at the Kentucky statehouse in February. Riner lost his bid for re-election May 17 after 34 years in the legislature. (Kentucky Legislative Research Commission photo)

Frankfort—For more than three decades, Baptist pastor Tom Riner has been fighting for Christian causes in the Kentucky legislature without regard for party politics.

The socially conservative Democrat will wrap up his 34-year statehouse career in January after losing a bid for re-election May 17 to former Louisville Metro Council member Attica Scott.

Riner, 69, had built a reputation on his unyielding principles, which included his refusal to ask for or accept financial contributions in his reelection bid, not wanting to use the power of incumbency to gain an unfair advantage over his challengers.

"I call it the 'golden rule government,'" Riner said. "You think what you would like if you were in the position of the person who had never run before. I tried to make it a more even playing field."

Riner is pastor of Christ Is King Baptist Church, a small Southern Baptist congregation in Louisville. He has been both criticized and praised for his commitment to bringing his Christian faith into the public square.

The boundaries of Riner's district were changed three years ago in redistricting, which may have whittled away some of his core constituency. But he also faced opposition from Democratic colleagues. Pure Politics reported that Louisville Rep. Mary Lou Marzian and former Rep. Eleanor Jordan endorsed Scott as a "real Democrat" and accused Riner of not representing the district's values in a letter to voters.

"For too many years, someone who doesn't share our values has represented this district," they said in a letter. "The current representative is out of touch with the voters of the district on issues like choice, privacy and treating all people fairly regardless of gender or sexual orientation."

Riner said he always voted his conscience—even when it went against party principles.

In 2006, Riner sponsored legislation that would require members of Kentucky Homeland Security to affirm the existence of an almighty God, and he was instrumental in passing legislation to erect a monument with the Ten Commandments in front of the state capitol.

Most recently, Riner frustrated fellow Democrats by assisting Rowan County Clerk Kim Davis with her legal defense by introducing her to the legal rights group Liberty Counsel after she refused to sign marriage licenses for same-sex couples.

Riner also made waves in Frankfort for his role in exposing a sexual harassment case against a fellow Democratic lawmaker—an action he considers one of the most significant accomplishments of his legislative career.

"I feel that as a Christian, I have a duty to defend the defenseless and to aid those who don't have anyone else to plead their cause," Riner said. "We've had a long history in the state of public corruption, and I think that it becomes ingrained and becomes very difficult to unmask it, talk about it."

Democratic strategist Dale Emmons said Riner has been an advocate for the state's downtrodden.

"He's got nothing to hold his head down about," Emmons said. "He's been a very principled person. He's stood up for people who nobody's lobbying for—poor people, mentally ill people, convicted felons, trying to help them get their life back together and get a second chance."

Riner acknowledged that some of his beliefs put him on a downhill political ride, but that he felt duty-bound.

"I understood all the possible consequences, but I just felt like that the Lord had put me there for a purpose," he said. "That was one of the reasons I was there, to do things that others wouldn't do, to take risks that others wouldn't take."

Now, Riner said he is taking time to pray for God's direction in the next chapter of his life and to reflect on his years in Frankfort.

"I don't have any regrets," Riner said. (BP)

Molly

Continued from Page 1

comfort to these people that are experiencing severe anxiety and social disorders."

"She enriches people with her warm nose and soulful eyes. Ron ministers to them with the love of Jesus in his heart. It is a beautiful combination of one of God's most graceful creatures and man serving Him in this amazing and unique ministry," Randolph added.

In addition to the work that the Leonards and Molly do with the military, Molly also spends her time ministering in nursing homes, children's homes, and hospitals. Molly's newest venture is working with victims of human trafficking as a therapy dog.

"The Leonards have a unique ministry to military families, meeting physical and emotional needs as they point them to Jesus," said Joy Bolton, executive director of the Kentucky WMU.

She continued, "In dealing with PTSD, which affects the entire family, not just the individual, their dog Molly is a great asset to the ministry. It was wonderful to have the Leonard's at the recent state WMU Annual Meeting to lead a conference about their ministry and provide ideas for churches on how to minister to families who are suffering because of PTSD."

Molly spends her days working with PTSD patients in Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama and Ohio. The Leonards use their ministry with Molly to educate churches and individuals on the effects of PTSD and how to respond biblically, Leonard said.

"A dog really alleviates that stress within the PTSD environment. So that's what Molly's done. She's worked with hundreds of PTSD patients and we find out if we can get that PTSD patient or that person a dog, that we can really drop down the suicide rate," he added.

"She just does what a dog does. She just absolutely starts loving on people and people start loving on her. After that, the rest is history," Leonard added. (WR)

SBC's first black professor among Southern Seminary retirees

By Andrew Smith

Louisville—The Southern Baptist Convention's first African-American seminary professor is among three retiring faculty members at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

Vaughn Walker, David Puckett and Brian Richardson are retiring following the 2015-2016 school year. Walker, WMU professor of Christian ministries and professor of black church studies, was appointed in 1986 as the first black professor at any of the six SBC seminaries, and the first elected to faculty in 1997.

"Over the course of 30 years, (Walker) has shown a steadfast commitment to Christ's calling in his life, service to the church and commitment to this school that was transformed during the time he was here," Southern Seminary President Albert Mohler Jr. said. "There are very few men who could have lived through that entire process, and with such a kind and constant spirit contributed so much to this school."

Walker, who had earned a Ph.D. from Oregon State University and was a college professor, moved to Louisville in 1984 as a Southern Seminary student. The institution was then founding the Carver School of Church Social Work and wanted to develop a ministry to the inner city of Louisville, particularly to black families, Walker said.

The seminary hired Walker as an assistant professor and he taught for seven years in the Carver School, which closed in 1997.

After Mohler was elected president in 1993, Walker moved to the School of Theology, then to the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry in 2003. He retires as the last active professor hired by the late seminary president Roy Honeycutt.

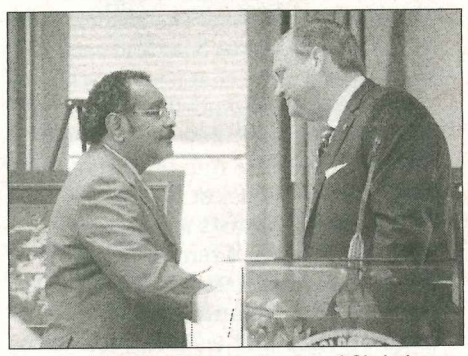
"The most compelling emotional moment for me here, in my 30 years, was the day I signed that Abstract (of Principles)," Walker said about the founding seminary charter all professors are required to sign upon their election. "I know I was the first African-American, at No. 200, to sign it. I even wondered whether an African-American had ever touched that book before."

Walker has developed both master's and doctoral programs in black church leadership, and has pastored First Gethsemane Baptist Church in Louisville, since 1984. While he is retiring from full-time teaching, he will continue to supervise his current doctoral students and pastor his church.

"I am a practical theologian, I am not your traditional theologian. I see myself as a pastor who teaches," Walker said.

Kevin Smith, assistant professor of preaching at Southern Seminary and the first African-American president of the KBC, studied under Walker during his Ph.D. program and said he owes his career to him. A fellow graduate of Hampton University—a historically black university in Virginia where Walker earned his bachelor's—Smith said the fruit of Walker's academic ministry is scattered throughout SBC institutions.

"I think his legacy is every black professor at a Southern Baptist seminary," Smith said.



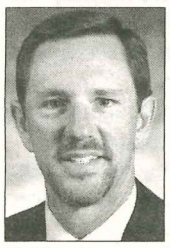
Vaughn Walker, WMU Professor of Christian Ministries and professor of black church studies, is honored May 19. (SBTS photo)

Mohler also praised Puckett for his "massive" contributions to Southern Seminary, serving as professor of church history since 2002 and as associate vice president for doctoral studies from 2002 until 2012. Mohler said Richardson, Basil Manly Jr. Professor of Leadership and Church Ministry since 1996, is uniquely "encouraging and unwavering in the faith." Richardson was president of the North American Professors of Christian Education, the founder of the "Journal of Christian Education" and contributed to many books on education and family ministry. (BP)

'Join me in prayer'

Throughout Scripture, God's people are exhorted to pray. In his letter to the church at Philippi, the Apostle Paul offers this encouragement: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6). As Kentucky Baptists begin another summer of mission work, would you join me in praying for some specific requests?

Together
We are the KBC



Paul Chitwood

First, pray for Kevin Smith and his family as they transition from Kentucky to the Northeast where Kevin will begin serving as executive director for the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware. Also pray for Andrew Dyer, pastor of Corinth Baptist Church in London, as he is promoted from first vice president to president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention.

The biggest mission event in most of our communities this summer will be Vacation Bible School, when churches across the state will minister to and share the gospel with families. Pray for the thousands of Kentucky Baptists who will evangelize and disciple students during VBS. Pray that the Holy Spirit will use VBS to bring the lost to Christ.

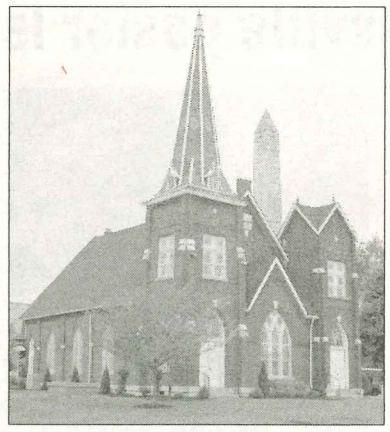
Kentucky Changers is also part of summer for many churches committed to sharing Christ in their Judea. Pray that God will use this effort to save the lost and equip students who are serving in Kentucky Changers to live their lives on mission.

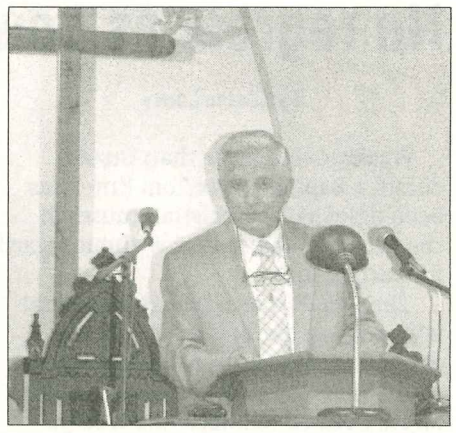
I recently had the privilege of spending time with Crossings' summer staff at Cedarmore, as they prepare for their summer mission of sharing the gospel with close to 15,000 young people at our Kentucky Baptist camps. Pray for these young leaders to have health, energy, and passion as they share the gospel, and pray for campers to hear and respond to the good news that Jesus saves. Pray for Crossings' new president, Jeff Dalrymple, and other new team members as they settle into their roles in the ministry's busiest season.

Kentucky Baptists will benefit from thousands of reinforcements as we seek to reach our state for Christ this summer. Volunteer mission teams from churches sprinkled across the SBC choose Kentucky as a missions destination each year. As you pray for these volunteer teams, be sure to express gratitude to God for those outside of our state who love the lost in Kentucky. Pray that their witness would be effective and that they will have much joy in their labors.

Finally, pray for our pastors, especially those with school-aged children. In the midst of VBS, mission trips, camps, and other special events on the church's summer calendar, finding time to spend with their own children who are out of school for summer break can be challenging. Pray that God would give your pastor freedom to enjoy his family this summer.







Left: *Terry Joiner, pastor of Bethel Baptist, speaks during the bicentennial celebration.* ***Middle:*** *The church property sits on the east corner of the Jefferson Davis historical birthplace site.* ***Right:*** *Historian William Turner gives a historical presentation of the church's 200 years.*

Historic southern Kentucky church celebrates bicentennial

By Cary Donnell

Fairview—Bethel Baptist Church is unique. It sits on property given by Jefferson Davis, president of the Confederate States of America, who was born on the site in 1808.

The first congregation was formed in 1814, but the church wasn't organized and constituted until 1816, its original location being in Salubria Springs. Despite trials and obstacles, the church has managed to survive for two centuries and maintains a positive outlook.

"The Lord's not stopped (working)," said Terry Joiner, pastor of Bethel Baptist Church. "We're trying to be a light to the Fairview community."

Bobby Melton, director of missions for Christian County Baptist Association, presented a plaque to the church a week before the ceremony honoring its bicentennial. "They have a very strong sense of cooperation," he said.

On Sunday, June 5, the church celebrated its 200 years. Two of the 12 preachers ordained by the church in the 1970s spoke about how God used them through the years and about their time at Bethel.

The event also included a presentation about the two centuries of history at the church by an official historian of Christian County and the giving of a historical marker by the National Society of the Colonial Dames. Music was provided by a gospel bluegrass group and individuals.

"This was planned for several months. The church was filled to capacity," said Terry Joiner, pastor of Bethel Baptist. "There were people present who hadn't been in 40-plus years."

Jefferson Davis was born June 3, 1808 in Fairview. As an infant, Davis and his family moved to St. Mary Parish, La., then to Wilkinson County, Miss. Davis served first as a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Mississippi, then U.S. Secretary of War under President Franklin Pierce, and finally as a U.S. Senator from Mississippi until the state seceded from the Union in January 1861. Davis was then selected to serve as President of the newly formed Confederate States of America, serving from February 1861 until his capture by Union forces in May 1865.

"Jefferson Davis is very important to the church and community," added Joiner. "He was very inspirational in starting the church."

In 1884, a decision was made to split the congregation and build two churches, one in Fairview and another in Pembroke. Davis deeded land from his birthplace for the Fairview church, Bethel Baptist. Davis was in attendance at the dedication, presented both the deed and a communion set for the church, and gave a speech to the congregation.

