

TENNESSEE'S BAPTIST & REFLECTOR

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Statewide Edition

August 14, 1996

this week's news

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MOVING? Cut out and mail address label and new address to *Baptist and Reflector*, P.O. Box 726, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024

Polk County Association leads efforts

Tennesseans minister at state Olympic venue

By Connie Davis
 Baptist and Reflector

OCOEE — During the Olympic Canoe/Kayak Slalom events here July 26-28, thousands of visitors poured into Tennessee to enjoy sports. They were joined by several hundred Baptists with an enthusiasm for their faith.

About 220 youth and adult Baptist volunteers from seven states were based at Camp Agape of Polk County Association during the weeks surrounding the weekend. To minister to athletes, tourists, and local residents, they worked at the Olympic venue, the parking area of the venue, motels, camping areas, canoeing/kayaking centers on the Ocoee River, and in community ministries.

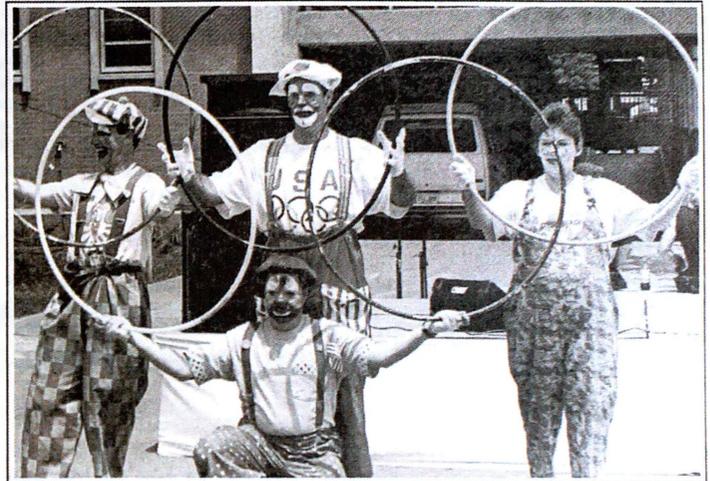
The volunteers distributed about 30,000 hospitality bags provided by Tennesseans, mostly Woman's Missionary Union members, reported Andy Jordan of the association, who directed Olympic ministries in Tennessee. A total of 40,000 bags were distributed in the area. Additionally, about 100 people made professions of faith, he added.

Despite initial opposition by Olympic officials and the pipe bombing in Atlanta, about 90 volunteers worked in the venue selling concessions. Jordan placed Baptist volunteers in the jobs despite the fact they were not ministering overtly,

which was not allowed. The day after the pipe bombing at Centennial Olympic Park, he substituted adults for youth to exercise caution for their safety, he explained. Several volunteers got to share their faith, which was extraordinary considering the obstacles, he noted.

Work outside the venue was not without challenges. Jordan had gotten permission from local property owners and law enforcement agencies to set up hospitality centers near the venue parking area. Hospitality bags were given to motorists from the centers. The volunteers were targeting the 14,000-15,000 visitors each day.

When law enforcement officials expressed concerns about the distribution delaying motorists, the volunteers became flexible. They relocated closer to the entrance where cars were forced to slow down and to private property at the exit of the parking area. Officials expressed concerns that hospitality bags contained snacks,



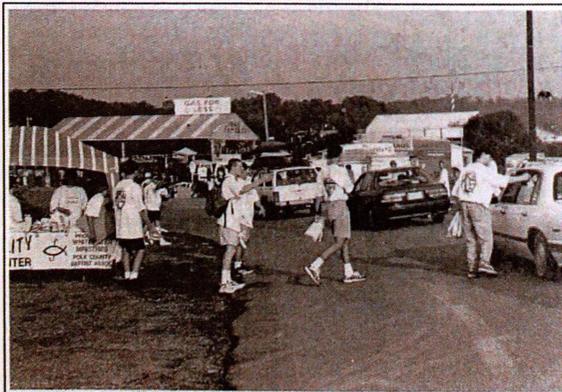
FORMING THE OLYMPIC LOGO with hula hoops during a performance at a street festival in Cleveland held during the Olympics are members of the clown troupe of Manley Church, Morristown, from left, Sheridan Barker, co-director; Steve Smith, kneeling; Larry Smith; and Kim Smith. — Photos by Connie Davis

which might be taken into the venue. Food from outside the venue was not allowed. The volunteers got more flexible. Workers at the entrance got permission to distribute the Interactive Pocket Guides provided by the Home Mission Board, which were in most of the hospitality bags.

One Tennessee group remained at the parking area entrance during most of the Olympic weekend because Jordan had gotten permission from the

owner of a gas station located there and because they decided to serve people who stopped there to avoid delaying motorists. The volunteers from Concord Association worked from the association's disaster relief unit, providing drinks, hospitality bags, and other assistance.

Acteen Activators from Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville, joined volunteers from Mississippi in distributing the pocket — See Tennesseans, page 6



GIVING HOSPITALITY BAGS to motorists at the entrance to the Olympic venue parking area are youth from Batesville, Miss. The bags were made up by Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union members, who prepared more than 75,000. They were distributed in Tennessee and at other Olympic sites.

B&R wants to be your friend

This issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* is a special edition. Readers should notice several articles dealing with the purpose of the paper, its history, and reasons why TBC churches should observe *Baptist and Reflector Day* Aug. 18.

The only official voice for Tennessee Baptist news, the paper traces its history back to 1835.

The paper is the agency of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. As the official paper, the *B&R* carries news and features that can enable Tennessee Baptists to minister more effectively.

Weekly there are servings of foreign and home missions, plus news of state missions as TBC churches work alongside missionaries here and abroad.

The people can read letters to the editor, written with candor. This open forum gives Tennesseans opportunity to see opinions of others.

Many features and news items inform readers of the ministries performed regularly by Tennessee Baptists.

Readers are encouraged to read thoroughly. This newly designed paper is yours for edification, information, inspiration, and interest. *B&R*

- ▶ Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor
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- ▶ **To contribute a news item, call or write Editor** Wm. Fletcher Allen; Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor; or Connie Davis, assistant editor.
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- ▶ **Office** — *Baptist and Reflector*, 5001 Maryland Way, Brentwood, Tenn., 37027
- ▶ **Mailing address** — P.O. Box 728, Brentwood, Tenn., 37024
- ▶ **Phone** — (615) 371-2003. **FAX** — (615) 371-2080
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Printed on recycled paper

Says HMB official

Best-seller contains Mormon doctrine

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — It may come as a surprise to many Baptists, but the popular personal training programs written and promoted by Stephen R. Covey also promote his Mormon beliefs, according to Bill Gordon, associate director of the interfaith witness department at the Southern Baptist Convention Home Mission Board.

In an analysis in the August issue of *SBC LIFE*, Gordon stated Covey's best-seller, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, is ripe with Mormon doctrine altered to appeal to a mass audience.

Gordon found *7 Habits* contains many of the same principles, anecdotes, and illustrations used in one of Covey's

earlier books, *The Divine Center*, a book meant to promote Mormon beliefs and show any spiritual model other than the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), including evangelical Christianity, is a false "map" that limits the personal development of its followers.

"Covey explains in this book that he has discovered how to communicate Mormon truths to non-Mormons by simply changing his vocabulary," Gordon recounted.

"Covey writes, 'I have found in speaking to various non-LDS groups in different cultures that we can teach and testify of many Gospel principles if we are careful in selecting words which carry our meaning but come from their experience and frame of mind.'"

In *The Divine Center*, Covey writes orthodox Christianity "so distorts the knowledge of who we really are, who our Father in Heaven really is, who Jesus Christ really is, and who the Holy Ghost really is, that it imposes enormous limitations on the software program of those who 'buy into it.' ... It also impels their minds to great accusation and criticism of those who are correctly programmed in these matters."

Those correctly programmed, according to Covey, are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, while evangelical Christianity "gets just about everything wrong, including God, man, man's relationship to God, the role of Christ the Savior, the purpose and meaning of life." ■

Medical volunteers needed for relief work in Costa Rica

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — Due to the recent hurricane in Costa Rica, a medical disaster relief request has been sent to the Tennessee Baptist Convention Partnership Missions Department.

Costa Rica missionaries have expressed a need for three doctors (general practitioner, pediatrician, and gastro-interologist) and two nurses.

The medical relief effort will begin the last week of August and go through the first week of September for a total of 10 days. The estimated cost is \$1,000-\$1,100.

For more information, call (615) 371-2064. ■

Nearly one in five abortions to evangelicals, study says

By Tom Strode
For Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — Women who claim no religious identification apparently are about four times as likely to have an abortion as those who identify with a religion, according to a recent study, but nearly one in five women who have an abortion describes herself as a "born-again" or "evangelical" Christian.

The 1994-95 national survey, released Aug. 7, also revealed an increasing number of women are using abortion as a back-up for contraceptive failure. The study showed about 58 percent of women used a form of contraception the month they became pregnant, as compared to 51 percent in a similar survey in 1987.

Other findings in the study were:

(1) Abortion rates among Catholics are 29 percent higher than among Protestants.

(2) For 45 percent of women having abortions, it was at least their second, compared to 43 percent in 1987. It was at least the third abortion for 7 percent of these women.

(3) Nearly 26 percent of women having abortions are married, with 7 percent of this total for wives who are separated.

