

# Baptist & Reflector

Wide Edition

Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists

Vol. 171/No.24; June 29, 2005

## this week's news

Nashville Baptist churches baptize members at annual meeting. — Page 3

SBC registration runs smoothly thanks to volunteers. — Page 7

Discover what is happening in Tennessee Baptist Men's Ministries. — Pages 9-12

Crossover decisions continue to increase. — Page 17

Tennessee registers most messengers for annual meeting. — Page 18

Have a safe 4th of July, no trouble next week

ist and Reflector

RENTWOOD — Americans will celebrate our nation's freedom on Independence Day next week.

Events worldwide serve as a constant reminder that we should never take for granted the freedoms our fathers fought for in that our nation would be what it is today.

God has blessed us with a country where we are free to ship. Amid the picnics, parties, and fireworks displays on July 4, take time to thank God for our country and for the sacrifices of our fathers.

Due to our production schedule, there will be no issue dated July 6. The next issue will be dated July 13 and will contain Tennessee's "The Link."

For late-breaking news, check with Sunday School commentaries for July 10, will be posted on the TBC web site at [www.tnbaptist.org](http://www.tnbaptist.org).

Have a happy and safe 4th of July holiday. □ — Lonnie Wilkey

## Jerry Sutton elected first vp

## Baptists embrace 'Everyone Can!' challenge

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptists were exhorted to take up Bobby Welch's "Everyone Can!" challenge to witness, win, and baptize one million people between Oct. 1 of this year and Sept. 30, 2006.

Everyone Can! was the theme of the 148th annual session of the convention.

In between messages to inspire and motivate messengers to become more involved in evangelism efforts, Southern Baptists lifted a boycott on the Disney Corporation, re-elected Welch as SBC president, heard a live video message from President George W. Bush, honored legendary evangelist Billy Graham, and dealt with a variety of resolutions and motions.

Southern Baptists also elected a Tennessean — Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, as first vice president.

The annual meeting drew 11,641 messengers from all 50 states. Messengers represented 4,976 churches. The number was up considerably from the

8,600 registered messengers at the 2004 annual meeting in Indianapolis.

### Everyone Can!

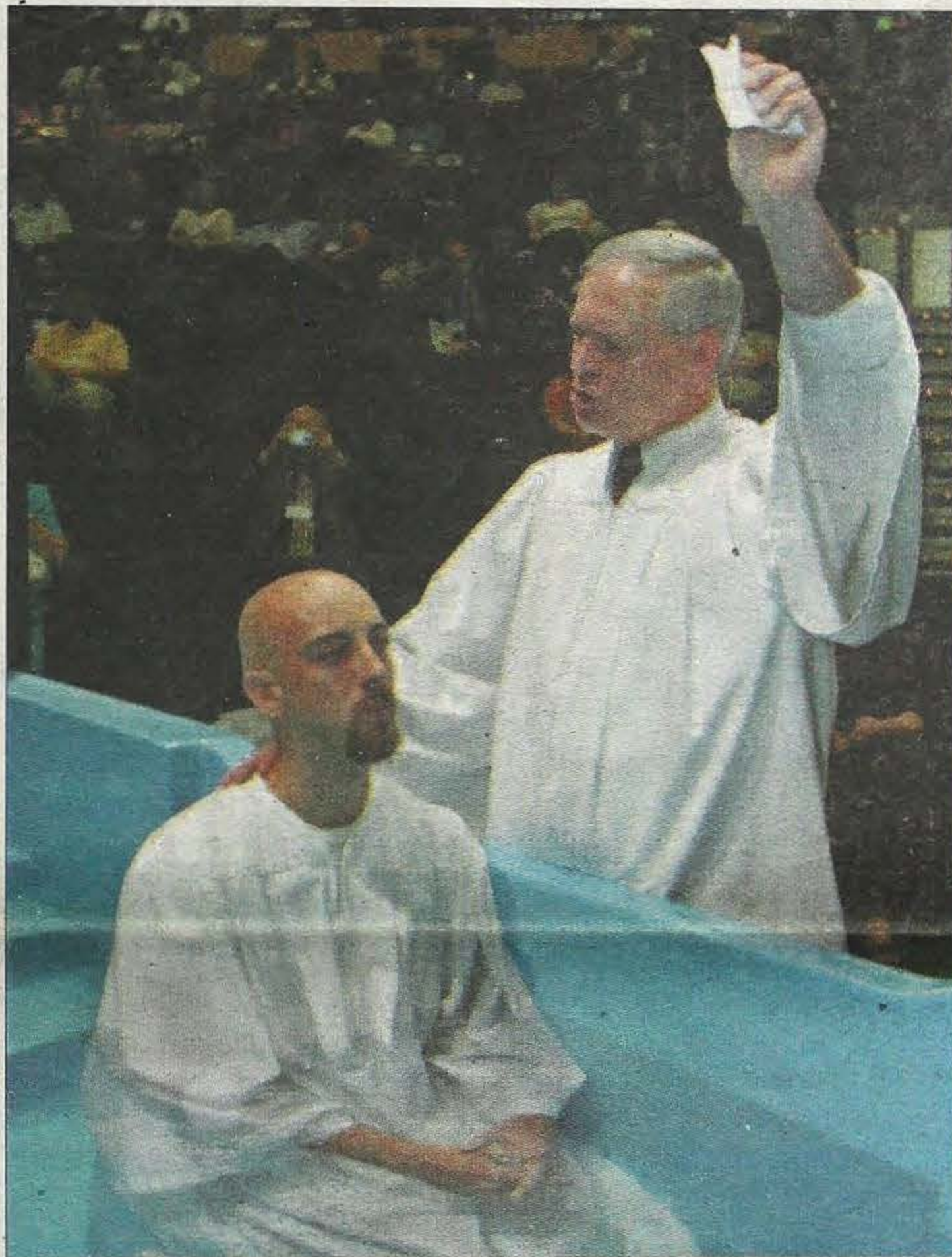
Welch's Everyone Can! effort to witness, win, and baptize one million people over the next year received a boost from Crossover, the SBC's evangelistic thrust held before the annual meeting.

As of June 23, more than 2,500 professions of faith in Christ have been recorded as a result of the Crossover efforts, according to records submitted by 80 of the 100 venues reporting to the Nashville Baptist Association office along with reports from the door-to-door Crossover thrust initiated by Welch and coordinated by LifeWay Christian Resources.

Crossover 2005 was a joint effort of the North American Mission Board, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and seven local Baptist associations.

Throughout the annual meeting Everyone Can! challenges were issued (see story on page 8), culminated by LifeWay President Jimmy Draper's message at the closing session on June 22.