"Davis wasn't a Baptist, but he saw the need for a church to be built," explained Joiner. "We all believe in one God, regardless of (denomination)."

Bethel Baptist dealt with racial issues during the 19th century. The church voted to allow African American members to form their own church, known today as St. Bethlehem Baptist Church.

"67 African Americans attended Bethel and sat in the balcony," said Joiner. "They just wanted their own church, and Bethel helped them establish their own church."

In 1900, lightning struck the church and it burned to the ground. However, many Fairview residents who rushed to the burning building were able to salvage the stained glass windows and the communion set donated by Davis. Soon thereafter, a new church building with the same specifications as the old building was constructed and houses the congregation today.

Don't expect Bethel Baptist's drive or vision to be deterred, according to Melton. Rather, expect the next 200 years to be even better than the last 200.

"Their best years are ahead of them," said Melton. (WR)

The rest of the story...

In the previous issue, the recipients of the Masters of Arts, Theology and Divinity degrees were not included in the spring graduates from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Following are the students from Kentucky:

Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling: Morgan Carter, Madison, Ala., Cedar Creek Baptist Church, Louisville; Elsy Esther Gonzales Vasquez, Honduras, Highview Baptist Church Fegenbush, Louisville; Lauren Marie King, Bowling Green, Immanuel Baptist Church, Louisville; Dan McGill, Hanover, Md., Auburndale Baptist Church, Louisville; Ivana E. Rodriguez Reyes, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, IBI.

Master of Arts in Church Ministries: Dean C. Clark, Louisville, Highview Baptist Church East; Scott Cameron Ford Jr., Atlanta, Ga., First Baptist Church, Mt. Washington; Hannah Marie Johnson, Louisville, Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church; Alex Philippi, Hudson, Quebec, Canada, Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville; Curt Sharbaugh, Brownsburg, Ind., Kenwood Baptist Church, Louisville.

Master of Arts in Discipleship and Family Ministry: Madeline Maupin Hicks, Louisville, Sojourn Community Church Midtown Campus.

Master of Arts in Leadership: Richard H. Downing, Arnold, Mo., First Baptist Church, Mayfield.

Master of Arts in Missiology: Kieler B. Henry, Louisville; Elizabeth Jordan Shearer, Lancaster, New Breed Church, Louisville.

Master of Arts in Theological Studies: Jonathan Douglas Brazell, Calvert City, Pathway Baptist Church; Aaron Kiefer, Louisville, Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church.

Master of Arts in Worship Leadership: Cassandra Patterson, Maysville, Grace Church; William Zachary Taylor, Stilwell, Okla., Sovereign Grace Church, Louisville.

Master of Theology: Brian A. Blair, Greenville, Pa., Christ Community Church, Louisville; Sean J. Costello, Louisville, Southeast Christian Church; Moses Abiodun Orukotan, Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria, Abbowo Baptist Church Ibadan; Hoon Seo, Masan, Korea, Sogye Central Church, Masan, Gyeongnam, Korea; Garnetta Sweeney Smith, Louisville, Highview Baptist Church East.

Master of Divinity: Jack Brannen, Versailles, Sojourn East, Louisville; Nathan Brock, Winter Haven, Fla., Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville; Nate Brooks,

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BAPTIST FORUM

Father's Day: Still wanting to call and talk

By Jim Burton

On a Thursday night in May 1944, my father, James "Jimmy" Warren Burton, delivered the valedictorian address on the topic of citizenship at the Owensboro High School commencement in Kentucky.

"However grave the crises of the future may be," he said, "our country will pass safely through them if at all times it has the support of citizens who are loyal and intelligent and who are skilled in the arts of democratic citizenship."

The next day, like scores of other 18-year-olds, he boarded a train for basic training in the Army Air Corps.

His destination eventually was Burma, via India, and China where he would serve as a cryptographer encoding and decoding messages for air base commanders. This only child was living in tents surrounded by mosquito nets in a land where he knew no one from home.

When he returned to Owensboro, the bus arrived early and he took a taxi home without calling his parents. As he looked through the front door, he could see his mother stirring around. After knocking, she asked who was there. "It's me," Dad said, at which point she slung open the front door and ran through the screen door to hug him.

FIRST PERSON

My family's stories are fresh to me this year since my father passed away Jan. 7. Our family has since gone through boxes of memorabilia to find treasures that might not mean anything to others, but are gold to us.



Left: *As a Royal Ambassador in the late 1930s and early 1940s, Jimmy Burton achieved the highest honor. Advancement requirements included making a wooden RA shield and sword.* ***Right:*** *Jimmy Burton, 89, passed away Jan. 7, 2016, at the Joseph "Eddie" Ballard Western Kentucky Veterans Center.*

In his letters home from war, he showed respect and concern for his parents, telling them not to send money because he was doing fine. He wrote on chapel services he attended and the number of professions of faith.

His parents had begun pressing him on a college decision, which he had not made yet. But he was thankful for the new GI Bill, which would provide him $65 per month to attend college.

His war experience was a defining aspect of his life. But before he was in the military, another organization shaped him—Royal Ambassadors, the Southern Baptist missions education ministry for boys.

My father's RA chapter at First Baptist Church of Owensboro provided the context for him to grow in his Christian faith and knowledge of missions. As a boy, he learned about the Cooperative Program—Southern Baptists' method for mission support—and remained loyal to it his entire life. Many of the ministry's objectives remain today, but advancement was markedly different. He attained the highest honor possible for an RA—"ambassador extraordinary plenipotentiary," which the Western Recorder recognized with an article and photograph.

My father continued throughout life as an ambassador for Christ.

When my parents married in 1953, they joined a

❑ See Father's Day... Page 6

News you can use

• 60 percent of adults in the United States have never made a Last Will and Testament.

Making a will is the single most important act of Christian financial stewardship you can ever take.

• If you have not made a will, the state in which you reside has a plan of asset distribution written for you.

FINANCIAL FORUM

Laurie Valentine

Here in the Kentucky that plan is called the "Kentucky Intestate Succession Statute." There is a good possibility that Kentucky's "will" sets up a plan of distribution that doesn't meet your family's needs or your wishes regarding how your assets will pass at your death.

• A court will decide who will rear any minor children if both parents are deceased, and they have not made a will or included a nomination of guardian provision in their will for the children.

This is a far more important issue than who will receive your assets at death.

• Kentucky's plan for asset distribution does not include your church or any other Christian ministry.

You also forfeit the option of creating provisions that will benefit both your family and the Lord's work.

• Without a properly drawn will, the death taxes and cost of administering your estate may be higher, thereby reducing what will be available for your family.

• By having a properly drawn will, you get to choose who serves as executor of your estate.

• By having a properly drawn will you are helping ease family friction at your death.

This is especially important at a time when your loved ones are grieving your death.

Laurie Valentine is Trust Counsel and the Chief Operating Officer for the Kentucky Baptist Foundation.

In the 'good-ole' summertime

Q: My husband and I are both teachers, and so we spend a lot of time together in the summer. How can we maximize this time to strengthen our marriage?

A: Traveling by car on a summer vacation is often preceded by an oil change, visual inspection of belts and hoses, proper inflation of tires, and sometimes even a tune-up. Most of us would never imagine going to a service station and saying to the attendant, "Do whatever you like." Instead, we would want to know the specifics of any concerns before deciding how to address them.

FAMILY FORUM

Scott Wigginton

Summer is actually a great time to assess our marriages. Just like a mechanic can catch the beginning of a problem and take corrective action, the same is true with a marriage. If we pay attention to specifics at regular intervals, we can often avoid major problems that may result from inattention, unhealthy practices, or the formation of bad habits.

Following are some questions that each of you can rate on a 0-10 satisfaction scale (0 represents no satisfaction while 10 represents perfect satisfaction). Do this separately and then come together to talk about the numbers. Talk first about the strengths you have identified before moving to the areas upon which you can strategize to improve.

- How we make decisions
- How well you feel your spouse listens
- Comfort in sharing feelings
- How we manage conflict
- How we share day-to-day chores and tasks
- Parenting
- Sex
- My trust in my spouse and theirs in me
- Sharing faith and spiritual concerns
- Relationship with in-laws
- Management of finances
- Careers

Whether caring for a "classic" car or building a classic marriage, at the end of the day it is all about intentionality. But it is also about sacrifice and grace. That is what Christ modeled as the Bridegroom to His resplendent Bride the church. **Are you being intentional, sacrificial, graceful?**

Some good ideas from the past

I was a child in the 1960s, became a Christ-follower in the 1970s, started pastoring in the 1980s, got married in the 1990s, and became a seminary dean in the 2000s. The world's changed a lot in those decades—some for good, some for bad.

Remembering some activities of the past, here are some simple suggestions that could help us enjoy today:

1. Write thank you notes. An email "thank you" is nice—and certainly better than no thank you at all—but taking the time to express words in your handwriting still says something positive.

2. Use your phone for an actual call. Let somebody hear you, even if it's just to say, "Hello." The sound of a beloved voice can be powerful.

3. Sing a hymn. Many churches still experience the value of good hymns sung well. They teach theology and remind us of our Christian heritage.

First Person



Chuck Lawless

"Let's slow down whenever we can and enjoy God's blessings in time."

4. Read a magazine or book to learn about the rest of the world. In my day, that magazine was National Geographic, and many of the books were novels set in various eras and locations. Read something that takes you to another part of the globe that might need the gospel.

5. Go on an outdoor picnic. Andy Griffith often did it. My family did it while camping. It seems that not too many families make time to do it today—and they miss the treat of eating fried chicken and potato salad while sitting on a blanket on the ground.

6. Walk somewhere. That's what we used to do. Much of the world still does. You'll see more, and you'll likely meet more people if you walk.

7. Eat a daily meal as a family. I seldom remember my family eating meals together, but I know families who did. Because Christian friends invited me to join them at their table, I know my family missed something.

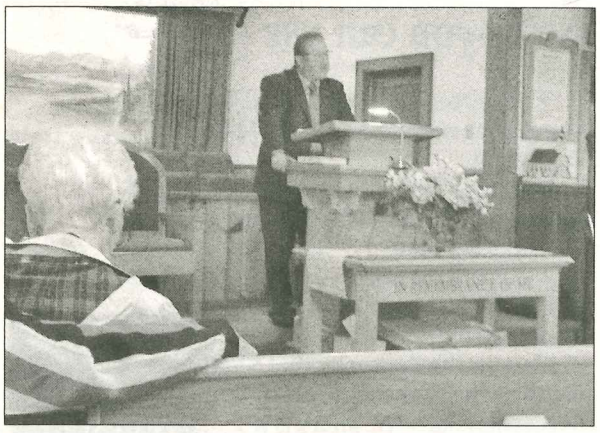
8. Set aside the Lord's Day for rest and worship. Sure, we had laws that helped us organize Sunday years ago. I doubt that's the answer but it wouldn't hurt us to let Sunday genuinely be a day of rest and worship again.

9. Meet your neighbor. When I was a child, our neighbors became our adopted Grandma and Grandpa who even vacationed with us. Now, we drive by neighbors whose names we don't even know.

10. Talk to somebody. With your voice. Face-to-face. Eyeball-to-eyeball. Not an email. Not a text. Not a Facebook message. Talk. Try it—you might find it's a tradition of the past worth resurrecting.

Let's slow down whenever we can and enjoy God's blessings a bit more.

A pace of life that drives us quickly past God's gifts is simply too fast. (BP)



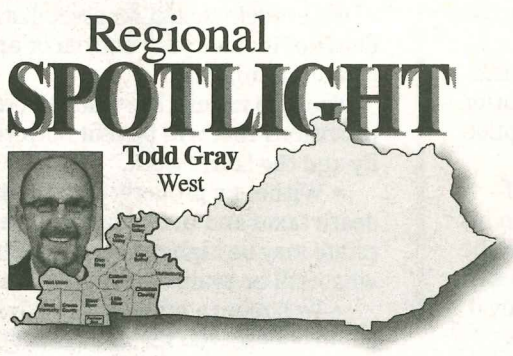


Before becoming pastor, Mike Boyd shared with the congregation that his intention was to lead the church to grow. The congregation gladly accepted his vision for reaching people. As the church began to remodel its facility, they found themselves working together, which resulted in greater unity and fellowship.

A turnaround story: Boyd and Lebanon Baptist

Princeton—Mike Boyd became pastor of Lebanon Baptist Church in Princeton seven years ago. Thom Rainer, in his book, "Autopsy of a Deceased Church," indicates that years 6-10 of a pastor's tenure can often be fruit bearing years, and that's true for Boyd and his wife, Teresa.

Boyd retired from the U.S. Army Reserves after 24 years of service. While serving with the Army Reserves, he also worked with the Fort Campbell Fire Department, which he retired from after 27 years and reaching the position of Fire Chief.



Boyd was saved at age 17, but did not begin to grow in faith until 28 years later, after attending a Promise Keepers event with men from Northside Baptist Church in Princeton. In 2008, he answered a call to ministry and began to serve as a supply preacher in the surrounding counties. Lebanon Baptist Church called him as pastor in 2009.

When Boyd started at Lebanon Baptist, an average of 15 people attended Sunday School. The 150-year-old congregation had averaged 20 people in worship attendance for the previous 15 years. Mike and Teresa describe the congregation then as a very loving congregation, but lacking a vision for growth and ministry. Morale was low due to poor attendance. There was talk of ending Wednesday services and possible concern in the minds of some members regarding the church's future.

Boyd began to address some of the issues related to renewal and revitalization. The first thing he did was make the Sunday School rooms more welcoming to guests. He cleaned out other rooms and started a nursery. On one Sunday, Boyd shared with the congregation that he felt led to help the church grow. He urged them to get on board, which they gladly did.