(4) The age group with the highest rate of abortions is 20 to 24 years, with nearly 33 percent of all abortions from this category. Teenagers have nearly 22 percent of all abortions.

(5) White women have 61 percent of the abortions, while black women have 31 percent, even though they make up only 14 percent of the female population between 15 and 44 years of age.

(6) Nearly 56 percent of women having abortions already have delivered at least one child.

(7) Non-whites, women aged 18 to 24, Hispanics, separated, and never-married women, and those who have an income of less than \$15,000 or have Medicaid are twice as likely as women in the general population to have abortions.

The Alan Guttmacher Institute, a special affiliate of the abortion advocacy organization Planned Parenthood Federation of America, surveyed nearly 10,000 women in 13 hospitals and 87 non-hospital facilities. The institute also did a study

of nearly 10,000 abortion customers in 1987.

The figure on professing evangelical Christians reflects a slight increase from the '87 survey. The '94-95 study showed 18 percent of women having abortions describe themselves as "born-again" or "evangelical," while 16 percent did so in '87.

If the survey approaches accuracy, the results on evangelical women "should motivate us to persevere for the long haul," said Ben Mitchell, a Southern Baptist biomedical issues specialist.

"This study demonstrates that we must not only function as the conscience of a culture gone mad, but we must do so for our own households as well. The church must use her prophetic voice more effectively even within her own walls to prevent the senseless killing of the unborn" he said.

Christians also must continue providing alternatives to abortion, added Mitchell, visiting professor at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and consultant for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. ■

Sullivan recovering after surgery

For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — James L. Sullivan, retired president of the Baptist Sunday School Board and former president of the Southern Baptist Convention, underwent surgery Aug. 8 to relieve pressure caused by fluid on his brain.

It was the second surgical procedure he has undergone in two weeks. Both surgeries were precipitated by a fall he sustained in May.

Sullivan's progress since his second surgery has been

steady, according to family members. Sullivan is the father of Lynn Porch, wife of TBC Executive Director James Porch.

On Aug. 12 doctors were anticipating moving Sullivan to the rehabilitation unit of Baptist Hospital, Nashville, for continued therapy.

The family expresses great appreciation for the many prayers and numerous expressions of kindness from people throughout Tennessee and across the nation and requests continued prayer support. ■

ACTS channel to change names

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — The name of The Faith & Values Channel, which carries ACTS programming, will be changed to ODYSSEY beginning Sept. 29.

ACTS is the cable television program service of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission.

Garry E. Hill, president and CEO of F&V, said ODYSSEY will feature a new logo and on-air look.

"We believe our new name, ODYSSEY, and our new tag

line, 'Exploring Life's Journey,' better convey the breadth of our program offerings and better meet the ever-increasing demands for programming that both inspires and entertains."

"The name change doesn't affect our programming in any way," said Jack Johnson, RTVC president.

"The channel will continue to carry our regularly scheduled programming" he said.

The Faith and Values Channel currently carries programming from 65 religious groups. ■

Growth of Gospel accelerates in formerly atheistic Albania

Baptist Press

TIRANA, Albania — Churches continue to spring up in Albania, with dozens of new believers being baptized at the same time and hundreds praying to receive Christ during visitation campaigns.

Albania government leaders once bragged theirs was the most atheistic country on earth. Now the Eastern European country has dozens of Christian congregations and a people hungry for the Gospel, said Gale R. Hartley, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary assigned there.

And with 11 congregations, Baptists in Albania are beginning to discuss starting a convention or union to improve cooperation, he said.

Hartley and fellow Foreign Mission Board missionary Lawrence Duhon baptized 29 new believers at a new church in Fier recently and now membership is at 50 and growing. "These are mostly younger people from both

Muslim and Orthodox backgrounds," said Hartley. Duhon now leads the Fier work.

Some of the new believers were reached during April when 21 volunteers with the U.S.-based Global Mission Fellowship witnessed door-to-door. More than 500 people prayed to receive Christ as their personal Savior. The Americans used Albanian translators to help them present the Gospel.

Hartley is now concentrating his ministry in Tirana, the capital, and Durres, a port city. In Durres he is starting with a group of nine believers who became Christians last year.

The Foreign Mission Board is sending several new missionaries during 1996 to help meet the heavy response, said Larry Cox, associate area director for central Europe. One request for a church planter has not been filled, he added.

While dozens of Christian groups from America and Western Europe maintain workers in Albania, the ar-

rival of two Romanian volunteers in July indicates a new phase of work. The two young women, sponsored by Segal Baptist Church in Arad, Romania, hope to reach Albanians of Romanian descent, Hartley said.

But Albania is not a clear field for Christian evangelists. Muslim groups in the Middle East are heavily financing mosque construction and the teaching of Islam across Albania. In pre-communist times, Albania was said to be more Muslim than Christian, but today both names mean little more than a cultural label to most people.

When Hartley visited one Muslim family, the father was furious. "I'm a Muslim and all my daughters want to talk about now is Jesus since you have come, and I don't like it," the man told him.

"Those were his first words to me when I arrived at the home," he said.

But Hartley sat down with him and told of the Jesus who had so intrigued his 16- and 12-year-old daughters. "By

the time I left, the man said his daughters could continue studying the Bible, and he even offered to help us find a place to meet," Hartley said.

American-based cult groups also are competing for souls in Albania. One 65-year-old man who had been attending Baptist Bible studies told Hartley about Jehovah's Witnesses who had visited him and left printed material. He said he had looked over the material, but "I don't have a good feeling about it." When Hartley explained Jehovah's Witnesses present a distorted theology, the man said he would not allow them to enter his house again.

Albania has been isolated for so long many standard Baptist teaching aids still seem new, missionary Leslie Hartley has discovered. When she used a flannel graph board to teach Bible stories to Muslim children in her neighborhood, they came back the next day for more.

"It's just really something what God is doing in Albania," Hartley said. ■

Arson fund disbursement to state conventions nears \$300,000

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Fourteen state Baptist conventions received nearly \$50,000 when the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee business office Aug. 2 released additional funds from the "Arson Fund" to assist African American churches victimized by arsonists.

Coupled with the initial distribution July 3 of \$246,712 to 12 state conventions, the Arson Fund gifts which have been distributed from the SBC office now total \$293,746, according to Jack Wilkerson, Executive Committee vice president for business and finance.

Two state conventions — Arizona and the Northwest (Oregon-Washington) — received gifts during the August distribution in addition to the previous 12 of July.

The Arson Fund is primarily from an offering taken at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans in June. That offering came at the request of then-SBC President Jim Henry, Orlando, Fla., pastor, and raised \$282,000 in pledges and cash gifts.

Disbursement of the funds follows instructions of the Inter-Agency Council's Racial Reconciliation Task Force which formulated the percentage allotment to the 14 state

conventions. More than 40 African American churches, most in the Southeast, have burned in the last 18 months, primarily as the result of arsonists. SBC officials said the formula of distribution is based on an in-hand count of arson-related African American church fires in the states as a percentage of the total number of churches impacted nationally.

Wilkerson said funds from the pledges at the New Orleans meeting are continuing to arrive at the Nashville office, as well as gifts from churches throughout the SBC sent through normal channels as designated gifts.

The August distribution of \$47,034 went to: Alabama, \$3,950; Arizona, \$564; Arkansas, \$2,304; Florida, \$1,693; Georgia, \$1,128; Louisiana, \$5,126; Mississippi, \$3,950; North Carolina, \$4,515; Northwest, \$1,128; Oklahoma, \$564; South Carolina, \$9,642; Tennessee, \$4,515; Texas, \$6,819; and Virginia, \$1,128.

According to Richard Land, SBC Christian Life Commission president, the funds are sent to the state conventions which then have responsibility to determine the amount of assistance each church will need. "Baptists in Alabama know more about the needs in Alaba-

ma and Baptists in Georgia know more about the needs in Georgia," Land said.

In addition to the monies, Southern Baptist construction crews are volunteering to rebuild the burned churches. At least four state Baptist conventions have sent crews to churches in need and the SBC Brotherhood Commission is attempting to contact each of the fire-damaged congregations to assess the level of need.

In Tennessee, donations to the SBC Arson Fund may be sent directly to state convention offices in Brentwood or the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Nashville, TN 37203. ■

President confirms gambling commission

Baptist Press

WASHINGTON — President Bill Clinton has signed into law legislation establishing a panel to study the effects of gambling on American society.

Acting Aug. 3, Clinton signed the National Gambling Impact Study Commission Act, which provides for a nine-member commission to study the social and economic effects of gambling on government, communities, families, businesses, and individuals.

"The commission will help draw attention to the growth of the gambling industry and its consequences," the president said in a prepared statement. "Too often, public officials view gambling as a quick and easy way to raise revenues, without focusing on gambling's hidden social, economic, and political costs.

"Such a balanced study will be invaluable to public officials as they make policy decisions concerning this important issue," he said.

The next step will be the appointment of the commission members. The panel will have

three members appointed by the president; three appointed by the Senate majority leader; and three by the speaker of the House or Representatives. The appointments must be made within 60 days after Clinton's signing.

"This is a very important piece of legislation which has been passed," said Will Dodson, the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission's director of government relations. "Everybody knows that the impact of gambling has risen dramatically in this country.

"It is important now that the individuals appointed to the commission be of the highest credibility and character in order to withstand the many pressures they will face," he said.