— See Baptists, page 4



**GORDON DONAHOE**, right, pastor of Donelson View Baptist Church, Donelson, baptizes Rodney Kelly, 22, on June 21 as more than 11,000 messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention watch and applaud. Kelly, who recently returned from a tour of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, made a profession of faith in Christ during a premarital counseling session with Donahoe. Since members of 10,000 SBC churches did not see anyone baptized last year, SBC leaders decided to feature a baptism at each session of the SBC annual meeting held last week at the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville. **BELOW**, Jerry Sutton, left, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church, was elected as the SBC's first vice president. With him, from left, front row, Bobby Welch, president; Roy Fish, Fort Worth, Texas, second vice president; back row, Jim Wells, Ozark, Mo., registration secretary; and John Yeats, Oklahoma City, recording secretary. — Photos by Kent Harville (above) and Morris Abernathy



**BOBBY WELCH**, left, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, stands at attention during a military tribute honoring men and women in the armed forces on June 21 during the opening session of the SBC annual meeting at the Gaylord Entertainment Center. — Photo by Bill Peoples





## about your newsjournal

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## God is moving, Rankin tells SBC messengers

Baptist Editors' Network

NASHVILLE — Like a mighty wave, God is moving, pouring out His grace in astounding and marvelous ways, Jerry Rankin, president of the International Mission Board, told messengers to the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention here June 22.

"In an instant, 250,000 lives were swept into eternity without Christ," Rankin said, recalling the tsunami that devastated eight Asian countries on Dec. 26, 2004. "This tragedy reminds us of the urgency of the task of getting the gospel to all people."

Rankin shared with Southern Baptists about another wave that is sweeping the world today that is far more powerful than that tsunami in Asia. This wave, he said, is "the tsunami of God's spirit, that is moving in the power of the gospel to break down barriers, open doors and sweep souls into the kingdom of God."

A year ago, Rankin said, the board rejoiced to report for the first time more than a half million baptisms. In 2004, IMB missionaries saw an increase of almost 20 percent, as more than 607,000 new believers were "swept into kingdom," he noted.

"Passionately devoted to pushing back the frontiers of lostness," missionaries and national workers are penetrating many previously unreached people groups, Rankin said. The harvest of souls is accelerating in Africa and Latin America, and massive population groups in South Asia and China are hearing the good news of God's love for the first time, he emphasized.

"All together 21,000 new churches were started last year. That's 400 every week," Rankin reported. "This church planting movement will obviously continue as missionaries last year reported more than 50,000 addi-

tional outreach groups and mission points around the world," he said.

Rankin expressed gratitude to Southern Baptists for their faithful giving to the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, which enabled the board to support more than 5,200 missionaries around the world. This year, Southern Baptists gave more than \$133 million to the Lottie Moon offering, enabling the mission board to send out 692 new missionaries. □

## NAMB uses video in SBC report

Baptist Editors' Network

NASHVILLE — Kelly once made excuses for not attending church. Now, she is a faithful member of a new congregation located on the Palm Coast of Florida where she recently came to know Christ.

Michael thought he had experienced "hell on earth" one Thursday last summer after Hurricane Lilly ravaged the Gulf Coast. The next day, Southern Baptist volunteers arrived in the storm area, and the first day of Michael's new life came on Saturday when he met a SBC disaster relief volunteer. He later met Jesus.

Several months ago, Jonathan resented fellow college students who attempted to talk to him about Jesus Christ. Offended or not, it was an on-campus encounter where the student accepted Christ, and now he is the one witnessing to collegiates.

Kelly, Michael, and Jonathan were among thousands who were introduced to Jesus Christ through ministries of the North American Mission Board (NAMB) during 2004 and featured on a video presented during the NAMB report at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting, June 21-22 in Nashville.

The video, a modern day spin-off of C.S. Lewis' 1941 book, *The Screwtape Letters*, took a look from a demon's perspective, how the gospel message is



**JOHN PARROTT**, center, director of missions for Holston Baptist Association, Rogersville, and his wife, Kathie, vis Gary Rickman, ministry coordinator for the Tennessee Baptist Convention in the exhibit area of the Southern Baptist Convention last week in Nashville. — Photo by Connie Davis Bushey

reaching today's society even in the midst of darkness.

"The enemy knows it and even more important God promises it," NAMB President Bob Reccord said after the video. "The battle has already been won, but that doesn't mean the other side has given up."

"We've all seen it in our world, in our neighborhoods, in our workplaces, and in our families," said Reccord. "Satan still walks around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour."

Before the video, Reccord shared six ministry areas in which NAMB is helping Southern Baptist churches and Christians fulfill the Great Commission. These include: sharing Christ, volunteering in missions, equipping leaders, sending missionaries, and impacting culture.

Last year was a banner year for the NAMB, Reccord said, as more than 1 million Southern Baptists were equipped in evangelism through NAMB ministries. More churches were started in 2004 than any other year in SBC history. Of these 1,784 new congregations, 59 percent were African-American or ethnic.

NAMB also assisted in mobilizing 116,000 Southern Baptists who took part in short-term mission projects. □

## Draper gives final LifeWay report

Baptist Editors' Network

NASHVILLE — Jimmy Draper admits he's no action hero. But Draper, who is scheduled to retire in February from his post as president of LifeWay Christian Resources, said the past 14 years have been a great adventure indeed.

"In fact, many times over these years it seems as if I've been holding on while God has led us into a great adventure," Draper said during LifeWay's report to convention messengers June 21 in Nashville. "I've tried to walk by faith, knowing that He's the one who ultimately

writes our scripts."

His video presentation titled *LifeWay highlights* his 14 years as president, including the True Love abstinence program, which resulted in a reduced release of the Holman Chi Standard Bible, which grown in popularity; and efforts to include younger ers in denominational life.

During last year's Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Indianapolis, Draper noted the lack young ministers in denominational involvement. Since then, Draper has met more than 500 younger ministers to seek their input what he calls a "crisis" denomination.

Furthermore, he said newly-elected members of LifeWay's board of trustees under 40-years-old, included individual who is 27-year-old.

"We'll continue our dialogue with younger leaders by including them in well-planned sessions that lead to leadership and involvement opportunities," Draper explained.

"They asked for a seat at the table and LifeWay is pulling the chairs," he continued. "I would (recommend that) church and entity of the SBC be the same."

Though Draper will retire Feb. 1, 2006, he said he does not intend to "back away from" his role in there and mixing We as LifeWay and we as Southern Baptists must pursue ministry opportunities that has placed before us."

Draper closed his report with three prayer requests.

"Pray for LifeWay's transition as they seek God's man to be the next president," he asked.

"Pray for our denomination that we will humble ourselves before God and focus our efforts on fulfilling the Great Commission."

"And pray that there will be a whole bunch of chairs pulled to the table and all generations of Southern Baptists will come together to aggressively reach the world for Christ."