Teresa noticed a woman attending worship who had two small daughters and was expecting. She noticed the woman would sit in the sanctuary with her children because the church did not have a Sunday School class for her children. They started a class to minister to her family and other families followed.

One of the next needs was to make more room available for ministry. They remodeled existing space making room for new growth. They made a number of cosmetic changes, updating the facility's appearance. They built a foyer onto the sanctuary, making a welcoming entrance and restrooms easily accessible.

Today, the church averages about 60 for Sunday School and 80-90 in worship. The Wednesday night service, which was near being eliminated seven years ago, now draws 45-50 people. At a time when many churches are struggling to have a Sunday night crowd, Lebanon has a core group of nearly 50 participants.

Boyd credits God for the turn around that the church is experiencing. The Lord called him to be pastor of the church and gave him favor with the congregation. The Lord continues to add people at a rate of 15-20 per year.

Boyd also has made a practice of investing personally in men through one-to-one disciple-making. He has discipled three men, two of which have discipled another.

Some takeaways from Lebanon's encouraging turnaround:

- Address the facility.
- Make room for people.
- Cast a vision for growth.
- Take the lead in evangelism.
- Lead the church to work together on projects.
- Give God the glory.

Lebanon Baptist Church is a reminder that God is not finished with many of our small and struggling churches. These churches have resources and people that matter to God, and many of them can see a turnaround like the one Lebanon experienced. (WR)

Young musicians embarking on tour

Louisville– Sixty-six young Baptists band together this month to celebrate God's gift of music on a four-city tour.

The Kentucky Baptist Convention's All State Youth Choir and Orchestra begins its jaunt through central Kentucky June 22 at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville.

Leading worship are conductors Mickey Ballard, Sue Ellen Ballard and Scott Bersaglia. Mickey Ballard serves as the minister of music and worship at Central Baptist Church in Paris. He previously taught at Eastern Kentucky University, has conducted the KBC Men's Choral, and served many Kentucky churches as a minister or clinician.

Sue Ellen Ballard is the choral director at Bourbon County Middle School and organist at Central Baptist. She has served at Eastern Kentucky University, Transylvania University, Georgetown College and in public schools in Mississippi and Kentucky.

Bersaglia is the founder and music director of the Sacred Winds Ensemble, as well as founder and chairman of Sacred Winds Ministries. He serves as the director of bands for Pikeville Independent Schools. Bersaglia recently served as the interim minister of music at First Baptist Church of Pikeville, and will join First Baptist Church of Hazard in July as part-time music minister.

All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra tour dates are:

- June 22, 6 p.m., Walnut Street Baptist Church, Louisville
- June 23, 7 p.m., First Baptist Church of Mount Washington
- June 25, 7 p.m., Broadway Baptist Church, Lexington
- June 26, 9:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. (Abridged performances), First Baptist Church of Richmond
- June 26, 3 p.m., First Baptist Church of Richmond

For a full listing of All-State Youth Choir and Orchestra members, see www.westernrecorder.org. (KBC)

Father's Day

Continued from Page 5

church plant, Lewis Lane Baptist Church in Owensboro. Dad was a deacon, active in visitation, and taught Sunday School for 13-year-old boys. In 1965, our family moved to Madisonville and joined First Baptist Church, where he remained a loyal member and regular attender until shortly before his death at age 89.

Dad worked as a civil engineer for Kentucky's Department of Transportation for nearly 44 years after earning his degree from Auburn University.

Born in 1926, he was a child of the Depression who could still recall the hardships his parents faced. When my grandfather lost his job, the family rented out their house and returned to his mother's family farm in Smithland. They stayed there three years before returning to their home in Owensboro.

My younger brother and I saw evidence of the Depression's hardships in how our dad handled money. He was tight, rarely spending on himself. There were no vacations, though he did relent and agreed to spend a few days one summer at Kentucky Lake.

I don't care about what I might have missed as my father pinched pennies. What matters is that he provided a secure and safe environment for his wife and children. My father lived with a Christ-like concern for all people, particularly his family.

I spent much of my adult life in adult mission education through the former Brotherhood Commission and North American Mission Board. While serving as the director of Men's Ministries, I heard many men tell of hurt and abuse from their fathers. Those stories were foreign to me.

This Father's Day will be the first without him. We are certainly not the only family to experience this loss. I still want to call him most nights to talk. Then I catch myself and realize once again that he's gone. But good memories flood those spaces and keep me going. I loved you, Dad. And I always will. (BP)

Jim Burton is a photojournalist and writer in Atlanta. He served 25 years with the Brotherhood Commission and North American Mission Board.

Messenger increase predicted for St. Louis

By Daniel Woodman

St. Louis—Hotel reservations for the upcoming Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting are up 23 percent from last year's in Columbus, Ohio, leading some convention leaders to project an increased messenger total as well.

Some 13,275 hotel room nights in St. Louis have been reserved for the annual meeting while 4,923 messengers have been pre-registered online so far, the SBC Executive Committee reported. That's up from 10,829 hotel room night reservations in 2015 and 3,267 pre-registered messengers. The messenger pre-registration total to date marks a 51 percent increase over 2015.

Convention manager Bill Townes said he projects 6,000-7,000 messengers in St. Louis and 10,000-11,000 total attendees based on the hotel and pre-registration numbers. SBC registration secretary Jim Wells told Baptist Press he agrees with Townes' assessment. Last year, 5,407 messengers attended the Columbus meeting Wells reported.

Townes, who also serves as Executive Committee vice president for convention finance, said his projection "is just an educated estimate at this point."

"I would suggest that the hotel reservations are a pretty good indicator of our anticipated increase in attendance," Townes said. Hotel advance registration closed May 18, but online messenger registration continues through the annual meeting.

SBC President Ronnie Floyd told BP "Southern Baptists need to be encouraged" by an upward attendance trend.

"We have worked hard, not just in casting the vision, but creating a new convention format we believe is more streamlined, but also very focused in packaging an entire message to our SBC and even beyond," Floyd said in written comments.

"Our emphasis on 'Great Awakening' a year ago and this year on 'Awaken America, Reach the World' is resonating with our churches and beyond our Southern Baptist family," Floyd said. (BP)

Education for Time and Eternity

What is OBI?

Oneida Baptist Institute is a fully accredited Christian school for grades K-12 (boarding 6-12).

OBI was founded in 1899 by James Anderson Burns.

Oneida is a mission field

OBI began as a school for children of the Eastern Kentucky mountains. We still welcome commuting students, many of whom carry on a family tradition by coming to Oneida.

Approximately one-third of our students are from Kentucky. About 47% come from other states and another 20% are internationals.

Oneida is a place where local, state, North American and international missions are happening—all at the same time.

Annual offering

This is the 20th year for Kentucky Baptist churches to observe the Father's Day Offering for Oneida Baptist Institute.

Would you like to contact us?

Oneida Baptist Institute
P.O. Box 67
Oneida, KY 40972

(606) 847-4111
Tours available; call to schedule a visit.

Visit our website at:
www.oneidaschool.org

2016 Father's Day Offering for...

Oneida Baptist Institute

Meet some of OBI's graduating Class of 2016

Maria found her reason for being at OBI in Christ



Maria was named the First Runner Up in the annual Oneidian Yearbook Queen pageant for senior girls. She is pictured with her escort, Ivan, an OBI junior.

One of seven brothers and sisters at an orphanage in Guatemala, Maria was adopted by her northern Kentucky family at age six. Her mother graduated from OBI and wanted Maria to experience the benefits Oneida had to offer. "My mom thought it would be a place for me to try new things," Maria said.

When she arrived at OBI in 2010, she said, "I never met so many kids from so many different places! ... I really liked it, so I kept coming back."

Maria admitted that in her first year, she had some growing up to do. She had trouble in the dorm followng the rules when it came to chores and her after school job in the kitchen. "I would refuse to do what I was told, and I would get suspended. At home, I didn't have chores. I didn't wash dishes or wash my own clothes or make my bed. When I came to OBI, they told me I had to all this, and I didn't do it at first. I had to catch on that I was here for a reason," she said.

Maria joined a variety of cocurricular activities beginning in middle school. She liked that many of these activities met OBI's after school work requirement. Her first sport was cross county, which she joined as a seventh grader. She went on to compete in soccer, volleyball, basketball and tennis.

Maria has been a member of the yearbook staff for two years. She participated in the Student Council and became an officer in the FFA. In the Career Placement program, she worked on the farm to prepare for veterinary studies in college.

Maria had not attended church growing up but said, "I think the main reason my mom sent me here was because I used to ask a lot of questions about the Bible. ... I never knew who God was. Oneida helped me figure out that God was there for me," she said. During her freshman year at a revival service in the OBI chapel, Maria made a decision for Christ. She chose to be baptized at the Oneida Baptist Church and said, "I did it because I wanted God to know that I accepted Him and His sacrifice for me."

Maria noticed a difference in her life after becoming a Christian. She was more respectful to the houseparents, followed the rules and read her Bible. She added, "Before I became a Christian, I would go into chapel and sleep. I didn't pay attention to the speaker. After I became a Christian, I couldn't sleep [in chapel]! I listened to the speaker." Maria took faith-related questions to trusted staff members. "I could ask them anything, and they would help me," she said.

As a senior, Maria was a peer leader in the dorm. She recounted, "When there was a new student who was having a hard time, the houseparents would send her to me. I would tell them about when I first came to OBI and what OBI has done for me."

Autumn commuted to OBI for a Christian education



Autumn excelled in a variety of OBI sports including two seasons each of soccer, swimming and tennis.

Autumn enrolled at OBI as a day student her freshman year. She lives in a neighboring community about 25 minutes' drive away from the OBI campus. Until she could drive her junior year, her parents transported her and her younger sister, Sierra, back and forth to the Oneida campus each day. Her brother, Forrest, began attending OBI as a sixth grader in August, 2015. Autumn explained her family's commitment to OBI saying, "It's the only Christian school in the area."

Autumn's family moved to Kentucky from California about six years ago because of her father's job. She noted, "The move here was hard, because I had a lot of friends at my old school, but I actually enjoy traveling and experiencing new cultures." At OBI, Autumn had a unique perspective having moved from the west coast but also living in the local community. She said, "OBI wasn't that different from California, because we had a lot of diversity. Coming from Clay county, it was very different. Oneida is kind of its own little world with all the different countries and states represented. ... [Since] everyone was coming in new and getting to know each other, it was easier to fit in and make friends."

At OBI, Autumn was a straight A student who graduated in the top ten of the Class of 2016. "I've definitely been challenged academically," she noted. In preparetion for college, Autumn took advantage of AP and honors courses. After high school, she is interested in studying graphic design, interior design, engineering or architecture. "My better subjects are math and science," she added.

Autumn was the recipient of the 2015-16 Bert T. Combs scholarship. She was also voted by the OBI faculty the Most Studious in grades 10 and 12, the Most Outstanding in grades 9-11 and the Most Likely To Succeed senior girl.

As a senior, Autumn received her state certificate for the Career Placement program, a school-to-work program of-

(Autumn continued p. 2)

Everett thrived academically, socially, spiritually



Everett enjoyed team sports for the first time at OBI.

Everett grew up on a family farm in central Kentucky and enrolled at OBI as a junior. A friend in his home-school group had become a student at OBI, and Everett commented, "Home-schooling wasn't really working out for me. I didn't really have a lot of motivation to do my work." He did not like the idea of attending a boarding school but said, "It turned out to be an amazing experience! There are kids from all over the world and all kinds of opportunities I never would have had if I'd stayed home!"

Everett joined cross country, swimming and baseball. "I'd never had the opportunity to play sports, so it was kind of a big deal for me," he said. He earned a Coach's Award in cross country, a varsity letter in baseball and the Overcomer Award in swimming. This year, Everett's 400 freestyle relay team advanced to the state swimming competition.

Acting was also a new experience for Everett who had roles in both OBI Drama productions his senior year and was named the Best Supporting Actor. He held leadership positions as the FFA president and a Resident Assistant in the dormitory. He received a President's Award at graduation.

Coming to OBI gave Everett the chance to grow in his spiritual life. "I kind of took my faith for granted ... It wasn't really my faith; it was my parents' faith," he said. He became a student-leader in the Lion's Den, a Bible study group for OBI students.

Everett would like to study creative writing or forensic science in college. He reflected, "Oneida really turned out to be the best thing for me. I've really thrived here."

Oneida Baptist Institute

(Autumn continued)

fered by OBI. She worked as a "jounalist assistant" for the yearbook sponsor which augmented her position as the yearbook editor. Autumn also enjoyed working as a yearbook photographer. "I really wanted to do photography. This allowed me the chance to go to the games to take pictures and be a little more involved on campus," she said.

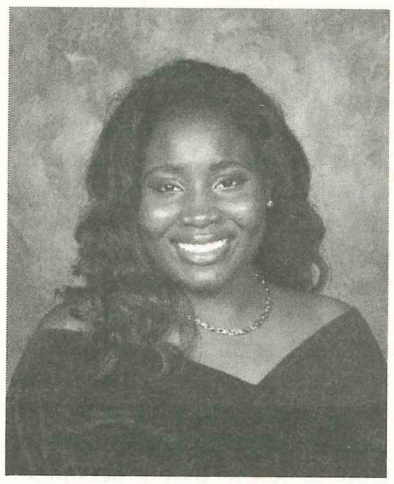
Autumn was active both on campus and in her community. She participates in her church youth group, the "Impact Outdoors" summer program and "Monkey Dumplin's," a community theater group. At OBI, she became the president of the National Honor Society and represented her class on the Campus Activities Board. At graduation, she was awarded OBI's John Michael Davis Citizenship award.