The law requires the commission to make its report no more than two years after its first meeting. The cost of the commission will be about \$5 million, according to a Congressional Budget Office estimate.

The last national study of gambling came in 1976, when few states had legalized gambling. Twenty years later, only a few states, including Tennessee, have no form of legal gambling. ■

Historical Commission to offer 'Baptists and the White House'

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — With the presidential election just around the corner and a Southern Baptist in the White House, the Historical Commission will publish a special issue of the journal *Baptist History and Heritage* focusing on the contributions of Southern Baptists to the nation's highest office.

Former First Lady Rosalyn Carter has agreed to write the guest editorial for "Baptists and the White House," a special January 1997 issue of *Baptist History and Heritage*.

The issue will look at Southern Baptist individuals who have influenced various levels of federal government.

Among the contributors to the journal will be Mel Hawkins, professor of religion at Carson Newman College, Jefferson City.

BH&H managing editor Jim Taulman said he believes the issue will help Southern Baptists understand the four Southern Baptists who have served as president — Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter, Warren Harding, and Harry Truman.

"Baptists have influenced the world by the impact they made on the men who have served as president," he said.

People wishing to purchase copies of the journal at the pre-publication price of \$3.95 each if ordered before Dec. 1 may call (800) 966-2278. ■



opinion

about letters to the editor

- > Make it concise, no more than 250 words. Letters may be edited for length.
> Name may be withheld for sufficient reason. Include address and phone number.
> Avoid personal attacks on the character or integrity of anyone.
> Send original copy. Form letters and 'open' letters will not be published.
> Only one letter in a three-months period per writer will be published.
> If letter does not confirm, it will be returned.
> Opinions and ideas expressed in letters are not necessarily shared by the Baptist and Reflector and its staff.



Partnership Prayer Requests

August

- 14 —Pray for Colson Bargain, infant son of Lloyd and Laurie Bargain of First Church, North Battleford, Saskatchewan, Canada, who is ill.
15 —Pray for Bob Davison of the Tennessee Brotherhood office and a team who is in Torun, Poland, Aug. 3-17 building a camp.
16 —Pray for the Praxis Team which began Bible studies in July to establish new congregations in the Union Lake area of Michigan.
17 —Praise God for the needed immigration papers for the Vukmanovic family and their sponsors, Scarborough Church in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan.
18 —Pray for Carlton and Doris Carter of Nashville, who began working at the Polish Baptist Seminary Aug. 14.
19 —We praise the Lord for an event held by Oakland Association, Michigan, in June, which drew 210 people.
20 —Praise God for the fast recovery of Rich Carruthers, BSM director, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada.

Information helps

I commend you for your informative article, "Facts, figures about inhalants," in the July 17 edition.

The United Tennessee League addresses this problem in schools and churches across Tennessee. We have a video entitled "The Truth about Inhalants." Readers may inquire about borrowing this video by calling the office of United Tennessee League, Inc., at (615) 385-2251.

Thank you, Baptist and Reflector, for your good work.
Wayman E. Jones, president
United Tennessee League
Nashville 37204

Thanks for help

The Salem church family is moving ahead and is in the process of rebuilding. We are growing stronger and closer together. We have a great task before us, and we know that God will give us the courage, the boldness, and the fortitude to overcome what some may see as a disaster.

We have taken Romans 8:28 as our motto: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (KJV). We know that God's grace is sufficient.

We are grateful for the convention's donation of \$5,000

and especially for your prayers. "The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avaleth much" James 5:16b KJV.

If the person or persons responsible for igniting the flame that burned our building had known that he/they would become an instrument for bringing so many people together in brotherly love, I am sure they would not have acted as they did.

We thank you, and we thank God for you, for your interest, and concern for us.

Daniel Donaldson, pastor
Salem Missionary Church
Humboldt 38343

Explains CBF

With due respect to Mr. W.T. Barner, his letter of Aug. 7 had so many inaccurate statements about CBF, a corrective is needed.

He states, "CBF has its own convention." In June, CBF voted overwhelmingly not to separate from SBC, despite the latter's refusal to accept our money. Most CBFers in our state are loyal Tennessee Baptists whose money, time, and talents are vital parts of our convention and who have no desire to leave. CBF is neither "liberal" nor competitive, since the 141 missionaries serve in areas where there is no Baptist (and usually no Christian)

witness. Most of these missionaries served with the FMB until various circumstances made it impossible for them to continue. Some are new, but all are doing a wonderful job proclaiming Christ where no one had gone before, and their testimonies make you praise God that his Gospel is going forth.

Where Mr. Barner got the notion that CBF was "enterprising" instead of "evangelistic" is a mystery. The CBFers I know are desperately concerned that others know Jesus, and while their spirit and witness is usually marked by joy, they are dead serious in their ministry.

The "cleansing" of "liberals" my brother mentioned has come at horrible price and with deep hurt to many fine servants of Christ. Does Mr. Barner consider Keith Parks, Carolyn Weatherford Crumpler, etc., "liberals?" Yet these and other fine Christians are CBF leaders and want only to serve their Lord.

Our grown children, all of whom are in Baptist ministry, were able to attend the CBF assembly in June for the first time and were thrilled that it reminded them of their best memories of Ridgecrest — only better, because there was more openness to women and minorities.

CBF exists as a fellowship or movement only. Its purpose

is to proclaim Christ. It has helped to hold us together, not pull us apart, because thousands of us have been determined to conserve our historic Baptist principles like priesthood of the believer, free press, religious liberty, and other vital beliefs being eroded or attacked by the new SBC leadership. We are Bible-believing, Christ-centered, mission-minded Baptists who want to love those who agree or disagree with us. We want to work together in Christ's kingdom. Our prayer is that all will be more careful in their information in the future.

Diane Jordan
Talbot 37877

A powerful book

For centuries the farmer, the slave (even though denied an education), presidents, and preachers, once they were saved, could understand the Holy Bible.

Could it be that we have moved so far away from God's inerrant, inspired, infallible Word that we do not know or remember the anointing of the Holy Spirit? The authorized King James Bible is a powerful book from a powerful God.

"And be renewed in the spirit of your mind." — Ephesians 4:23, KJV

Thelma Sudberry
Shelbyville 37160

When the going gets tough, come up for air

an occasional word — by Lonnie Wilkey, associate editor

I have two kids who love the water. If given a choice about what to do on a family outing, both Joanna and Daniel would vote for anything that would give them the opportunity to go swimming.

They definitely didn't get that from their dad. My family teases me because I'm now the only one in it who holds his nose when I go under water.

But I do have an excuse. I wasn't around water that much as a kid. When I was, it was usually when I was fishing in a nearby river where if I did fall in all I had to do was stand up. The water seldom was over waist high. Even though I went swimming occasionally with youth from my church back home, it was not often enough for me to become thoroughly comfortable in the water.

I can swim now, but I still don't like to get in water over my head.

But because the kids enjoy the water so much Joyce and I decided we better do something to give us piece of mind when we're at a pool. We took the kids and enrolled them for swimming lessons at the local

YMCA.

Joanna is almost 11

so she had a head start on Daniel because over the years she had practically taught herself how to swim.

Daniel, on the other hand, though he loves the water, was not as accomplished on the finer points of staying afloat.

Because Daniel was older than some of the other kids taking lesson, he was put in the group with Joanna and a boy who had several years of swim lessons to his credit.

I wondered about the wisdom of that move, but I trusted the instructor to know what he was doing. Later, both Joyce and I wondered about the trust we placed in that young swimming instructor.

Joyce nearly fainted when at the end of the first day of lessons, the instructor took his three students, including Daniel, to the deep end of the pool and told them to jump in.



WILKEY

No problem. Joanna jumped in and began swimming as if she had done it all her life.

Daniel jumped in, went to the bottom, and then popped up like a cork. With a little help from the instructor, he made it to the side of the pool.

By the end of the two weeks of lessons, Daniel was actually swimming. He still has a way to go, but Joyce and I feel confident that if he were to fall in deep water, he could at least stay afloat until help arrived.

On vacation recently we were at a hotel with a pool (is there any other kind?), so of course we spent a lot of time there.

I enjoyed watching the kids. They were having so much fun that I forgot how much the lessons had cost. Regardless, I knew it was worth the cost, not only for the peace of mind that they could keep from drowning but just the enjoyment they were having.

Daniel would jump in and swim furiously with his head down in the water. After a few seconds he would stop, poke

his head up to get some air and then be off again.

Life is a lot like swimming. There are times when things get tough and we become so immersed in what we are doing. Unfortunately, we sometimes forget to "come up for air" and have a little talk with the Lord. We get so caught up in our daily routines and stresses that we forget the going would be easier if we let the Lord take over and guide us.

The result is a lot like swimming. A swimmer who does not come up for air drowns. When we forget to "come up for air" and turn our problems and concerns over to God we "drown" or make matters worse.

Daniel and I were with a friend of his at a "wave pool" recently and we saw someone almost drown. It was scary, but also reassuring to see all the lifeguards respond to the person who finally began to breathe again with their help.

We have the greatest "lifeguard" of all time at our disposal. He's always there when we need him. Isn't that a comforting thought? BGR

You, the readers, celebrate B&R Day



This week's issue of the *Baptist and Reflector* is going to more homes than our usual mailing.

The staff is urging Tennessee Baptists to observe *Baptist and Reflector* Day during the morning church hour, on Sunday, Aug. 18. In addition to our regular subscribers, 101 churches have ordered 8,227 copies of this issue for use this Sunday.