**WALTER CROUCH**, center, of Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City, visits with Ginger Dean, left, and Phyllis Dean of Oak Grove Baptist Church, Mt. Carmel, in the exhibit area of the SBC annual meeting.



# Nashville pastor coordinates baptisms held at annual meeting

Donnie Davis Bushey  
Pastor and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Jim Cross, pastor of First Baptist Church, Donelson, coordinated the first baptisms ever held at a Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. The meeting was here last week.

Cross said he was glad to see Bobby Welch add the baptism to each session of the annual meeting. Welch's purpose, said Cross, was "to say to all Southern Baptists and to the world, Jesus is really the core of who we are."

Welch focused on evangelism during his presidency, saying the "Everyone Can! Mission Challenge" June 22 through June 28, win, and baptize a million in a year.

Welch said he added the baptism segment as a way to meet the challenge he issued on June 22.

Baptism is that huge, first step toward discipleship, Welch said.

For some, this was the first baptism they had seen in 12 years," he added.

Eric Kilby, now a member of Heritage Hills Baptist Church, Hermitage, said, "The purpose of baptism is to dis- obedience. Why do it in front of 1,000 when you can do it in front of 10,000?"

Kilby and his wife, Julie, were baptized in the Wednesday evening session of the annual meeting by Poly Rouse,

who Kilby noted it was exciting she would always



**JIM CROSS**, pastor of First Baptist Church, Donelson, baptizes Luke Charlton, 7, June 21, as messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention watch and applaud. — Photo by Matt Miller



**KEN CLAYTON**, pastor of Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory, baptizes Robin Hunt on June 22 during an 8:15 a.m. segment on the program of the Southern Baptist Convention. — Photo by Matt Miller

remember. "It was special. It was neat to look out and see that many Christians, brothers and sisters in Christ."

The baptisms held at the SBC annual meeting were unusual. Cross explained because the baptisms were held at the SBC annual meeting didn't mean the SBC was baptizing the person. Churches alone can baptize a person since it is an ordinance of the church.

To reinforce that, members of each congregation were present to witness the events, he added.

"We just moved the event to the Southern Baptist Con- vention. In reality the SBC joined our local Southern Baptist church in the celebration of baptism."

Cross led one baptism, and recruited four other Nashville pastors to conduct the others. They were Rouse; Ken Clayton, Tulip Grove Baptist Church, Old Hickory; Phil Gruita, Ivy Memorial Baptist Church, Nashville; and Gordon Donahoe, Donelson View Baptist Church, Donelson.

During each session, a different church held its baptism in a five-minute slot on the program. Descriptions such as "awesome," "exciting," and "It's a God-thing," flowed from the

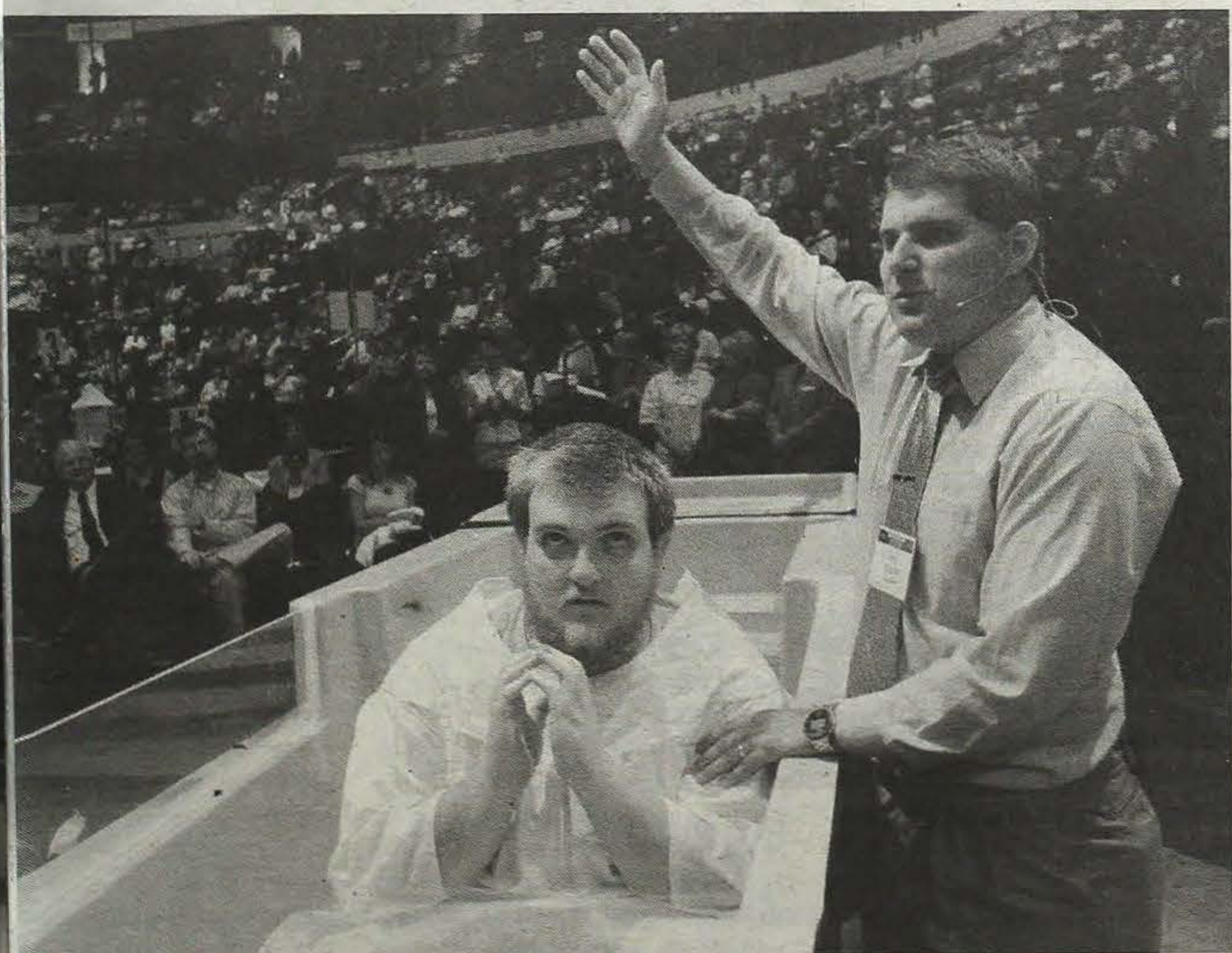
mouths of SBC messengers, members of the churches which held the baptisms, and those baptized.

Cross also noted those baptized represented a cross section of ages and backgrounds. For instance, folks were baptized who grew up in church and who just learned about Jesus during Crossover events.

He added that the pastors involved were "very gracious" to participate.

The pastors had to explain the event to their congregations and organize the presence of the baptismal candidate and congregation representatives to be present, Cross said.