Once she could drive and could stay late for practices and competitions, she joined sports. She earned varsity athletic letters in soccer, swimming and tennis. "I really enjoyed it. I liked interacting with other students not just in class. I liked the team spirit," she said.

Growing up in a Christian home, Autumn said that having a daily chapel service at school was a positive influence. "A lot of the sermons had points in them for me to apply to my life. Overall, I've enjoyed chapel and the Friday song service," she said.

Autumn has enjoyed serving out of the country in short-term missions each summer of high school. She has helped to build churches and do community outreach in Ecuador, the Dominican Republic and Panama. "The summer after my freshman year, my mom challenged me to either work at a camp or go on a mission trip," Autumn recalled. After her first trip which she described as "hot" and "hard work," she said, "It got me hooked! We had a blast for two weeks!"

Deborah became fluent in English, developed work skills



Positive peers enabled Deborah to prioritize academics.

From the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Deborah has attended OBI since her freshman year. Her mother had a friend whose daughter had been a student. Deborah recalled the day her mother talked to her about Oneida saying, "She told me, 'I want you to try to go to school in another country. It's going to be a good experience.'" Deborah found it difficult to say "good bye" to her friends but added, "I came here, and I made new ones and got really attached to them. I actually think it was a good decision. I got a better education and I got to learn English."

Deborah can speak four languages: French, Congo, Swahili and now English. While she had learned some English in school, being immersed in the language helped her fluency. "At first, I could understand everything, but it was hard to communicate back because I was thinking only in French," she explained. She would like to study international business and interpreting at a university in Kentucky.

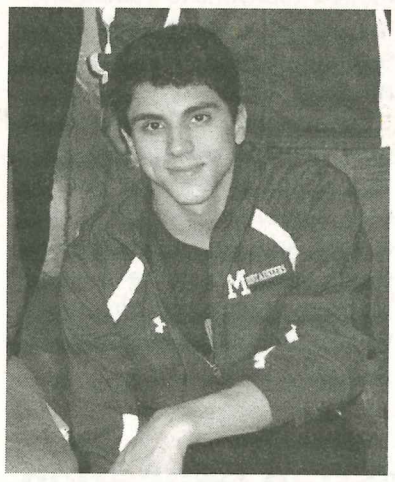
Deborah noted that living with scholarly-minded peers makes it easier to be a good student. She did not like school at home but felt differently when she came to OBI. "Living with people who want good grades and who actually want to work hard ... made me realize that school is important," she said.

Having an after school job and required room chores were new experiences for Deborah who had grown up in a home with a housekeeper. She said, "When I got here and learned of having roommates and sharing a bathroom, all of that was crazy to me!" Despite her lack of experience, Deborah and her roommates earned the dorm's Cleanest Room Award her first year. She described living with roommates saying, "You get more open to sharing, and you learn to be more organized."

After six months, of working in the kitchen after school, Deborah became the supervisor of a dormitory cleaning crew. Her sophomore year, she joined sports including volleyball, cheerleading, track and field and tennis. As a senior, she was accepted to the position of Resident Assistant in the dorm. Of her work experience at OBI, she said, "I think it might help me later on in college and in life."

A Christian since she was eight years old, Deborah grew in her faith while attending OBI. She said, "Chapel helps you to learn and get closer to God."

Missionary son, Daniel, needed a place to finish high school



Daniel went to state in swimming and helped the OBI soccer team win the Class A regional championship.

Daniel was born in Brazil, where he lived until age 10 when his parents became missionaries in Senegal. They were there for four years before Daniel enrolled as a sophomore at OBI. "I came here because the school I was in, a British school for missionary kids, didn't offer the last year. I didn't have any place to go except expensive schools," he explained.

Daniel's parents learned about OBI from a fellow missionary who had been a student here. His older brother, Sam, enrolled a year before Daniel and graduated with OBI's Class of 2015. Daniel said, "We thought it would be better to come here, because then it's easier to get into college. ... I was used to traveling, and I was excited to be in a new place!"

The hardest part about boarding school, for Daniel, was adjusting to living in the dormitory. He said, "I'd never been in a dorm. It was different having to adapt to all the rules, like bed check." Dorm life was not without its benefits. "I could be with my friends after school. It was good!" Daniel said.

Having a required after school job was another adjustment for Daniel who worked on a classroom cleaning crew his first year. He noted, "I had to clean at home, too. The only difference was that [at OBI] I had to do it at a set time and check in with my supervisor."

Once he became eligible to play sports, he participated in soccer, swimming and track and field. He earned the Offensive MVP Award in soccer and went to state on the 400 relay team in swimming. In his spare time, Daniel was a member of the National Honor Society and the Presidential Advisory Council.

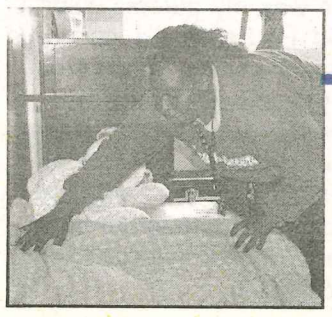
Though he grew up in church, Daniel saw the benefit to OBI's daily chapel services. He stated, "Some of the speakers, I feel like they are really speaking from God. ... They helped me a lot."

His first year at OBI, Daniel earned the Highest GPA award for the sophomore class. "In the 11th grade, they put me in harder classes like AP calculus and AP English," he smiled. As a senior, he earned college credit in the dual credit English class and took AP government and physics.

This fall, Daniel plans to play soccer while working on a degree in civil engineering at a college in Kentucky.

A day in the life of an Oneida student . . .

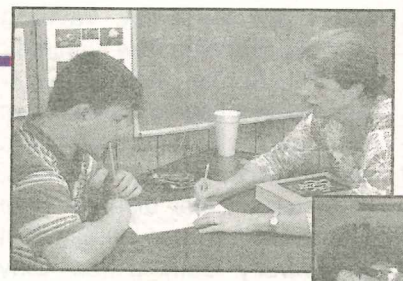
Before going to school, beds must be made and dormitory rooms cleaned. Breakfast is served in the dining hall at 7:00 AM.



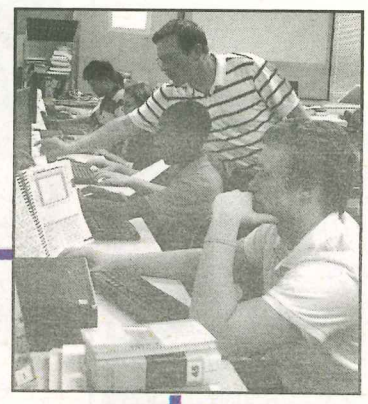


Classes begin at 7:50 AM. Students attend seven, 50-minute periods.

Our fully-accredited **academic program** has a wide range of classes and electives to meet the needs and interests of our diverse student body. We offer advanced placement and honors courses, tutoring and English as a Second Language class.







Oneida Baptist Institute

Eric and Jordan - "staff kids" since birth



Jordan and Eric took advantage of most everything Oneida has to offer students including sports, fine arts, AP classes.

Each year, it is typical to watch one or two children of OBI faculty and staff graduate. The Class of 2016 is unique in having eight graduates who are "staff kids." Two of these graduates, Eric and Jordan, were born after their parents came to serve at Oneida. Since OBI president Mr. Larry A. Gritton, Jr.'s 1993 graduation from OBI, there have been fewer than six students whose parents have served at OBI from their birth through graduation.

By the age of 10, both Eric and Jordan had accepted Christ and were baptized. Both were active in cocurriculars at OBI and graduated in the top 10 having taken advanced placement and dual credit courses.

Eric's parents came to Oneida after serving for over two years as missionaries in Costa Rica and Paraguay. Because his father is Canadian, Eric enjoyed opportunities to see that part of the world. Eric helps to care for his older sister, Hayley, who is autistic. His younger sister, Jamie, is an eighth grader at OBI. Eric said he has enjoyed growing up in Oneida because of the rural environment coupled with the variety of students. "I like that I can walk up to the dorm from my house and talk to my friends. It's very home-y with everybody around," Eric said.

Eric has always been a strong student, especially in math. He plans to major in astrophysics in college and said, "Hopefully I can work for NASA. That's the aspiration at the moment." Eric attributed his success in dual-credit classes to "a combination of all of my OBI English teachers helping to get me prepared."

The OBI faculty named Eric the Most Outstanding boy in the sixth, 10th and 11th grades. As a senior, he received the WYMT Mountain Classic Scholarship and the faculty-voted Mr. Oneida, Most Likely To Succeed and William A. Evans awards.

Eric has represented OBI at the state varsity cross country meet every year since he joined the sport as a seventh grader. He was a starting pitcher and "utility man" for baseball in grades 9-12. He earned the Most Valuable Runner Award in cross country and the Highest GPA Award and the Coach's Award in baseball.

Eric was a member of the Academic Team, the National Honor Society and had roles in seven OBI Drama productions.

Looking forward to college in the fall, Eric noted, "I've watched Oneida change; I've seen all the people come and go, but Oneida feels like home."

Thinking about his favorite part of life in Oneida, Jordan said, "For one, it's beautiful. I love the environment. It's nice not to have a lot of noise and distractions. You can be fully focused here."

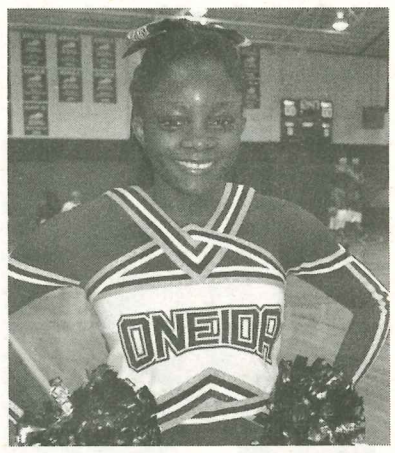
Following in the footsteps of his sister, Taylor, OBI Class of 2014, Jordan participated in track and field, cross country, swimming and tennis. "I'm grateful for the no-cut policy at Oneida, because it allowed me to try different sports without the pressure of having to be 'good enough' to make the team," he said. In cross country, he earned the "Inconceivable Award," competed at the state meet and was named to the Academic All State First Team. Jordan was the recipient of the 2016 All 'A' Classic scholarship.

A member of the vocal ensemble, Jordan represented OBI in Kentucky Baptist churches on Sundays from October to May for four years. He sang with the All Festival regional honor choir and the All State Junior High Mixed Chorus. He received the Director's Award in vocal ensemble and the National Federation of Music Clubs Irene Muir Award.

Acting in nine OBI Drama productions, Jordan received the Director's Award and Best Actor award. He served on the Student Council, National Honor Society and the chapel audio-visual team. He noted, "Life is more than yourself; it's about discovery, it's about contributing and making an impact on other people's lives."

Voted the Most Studious senior boy by the faculty, Jordan appreciates the strong academic foundation he received at OBI. "Oneida is a place that encourages growth in every aspect of life. I believe I have excelled because of the opportunities I have had at OBI and the sacrifices others have made for me to be here," he said.

Tammy appreciated OBI's diversity, affordability



Tammy got to be a cheerleader for the first time at OBI.

Tammy (her American nickname) enrolled at Oneida as a junior from Nigeria in 2014. She recalled, "We found OBI online, but it turns out that my mom's friend had children who went here. I always dreamed of going to college in the U.S., because America has better opportunities."

A member of OBI's National Honor Society, Tammy has always excelled academically. During her two years at OBI, Tammy took advantage of both AP and dual credit classes including AP calculus. "That was a hard class!" she laughed. In college, Tammy plans to major in pre-medicine or architecture. During her senior year at OBI, Tammy enrolled in the Career Placement program and worked in OBI's commercial art classroom. "It was the closest thing I could get to architecture. I liked doing the hands-on jobs, drawing and constructing projects," she said.

Of the boarding schools in America she could have chosen, Tammy said the fact that OBI was Christian and affordable made it stand out. She speaks three languages and noted that she enjoyed Oneida's diverse student body. Tammy shared, "I met someone here who went to elementary school with me in Nigeria! It's such a small world!"

Until she became eligible to participate in sports, Tammy worked after school in the daycare for children of OBI faculty and staff. She said, "I loved it so much! After we cleaned, I liked to hang out with the kids until the parents picked them up." She received an Outstanding Worker award.

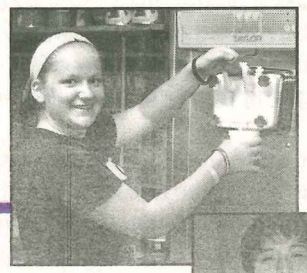
This year, Tammy participated in golf, cheerleading and tennis. She smiled, "I've always wanted to be a cheerleader, but they don't exactly have cheerleading programs in Nigeria!" She received OBI's President's Award for Academic Excellence in Athletics.

Tammy was baptized into the Christian faith at the age of 15. She said of daily chapel services at OBI, "It wasn't exactly what I was used to, but that daily reminder helped you to keep up with your faith."

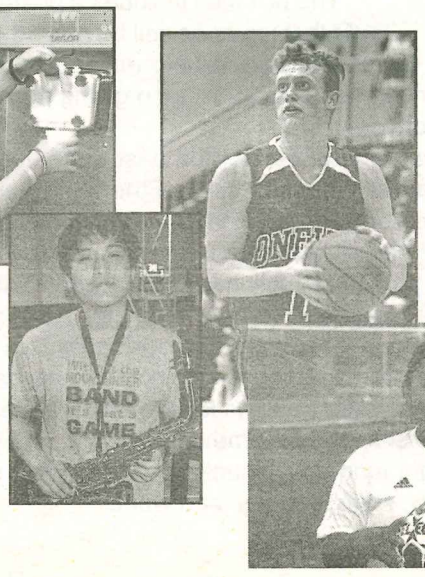
She enjoyed the worship time and Bible study at Baptist Campus Ministry meetings on Sunday evenings for the same reason. "It was one of those things that reminded me what I needed to do to stay close to God," she said.