We welcome the "extra" readers to our family. These and churches already subscribing to the paper can call attention to the heritage by using a few minutes of explanation August 18. Since the paper will already be in the hands of the people, mention of the purpose of the paper is worthwhile.

On *Baptist and Reflector* Day especially, prayer is vital for the paper and its staff.

Throughout the rest of this year, we challenge Tennessee Baptists to become more familiar with their paper. Every church that contributes to Tennessee Baptist Convention ministries through the Cooperative Program, has a stake in the paper.

The paper is older than the Tennessee Baptist Convention, but there already was a Baptist presence in the state when the paper was first published.

The strong ties of Baptist newspapers and active Baptist work have helped in the growth and development of the convention.

This special emphasis for the paper is planned with readers in mind. Even those without a penchant for history will be interested in some of the information concerning the *Baptist and Reflector's* heritage.

And though the paper is older than the convention it proudly serves, the *Baptist and Reflector* staff is pleased to celebrate with Tennessee Baptists a rich

history of ministry and service. The paper was founded in Nashville, 1835, by R.B.C. Howell, who at that time was pastor of First Church, Nashville.

He had been there just a few short years — but his dream even before he came southwest from Richmond, Va., was to begin a Baptist paper that would help Baptists in a pioneer area and strengthen them as they began to move west from the "gateway" city of a youthful Nashville.

We can see him now, we can hear him speaking, a voice from the past. He looked west from Middle Tennessee, and realized that as pioneers moved to new frontiers, they would take a Christian witness with them. Some would plant Baptist churches, and those churches would need to have communication with other churches. The Baptist churches were leaders in the trek to new country.

The *Baptist and Reflector* played a vital role in providing a vital link for Baptist churches. Almost 30 years ago, the late Richard Owen, then *Baptist and Reflector* editor, wrote, "I am sometimes smitten with a dream. I believe the state paper has a brighter future. Our longstanding goal of getting into each Baptist home is realistic because the paper has become more relevant and vital to church and the home." *Our goal, dream, and prayer is the same.*

Before Owen's day, Howell was followed by J.R. Graves, strong supporter of Landmarkism, who served as editor for 40 years. Both men and several other editors owned the paper they edited.

In more recent years, Baptist state papers, including the *Baptist and Reflector*, have been owned by the state conventions.

Here in Tennessee, actual ownership of the paper is held by the TBC's Executive Board.

The board's Executive Committee has direct oversight of the paper, acting as an 18-member Board of Directors. This means that the editor and the staff are responsible to this board of directors. He meets with the board as often as necessary, and at least three times annually when the Executive Board is in session.

The staff is asked often about this relationship. The answer is standard — and honest. It works remarkably well for the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Some state papers have a separate board elected by the convention. However, we are able to rely on interest and skills of our board (Executive Committee).

This alleviates the staff from having to fend off any suspicion of control by any group.

However, the staff is pledged to work for all Tennessee Baptist churches through the Board of Directors. To uphold its assigned purpose, the paper finds the best way to present news from both sides of any issue, and to allow the people to speak through letters to the editor.

If you believe in a free press where all people are equal, then this is your paper. We urge all Tennessee Baptists to get acquainted with their paper, its staff, and to pray for us. We urge you to observe *Baptist and Reflector* Day on August 18. We ask you to pray for us, and to work with us to keep Tennesseans informed with the best newsjournal among Southern Baptist papers. *You are needed and respected. B&R*

Just for today

By Fred Wood
pastor emeritus
Eudora Church, Memphis

Start with a smile

Jeff, visiting Jeb in jail: "How long do you think you will have to be here?"

Jeb: "Thirty days."

Jeff: "You mean you shot someone and they only gave you 30 days?"

Jeb: "Well, after that, they're going to hang me."

Take this truth

Sometimes life seems to move from one bad thing to something even worse.

What can we do to make it better? Of course, if we are convicted of murder, not much hope is present for us, but most of us don't have a problem that big.

With the Lord, we can always start all over again.

Memorize this Scripture

If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (II Corinthians 5:17)

Pray this prayer

Lord, help me to realize two things: First, no sin is too great for God's forgiveness. Second, no problem is so great God cannot give us strength to cope with it. ■

Descendant of papers with a dozen cousins

Freedom of speech in print is freedom of the press. It is one of the freedoms that is hotly debated, especially when something is printed that you don't like.

Responsibility is the key word. Newspapers must be held accountable for telling the truth with honesty and integrity in all things, and with pure motives.

Baptist newspapers in Tennessee date back to a period almost 200 years ago.

Some lasted, some did not.

The *Baptist and Reflector*, sole survivor and descendant of papers with a dozen names, is the official newsjournal of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and as such is supported partially with Cooperative Program funds.

While it was a distinctive of Baptist papers of a hundred years ago for the editor's views to be freely expounded politically and theologically, that is not the case today. It was not unusual for the editor to challenge and chastise leaders of other denominations on doctrinal matters, not al-

one word more

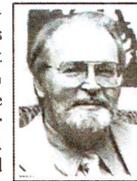
— by Wm. Fletcher Allen, editor

ways in a friendly tone.

But for many years now, the paper has been the official voice for Tennessee Baptists. Under the guidance of the convention's executive committee, the paper has responsible editorial freedom.

This paper belongs to all Tennessee Baptists, and the paper has only one editor. I try to represent all Tennessee Baptists even though we may differ in ideas. The letters page is a forum for your views, a healthy give and take. Views should always be expressed positively. Occasionally we have to bring you back across the line.

Sometimes the editors have provoked, and sometimes prodded. Sometimes we have been the conscience for Tennessee Baptists. Sometimes you have taken us to task. We honor that. Bravo!



ALLEN

But always, it seems, the goal has been to do as Alfred, Lord Tennyson, wrote in *Ulysses*. "To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Truth is the object of the striving and seeking. Once found, there can be no yielding.

This edition of the *Baptist and Reflector* may serve as an introduction to new readers. As your editor, I appreciate that. Along with the staff, I hope you appreciate and enjoy your paper, and its future. Each one of our readers is part of the family.

Of the 39 Southern Baptist state papers, the *Baptist and Reflector* is exceeded in age by four: Georgia's *The Christian Index*, 1822; Kentucky's *Western Recorder*, 1826; Virginia's *The Religious Herald*, 1828, and North Carolina's *Biblical Recorder*, 1833. The *Alabama Baptist* also began in 1835. We are growing older, and we hope, better. ■

It's all a matter of time, and importance

think about it

by Terry Carver, pastor, Edgefield Church, Nashville

ing it wisely.

It means to make every moment count — and do not waste time doing the unimportant while neglecting the important.

The great debate is about what is important.

We need to remember that many things we first push out of our overcrowded schedules are those things which matter most — spending time with family, alone with God, ministering to others, worship and fellowship at church.

Is this the way it is with you?

People complain sometimes that they just do not have the time to do these things.

But as someone has said, "you never have time to do everything, but you always have time to do the important things."

Are your priorities in the right order? A look at your daily schedule or monthly planner would give a good indication.

If Jesus is Lord of your life, he should be Lord of your time.

Make time for all the priorities God has for you life.

It is important! ■



Polk County Association leads efforts

Tennesseans minister at state Olympic ...

— Continued from page 1
guides at the parking area entrance. They reported most people had been receptive to their efforts. As member Beth Wilson put it, people coming for the Olympics were "not coming for us, but we're an added extra," she said.

They were undaunted by the bombing because of their excitement at being involved in ministry during their week-long commitment. This was true despite obstacles like a lack of visitors to their hospitality center near a motel and the challenge of being flexible, members reported.

The team also led children's activities at a day care center in Cleveland and in a community near some apartments. The Activators, who are 15-17 years of age, saw

one of their leaders witness to two teenaged girls while they were working in a community. The girls said they would consider making professions of faith.

"We've definitely stepped out of our comfort zone," said Activator Dawn Peek.

A street festival in nearby Cleveland was another focus of ministries during the Olympic weekend. A Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union Enterpriser team led children's activities at the street festival.

Amanda Day of Tennessee WMU said the area had been one of the busiest of the festival. Sixteen Enterprisers were assisted by youth volunteers. And despite initial opposition to the group providing religious material included in the hospitality bags, Baptists were allowed to provide the bags, Day said. They were available in boxes posted with "free" signs above them. "They've

been going like wild fire," she added.

Volunteers also presented spiritual lessons through skits and puppet performances and helped children make crafts.

Other volunteers

The comfort zone of other Tennesseans was stretched as they related to people from other countries. Summer missionary Lee Wilson of Savannah, who has been working with Jordan all summer, reported his ministry had included witnessing to two young people from Germany. They stumbled upon Camp Agape while looking for campsites and were welcomed by the staff, who invited them to use the tent camping facilities overnight.

Wilson, who witnessed to them, found they had no knowledge of Christianity because they were from the former country of East Germany. However, they were interested in the Christian faith, said Wilson. "It was a really neat experience for me," he explained.

All of the ministries took a lot of coordination, which required volunteers like Edna Rhea Vaughn of First Church, Murfreesboro. Vaughn, who worked with Jordan for three weeks, retired from her position as publications coordinator at the church to do the volunteer work. She learned about the opportunity from Jordan, who spoke at the church last year.