Then they had to meet the schedule of the baptism. Ken Clayton led one at 8:15 a.m. on Wednesday morning, he noted. □ — Jennifer Davis Rash of The Alabama Baptist contributed to this story.



**PHIL GRUITA**, pastor of Ivy Memorial Baptist Church, Nashville, baptizes Billy Strong, 21, on June 21 before more than 11,000 messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention watch and applaud. Strong declared Christ as his Lord and Savior during the Crossover evangelistic thrust held the weekend prior to the convention. More than 2,500 decisions for Christ have been recorded through Crossover, a joint effort of the North American Mission Board, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, and seven Baptist churches. — Photo by Van Payne



**POLY ROUSE**, pastor of Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Hermitage, baptizes musician Eric Kilby, 27, on June 22. Rouse then baptized Kilby's wife, Julie, as her husband watched and applauded along with 11,000-plus messengers attending the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville. — Photo by Matt Miller



# Baptists embrace 'Everyone Can!' challenge; Sutton ..

— Continued from page 1

Draper noted that Southern Baptists "have been called by God to be the leader in evangelism and missions in confronting our culture with the gospel of Lord Jesus Christ."

"Let's rise up and follow Him and His story to its glorious conclusion," Draper said.

In his president's address, Welch urged messengers to "take risks and share Jesus with others."

## Officers elected

Welch was re-elected to a second term as president of the Southern Baptist Convention without opposition June 21.

Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church in Daytona Beach, Fla., has endeared himself to Southern Baptists with his humor and emphasis on grass-roots evangelism. Messengers elected him to another one-year term as president of the largest non-Catholic denomination in the United States, following a long-time pattern of granting presidents a second term.

Alabama evangelist Junior Hill, who nominated Welch, praised him for stirring Southern Baptists out of their indifference. "A prophet has been among us."

Southern Baptists elected another pastor and an evangelist to their other top offices.

Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville, was elected first vice president over two other pastors, including Mike Boyd, pastor of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville. The other candidate was Dan Spencer, pastor of First Baptist Church, Thomasville, Ga. Sutton won the position with 72 percent of the vote in a run-off election against Spencer.

Sutton was nominated by Steve Gaines, a former Tennessee Baptist pastor now serving at First Baptist Church, Gardendale, Ala.

Gaines noted Sutton, a former president of the Southern Baptist Pastors Conference, had served at Two Rivers for 20 years and that his church had baptized 3,500 people and given \$5 million through the Cooperative Program during those years.

Sutton also is the author of *The Baptist Reformation*, a history of the conservative resurgence in the Southern Baptist Convention.

Boyd was nominated by TBC President Roger Freeman, pastor of First Baptist Church, Clarksville.

He noted Boyd, a past TBC president himself, led Wallace Memorial to be one of the first churches to teach the FAITH evangelism program which was developed by Welch.

Boyd has served in Brazil, China, the Ukraine, the Philippines, Iowa, West Virginia, New York, Michigan, and Rhode

Island, Freeman told messengers.

Spencer, nominated by John Hannigan of Jacksonville, Fla., was nominated because "the time has come to press the next generation of leaders into service."

Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, for more than 40 years, was elected second vice president with 80 percent of the vote.

In electing Fish, messengers turned back the nomination of Wiley Drake, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Buena Park, Calif., who has become well known to messengers as a frequent introducer of motions and resolutions during the annual convention. Drake instigated the SBC boycott of Disney in 1997. In his nomination speech, Bill Dodson of Murray, Ky., called Drake "Mr. Resolution, a man who is seldom wrong and never in doubt, and everyone's favorite messenger."

"I believe it is time for us to let him speak from the platform microphone," Dodson joked. And if Drake were elected, he added, "we all will benefit from fewer motions and less resolutions."

Two other officers were re-elected — James Wells, a director of missions from Nixa, Mo., as registration secretary, and John Yeats of Oklahoma City, Okla., editor of the *Baptist Messenger*, as recording secretary.

## Bush greets messengers

Bush thanked Southern Baptists June 21 for being "soldiers in the army of compassion" who make a difference in America and the world.

Bush's speech marked the fourth year in a row he has addressed Southern Baptist Convention messengers, all live except for 2003, when he sent a taped message.

Appearing relaxed, often smiling broadly at the cheers, shouts, whistles, and applause he was receiving, Bush had to motion for quiet before he could begin his 11 minute speech.

Bush touched on four elements known to resonate with many Southern Baptists: a proposed "family amendment" that defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman, continuing legislation to curtail the practice of abortion, the appointment of more conservative judges, and government aid for faith-based organizations.

"Building a more compassionate society begins with preserving the source of compassion: the family," he said. "Southern Baptists are practicing



**DURING A SPECIAL** recognition service June 22 for the ministry of Billy Graham, SBC President Bobby Welch, presented a bronze model of Graham in a pose familiar to millions world-wide from his many crusades. A full statute has been commissioned and will be permanently displayed in Nashville.

ing compassion by defending family and the sacred institution of marriage," he continued, to loud and sustained applause.

"Because marriage is a sacred institution and the foundation of society, it should not be redefined by local officials and activist judges," he said, to another round of cheers.

"For the good of families and societies, I support a constitutional amendment to protect the institution of marriage," he said, then paused for more extended applause.

"And for the good of our legal system, I will continue to nominate federal judges who faithfully interpret the law and do not legislate from the bench," Bush said, calling for all of his nominees to get an up or down vote on the floor of the U.S. Senate. He thanked Southern Baptists for their "strong support" in that effort.

"Building a compassionate society also depends on building a culture of life," Bush said, one that "defends its most vulnerable members at every stage of life" and "supports principles of ethical science."

Ethical science must preserve human dignity, Bush said, citing his opposition to cloning and partial birth abortion. "A compassionate society will not sanction the creation of life only to destroy it," he said.

"With your continued dedication and work we will continue to build a culture of life in America, and America will be better off for it."

"Finally, building a compassionate society requires that we mobilize our nation's armies of compassion to help the poor, the sick, and those who hurt." Faith-based institutions change



**PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH** addresses messengers satellite during the opening session of the annual meeting Southern Baptist Convention held June 21-22 in Nashville.

hearts every day, but the government has discriminated against faith-based programs, he said. "That's why I signed an executive order that said that faith groups providing social services are entitled to the same access to federal money as other groups."

Bush noted Southern Baptists "are the soldiers in the armies of compassion at home and abroad."

Messengers responded with a lengthy standing ovation, then paused for a "God and country" observance that included a pledge to the American flag.

## Graham, others honored

Observing that no one in history has preached the gospel to as many people, and no one has been used of God to lead so many to faith in Christ within his own lifetime as Billy Graham, Welch led messengers in the presentation of a tribute to the beloved evangelist.