Each school day, students attend a 25-minute **chapel service** which often includes guest speakers, special music and skits.

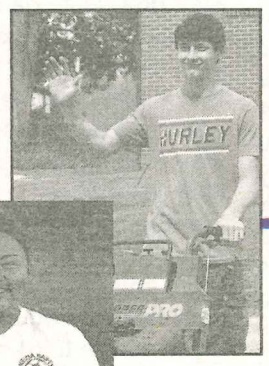




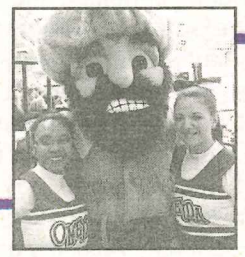
In the afternoon and evening, most students are busy at their **daily jobs and cocurriculars**.



There are a variety of activities to choose from including sports, the campus grill, pep band, the farm, lawn mowing and many cleaning jobs!



During evening **free time**, students attend campus events or club meetings, catch up on homework or hang out with friends.





Teens may pick up mail, prepare a snack or make a phone call at the dorm office before **"lights out"** at 10:00 PM on school nights and 11:00 PM on weekends.

Oneida Baptist Institute

For Time and Eternity

Unlike many Christian schools, OBI welcomes teens who do not know Jesus.

At OBI they hear the Gospel message daily. If we reach them for Christ, they can take the good news around the world.

Our funding

Approximately 7% of Oneida's funding comes from the KBC Cooperative Program.

Another 30% comes from student fees.

The remaining 63% of our support comes from churches and individuals as well as income from our modest investments.

Our ongoing tradition of affordable student fees and need-based scholarships keeps the door open to any young person who needs to be at Oneida.

More about Oneida

OBI's average enrollment is 325.

Approximately 125 Ministry Team members serve for a modest salary or are full-time volunteers.

OBI's 850-acre campus includes a 200-acre farm.

Students may apply throughout the year.

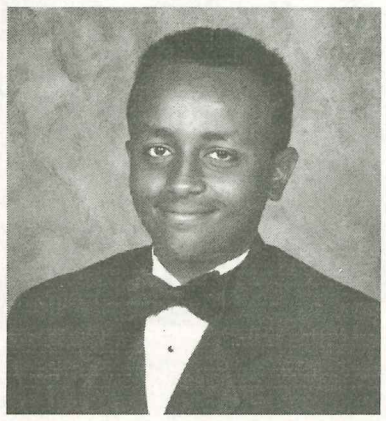
Our curriculum is designed to serve students at all academic levels.

OBI has an 11:1 student/teacher ratio.

We offer a wide variety of cocurricular activities plus a unique student work program.

Meet some of the Class of 2016

Redeat became a leader in the work program



Redeat experienced American culture before college.

Redeat came to Oneida as a junior from Ethiopia who wanted to experience American culture in preparation for attending a U.S. college. A friend of his father's is a former OBI student. Redeat said, "I was excited for it. It was something new!" Like some of our students, Redeat had to get used to the rules at OBI. He laughed, "I thought I would have freedom, but I didn't know Oneida yet! My dad liked the strictness. I got used to it really quickly."

Redeat earned Outstanding Worker awards for his work as a cleaning crew supervisor in the dormitory at night and in a classroom building after school. He was a concessions manager during basketball season and completed the Career Placement program this year. "I like working," he said. His senior year, he worked as a Resident Assistant (RA) in the dormitory. "I really liked it, because it helped us work on our leadership skills. We worked with peers and houseparents. I feel like it will help me in my future," he said.

In his "spare time" his senior year, Redeat joined soccer, swimming, track and tennis. He received the President's Award for Excellence in Athletics.

Redeat benefited the most from the academic program. At home, he had earned very poor grades. He explained, "I was in that phase where I was too cool. I didn't care. Oneida really helped me, because they took us to college fairs and helped us take it seriously. All of my grades sky-rocketed which helped me for college a lot!"

Redeat will be attending a Christian college in Kentucky and plans to major in business.



Madison became OBI's first female basketball player to score 2,000 career points.

Madison caught up academically thanks to supportive teachers

Madison's mother graduated from OBI in 1983, and Madison was interested in continuing the "family tradition." When her grades began to drop in middle school, her mom suggested it was time to give it a try. Madison agreed because, "I wanted to be independent"

Living less than an hour from campus, she moved into the OBI dormitory as an eighth grader. "The first week was hard. It was a big adjustment." Explaining that she was not used to daily chores, Madison said, "My mom always cleaned my room, and I had to do it here. It's good, because it teaches kids responsibility. I'm thankful now."

Madison appreciated OBI's diverse student body but had to adjust to the rural location. She said, "It felt like an island. I didn't like it at first, but now I like it. It makes us closer. Oneida is like a family and if the town was bigger or if there were more students, I'm sure we wouldn't feel that way."

Madison was behind in math and needed one-on-one tutoring to catch up. "I was in eighth grade math, but I tested as a sixth grader," she recalled. After one year of taking her math class with a tutor in OBI'S Learning Center, Madison was caught up. "They really helped me a lot. Ms. Lawson taught me everything and helped me so much. The amount of stuff I needed to learn in a year; I don't know how she did it! I didn't even know my multiplication tables! I was very behind, but I caught up. ... The teachers really care about you." By her freshman year, Madison was in all regular classes and made the honor roll.

By enrolling in an art class, Madison discovered a talent that inspired her to take the advanced art class the following year. She won second place in the OBI Art Show and received the Outstanding Participation award from her teacher.

Having a daily required job took some adjustment for Madison who said, "When they said I had to work in the kitchen, I wanted to go home right then!" Learning that sports would fulfill her work requirement, she was happy to join the OBI Lady Mountaineers. In her fifth season, Madison became OBI's All-Time Leading Scorer and first female basketball player to score 2,000 career points.

Madison received the Most Valuable Player award in cross country, basketball and softball and was named to the All District and All Region teams in basketball. She received the Offensive MVP award in soccer and a basketball scholarship to college, where she plans to study criminal justice.

Madison became a Christian when she was younger but did not take her faith seriously as a teenager. She said, "At home, I just went to church to meet up with friends" Daily chapel services and OBI's Christian environment drew her closer to God. "I think that's the main reason why my mom wanted me to come here. You don't get the godly environment you need in public schools. [At OBI], being able to openly talk in class about any matter or a prayer request; ... it really made my faith stronger," she said.

Once her grades had improved, Madison said, "The people kept me here. Some of the staff have helped me tremendously. I can't thank them enough. I went from having one parent to feeling like I have a whole family to help me. My friends really will be lifetime friends. Even to this day, my mom still talks to her OBI friends."



Dear Partners in the Gospel,

Your church may have recently received a box of materials from us. While it may look like any old U.S. Postal Service box, it is a box that is vitally important to the Lord's ongoing work here at Oneida. That box contains items about the KBC's Father's Day Offering for Oneida Baptist Institute and includes a letter written by Mr. David Robinson, our principal and a 1982 OBI graduate. David wrote about his Oneida experience and how Dr. Barkley Moore believed in him when no one else would and became his Oneida father. Please take the opportunity to read that letter if you haven't already done so.

The box also includes a poster, flyers, return envelopes, and a two-minute DVD that we hope will be played on Father's Day Sunday. If you love Oneida, and I know so many of you do, please help make sure these materials are made available to your church family. Our ministry relies heavily upon giving from Kentucky Baptist churches and we are forever grateful to each of you.

One of my favorite parts of the job the past three years has been traveling with our choir to visit you, the Kentucky Baptist churches that partner with our ministry. On the Sundays when our choir is not scheduled to be somewhere, I have visited some of you folks on my own, and I have enjoyed each and every visit. I have loved meeting many of you who love and support us in so many different ways. During my visit you most likely heard me share Matthew 19:14 which says, "Jesus said, Let the little children come me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." The theme of the materials in the box you received is "Let the children come." Your love, prayers, and support enables Oneida to allow children to come to our campus, even if their family can't afford it, but more importantly your support enables kids to come to Jesus while attending our school. Your generosity helps us educate students for time and eternity, and I simply ask that each church and individual gives as the Lord might lead you. Thank you for helping us offer hope and a future to young people from across our county, state, country, and world.

— Larry Allen Gritton, Jr., OBI President

Transgender

Continued from Page 1

"This represents just the latest example of the current administration's attempts to accomplish by executive fiat what they couldn't accomplish through the democratic process in Congress. By forcing through his policies by executive action, President Obama excluded the voice of the people. We stand today to ensure those voices are heard."

Although the Dear Colleague letter does not explicitly mention repercussions for failing to follow the guidelines, previous action by the Obama administration demonstrates failure to comply comes with a high price tag.

Earlier this year a school district outside of Chicago created its own standards for balancing the needs of a transgender female student—a teenage boy presenting himself as a girl—with those of the student's female teammates. Demanding full inclusion and affirmation of the student's gender identity as a female, the trangender student balked at the school's offer of a private changing area and sued demanding to be allowed to use the same locker room facilities as the girls. Citing Title IX, the Departments of Education and Justice threatened to withhold some of the school's $6 million in federal funds if they did not submit to the student's demands.

The ongoing battle over recently enacted transgender student guidelines by the Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD) demonstrates the dissolution of gender norms that Obama's interpretation of Title IX require. The guidelines permit students to identify as either gender without medical or parental validation and requires district employees and students to affirm the student's preferred gender identity. The guidelines also require school personnel expunge gender normative language, such as "boys" and "girls," from the classroom.

Texas Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick, who has demanded the FWISD rescind the guidelines and fire Superintendent Kent Scribner, said Obama's edict "ignores both common sense and common decency."

"(It) creates a problem where none existed," Patrick said in a statement supporting the lawsuit. "It will disrupt schools across Texas, creating potentially embarrassing and unsafe situations for girls who would be forced, under his order, to share bathrooms, locker rooms and showers with boys."

Patrick said he will continue to push back against the local and federal regulations.

HISD issued new guidelines May 23 in defiance of the Obama administration's interpretation of Title IX, stating a student's birth certificate will determine gender identity on campus and all multiple-occupancy bathrooms or changing facilities "shall be designated for and used only by individuals based on their biological sex."

In an effort to accommodate students with special needs, the HISD guidelines state, "The Superintendent or campus principal may make reasonable accommodations upon a person's request due to special circumstances." (BP/WR)

Muhammad Ali heard gospel from Graham, Rogers, Dumas

By David Roach

Nashville—Billy Graham, Adrian Rogers and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary administrator Dan Dumas are among the Christians who have told of gospel conversations with the late heavyweight boxing champion Muhammad Ali.

Ali, who died June 3 in Scottsdale, Ariz., at age 74, grew up in a Christian family but converted to Islam in the late 1960s. Initially, he was a member of the black nationalist group the Nation of Islam, but in the mid-1970s he converted to more orthodox Sunni Muslim beliefs, NPR reported.

According to the Associated Press, Ali occasionally attended King Solomon Missionary Baptist Church in Louisville, where his family worshiped, even after his conversion to Islam. However, he was honored in a Muslim funeral June 9.

The AP reports the late champion said of religion, "Rivers, lakes, ponds, streams, oceans all have different names, but they all contain water. So do religions have different names, and they all contain truth."

Concern over Ali's beliefs once led his father to take the boxer to visit evangelist Billy Graham at his home in Montreat, N.C.

Billy Graham wrote of the 1979 meeting in his autobiography "Just As I Am," "I autographed a Bible for him. He accepted it graciously, but when he looked at my unreadable scrawl, he asked (longtime Graham associate) T.W. (Wilson), 'What does that say?'"

Graham responded, "It says 'God bless you,' and it's signed 'Billy Graham.'"

Ali handed the book back to Graham and said, "How about printing 'Billy Graham' under that. I want people to know it's you when I show it to them." As Graham recounted, "I laughed and printed my name in big letters."

Franklin Graham said the two men "met together again several years ago in Louisville, Kentucky, when my father was there to preach."

Rogers, a former Southern Baptist Convention president, told in sermons between 1986 and 1994 of sharing the gospel with Ali. Rogers died in 2005.

In a 1994 sermon, Rogers, longtime pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church in Cordova, Tenn., said Ali had asked him, "How can you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the unique Son of God? Just because He was born of a virgin? Why, Adam didn't have a father or mother. Wouldn't that make Adam more son of God than Jesus?"

Rogers replied according to a sermon transcript provided by Love Worth Finding Ministries, "Champ, Jesus was not the Son of God because He was born of a virgin. He was born of a virgin because He was the Son of God."

Dumas, senior vice president for institutional administration at Southern Seminary, tweeted following Ali's death, "In 1992 in NYC, I spoke the gospel to Ali & gave him a tract. In kind, he gave me a signed tract for Islam."

Dumas told Baptist Press Ali "seemed hostile to the gospel" during their encounter, which took place at LaGuardia Airport while Dumas was on his way back home from a mission.

Ali was buried at Cave Hill Cemetery in Louisville, where Southern Seminary's plot includes the graves of Southern founders James Boyce and John Broadus among others. (BP)

Lexington church group uses quilting as outreach tactic

By Cary Donnell

Lexington—For nearly 13 years, a women's group at Rosemont Baptist Church in Lexington has had a unique way of showing compassion for children and others suffering hardships.

They make quilts for the homeless, hurting families, and those in children's homes and daycares.