Vaughn organized hospitality centers at eight area motels, coordinating the volunteers who manned them. Not one motel manager refused to let Baptists minister at the sites, she noted. The centers were set up on parking lots.

She saw ministry being accomplished as the volunteers got the opportunity to talk with someone from another country or someone who was sim-

ply different from them. And people made professions of faith, she said. "Then I know that this is a ministry," she added.

Also assisting in coordination of activities was Dick German, Volunteers in Ministry state coordinator from Tullahoma, who worked more than a week. He noted the people



who just received a hospitality bag were receiving a Christian message because the bags included the pocket guide and an Olympic pin, the spiritual meaning of which was described in the pocket guide.

The ministry opportunities during the Olympics were unique, according to leaders of the clown troupe of Manley Church, Morristown.

They worked in the outdoor patio area of a motel in which many reporters covering the Olympic events were staying. The troupe was somewhat concerned about their reception, noted Sheridan Barker, co-director of the group. However, God had prepared them in that they had planned to present a skit which featured reporters — even before they received the assignment, he explained.

The audience was very receptive, Barker noted. The troupe members were relieved to find that their audience included children, which they have worked with often. Besides interacting with the children, several members witnessed to several men. They met some Christians and others who listened to their witness, Edgar Gray, co-director reported.

"Clowns can just go in and tear down all sorts of barriers. If they [the audience] make fun of us, we can just go along with them," said Barker.

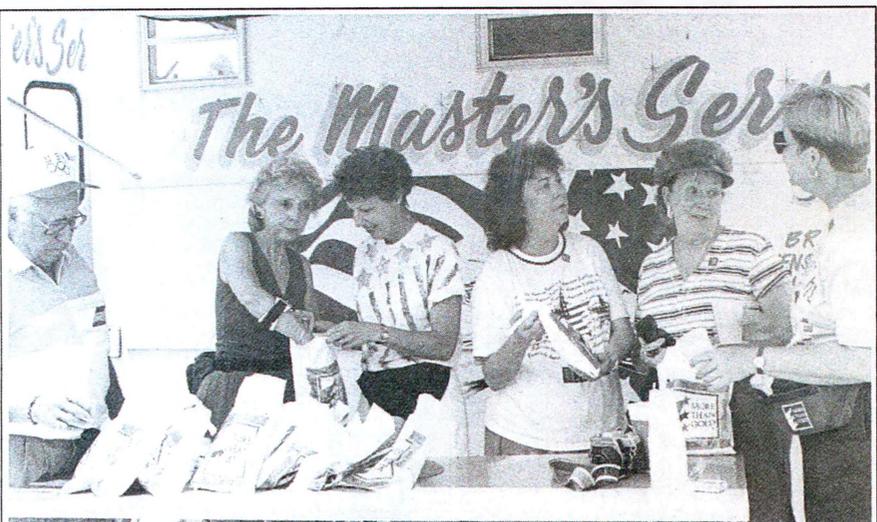
The troupe also performed at the local opening ceremony of the Olympics in Ocoee, which was an honor, they reported. Other ministry sites were at a shopping mall, boys and girls clubs, and day care center.

At a boys club, the troupe presented the Gospel. Assisted by a youth group who served as counselors, the volunteers saw 13 children make professions of faith. "We've never had a more attentive audience," said Gray. The troupe has been ministering for six years.

Jordan summed up the Olympic experience. "We saw God doing something and we joined him, and he's certainly kept us busy." B&R



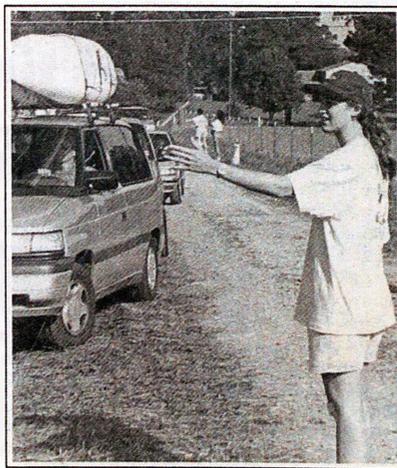
GIVING A GIFT to a member of the audience who was watching members of the WMU Enterpriser group perform is Enterpriser Karen Hornsby, First Church, Memphis.



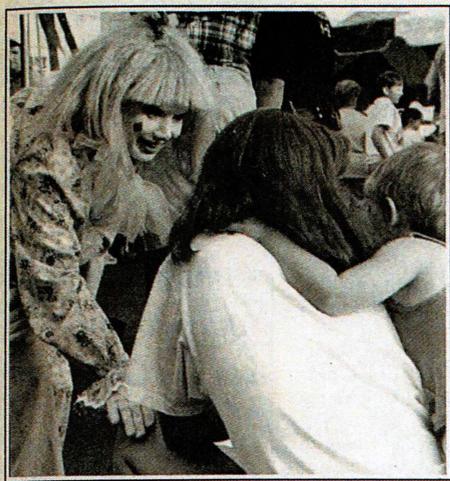
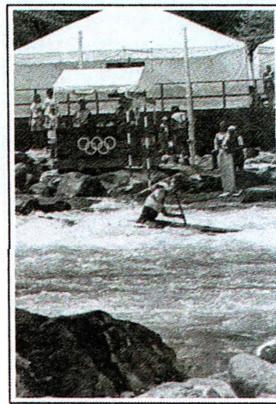
VOLUNTEERS FROM CONCORD ASSOCIATION who hosted a hospitality center at the entrance to the Olympic venue parking area from the association's disaster relief unit are, from left, Bennie L. Edwards, Fellowship Church, Mount Juliet; Ann Ferrell and Juanice Willingham, First Church, Smyrna; Maie Edwards, Fellowship Church; Marilyn Wilson, First Church, Smyrna; and Wanda Gatewood, Southeast Church, Murfreesboro.



DISTRIBUTING Olympic pocket guides to motorists entering the parking area of the venue are, from left, Adria Wilkins, Holly Springs, Miss.; and Megan Wilson and Lisa Woods, Wallace Memorial Church, Knoxville.



ASSISTING PARKING officials at the parking area for the venue by directing traffic is Megan Taliaferro of Bluegrass Church, Hendersonville.



TRYING TO MAKE a new friend is Adelia Clark, a WMU Enterpriser from Cleveland.

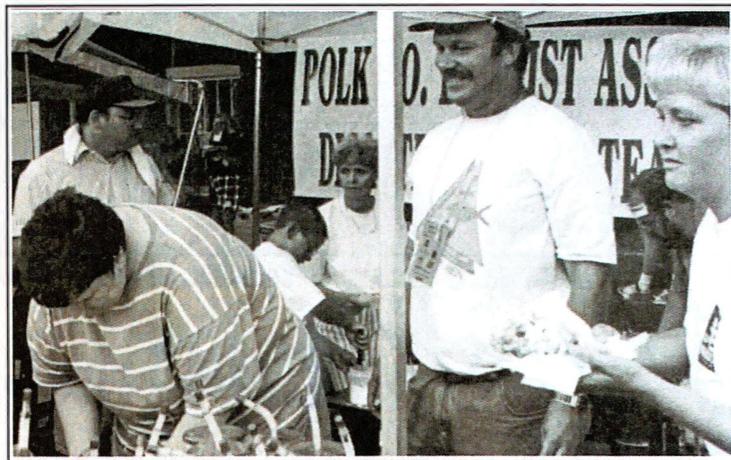


CHECKING ON the volunteers selling concessions at the Olympic venue is Mark Carr, left, of the Camp Agape staff, visiting with summer missionaries Jennifer Hale, center, of Williamsburg, Ky., and Stephanie Franklin of Ocoee.

➤ **AN OLYMPIC** competitor in the men's kayak event exits a hanging gate on the treacherous Ocoee River.



DIRECTOR OF TENNESSEE Olympic ministries, Andy Jordan, left, of Polk County Association, and Amanda Day of Tennessee WMU discuss ministries at the Cleveland street festival held during the Olympics.



PROVIDING Olympic hospitality bags and food like funnel cakes at a street festival in Cleveland are disaster relief workers of Polk County Association, from left, Ed-die Sloan; Susie Thomason; Jim Rogers, associational Brotherhood director; and Michelle Ward. The group was ministering and raising money for disaster relief projects.



STATE WMU PRESIDENT Carol Richardson, a member of the WMU Enterpriser team from First Church, Memphis, decorates a boy's face at a Cleveland street festival.

Andy Jordan leads state Olympic ministries

For Baptist and Reflector

BENTON — The challenge of leading ministries during the Olympics was accomplished with two years of planning and some sweat on the part of several Tennesseans.

Andy Jordan of Polk County Association, who directed the state's Olympic ministries, had a lot of coordinating to do. He worked with two other Tennessee associations, two associations in Georgia, the Home Mission Board, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, several Olympic organizations, and local community organizations supporting the Olympics. And that's not counting the volunteers.

Volunteers filled Camp Agape, the association's camp, to capacity, occupying its tent campsites and older cabins during the weeks prior to the Olympics, reported Jordan.

The focus of the entire summer has been to prepare the community for the Olympic ministries by Baptists, he explained. Jordan expanded summer staff from four to six summer missionaries. With the assistance of Mark Carr, pastor of Coletown Church, Copperhill, Jordan coordinated ministries for 900 volunteers. The

camp usually hosts 400 campers during the summer, some of whom do volunteer service directed by Jordan.