Graham's grandson, William Franklin Graham IV, accepted the framed tribute on behalf of the Graham family and assisted in the unveiling of a replica of a statue during the Wednesday evening session.

The life-sized statue, titled "There is Room at the Cross for You," will be completed by sculptor and bivocational pastor Terrell O'Brien of Wyoming, for next year's annual meeting in Greensboro, N.C.

Welch said the location of the statue's presentation will be particularly appropriate since it is Graham's home state.

After the statue is presented in Greensboro, it will be relocated to a permanent site in Nashville, Welch told messengers. "As long as people roam those streets and hills," Welch said, the statue will be there as "a marker that a man like this came across a land like ours,

preaching the gospel love so well. And he Southern Baptist."

The Graham tribute a series of four citations appreciation the SBC be upon longtime Baptist l The convention also h Bill Crews, Jimmy Drape Adrian Rogers.

Crews retired last fa serving 17 years as pres Golden Gate Baptist The Seminary in Mill Valley and previously was edito Northwest Baptist Witn pastor of eight church resolution cited him for the seminary to achieve tation for master's degre five campuses and laud for his "integrity, devotion, fullness, compassion, v and unflagging commit reaching the West for Cl

Draper will retire ne ruary, completing more years as president of the publishing house, I Christian Resources. that, he was president convention and serve churches. The resolution him a "pastor's past praised his "unflagging ment to evangelism" and to model "servant leader

Rogers, the first p elected during the SBC servative resurgence," this spring after 32 y pastor of Bellevue Church in suburban M He is the only person in history to serve three t convention president. B tenure at Bellevue, he v tor of two churches. His tion tabbed him the "p preachers" and said his tion leadership helped SBC seminaries and oth cics "to their historic th foundations."

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# he pep rally is over — let the game begin



Lonnie Wilkey, editor

have been contemplating must concluded annual meet- of the Southern Baptist Con- held here in Nashville week. college or high school foot- lingo, we had a pep rally now it is time to play the is hard to fathom how any- could have attended the al meeting last week and ave been inspired to go out tell others about Jesus st. e 11,600-plus messengers numerous other visitors attended were challenged resident Bobby Welch over ver again, as well as other am leaders, to boldly share faith. elch's "Everyone Can!" enge to witness, win, and ze one million people from of this year through Sept. 2006 is a bold, seemingly ssible goal. ter all, Southern Baptist hes last year baptized 83 people. How can we use by 601,717 to reach one in just a year? While it e humanly impossible, it is within reach if we allow d the Holy Spirit to take

control. Reaching and winning one million people for Christ will take every Southern Baptist doing his or her part. We can't have the attitude, "Let the preachers do it. It's their job." Yes, it is their job, but it is also the "job" of every Christian who has professed faith in Jesus Christ. Nowhere in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20), does it specify that only ordained ministers are to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. The challenge has been laid out. We have the message to share. Will we do it? It's up to us. **Crossover** Overall, this was one of the better annual meetings I have attended in recent years. Now, I am prejudiced (yes, I will admit it, at least in this case), but I am convinced that the effort and emphasis that the North American Mission Board, the Tennessee Baptist Convention, seven local Baptist associations, and LifeWay Christian Resources placed on the Crossover evangelistic emphasis before the annual meeting played a major role. Crossover has been a part of the SBC annual meetings since 1989, but none have been as large as this year's event. Crossover 2005 attracted more than 13,000 volunteers who shared their faith and the love of Jesus Christ in a variety of ways. In last week's issue which carried almost eight

pages of Crossover coverage, Jerry Essary, evangelism specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention, summed it up like this: "Only eternity will tell what has been accomplished for the kingdom of God through Crossover 2005." Hats off to the thousands of Tennessee Baptists and Southern Baptists who came early to share their faith with people in Middle Tennessee who do not know Christ as Lord and Savior. **SBC volunteers** Despite a crowded downtown area and less than adequate parking, the 2005 annual meeting was held with few hitches. Kudos to all the volunteers who worked with convention leadership to make this possible. According to Kevin Shrum, pastor of Inglewood Baptist Church in Nashville, and chairman of the local arrangements committee, between 600-700 volunteers from Tennessee Baptist churches participated in the convention. "We had lots of volunteers step up in an overwhelming way in every area," Shrum said. Who would expect anything less from the Baptists of the Volunteer State? **Other thoughts** With all the emphasis on evangelism (where it should be), the business seemed secondary this year. Southern Baptists passed the traditional resolutions covering the usual topics. Noteworthy was the call to end

the Disney boycott. The resolution on educating children was fair and basically left the decision up to parents to decide what is best for their children. The resolution affirmed both homeschools and private schools as well as commending teachers and students who seek to be a light for Christ in the public school arena. A lot was said about the sole membership issue with New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, but quite frankly I don't think it was a major issue with most Southern Baptists. Tennessee Baptists can take pride in the fact we had two pastors nominated for first vice president. Congratulations to Jerry Sutton of Two Rivers Baptist Church, Nashville. Both he and Mike Boyd of Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville, were qualified and capable candidates. Bobby Welch was elected without opposition for another one-year term. He has provided a needed enthusiasm to spur Southern Baptists to focus on winning the lost for Christ. Competition for SBC offices is a good thing. Hopefully, next year, several qualified candidates will be nominated for the presidency. It shouldn't be decided only by a "select" few. As Southern Baptists return home and get back to their daily grind, my prayer is they will take the Everyone Can! challenge seriously. The pep rally is over. The game is at hand. □

## a parent speaks



By Carolyn R. Tomlin

## God has blessed the United States

In 1776 America became a sovereign nation and gained her independence from the mother country, Great Britain. Some of the colonists remained loyal to England; others wanted independence at home. Among those were Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence; Patrick Henry, who said, "Give me liberty or give me death"; and who can forget Nathan Hale, who cried before being hung, "I only regret that I have one life to give for my country." As with all wars, the Revolutionary War was fought at a great price in the lives of people. As we celebrate Independence Day what values are you teaching your children about the freedoms we enjoy in our country? Check yourself on the following:

- As a parent, do I value the religious freedom we have in America? Attending a house of worship in some countries could result in prison, severe punishment, or even death.
- As a parent, do I teach my children that God is a just and loving God who hears their prayers? In some countries, the word "Jesus" is unknown.
- As a parent, do I appreciate the value Americans place on human life? Our doctors go to great lengths to save a pre-term infant, extend the quality of life to the elderly, and give their lives to research so that our people may enjoy better health. Some countries allow a family only one child and males are desired. Therefore, girls or multiple children are killed at birth.
- As a parent, do I realize the worth of our public schools, so that all boys and girls — regardless of social class or financial status — may achieve an education? In some countries only boys receive formal education. In others, only the wealthy attend school.
- As a parent, do I appreciate the fact that a person from a lower socio-economic level may achieve greatness through hard work and self-discipline? In America, everyone has an opportunity to become successful.
- As a parent, do I encourage my children to value books and education? Some countries prohibit books that are not approved by their government.