"As a mission-minded church, we are always seeking new opportunities to be 'on mission' from the Lord," said Eddie Benton, senior pastor at Rosemont, "We, as a church, are always trying to find new ways to share the gospel and impact people's lives in Jesus name."

The Thrifty Needles Quilt Group began as a group of women who wanted to learn how to quilt.

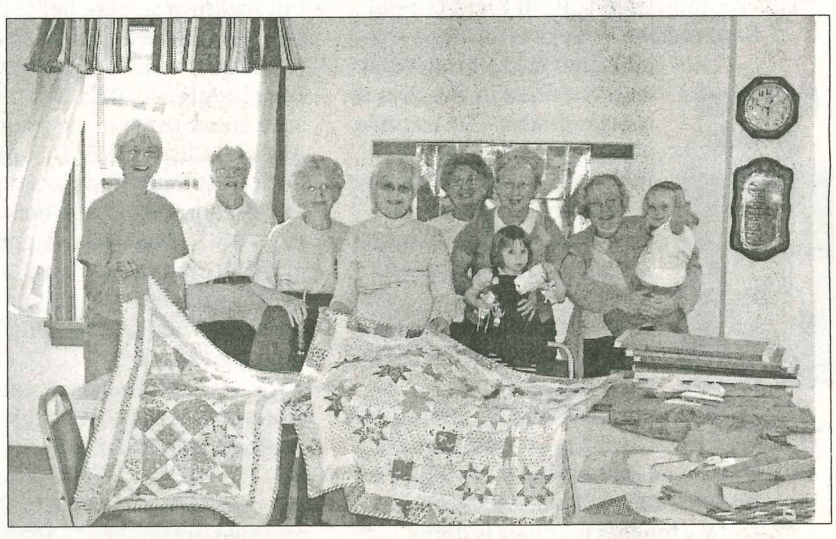
They learned and began donating quilts, blankets and scarves to the less fortunate. They estimate they make about 50 twin-size and 50 baby quilts a year.

"We pray that each quilt, scarf, blanket, will show God's love in some way," said Benton.

Four years ago, the group began making memory bears from loved ones' clothing. They also make soft bears to give to children as Christmas gifts, feeding scarves for a local nursing home and cancer quilts for friends enduring chemotherapy.

The church has a quilt drop-off room where anyone can donate recycled blankets for homeless shelters.

"When these ladies come together and meet and work they enjoy what they are doing. However, they see it being much more than just a fun activity. They see it as an extension of our ministries here at Rosemont Baptist Church to impact our world for Christ," added Benton. (WR)





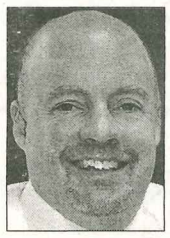
SBTS graduates

Continued from Page 4

Louisville, Clifton Baptist Church; Adam Burton, Lawrenceburg, First Baptist Church; Colby Warren Flowers, Lexington, Immanuel Baptist Church; James Derek Gunn, Louisville, Sojourn Community Church; Joshua Haywood, Harlan, Harlan Baptist Church; Joseph Hussung, Bowling Green, Rich Pond Baptist Church; Michael Mammi Ijah, Abuja, Nigeria, ECWA Goodnews Maitama Abuja-FCT; Minsuk Kim, Louisville, Hanmaeum Korean Baptist Church; Renae Kotarski, Louisville; Garett K. Lowery, Mt. Washington, Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Shepherdsville; Elizabeth Joy Lumbrix, Louisville, Ninth and O Baptist Church; Timothy Stephen Marsee, Simpsonville, Simpsonville Baptist Church; Michael Gilder McDowell, Louisville, Sojourn Community Church; Joshua Moxon, Louisville, Christ Community Church; Christopher Parrish, Lawrenceburg, Rosemont Baptist Church, Lexington; Jonathan Lee Saunders, Louisville, Fisherville Baptist Church; Mike D. Settle, Elktown; Jason D'Marcus Towns, Louisville, First Gethsemane Baptist Church, Louisville; Aaron Micah Tufts, San Jose, Costa Rica, Hazelwood Baptist Church, Louisville; Andrew Waldroup, Georgetown, Safe Harbor Baptist Church, Georgetown. (SBTS)

Summer at Oneida

This is Oneida



Larry Gritton

Folks often ask me if we have students on our campus during the summer. The Oneida ministry virtually never stops, and we typically have about 100 students during the summer months.

Our school year ended on May 13. You might be wondering how we are out of school so early. Since most of our students are already here on the campus in our dormitories, we don't take snow days, three-day holiday weekends, etc. We are much better off to keep our young people in structured routines than to allow them to have days off just to hang around the dorm.

Our public school friends often make comments about their envy of our early dismissal date, but I often remind them that we did not have all the days off during the school year that they enjoyed.

Once school ended, about two-thirds of our students left our campus for the summer. We had a wonderful graduation celebration on May 14, and then the vast majority of those 55 graduates left campus. Some of our graduates stayed on campus to finish their spring sport seasons—baseball, tennis, track, etc.

On Monday, May 16, we began our five-week summer school term. Some of those 100 or so students need to recover credit and make up classes. Some are working to get ahead. Some are seniors who need to finish up something to actually receive their diploma, and others are, quite frankly, better off staying here on our campus and taking classes than returning home to some difficult circumstance.

Once our five-week summer school session ends, many of those same summer school kids stay on campus for four additional weeks to work in our work program. Those are the kids on scholarship, and they work from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. They paint, wax floors, work on our farm, mow the grass, work in the kitchen, and many other things.

Since there are fewer students here than there are during the regular school year, summer is a more laid-back atmosphere. This is also a time that we receive some new students to begin their own Oneida journey. This is a good time for them to adjust to the Oneida way before the regular school year arrives.

Once the work program ends in late July, we do close our dorms down and all students leave campus. At this time our staff takes vacation time. After that vacation time, we begin to prepare our campus for the new school year. We also have staff meetings to kick off our new year. Any meeting involving all staff is really only possible when the students are gone, but I must admit it feels quite lonely when our students are gone.

As you can see, Oneida keeps on keeping on during the summer. Come and see for yourself any time.

Larry Gritton Jr. is president of Oneida Baptist Institute. Website: oneidaschool.org. Phone: (606) 847-4111. Follow OBI on Facebook at www.facebook.com/OBI.KY.

Favorite memories from the 'Creek' (Part 3)

Clear Creek Chronicle



Donnie Fox

Graduation time at Clear Creek Baptist Bible College is always a special time to celebrate what God has done in the lives of our graduates. The last two weeks you have been reading some favorite memories from our graduates that they shared as they walked across the stage to receive their diplomas. I know you will enjoy this last recollection of memories from our graduates.

"My fondest memories of Clear Creek have been all the ways God has made this place my home." **–Gabriella Ann Kahkola**

"My fondest memory is doing Internship II and having Dr. Ditty as my mentor. This taught me a lot on how to be a pastor and what that looks like. It's not just being a pastor, but having a sincere heart for the people." **–Shane Henry McKenney**

"When we moved from Maine to here in August 2012, we were only sure about three of us living in our home at Clear Creek. In January 2013, our oldest daughter moved in, and our first grandson was born on March 22, 2013. In 2014, our son proposed, and all three of our daughters became engaged. In August 2014, we welcomed our second daughter-in-law into our family. In Dec. 2014 and May 2015, we welcomed two sons-in-law who were both Clear Creek students. We have gained four family members since moving to CCBBC, and I have attended college with two daughters and two sons-in-law." **–Diana Kathrine Myers**

"My fondest memory of Clear Creek would be every Monday morning being around a table with Greg and Kay Jones, starting out the week with a devotion and a time of prayer. I am also grateful for the confidence I gained to prepare sermons and having my faith increased in God to take care of me." **–Jon Preston Riggs**

"My fondest memories have been making lifelong friends, meeting my wife, and having our son, Graham." **–Michael Allen Schoenherr**

"My fondest memories from Clear Creek include becoming a youth pastor, getting married, and being with my friends at Kelly Hall." **–Jacob Ryan Schofill**

"God has continually used CCBBC to affirm his calling on my life. I'm forever grateful for my time here and look forward to where God calls me next." **–Jesse Allen Wright**

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

Celebrating students

Ky. Baptist Foundation



Richard Carnes

Graduation ceremonies are occurring across the Commonwealth of Kentucky at this time. It is always an exciting time for students and their families as they celebrate the achievement of an educational milestone and look forward to the next phase of the student's life. For many students, college or technical school awaits them, but some budding young scholars must defer the hope of achieving their academic dream due to a lack of sufficient financial resources.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation has been honored to work with numerous donors whose passion is helping students secure the necessary financial support to achieve their educational goals. One example of this collaboration is the scholarship funds that donors have established at the Foundation to help offset the costs of a student's education.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation's scholarship committee met recently to review student applications and grant scholarship awards for the upcoming academic year. The scholarship committee was privileged to award 74 scholarships to college and seminary students, totaling $93,385 from the 17 scholarship endowments administered by the Foundation.

You may share this same passion for education and would like to explore how you can implement a legacy gift plan to fund a scholarship endowment like the ones referenced above. Or, you may have a Christian school, college or Baptist seminary that you would like to support through a legacy gift. Also, churches can create scholarship funds through the Foundation that will provide much needed financial assistance to their college bound students.

The Kentucky Baptist Foundation staff is available to assist you by providing guidance in creating these scholarship funds and charitable endowments to support worthy Christian education causes across the state and the nation. To learn more, you may contact the Foundation's trust counsel, Laurie Valentine, or me at our toll-free number (866) 489-3533.

Richard Carnes is president of the Kentucky Baptist Foundation, PO Box 436389, Louisville, KY 40253; toll-free (866) 489-3533; KyBaptistFoundation.org.

Longtime Kentucky Baptist pastor dies

Paducah—Louis Brinker, former pastor of three Kentucky Baptist churches, passed away May 26 in Paducah. He was 78 years old.



Louis Brinker

Brinker served as pastor of Bellview Baptist Church in Paducah, Friendship Baptist Church in Smithland and Twelve Oaks Baptist in Paducah, as well as churches in Illinois and Missouri. He also returned to one of his Illinois pastorates and served as minister to senior adults.

"He passed away well-loved and well-respected," said Brandt Lyon, senior pastor at Twelve Oaks Baptist. "It seems like everywhere you went in Paducah, someone was baptized, married or ministered to by him."

During his time at Twelve Oaks, Brinker formed the Double Nickels senior adult group and helped that group grow and develop.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Carol, and three children, as well as six grandchildren, three siblings, and a host of nieces and nephews.

During his time at Bellview, Brinker was instrumental in the establishment and development of the bus and senior adult ministries and the church newsletter.

Brinker will be remembered for his heart for senior adults, the church, and the lost.

Former Kentucky evangelism director dies

Jacksonville, Fla.—Jay Brown, retired director of evangelism for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, died May 26 in Jacksonville, Fla.



Jay Brown

He retired from the KBC in 1988 after 11 years of service. His passion was for evangelism, and he put that passion to use wherever he went.

"He was a very caring, people-oriented person who had a deep passion for evangelism," Don Spencer, director of church financial benefits department at the KBC, said.

"He loved to be in as many churches as he could, preaching for revivals," Spencer recalled. "He was unapologetic in his zeal for reaching people for Christ.

"He did not like to be encumbered by dealing with organizational details and procedures. (H)e just wanted to be out there preaching and witnessing."

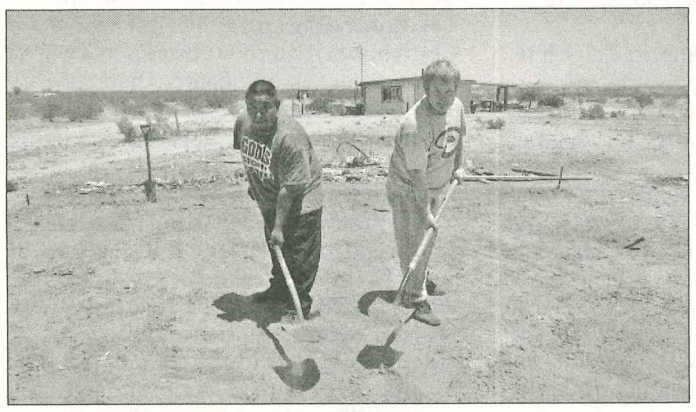
Brown was a graduate of Howard College (now Samford University) and Southern Seminary.

In addition to his work with the KBC, Brown was a pastor in four states, including Campbellsville and Louisville in Kentucky, was a director of missions in Michigan, and served on several committees, including being moderator of Long Run Baptist Association in 1978.

After his retirement, he continued to serve as an interim pastor until 2003.

Brown is survived by his wife Cecile, son, daughter, and grandchildren. Services were held in Trussville, Ala.





*Top: Eric Gibbs baptizes a new member of Cockleburr Ethne Church, a church plant on the Tohono O'odham Nation reservation. **Left:** Gibbs (right) and ministry coworker Lawrence Antone break ground for a new church building in the village of Cockleburr, Ariz.*

The 'forgotten' mark young couple's ministry

By Kathie Chute

Sacaton, Ariz.—As soon as Eric Gibbs stepped onto the Tohono O'odham Nation, one of the largest Native American reservations in the country, he felt a love for the people there.

"After seeing the needs of that community, I knew my time in Arizona would be more than just a week," Gibbs said of the short-term mission trip he took as a college student, a trip he didn't think much about beforehand.

Gibbs returned home to finish his degree and continue his service as a youth minister. But he and his wife Brittany began to pray about relocating to Arizona for long-term ministry.