Ministries included some from past summers. Every year volunteers work at take-out sites of rafting companies providing drinks and maps to people. That ministry was adapted during the Olympics, he explained.

New ministries were developed. With the help of Dimple Cox and Malcolm Jones of Bradley County Association, ministries at motels were added to reach tourists. Volunteers hosted hospitality centers and led day camps at motels.

Obstacles were met with God's help, said Jordan. Although officials denied ministries at the venue, the response encouraged him and his staff to think beyond that site, he explained. However, God allowed about 90 volunteers to minister at the venue, he added, despite the restrictions and the pipe bombing in Atlanta.

"We've had to learn how to do the job and not to be too aggressive in some of the new ministries," he said.

Jordan thanked all the workers, church members, and volunteers who made the ministry possible. **B&R**



➤ **DECORATING** a girl's face at the Cleveland street festival is Larry Smith of the Manley Church, Morristown, clown troupe.

Billingsley makes use of 'second chance'
Baptist Press

RIDGECREST, N.C. — Tee Billingsley's death has given her a second chance at life. And among her list of new priorities is a desire to be a mentor to the parents of the children at her church.

Complicated emotional circumstances brought about her sudden death four years ago, but her husband, through CPR, was able to revive her until she made it to the hospital.

"Not everybody gets a second chance at life, and I had to think and rethink very seriously about what God wanted me to be," said Billingsley, of Eagleville and choir coordinator of Bellevue Church, Nashville.

Billingsley, a preschool and children's music specialist taught a workshop on "Ministering to Parents" during a recent conference at Ridgecrest. ■

Dockery introduces 'dream team' to Union trustees; shares vision

By Keith Currey
For Baptist and Reflector

JACKSON — In his first meeting with Union University's full board of trustees July 26, David S. Dockery, Union's 15th president, introduced key members of his new cabinet and unveiled aspects of his vision for the school.

Dockery, who assumed the presidency June 1, introduced his leadership or "dream team," referring to the U.S. men's Olympic basketball team. He noted the team "makes up one of the finest leadership teams found on any campus in this country."

The president's cabinet includes:

Howard Newell, provost; Michael Duduit, executive vice president; Gary Carter, vice president for business services;

Charles Fowler, vice president for student services; John Adams, vice president for campus ministries and church services; James Baggett, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences;

Carla Sanderson, dean of the School of Nursing; Don Lester, dean of the McAfee School of Business Administration; Tom Rosebrough, dean of the School of Education and Human Studies; Hal Poe, dean of academic resources and information services;

Jimmy Davis, executive director of institutional research; Cindy Meredith, assistant to the president for university operations, and Jackie Bobbitt, administrative assistant to the president.



DOCKERY

Dockery shared his commitment for Union to be an excellence-driven, Christ-centered, people-focused, future-directed institution. Following a summary of the university's past, Dockery said that moving forward into the 21st century requires a dynamic vision that will:

(1) Create a climate of con-

tinuous improvement.

(2) Enhance the identity and image of the university.

(3) Enhance the financial stability of the school.

(4) Commit the Union family to a spirit of quality and excellence throughout the institution.

(5) Grow enrollment, evaluate tuition, and create programs to maximize Union's potential.

"It is my hope for Union to become a Great Commandment institution where faculty and staff will invest themselves in students, helping them develop Christian minds and hearts in order to become leaders and change-agents in the world," Dockery said.

Trustees unanimously elected new leadership for the 1996-97 academic year. John Drinnon, a businessman from Germantown Church, Germantown, chairman; Floyd Flippen, an attorney from First Church, Humboldt, vice chairman; and Max Walker, pastor, First Church, Selmer, secretary. ■



Annual golf tournament set for Oct. 3-4
For Baptist and Reflector

BRENTWOOD — The annual Tennessee Baptist golf tournament will be held Oct. 3-4 at Henry Horton State Park.

For more information about the tournament, contact Dan Farmer, 104 Hillsboro St., Greenfield, TN 38230; (901) 235-3017 or 235-3365. ■

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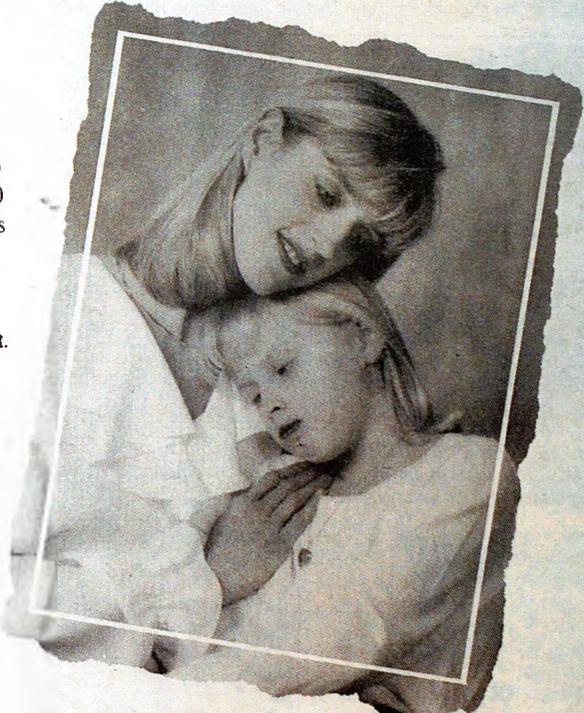
You, our friends, answered our appeal this year to help "Mend Broken Hearts" by surpassing our goal of \$1,215,000 which has not been done since 1992. On July 31, the receipts for the 1996 Mother's Day Offering totaled \$1,262,567.

Your generosity will allow us to mend the hearts of many children who have been traumatized by neglect, abandonment, and abuse. No finer gift can be made than that.

I wish that all the children could thank you personally and tell you how this ministry has affected their lives. But since they cannot, please permit me to do it for them: From the 30 homes at nine different locations across this state. . . from every heart of the more than 400 children who receive care through this ministry each year. . . THANK YOU. And may God richly bless each of you.



Dr. Gerald L. Stow
President/Treasurer



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leaders

■ **Rocky Churchwell** has been called as pastor of First Church, Jamestown. Formerly he was pastor of First Church, Huntsville, for four years.

■ **Bonita Wilson**, a missionary to Zambia since 1992 and a former Acteens director for Tennessee Woman's Missionary Union, has been named a candidate consultant for the Foreign Missionary Board.

■ **R. Paul Caudill**, retired pastor, First Church, Memphis, will establish the Trans-World Bible Society on Oct. 15 at the R. Paul Caudill Chapel of the Penal Farm in Memphis. The purpose of the society is to provide free Bibles for all inmates of major correctional institutions in the United States.

■ **Eastwood Church**, Cookeville, has called **Billy B. Cooper** as pastor, effective Aug. 25. Formerly he was pastor of a church in Pontiac, Mich. The native of Columbia

is a graduate of Belmont University, Nashville; Union University, Jackson; and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary.

deaths

■ **John A. Blevins**, 62, pastor, First Church, Gainesboro, died recently of a short illness. Blevins was pastor of Broadview Church, Winchester, for 13 years; Cross Roads Church, Centerville; First Church, Iron City; Eldad Church, Trenton; Gath Church, McMinnville; and a church in Virginia. He and his late wife had six children.

churches

■ **Immanuel Church**, Nashville, has established the Richard C. Shadinger Scholarship Fund in the Belmont University School of Music. The fund is to honor Shadinger, who has been organist at the church for 15 years and is professor of music and chairman of performance studies at the university's School of Music. Shadinger is a deacon and Sunday School teacher at the church. Contributions for the

fund can be sent to the church or the university.

■ **Fellowship Church**, Mount Juliet, held a revival July 28 - Aug. 4. Harold Newby of Spring City spoke. Twenty-nine people made spiritual decisions and three made professions of faith. The congregation prepared for the revival by holding a weekly prayer service for 13 weeks.

■ **Trinity Church**, Cordova, is offering Sunday Night at the Movies during August. The features include sermons on modern culture illustrated by movie excerpts.

■ **Swan Creek Church**, Hampshire, will hold revival Aug. 18-21. Jack Custer of Augusta, Ga., will speak.

■ **Forest Hills Church**, Nashville, will host Nancy Allen, a Christian recording musician, Aug. 25 beginning at 6:30 p.m.. Her latest release is of children's songs.

■ **Union Church**, Wartburg, saw its Vacation Bible School enrollment increase for the first time in several years. In 1994 it had 53 and this year the VBS drew over 230. The children and youth brought canned food to stock a local crisis center and youth worked at the center. Offerings were divided between the Cooperative Program and a congregation in



Tennescene

Union, Ohio. The group gave over \$1,000.

■ **Hillcrest Church**, Lebanon, celebrated its 40th anniversary Aug. 11. Activities include observances during the morning worship service and an outdoor service with music, message, and fellowship time.

programs

■ Applications are now being accepted for the **East Tennessee Southern Seminary Extension Center** at Broadway Church, Maryville. It will offer Elementary Hebrew, Leadership Recruitment and Training, and Ephesians and Colossians. Courses will lead toward the master of divinity degree. For more information, contact the seminary at 1-(800)-626-5525 or Mrs. Dean Denton at the church at (423) 982-6012.