Yes, America is a great country, but it is not perfect. However, we've been blessed to live in this nation where we enjoy so many freedoms. As we celebrate Independence Day on July 4, pray for our leaders and thank God for the life we have in the U.S.A. □ — Tomlin is a freelance writer in Jackson.

## letters to the editor

### ntify ourselves

m writing in response to Freeman's article in the L issue. While I did not read the letters in the May e. n writing on my late husband's behalf. He was a Baptist er for almost 50 years and ot ashamed to be called it." He was really offended the Baptist Book Store d its name to LifeWay ian Stores). He asked, "Are ptists ashamed of who they o they not want to identify lves?" er denominations identify lves. Why don't the Bap-

Mertie Smith  
Sharon 38255

Baptist churches. Those who desire to be something other than a Baptist ought to get their support from those who desire to be something other than a Baptist. **Ed Hamil, pastor**  
Hatchie Baptist Church  
Hornsby 38044

### Likes homeschools

I am concerned about what seems to be a growing dilemma for parents and their children: Home-school or public school. I think it is very sad that public school seems to be used by parents as a day care because they value the almighty dollar over their children's education. My son, an 11th grader, has been homeschooled since 6th grade. I took him out of public school because I was concerned over the integrity of the school system and the teachers. Children's minds are very impressionable and I feel we need to fill them with godly values and direction. Some of our public schools are an unsafe environment. Violence and the gangs (that don't exist according to the schools) and bullying are rarely addressed. It seems that if these issues are ignored long enough the problem will go away. What is addressed the majority of the time is whether a shirt is tucked in or the proper

shoes or colors are worn, taking up much more of the teachers' time than educating our children. I want my son and grandchildren to have a healthy, happy, more productive educational environment. I think that we as parents should evaluate the financial aspect of our homes and decide if giving up some luxuries to home-school our children is worthy in God's eyes. I just don't think their minds are worth giving them to public school. I would encourage every parent out there to consider homeschooling their children, not only can they get a better education, but it is my understanding that children who have been home-schooled have a more well-rounded education than those in a public school setting. Colleges and universities actively pursue home-schooled students. Homeschooling also gives you an opportunity to grow very close to your child, even your teenagers! Think about what is really of value, your children or your paycheck. Please support the parents and homeschool co-op teachers who have chosen that route as the option that is best for them. **Lynn Williams**  
Lebanon 37090

### Pray and give

After reading your column about the elderly couple in the

June 8 issue, I have these comments. I was raised in the Baptist church and attended for over 40 years, but no more. You spend your time praying for this couple, I'll do what Jesus wants us to do and continue to help people like this pay their bills. I don't understand why churches think so much of the money they beg for should be used to build multi-million dollar churches with sports complexes. I have had two Baptist preachers in my family and never did they ask for or expect a salary for serving God. They were of the old school and preached God's Word as He led them not as taught in some seminary. My point is this: churches have gotten away from what God wants and into the things of the world. I see in your paper ads for trips and conferences and meetings all of which make poor use of God's money. Also, who are we to copyright a Bible that was written by God? Should we really make a profit by putting the name of Jesus on every sort of doo-dad under the sun? Someday you must stand before God and when asked what did you do for the sick do you think "I prayed" will make Him smile? **Stephen Britt**  
Beech Bluff 38313



# Baptists embrace 'Everyone Can!' challenge; Sutton

— Continued from page 4

## Disney boycott lifted

SBC messengers approved a resolution June 22 proclaiming an end to its eight-year boycott of The Disney Company.

The Disney resolution, passed in a nearly unanimous vote by messengers to the SBC annual meeting, said Southern Baptists rightly called for a boycott of the conglomerate in 1997 but now it was time to "declare a conclusion" to the effort.

The boycott has been effective in expressing Southern Baptists' disagreement with Disney "products and policies that violate moral righteousness and traditional family values," and such an economic action must be "specifically targeted and of limited duration" to be effective, according to the resolution.

## Education

Messengers voted June 22 "to hold accountable schools, institutions, and industries for their moral influence on our children."

The resolution also urges parents and churches "to investigate diligently the curricula, textbooks, and programs in our community schools and to demand discontinuation of offensive material and programs."

The action came one year after SBC messengers rejected a proposal urging Southern Baptists to remove their children from "godless" and "anti-Christian" public schools.

Attorney Bruce Shortt of Texas was the co-author of proposed resolutions both last year and this year urging parents to withdraw their children from public schools. This year's proposal, co-written by Voddie Baucham Jr., called for removing children from schools that seek to influence students to accept homosexuality as a legitimate lifestyle.

While the measure presented by the SBC Resolutions Committee cited concerns about homosexuality, it stopped short of urging parents to withdraw their children from public schools.

Larry Reagan, pastor of Adam's Chapel Baptist Church, Dresden, spoke in favor of the resolution.

"I don't think there could be a more clear and concise statement about the stand we ought to take," Reagan said.

Jim Goforth of Missouri, who spoke against the anti-public school proposal last year, offered an amendment this year commending teachers and students "who feel a call from God to take a stand in secular schools as a light shining in the darkness."

Committee members accepted the proposal as a friendly amendment and it was approved prior to adopting the revised resolution.

## Other resolutions

Messengers submitted 23

proposals to the Resolutions Committee for consideration. Seven of the issues were addressed in three of the committee's nine resolutions. The committee declined to take action on the other 16 topics, including the SBC's "support for the unjust war in Iraq," encouraging Southern Baptist churches "to make available natural family planning" and rescinding commendation for LifeWay Christian Resources' Holman Christian Standard Bible translation.

Other resolutions that passed include ones supporting military troops; supporting religious freedom and freedom of speech; supporting non-embryonic stem cell research while opposing embryonic stem cell research; opposing congressional filibusters of federal judicial nominees; reducing the number of teenage smokers; affirming SBC President Bobby Welch's call for increased evangelism efforts; and the traditional resolution of appreciation for all those who helped make the annual meeting possible.

## Sole membership

The Southern Baptist Convention has secured its ties to New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, concluding years of wrangling over the convention's legal relationship with the school.

Messengers approved a charter change for the seminary, making the convention the "sole member" of the seminary's corporation.

They ratified the measure by a vote of 5,627 to 1,528 after allowing seminary President Chuck Kelley to explain the school's reservations for holding out on the convention most of a decade.

The process began in 1997, when the SBC Executive Committee asked the convention's 12 agencies and institutions to make the SBC the sole member — or single controlling entity — of their corporations. By 2000, New Orleans Seminary was the lone holdout, with the exception of the Executive Committee, which had pledged to submit its sole-membership amendments once the New Orleans dispute was resolved.