Brittany said she and Eric "always thought that we would take mission trips with our churches and lead mission trips with youth but never thought much about being 'missionaries.' Over and over again, (God) has made it known that this is His will."

After graduation from college, Eric and Brittany, both former members of First Baptist Church of Hardin, Ky., were accepted as church planters through the Mission Service Corps of the North American Mission Board. In 2010, the young couple moved with their two children to Sacaton, Ariz., a town of about 1,500, and settled into a reservation near the Gila River to begin a ministry among Native Americans.

"I feel called to pastor forgotten people groups," Gibbs said. "This kind of calling often leads to planting churches in places that can be rather closed off."

Gibbs is pastor of First Pima Baptist Church in the Gila River Reservation and also works with two church plants on local reservations, including one in the Tohono O'odham Nation, which saw 16 baptisms last year. In addition, Gibbs serves as regional director for Ethné Global Services, a nonprofit organization initiated by Alan Karr, a professor of church planting at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary, to work with African refugees in Phoenix, many of whom are from the Congo.

Gibbs' calling has dramatically changed family. In addition to the two children they brought to Arizona, Eric and Brittany have adopted a daughter from the Republic of Congo, adopted two Native American sons, and brought in foster children from local reservations. They are certified foster parents by Tribal Social Services, one of the few local couples with that distinction. The children have allowed the family to build relationships with both the African and the Indian communities.

Gibbs said they are simply "living on purpose" as they continue to seek God's will for their lives.

"We are an ordinary family that God has called to carry out an extraordinary mission," he said. "We are missionaries called to live and serve among the Native American tribes in Arizona. God has also called our family to adopt."

Another significant step was to enroll for seminary classes.

"I knew Golden Gate had a campus in Arizona when I moved out here, but I didn't think it would be possible for me to attend," Gibbs said. "But I was connected with scholarships that allowed me to study without a financial burden and to finish without taking any breaks."

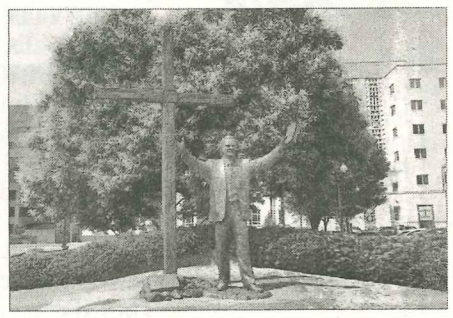
He completed the master of missiology degree in 2015 and was awarded the Golden Gate Church Planting Award.

"I feel like I am a better leader, pastor, husband, father because of my time at Golden Gate," Gibbs said.

"I didn't know how much I didn't know," he said of how his studies strengthened his calling "to relate to and minister to other cultures." (BP)

Graham statue moving from LifeWay to N.C. mountains

By Marty King



Nashville–LifeWay Christian Resources is moving a larger-than-life statue of Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham from its downtown Nashville location to a LifeWay retreat center in the North Carolina mountains, a few miles from Graham's home.

The move is prompted by last year's sale of LifeWay's 15-acre Nashville campus.

The iconic bronze sculpture is to be dismantled June 25 and placed in storage until a new site is ready this fall at the entrance to LifeWay's 1,300-acre Ridgecrest Baptist Conference Center, near Asheville, N.C.

"Ridgecrest is a perfect location for the Graham statue," said Thom Rainer, LifeWay President and CEO. "It is only a few miles from the home where Mr. Graham has lived most of his life, and it will welcome nearly 70,000 men and women, boys and girls who come to Ridgecrest every year for spiritual training and retreat."

The sculpture features a 7-foot-tall depiction of the world famous evangelist standing beside a 17-foot cross. Graham's arms are stretched wide, and an open Bible rests in his left hand. At the foot of the cross are three nails and a stone inscribed with the words of John 3:16.

Sculpted by bivocational pastor Terrell O'Brien, the statue was donated to LifeWay in 2006 by two Southern Baptist businessmen from Atlanta, Chris Fryer and Matt Samuelson. It was unveiled at the 2006 SBC annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C. and placed on LifeWay's property that December.

At a dedication ceremony, O'Brien said his vision for the statue was to pay tribute to Graham and his life's ministry, but "my heart's desire is to also honor the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

During the dedication, Cliff Barrows, longtime music director for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, said the sculpture captures Graham's passions for the Word of God, gospel preaching, the invitation, and the cross.

Graham has written 33 books and has been listed as one of the "Ten Most Admired Men in the World" for more than 50 years. Now in frail health, Graham lives in the home he shared with his wife, Ruth, who died in 2007, and their five children in the mountains of western North Carolina. (LifeWay)

From disappointment to fulfillment: Rick and Stephanie's story

Christians believe that marriage is a sacred union, an expression of faith and love hallowed by tradition and sanctified by God. Children are the manifestation of God's promise of hope for the future. But for some married couples, that promise goes unfulfilled.

Rick and Stephanie had been married for two years when they learned they could not conceive. It was devastating news for a young couple who had dreamed of raising a family. They explored adoption but were dismayed to find that the process can take years and often comes with unforeseen challenges. Nearing their wit's end, they began to pray fervently for God's help.

One day, Rick and Stephanie found a Sunrise Children's Services brochure at church. The words "adoption services" caught their attention. Rick and Stephanie enrolled in a "Be the One" therapeutic foster training class. Upon completion of this training regimen, they were certified as foster parents.

Then the waiting began. This stage of the adoption process can be an agonizing ordeal for prospective foster parents. Some tire of the waiting and disappointment and simply give up on their dream. Sometimes, referral calls would raise their hopes, only to have them dashed later by the words, "The social worker chose another home." Rick and Stephanie also received words of encouragement from the Sunrise team, but they couldn't help shedding some tears along the way.

Finally, the long-awaited call came. They had been selected as foster parents of a feisty 3 year old who had endured substantial abuse and neglect. They were asked if they could handle frequent temper tantrums and night terrors. Could they deal with the aggressive behaviors, the biting? Secure in their faith and relieved that their prayers had been answered, they accepted.

SUNRISE
Children's Services

Rick and Stephanie have been well-rewarded for their patience and determination. They've proven to be exemplary parents. Their child's behavioral problems have decreased and, today, they have a well-adjusted toddler in their care. Impressed by the couple's success, Sunrise has placed another child with Rick and Stephanie, one with significant medical issues. They are working toward fully adopting both children.

Just one year ago, Rick and Stephanie had run out of hope. Through the intervention of Sunrise and with God's help, today they are supportive parents of two children who've found safe haven and a loving home.

KBC Calendar of Events

June

16-18 Mission Adventure for Ky. Kids, Richmond
18 Church Planting Regional Roundtable, Louisville
18-24 Kentucky Changers, Murray
19-26 All-State Youth Choir & Orchestra, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville
23-25 Mission Adventure for Kentucky Kids, Bowling Green

Mountains to the Mississippi

Compiled by Staff

BEDFORD—Antioch Church has called **Ferrill Davis** as pastor.

EDDYVILLE—Second Church will hold homecoming July 31. **Mac Walls** is pastor.

FARMINGTON—Bell City Church will have its Bell City Bang 4th of July Celebration on Sunday, July 3, at 6 p.m. **Presley Lamm** is pastor.

HICKORY—Liberty Church will have its annual Liberty Fest Independence Day Celebration on Wednesday, June 29, at 7 p.m.

HODGENVILLE—Severns Valley Association holds a weekly Pastors' Fellowship at the Hodgenville Hardees on Thursdays, 6-8 a.m. **Gerald Murphy** is director of missions.

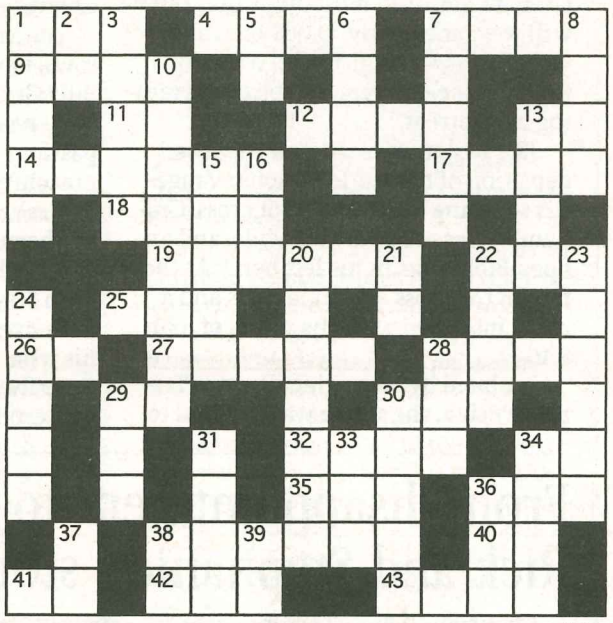
LOUISVILLE—Parkland Church will hold a community block party on Friday, June 24, from 6-8 p.m. For more information, call (502) 969-1387. **Tom Curry** is pastor.

MELBER—New Concord Church will have a gospel singing on Sunday, June 26, at 1:30 p.m., featuring The Bowlings. **Greg Winn** is pastor.

PRINCETON – Fairview Church has called **David Brown** as pastor.

Bible Crosswords

By Michael J. Landi



#65

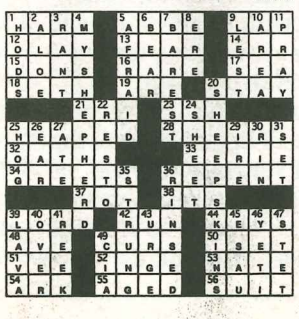
Across

1 "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not ____ that he should live" Acts 22:22)
4 "The joy of thy ____" (Matthew 25:21)
7 "Do thyself no ____" (Acts 16:28)
9 "A feast of wines on the ____" (Isaiah 25:6)
11 "Believe also in ____" (John 14:1)
12 "And sow wickedness, ____ the same" (Job 4:8)
13 "Called to be ____ apostle" (1 Corinthians 1:1)
14 A son of Benjamin (Genesis 46:21)
17 "Seeing he giveth to all ____" (Acts 17:25)
18 "Chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man ____ him" (Mark 5:4)
19 "His life a ____ for many" (Matthew 20:28)
22 "Hath the ____ of the Lord been revealed?" (John 12:38)
25 "Because Judas had the ____, that Jesus had said unto him" (John 13:29)
26 "____, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37)
27 "Wash his feet with ____" (Luke 7:38)
28 "And stamp with thy foot, and say, ____ for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel!" (Ezekiel 6:11)
29 "That where I am, there ye may ____" (John 14:3)
30 "Let him ____ the death" (Matthew 15:4)
32 "Whose shoes I am not worthy to ____" (Matthew 3:11)
34 "Be ye not as the horse, ____ as the mule" (Psalm 32:9)
35 "Do ye not therefore ____, because ye know not the scriptures?" (Mark 12:24)
36 "I ____ in Sion a chief corner stone" (1 Peter 2:6)
38 Blew trumpet before ark of God (1 Chronicles 15:24)
40 Preposition
41 Forefather of Jesus, El-modam was the son of him (Luke 3:28)
42 "Simon ____ -Jona" (Matthew 16:17)
43 11th letter of Hebrew alphabet

Down

1 "His eyes were as a ____ of fire" (Revelation 19:12)
2 Same as, or that is, Lat. abbr.
3 "Thou shalt not ____ the Lord thy God" (Matthew 4:7)
5 "Whose ____ have I taken?" (1 Samuel 12:3)
6 "Mighty in ____ and word" (Luke 24:19)
7 "That they should seek the Lord, if ____ they might feel after him" (Acts 17:27)
8 "Is not ___ to give" (Mark 10:40)
10 "Who shall ____ us from the love of Christ?" (Romans 8:35)
13 "But having seen them ____ off" (Hebrews 11:13)
15 "Whose is this ____ and superscription?" (Matthew 22:20)
16 "Honour all ____ " (1 Peter 2:17)
20 "The pen of the ___ is in vain" (Jeremiah 8:8)
21 First Gospel, abbr.
22 "Believe ye that I am ____ to do this?" (Matthew 9:28)
23 "Thou shalt forget thy ____" (Job 11:16)
24 "And being in an ____ he prayed more earnestly" (Luke 22:44)
28 "The prince of the power of the ____" (Ephesians 2:2)
29 "To ____ I am ashamed" (Luke 16:3)
30 Gold coin used in Palestine (Ezra 2:69 rsv & asv)
31 "The troops of ____ looked, the companies of Sheba waited for them" (Job 6:19)
33 Period of time
34 "Neither by any other ____" (James 5:12)
36 "Lot is cast into the ____" (Proverbs 16:33)
37 Greek, abbr.
38 Hebrew 5th month
39 "Pass over through ____, the coast of Moab" (Deuteronomy 2:18)

#64



Classified Ads

SEEKING: Tunnel Hill Baptist Church in Elizabethtown, Ky., is seeking a part-time youth director. Approx. 20 hours a week. Please submit resumé to tunnelhillbaptistchurch@ gmail.com no later than July 1.

SEEKING: Part-time music minister at Sharon Baptist Church, Mayfield, Ky. Please see church website for job description/qualifications at www.sbcmayfield.org or send a resumé to Sharon Baptist Church, 3586 State Route 303, Mayfield, KY 42066.

SEEKING: Bi-vocational pastor for small congregation in Jamestown, Russell County, Ky. Send resumé to Welfare Baptist Church, P.O. Box 904, Jamestown, KY 42629.

SEEKING: Small Southern Baptist church (conservative and traditional) seeks pastor. Located in central Ky. Prefer full-time, but will consider bi-vocational. Send resumé to: wbc.resume@yahoo.com or mail to 620 George St. Lebanon, KY 40033. Attn: Jerry Albertson.