PAUSING FROM their work in Center Line, Mich., are members of New Union Church, Dayton, from left, first row, Anna McSpadden, Sarah Knight, Karen Frazier, Adam Knight; second row, Lucy Mitchell, Lacy Cochran; third row, Alex Shaver, Brandon Collier, Aaron Davidson, Derrick Shaver, Steven Ruehling; standing, Charlotte McSpadden, Martha Ruehling, Dwayne Price, Angie Price, Steve Rowland, Michael Arnold, Richard Knight, and Karen Knight. The team held Backyard Bible Clubs and worked at Genesis Church there.

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Poll reveals good, bad news about giving

Associated Baptist Press

GLENDALE, Calif. — The good news is people are still giving to their churches. The bad news is they aren't giving very much.

Church attendance is at its lowest level in 15 years, but 45 percent of all Americans still donate money to a place of worship in a typical month, according to a recent Barna Research Group survey.

The study also found 41 percent of adults donated money to non-profit organizations other than a church within the past month, and 23 percent gave to both a church and other non-profits.

But 75 percent of adult Americans gave less than \$500 to both churches and charities last year, Barna reported.

Reports were based on a nationwide phone survey of 1,004 adults. ■

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Annuity Board assets top \$5.4 billion

Baptist Press

BOSTON — Assets of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention reached \$5.423 billion on June 30, 1996, a 13.1 percent increase in 12 months. Retirement and relief benefits set new records for the first six months of 1996.

Financial and operations reports highlighted the summer meeting of Annuity Board trustees July 28-30 in Boston.

Contributions to participant accounts that totaled \$130 million, along with earnings of \$291 million in the January-June period, pushed total assets to a new record. Board treasurer Harold D. Richardson said total earnings for the first six months were the second highest in the 79-year history of the board, exceeded only by the record of the same six months in 1995.

Richardson reported bene-

fits paid January through June totaled \$107 million, and total benefits for the year are expected to exceed \$200 million for the first time.

The board's Adopt An Annuity ministry, which provides an extra \$50 each month to annuitants with low benefits, now has funding for 2,635 individuals or couples, including 488 who have been added since Dec. 31, 1995. Funding for this \$1.6 million annual expenditure comes from direct or designated gifts. Another \$1.1 million from the SBC Cooperative Program is paid out in relief benefits. The Annuity Board receives no Cooperative Program money for operations. It pays all operating expenses

from earnings on assets.

Relief payments totaled \$667,005 in six months which exceeded, by \$76,387, the amount received from the Cooperative Program. The board's Retired Ministers' Support Fund, supported by direct gifts to its endowment department, supplements the relief funds provided by the Southern Baptist Convention.

The board's relief committee considered 141 relief requests at the meeting. Trustees approved 77 two-year monthly grants, three three-month monthly grants, 22 two-year expense grants, and two one-time grants. Thirty-seven requests were declined for being outside guidelines. The num-

ber of requests considered, and grants approved, both set new records for the program.

Paul W. Powell, board president, noted strong six-month performances of the board's four investment funds, all of which exceeded their individual benchmarks. The Variable Fund was up 11.2 percent; International Equity Fund up 7.5 percent, Balanced Fund up 5.9 percent; and the Fixed Fund credited 3.1 percent to participant accounts. ■

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CHURCH SECRETARY: Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, is seeking a full-time church secretary with desktop publishing experience. Call (615) 373-8074 for application.

MINISTER OF MUSIC: Charlotte Road Baptist Church has an opening for a part-time minister of music. Call Rev. Fred Phanco at (615) 356-5810 or send resume to 7511 Charlotte Road, Nashville, TN 37209.

NEEDED: YOUTH MINISTER: If interested, call or write Pastor Tony Rutherford, First Baptist Church, 206 Roane Street, P.O. Box 601, Oliver Springs, TN 37840 or call (423) 435-2946.

MUSIC/YOUTH: First Baptist Church, Parsons, is searching for a full-time minister of music and youth. Qualified applicants may submit resume to FBC, Attn: Damon Mays, 319 Tennessee Avenue South, Parsons, TN 38363.

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FILM PROJECT

A group of Florida Baptists is presently working on a major biblical feature film based on the life of Daniel.

Veteran film specialists with several successful name films to their credits are assisting in the development of this film.

If you have an interest in being a part of this project or knowing more about it please send \$10 made out to Kingstone Films at the address below. A preliminary prospectus with information on the film and how you can be involved on either a donation, investment, or prayer support basis will be sent to you. Please remit to the address below and a packet will be mailed to you within 2-4 weeks.

Attn: Art A. Ayris
First Baptist Leesburg
220 N. 13th Street
Leesburg, FL 34748

Wisdom

By L. Joseph Rosas III

Focal Passage — Proverbs 21:1, 30-31; 14:34; 16:12; 20:28; 28:2; 29:4; 24:23-25; 31:8-9

Labor Day marks the traditional beginning of the fall election campaign. We have already been inundated with political commercials, debates, sound bites on the evening news and the like that remind us this is a presidential election year. As Baptists we have historically stood for the separation of church and state. However, our faith must impact the way we view the complex issues facing our country. Proverbs outlines basic principles for wise governance.

The sovereign God (ch. 21:1, 30-31). Israel was originally intended to be a theocracy. Although the selection of a king was seen as a rebellion against God's direct rule. God had not given up sovereign control of the destiny of his people. The sovereignty of God is a truth that must be held in tension with the moral responsibility of man. The Bible teaches both. Scripture tells us God hardened Pharaoh's heart and that Pharaoh hardened his own heart. In other words, God intensified the natural inclination of Pharaoh. Ultimately, wisdom and security come only from the Lord. The wise leader is one who knows and lives in the light of this reality.

A righteous nation (ch. 14:34). It has been said there are no broken commandments, only broken men. God's moral standards have not been repealed or altered. Righteousness is conformity to the known will of God. The Judeo-Christian tradition rests upon the moral absolutes of the Law of God. We cannot escape the moral consequences of ignoring the basics of right and wrong revealed in the Word of God. Any country that neglects basic principles of righteousness does so to its own ruin.

A wise leader (ch. 16:12; 20:28; 28:2; 29:4) will recognize the importance of righteousness and governs accordingly. Both mercy and truth are indispensable for good government. The agenda of those who would govern well must be larger than mere exercise of power, there must be a commitment to bedrock values that will establish and strengthen the nation. The Northern Kingdom (Israel) and the Southern Kingdom (Judah) give dramatic illustration to the relative instability caused when the government ignores God versus the government that has some acknowledgement of divine authority. Government will be only as righteous as the governed demand.

A just legal system (ch. 24:23-25) is also essential to righteous government. No "respect of persons" means we must have the same standard of justice for all. It is a sad commentary on American life that those with money and power can frequently short circuit the justice system and gain advantages that others will not have. This is not only a miscarriage of justice, it is a blight upon the nation.

A compassionate society (ch. 31:8-9) is marked by concern for the poorest and weakest members of the community. We are admonished to "defend the rights of the poor and needy." Because of their powerlessness, the weak among us are often the victims of backlash and quick fix answers to problems. The church of Jesus Christ must be a voice for the voiceless in our society. "What does the Lord require ... to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God." ■ — L. Joseph Rosas III is pastor of Union Avenue Church, Memphis.

Repent and confess

By Kevin Goza

Focal Passage — Psalm 51

The impact of Psalm 51 is heightened because it is a practical prayer of repentance and confession. The superscription tells us that this prayer followed an act of disobedience to God. As we read these words, we are struck with the reality and enormity of David's guilt. Many have used these words as a model prayer of confession, leading them to discover the cleansing power of a holy, loving God.

The first two verses are a plea for mercy and cleansing directed to the God of unfailing love and great compassion. Notice the words and phrases he used to express what he needed from God: mercy, blot out, wash away, and cleanse. These are actions that only God could perform in his life.

The words transgression, sin, and iniquity describe how the psalmist perceived his crimes. He realized that he was a sinner through and through. Transgres-

Convention Uniform Lesson

sion describes willful rebellion against God. Iniquity is a term which means perversion. His sin was ugly and horrible. Sin is descriptive of having a goal, and missing it totally. God's best for him had been forfeited when he chose to go another way.

In verses three through six, the psalmist begins the act of earnest confession. While we might sometimes say, "Lord, forgive our sins," David felt that he needed to truly own up to his acts of rebellion. He wanted the

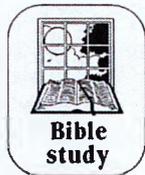
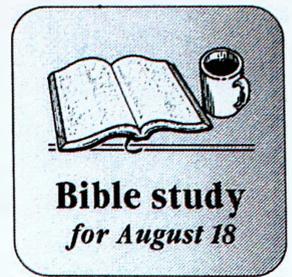
Lord to know that he realized how much pain his sin had caused. However, he realized that the ultimate pain caused by his sin was directly toward God himself (v. 4). All sin is ultimately against God. In verse five, the psalmist was not trying to blame his sin on others. Rather, he was using strong language to confess that he was a sinner throughout. Verse six shows what God desires for us, in contrast to what sin does to us.

When we confess, God responds with cleansing and renewal (vv. 7-12). In the first three verses, David confesses what will happen when God performs his wonderful act of cleansing. David would be cleansed, and would experience joy. In renewal, he would receive a clean heart and a right spirit, experience fully God's presence, and live again in the joy of salvation.

Together, these verses offer us every reason to come to God with our sin. Satan will fool God's people, telling them that they want to avoid confession because it is painful and embarrassing. However, those who have brought their sin to God acknowledge that, while it is humbling to confess sin, the benefits received in the process are worthwhile indeed.