"The issue is one of ownership," Morris Chapman, president of Executive Committee, stressed as he introduced the matter in Nashville June 21. "Do you or do you not believe the SBC should own the entities that receive Cooperative Program (unified budget) funds?"

If the answer is yes, then approving the seminary's charter change and making the convention the seminary's sole member is the right step, Chapman said.

The convention gave Kelley six minutes to explain the seminary's reservations with sole membership and to plead for the messengers to reject the

charter change.

He repeated concerns he and other seminary leaders have cited publicly for the past couple of years.

But to begin, Kelley noted both the seminary and the Executive Committee are "grateful for and supportive of the conservative resurgence," which turned the SBC sharply to the right during the past 26 years and put like-minded trustees and administrators firmly in control of the convention's organizations.

Also, "both the Executive Committee and the seminary agree the seminary is and always will be an entity of the SBC," he added.

That said, Kelley turned his attention to the seminary's reservations with sole membership.

New Orleans Seminary needs to be exempted from the sole membership requirement because "Louisiana law differs significantly from (laws in) other states," he insisted, noting the state's legal code does not define sole membership the same way as the nine states where 10 other SBC organizations are located.

The full implications of sole membership have not been developed in Louisiana. If the SBC is the sole member of the seminary corporation, that liability to could extend to the convention, he warned. For example, he theorized, if a fire broke out in the seminary's chapel, someone who sued the seminary for damages could sue the SBC as well.

"Since the law is unclear, a judge would decide," he said. "How much are you willing to risk?"

## Budget adopted

The Southern Baptist Convention turned back an attempt to redirect money from missions to political action during its annual meeting in Nashville June 21.

Instead, SBC messengers approved the 2005-06 Cooperative Program budget of \$189.9 million — as originally proposed by the convention's Executive Committee.

That budget allocates 50 percent of undesignated convention receipts (\$94.9 million) to the International Mission Board and almost 22.8 percent (\$43.3 million) to the North American Mission Board. It also directs 1.49 percent (\$2.8 million) to the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission.

But Rodney Albert, pastor of Hallsville Baptist Church in Hallsville, Mo., called on Southern Baptists to channel more resources into America's culture wars. He proposed amending the budget so that the International Mission Board's share would decrease to 49.75 percent of receipts, the North American Mission Board's portion would drop to 22.54 percent, and the

Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission's allocation would climb to 1.99 percent.

"We are in a substantial cultural war," Albert said. "We are fighting for the soul of America. But the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission gets one of the smallest amounts of budget."

SBC messengers struck down Albert's amendment and approved the overall budget. In addition to the mission board and the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, the Cooperative Program budget directs \$41 million to the SBC's six seminaries and historical library and archives, \$1.4 million to GuideStone Financial Resources, formerly known as the Annuity Board, and \$7.7 million to the SBC operating budget, which primarily funds the Executive Committee.

Among other business proposed by the Executive Committee, messengers voted to approve:

(1) Changing the name of the Annuity Board to GuideStone Financial Resources. This was the second required vote to amend SBC Bylaw 14, making the name change official.

(2) An amendment to SBC policies that enables a prospective messenger to present a "fax, e-mail, or other physical or electronically transmitted document" in substitution for an official SBC registration document.

(3) Two future convention sites — Indianapolis, Ind., in 2008 and Louisville, Ky., in 2009.

(4) The 2009-10 SBC calendar, which includes 32 items. This recommendation also deleted Baptist World Alliance Day from the SBC calendars in 2006, 2007, and 2008. Last year, the SBC withdrew from the BWA, comprised of 211 Baptist conventions worldwide.

## Motions

The Southern Baptist Convention will consider attempting to bring its women's auxiliary under its authority, thanks to a motion from the floor of the SBC annual meeting.

The convention received 24 motions during the opening day of its 2005 gathering, June 21 in Nashville. Of those motions, 13 were referred to convention agencies for study and possible action, and 11 were ruled out of order.

The request to invite Woman's Missionary Union to become an entity of the SBC was suggested by Leslie Stock, a messenger from Santa Fe Trail Baptist Church in Boonville, Mo.

Woman's Missionary Union is an auxiliary to the SBC. WMU was founded independently of the convention in 1881. Its primary objectives are to educate Southern Baptists about missions, collect two offerings that provide major funding for the convention's international and domestic mission boards, and provide hands-

on opportunities for miss

As an auxiliary, WMU its own funding and elects its own board and officers. SBC-owned entities their funding from the convention, and their boards elected by the convention.

Stock's motion proposed SBC "extend an invitation to WMU to 'become an entity of the Southern Baptist Convention to join the other SBC entities ... in the work of missions and enjoy the benefits of an entity of the SBC.'"

Some observers suggested the motion could be used to bring WMU into stricter oversight with the convention.

WMU Executive Director Wanda Lee said operating procedure calls for requests for corporate action to the WMU executive committee, the organization's governing body.

The motion was referred to the SBC Executive Committee for study.

Another motion referred to the Executive Committee for each state Baptist convention to provide "a good estimate" of when it plans to divide its Cooperative Program budget receipts evenly between itself and the SBC. Currently the 7-year-old Southern Baptists of Texas Convention sends 53 percent of receipts to the SBC, is the only state convention to achieve this ratio.

The Executive Committee also was asked to consider motions dealing with one woman on every SBC committee, having a moratorium on annual meetings during the week after Father's Day, and nixing the Southern Messianic Fellowship "a mal evangelistic mission to Jewish people worldwide and permission to submit proposed resolutions up to the beginning of the afternoon session on the first day of the convention's annual meeting."

Motions ruled out of order included ones encouraging Southern Baptist churches to refrain from removing "Baptist" or "Baptist" from their church signs and buildings, calling for publication of item expenditures and in all financial areas to report reporting entities, in salaries, bonuses, benefits, travel expenses for all mission employees, listed by name and title, and directing the SBC to amend its charter to make the SBC its sole member. Contributing to this report: Michael Foust and Tom Foust, Baptist Press; Connie Bushey, Baptist and Family Recorder; Greg Warner of Association of Baptist Press; Marv Knox, Standard; Tony Cartledge, Baptist Recorder; Todd Deaton, Baptist Recorder; and David and Trehnis Henderson, Baptist Recorder.



## Dyer students travel to Nashville; assist with SBC registration

Marcia Knox  
and Reflector

NASHVILLE — A cooperative team of 250 volunteers across Tennessee and two states were responsible for having the registration of 1,641 messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting run so smoothly, according to SBC local arrangements registration subcommittee officials.

Included in this registration were 23 volunteers from the Dyer Baptist Association, Dyersburg, made up of mostly college and high school students who not only registered messengers, but also participated in Crossover.