SEEKING: Hill Grove Baptist Church is seeking a bi-vocational pastor for rural community. Church located in Guston, Ky. www.hillgrovebaptistchurch.org. Send resumés to: kathygerkinsveith@twc.com or 1124 Ridgeway Dr., Brandenburg, KY 40108.

SEEKING: Long Run Baptist Association in the Metro Louisville, Ky., area is seeking a director of missions for its 160 churches. Resumés will be received through June 30, and may be sent to christina@lrba.org to the attention of the DOM Search Committee. Hard-copy resumés may be sent to DOM Search Committee, Long Run Baptist Association, 2722 Crittenden Dr., Louisville, KY 40209-1114.

SEEKING: Full-time minister of education/associate pastor to assist in educational and discipleship programs and assist in outreach and mission programs. Send resumés to: Olive Branch Baptist Church, 400 Olive Branch Church Rd., Hanson, KY 42413 or call (270) 322-8251 for further inquiries.

SEEKING: Munfordville Baptist Church is seeking a full-time minister of youth & children. College degree in related field and 3-5 years' experience in similar position preferred. Must adhere to Baptist Faith and Message (2000). Send resumés by June 30 to Munfordville Baptist Church, Attn: Minister of Youth & Children Committee, P.O. Box 445, Munfordville, KY 42765 or to mbcyouthchildrenministry@ gmail.com.

SEEKING: Hillcrest Baptist Church in Lebanon, Mo., is accepting resumés for a minister of youth and family life. Send resumés to pveanes@lebanon.k12.mo.us or call David Veanes at (417) 532-1021

SEEKING: Bi-vocational pastor sought by rural Southern Baptist congregation in Central Kentucky. Send resumés to Clover Bottom Baptist Church, 6321 Fords Mill Rd., Versailles, KY 40383.

SEEKING: Friendship Baptist Church is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Friendship is a rural church offering children and youth ministries. Resumés will be accepted until July 31 and can be emailed to janeblevins@ hotmail.com.

SEEKING: Layperson or clergy to lead senior adult ministry at Richmond First Baptist Church. The part-time position includes building a strong fellowship of seniors through travel, Bible study and group encounters, and also involves using seniors as a resource for ministering to others. Resumés or recommendations will be accepted until position filled and should be submitted to fbcresumes@firstbaptist-net.com or Administrator, First Baptist Church, 425 Eastern Bypass, Richmond, KY 40475. Selected candidates will be contacted to schedule an interview.

SEEKING: Buffalo Lick Baptist is seeking a bi-vocational pastor. Send resumés to harrisonvest@twc.com or call (502) 633-4320.

SEEKING: Edgewood Baptist Church is reopening its search for a full-time pastor. Send resumé and inquiries to edgewood@ edgewoodbaptistchurch.com, Attn: Pastor Search Committee. Resumés accepted through July 11. For information, visit http://www.edgewoodbaptistchurch.com.

SEEKING: Hillcrest Baptist Church is seeking a part-time interim preschool/children's director. Approximately 20-25 hours weekly. Send resumé to: Hillcrest Baptist Church, 920 Skyline Dr., Hopkinsville, KY 42240, Attention: Personnel Committee.

SEEKING: Hillcrest Baptist Church in Lebanon, Tenn. is seeking a full-time minister of music. Hillcrest has a blended-type of worship and the congregation averages 1,000 for Sunday morning service. Please email résume to: resume@hillcrestbaptist.org.

SEEKING: Kentucky Baptist Convention has an immediate opening for a Help Desk Representative in the Information Technology Department. Position primary responsibility—user support and customer service on company supported computer applications and platforms. Troubleshoot problems and advise on the appropriate action. Should possess knowledge and experience of customer service practices, relevant call tracking applications working knowledge of fundamental operations of relevant software, hardware and other equipment, self-starter, ability to work both independently and as a team player, prioritize multiple projects to meet deadlines. Strong interpersonal communication and computer skills required. College degree or comparable professional focus in computers and technology a must. Great environment, attractive pay and benefits. Mail resumé to: Human Resources, Attn: Shari Rogers, P.O. Box 43433, Louisville, KY 40253-0433 or email to shari.rogers@kybaptist.org.





Retiree: Mission:Dignity aids 'folks like us'

By Joe Westbury

Toccoa, Ga.—After 45 years of ministry, Reginald and Claudia Pressley retired much the way they began—serving small churches in the Southeast. They were there for births, baptisms, weddings and funerals as they marked the milestones and the passage of time in the lives of their members.

And they wouldn't take anything for the memories.

The couple met in their teens at Toccoa Falls Institute (now College), a faith-based school in the mountains of north Georgia. He was attending on the advice of a pastor where he lived in Talladega, Ala., after surrendering to the ministry; she was the daughter of an instructor.

His memory is that it was "love at first sight" for Claudia. Her story differs.

"He chased me all over the place."

Regardless, they struck up an acquaintance before he returned to Alabama for his senior year of high school. Then he was drafted by Uncle Sam; entering the Marines, he shipped off for the Korean Peninsula.

The relationship continued halfway around the world, and when he returned home he went to Toccoa to visit Claudia. Soon they were married and, after his discharge, settled back in Toccoa. He took Bible classes at the school and then moved the family to Florida where he studied at the Baptist Bible Institute (now the Baptist College of Florida).

"Times were tough being newly married, having a son and wife, and trying to support them; money was scarce," Reginald said.

His first pastorate, at Bellwood Baptist Church in Geneva, Ala., taught him and Claudia a lot about human nature, such as the squabble that was just being solved when they moved to town.

"The church had a very heated question over whether to add air conditioning," Claudia recounted. "Most folks didn't have it back then, and couldn't afford it, so they could not see taking on the expense of higher electric bills just for an hour or two on Sunday morning.

"Well, the church was split on the vote, so they went ahead and air conditioned the sanctuary, and that created a very unique worship experience," Claudia said. "The half in favor of air conditioning sat on one side with the cool air blowing, and those who opposed it sat on the other side with the windows open."

That was just the first of a lifetime of experiences that Reginald and Claudia look back on with lightheartedness.

Throughout the next several decades, the couple moved around the Southeast, always serving small churches and living in parsonages.

Reginald's favorite part of the ministry was preaching.

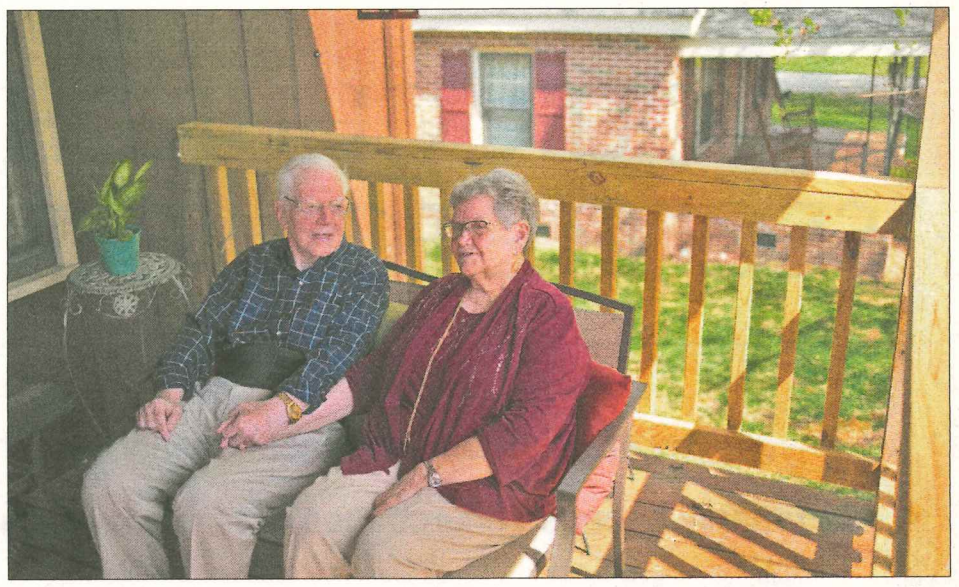
"The Lord just seemed to speak through me and give me what the people needed to hear at the time," he reflected.

Reginald also credits his ministry with good discipleship and a strong missions education program through Woman's Missionary Union and the Brotherhood, which he described as the backbone of the church that kept it focused on missions.

Now retired, the Pressleys are not far from where they first met. They live in Toccoa and are members of Old Liberty Baptist Church, just 15 miles across the state line in Westminster, S.C. It was the last church he served and where he retired at age 70 in 2001. Claudia plays the organ each Sunday.

One of the blessings Reginald and Claudia have in retirement is Mission:Dignity, the benevolence ministry of GuideStone Financial Resources by which Southern Baptists' gifts supplement the couple's limited income to help them make ends meet.

"We never had much money to put away for retirement, though the churches helped where they could," Reginald said. "I think many of them put about $35 a month away toward our retirement, which is what the Annuity Board (now GuideStone) recommended as a minimum.



Reginald and Claudia Pressley, over 45 years of ministry, "never had much money to put away for retirement," as he described it, "though the churches helped where they could." The Pressleys are among 1,800 individuals aided by Mission:Dignity, the retiree benevolence ministry of GuideStone Financial Resources. (Photo by Joe Westbury)

"Of course we didn't have anything to contribute because I rarely made more than $300 a month in my early days, and not much more than that later."

Claudia seconded that thought.

"I sometimes wonder how in the world we got by in those days without health insurance, but we couldn't afford it," she said. "Thank goodness the Annuity Board eventually offered a program and it was a real lifesaver. The Annuity Board was a real blessing when we needed it.

"It was hard to raise four children on a country pastor's salary, but the Lord always met our needs."

Mission:Dignity assists more than 1,800 recipients each month, providing a measure of security and dignity in their retirement years. The neediest couples with at least 25 years of paid Southern Baptist ministerial service can receive $600 each month from Mission:Dignity. Thanks to an endowment that pays for administrative costs, 100 percent of money given to Mission:Dignity benefits a retired pastor, worker or his widow in need. For some recipients, it means being able to stay in the familiar surroundings of their own home. For others, it covers the cost of groceries, utilities, prescriptions and other necessities. But for each of them, it's an expression of the love and care from their Southern Baptist family.

"As you get old the medical bills come a lot more frequently and seem to never end," Claudia said. "Mission:Dignity is helping us to meet those bills while still having funds available to cover other day-to-day expenses.

"We don't know what we would do without the check we receive from Baptists all over the nation who contribute to folks like us."

For more information about Mission:Dignity or to share a gift, visit MissionDignity.org.

Editor's Note: Mission:Dignity Sunday is June 26 in the Southern Baptist Convention in support of GuideStone Financial Resources' benevolence ministry for retired pastors or their widows.

'Sunburn trailer' offers relief, witness

By Butch Blume

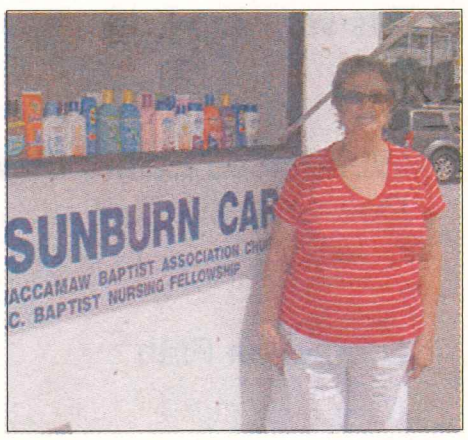
Conway, S.C.—Headed to the Carolina Coast this summer for some sun and surf but also looking for a missions opportunity? Martha Bullard has just the job for you.

This summer, as she has for the past seven summers, Bullard, along with volunteers from churches of Waccamaw Baptist Association, will be manning a "sunburn trailer" in Surfside Beach, S.C.

Volunteers at the trailer dole out free sunscreen, aloe gel and water, and they look for opportunities to share the gospel with visitors from all over the world. Often, youth groups from churches outside the area will coordinate with Bullard to utilize the trailer as a staging area for missions activities on the beach.

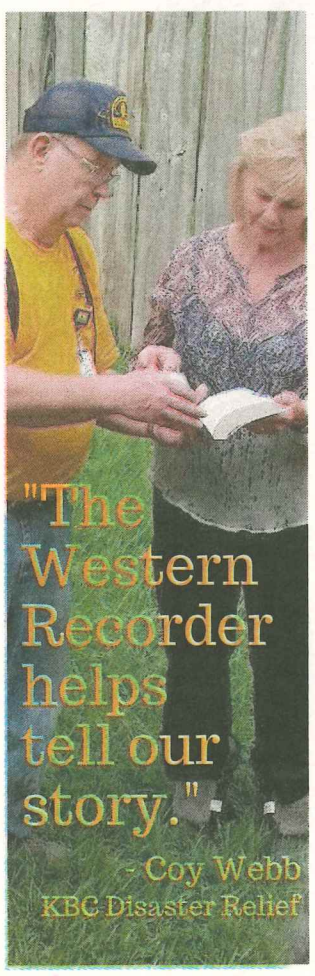
The trailer, normally used for disaster relief operations by Waccamaw Association in Conway has wide panels on both sides that can be raised to create an open-air setting conducive to having relaxed conversations with families on their way from the public parking lot to the beach, Bullard said.

The trailer is open during the summer months from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday-Saturday, and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays. Over the course of the summer, 50-75 people, many of them senior adults, will help man the trailer, Bullard said.



The ministry was started by the Baptist Nursing Fellowship many years ago, and Bullard, herself, spends three or four days a week helping man the trailer.

"I'm a people person," said Bullard, a member of First Baptist Church of Surfside Beach, "and I love to tell people about the Lord." (BP)









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