How must one come before God in confession? Verse 17 says that we are to come in brokenness. Before our offerings can be acceptable to God, we must come to him as obedient servants. We can offer many public displays of obedience, but none of these will please God until we have become broken over our sinfulness.

Thus, the first sacrifice that we have to offer God is a broken spirit and a broken heart. ■ — Kevin Goza is pastor of First Church, Lebanon.



The woman, dragon, and beasts

By Tom Moncrief

Focal Passage — Revelation 12:1-6, 11-12; 13:1-3, 18

The world has always experienced a conflict between good and evil. Leading the evil forces is a supernatural being, the "dragon" (serpent, devil, Satan in ch. 12:3) with the intention to thwart God's redemptive purpose for people. Satan enlists evil persons symbolized by the beast from the sea (ch. 13:1) and the beast from the earth (v. 11). Still, in spite of his great efforts, God through the Christ will utterly defeat these enemies. The spiritual strife with the forces of evil is carried on through the church.

A vision is given to John of the woman and the dragon (ch. 12:1-3). The woman may symbolize the true Israel, the ideal church described with amazing splendor. With her are the sun, moon, and stars (emblems of light) reminding us the church represents light in its constant warfare with darkness. Her pain in childbirth gives a reminder the church must bring forth Christ to the dark world. Faithfulness in doing so brings suffering to the faithful. The red dragon's seven heads show fullness of cunning and its 10

Bible Book Lesson

horns picture great strength in complete human power. Crowns show his claim to sovereignty. All the forces of evil are symbolized in this dragon.

The dragon is shown to be enormous in size and power. He stands ready to destroy the woman's child but the woman and her child are rescued (ch. 12:4-6). The very epitome of evil confronts Christianity at the incarnation of Christ. But he was unable to destroy Christ while he was on earth.

Here the truth that God in the incarnation has decisively defeated the devil is stressed. Since Satan could not destroy Christ he persecutes the church. During this time of persecution and trial God provides for and protects the church. Christ, caught up to God's throne, shows us his victory over Satan.

The vision continues with an announcement of victory and warning (vv. 11-12). The faithful are delivered only "by the blood of the Lamb" and their testimony. They were faithful in making Christ known even at the cost of their own lives. Because of victory won by the Lord and because of their faith in him,

there was great rejoicing. Satan is so enraged he attempts to make up for his defeat by coming down in

wrath on those still on earth.

John saw the beast from the sea (ch. 13:1-3). The sea represents the confused, disorderly, and rebellious multitudes of the nations. This beast is an embodiment of the dragon and is one in nature with Satan. It represents sinful human society estranged from God and under the dominion of the evil one. Through this great world power, Satan makes war against the church. The whole earth "wondered after the beast" showing how world power is always adored and always able to gain homage of the worldly spirit.

A second beast from the earth (v. 18) came forth. Those following this beast, which used power from the first beast which was worshiped, received an identifying mark (666). Numerous interpretations have been suggested for this reference. They all represent false religions which persuade men to accept a substitute for God. God warns against following any but him (ch. 12:12).

Satan makes many attacks upon the followers of Christ. Christians must make a lifetime effort to be Christlike. He gives victory through his blood and this is cause for rejoicing. ■ — Tom Moncrief is a member of First Church, Cleveland.



world news

Arson ruled in burning of Mississippi church

Baptist Press

YAZOO CITY, Miss. — An intentionally set fire partially destroyed the educational building of Beacon Church here in the early morning hours of Aug. 4, according to Dennis Weaver, the investigating agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Jackson.

The damaged building is one of two double-wide mobile chapel trailers to the church site owned by the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

Beacon is the sixth arson this year at a predominantly African American church in Mississippi and the first involving a congregation directly related to the MBC.

The church's pastor, Charles Thomas, said he does not believe the burning is race-related, but rather is the misdirected activities of neighborhood youth.

Beacon is a mission of First Church, Yazoo City. ■

Florida voters support boycott

Baptist Press

ORLANDO, Fla. — In a poll of Florida voters, 20 percent said they would support a Southern Baptist boycott of the Walt Disney Company, according to the *Orlando Sentinel*.

The poll, commissioned by the newspaper and conducted by Mason-Dixon Political/Media Research Inc., was conducted after messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention approved a resolution threatening a boycott over Disney's "anti-Christian and anti-family trend."

Apart from the 20 percent who voiced support for the boycott, 73 percent were opposed and 7 percent were uncertain, according to the poll.

The poll's results were based on responses by 807 Floridians who identified themselves as registered voters who cast ballots in most, if not all, statewide elections. They were not asked their religious affiliation.

A spokesman for the polling company said the figures "overstate considerably the potential for any boycott." ■

BSSB staffer dies of cancer

BSSB news office

NASHVILLE — Karen Gross, Bible Learners biblical studies designer in the Baptist

Sunday School Board's Bible teaching-reaching division, died Aug. 6 of cancer.

She joined the BSSB staff in 1994 after serving three years as products editor at Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union in Birmingham, Ala.

She is survived by her husband, Bob, and a daughter, Janan. The funeral was Aug. 9 at Clearview Church, Franklin. ■

Union graduate to coordinate FMB program

Baptist Press

RICHMOND — A former missionary has been named director of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's international services department, coordinating programs for overseas workers who are not career missionaries.

The new director, Randy Rains of Mayfield, Ky., will oversee the International Service Corps, a program for people serving between four months and two years; journeymen, a two-year program for young college graduates; and student summer missions and semester missions. He and his wife were appointed as missionaries in 1983. He is a graduate of Union University, Jackson. ■

Teachers needed at Samoan school

Baptist Press

ALPHARETTA, Ga. —

Four volunteer teachers are needed immediately at the Samoan Baptist Academy on the U.S. territory of American Samoa.

Four volunteers scheduled to teach there this fall had to cancel their plans in July, said Mike Riggins, associate director of the Home Mission Board's Mission Service Corps department. "We thought we had this all lined up, but in two weeks it fell through."

Teachers are needed for the fourth grade, fifth grade, language arts, and social studies, Riggins said.

The school is the only private Baptist school in American Samoa. The principal and all the teachers except the computer instructor, are MSC volunteers.

Volunteer teachers must have been certified, but they can teach at the school if their certification has lapsed. Housing and utilities are provided, and half the volunteers' travel expenses are paid.

For more information, call (800) HMB-VOLS. ■

Gold medalist is Baylor grad

Baptist Press

ATLANTA — Michael Johnson, who became the first man to win gold medals in the 200- and 400-meter sprints during the summer Olympics, is a graduate of Baylor University, a Baptist-related school in Waco, Texas.

Johnson shattered his own world record in the 200-meter race. He was featured as the cover story of this summer's *Baylor Line* alumni publication.

Johnson, in the interview, credited Baylor coach Clyde Hart, a member of First Church, Waco, as one of the reasons he chose to attend Baylor.

Hart remains Johnson's personal coach. ■

Crawford to fill chair of prayer at Southwestern

Baptist Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Dan R. Crawford has been named the first occupant of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's Fred and Edith Hale Chair of Prayer and Spiritual Formation.

Crawford, professor of evangelism/missions and director of evangelism and missions practice, has been at Southwestern since 1985.

He previously was on the staff of the Southern Baptist

Home Mission Board.

Crawford's appointment reflects Southwestern's commitment to spiritual formation as an integral part of seminary training, said President Ken Hemphill. ■

BSSB ministry to assist women

Baptist Press

GLORIETA, N.M. — "One Spirit," a ministry to women serving in ministry leadership positions, was unveiled recently by the Baptist Sunday School Board at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

Linda Miniard, BSSB consultant, led the introductory conference for women to launch the "touch point" at the Sunday School Board for the more than 22,000 women in ministry leadership positions in churches, associations, state conventions, and national agencies.

The purpose of One Spirit, named from Philippians 1:27, Miniard said, is "to minister to women serving in ministry leadership positions for the purpose of personal, spiritual, and professional affirmation, encouragement, nurture, enrichment, and education as they live their call to serve Christ."

One Spirit will provide a bi-monthly newsletter, networking receptions at state convention meetings, regional conferences, and more.

Regional meetings for One Spirit beginning in 1997 will offer sessions on emotional, physical, spiritual, and professional development. ■

B&H receives three awards

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Broadman & Holman Publishers of the Baptist Sunday School Board has received three Impact awards from retailers attending the annual Christian Booksellers Association Convention in Anaheim, Calif.

B&H has been cited for three consecutive years with Impact awards, which are given annually for promotional materials and campaigns.

The B&H awards were: outstanding design in in-store poster display for the "Christy: The Sweetest Gift Video Poster"; outstanding design in a special sale campaign for a previously released product for the "UltraThin Bible Campaign"; and outstanding design in a product introduction piece for the "Spanish Bibles Educational Flip Chart." ■

Welcome new readers!

Because many churches are observing Aug. 18 as *Baptist and Reflector* Day, many Tennessee Baptists are seeing the paper for the first time. Others, perhaps, may have read the paper years ago, but have not in some time. But, for only \$7.50, you can receive the *Baptist and Reflector* 50 times each year. Subscribe today to your Baptist state newsjournal. The *Baptist and Reflector* is the only official newspaper of the Tennessee Baptist Convention. Subscribe today to get a year's worth of state and national Baptist news. If you already receive the paper, subscribe for a friend. Share the good news!

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