19 computer savvy students were recommended by pastors and youth ministers to make the mission trip to Nashville for Crossover and the meeting.

The student team, which made up of members from churches, was organized by the Association director of Dyer, Joe Wright and his wife, Teresa; Stan Cavness, Dyer State Community College BCM director and assistant youth ministry coordinator; and Matt Stafford, youth minister, First Baptist Church, Dyer.

The team was housed at the First Baptist Church of Dyer while working at the meeting on the campus of Union University. The students' churches funded the trip for the students who were to make the mission

trip. Those volunteering were Laura Fisher, 18, a sophomore at Union University, Jackson; and a member of Evansville Baptist Church, Dyer. "I was selected to go on the team, because I am a TBC summer missionary in the Dyer Association," she said. "I meet and



**REGISTERING** messengers at the SBC annual meeting are Laura Fisher, left, and Andrew Wright, both students at Union University, Jackson. The students who were part of the Dyer Baptist Association, Dyersburg, mission team, assisted SBC messengers Peggy and Thurman Harris of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Madisonville, Ky.

greet the people and give them their packets."

She was joined in the registration booth by her boyfriend Andrew Wright, 18, also a sophomore at Union University and the son of the Wrights, who entered the messengers data into the computer system.

"Dyer Association felt that this was a great opportunity for the students to come and be a part of the SBC event," said Cavness. "We asked the church leaders to find those students most skilled in computers. We have found customer satisfaction high with the messengers, and we are proud of the job that they have done."

Not only was customer satisfaction rated high, but the students were timed and found to be registering messengers every 30 seconds, Cavness added.

"The Dyer Association does a collegiate and youth mission trip every year. When we heard about the SBC event in Nashville, we called the

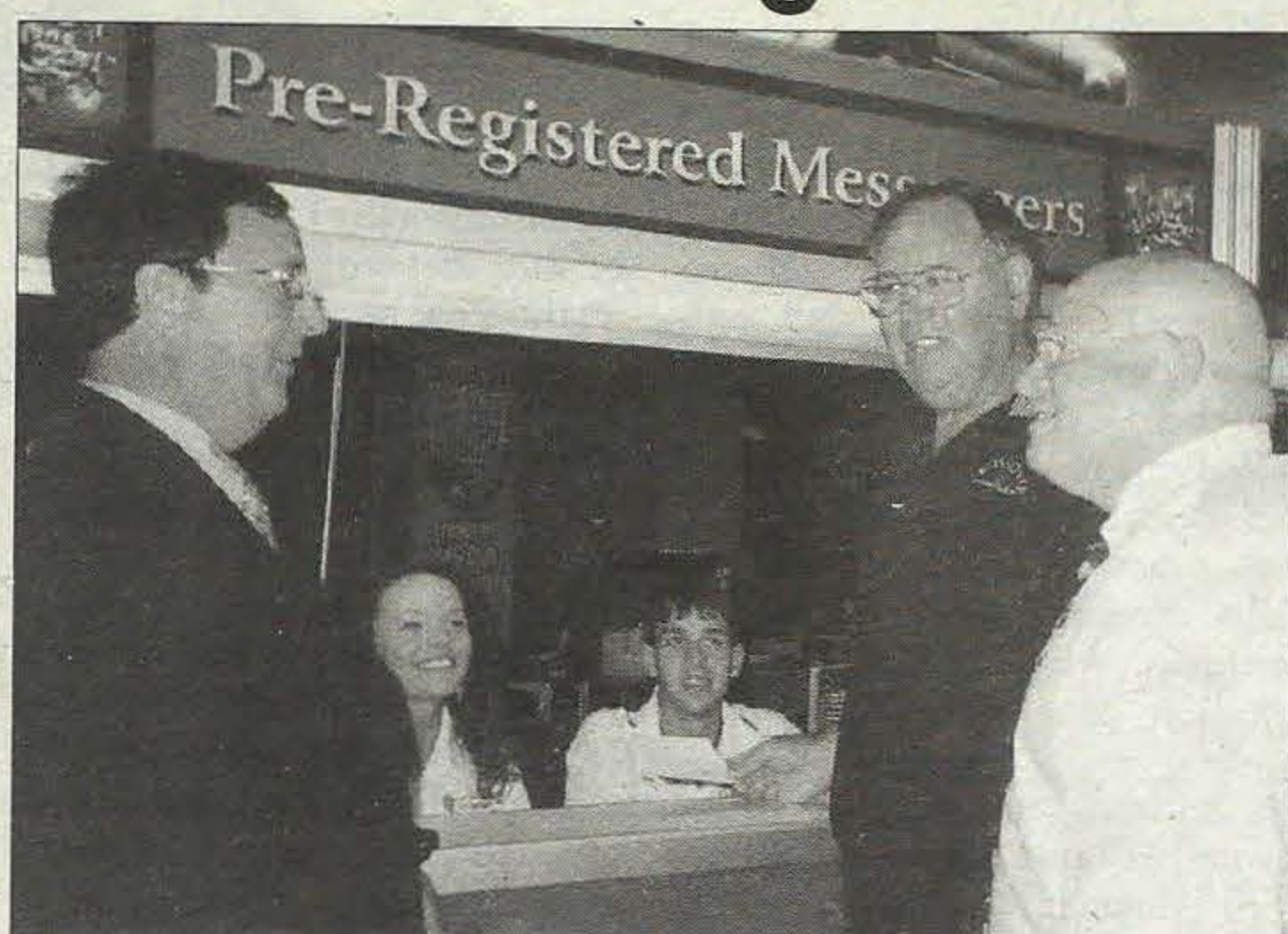
Nashville Baptist Association and talked to NBA associate Rusty Sumrall, co-chair of the local arrangements registration subcommittee. They were specifically asking for volunteers with computer skills, because of the SBC registration process."

The SBC messenger registration ran for four days with 20 booths, made up of 60 volunteers in three different shifts.

**"It's a beautiful picture of how a Baptist association can work together to accomplish what no single church can do by itself. — Rusty Sumrall"**

Besides Sumrall, co-chairman Andre Dugger, pastor of Grace Baptist Church of Nashville, also monitored the registration area, which contained volunteers from 37 Tennessee Baptist churches.

"Another group that assisted with registration was the Tennessee Baptist Church Secretaries," said Dugger. "The largest single group registering messengers was



**VISITING IN THE** registration area are, from left, Rusty Sumrall, Nashville Baptist Association staff member; Ron Davidson, director of missions, Shiloh Baptist Association, based in Adamsville; and Andre Dugger, pastor, Grace Baptist Church, Nashville. In the background are Dyer Baptist Association volunteers Laura Fisher, left, and Andrew Wright. Sumrall and Dugger served as co-chairs of the local arrangements registration subcommittee. — Photos by Marcia Knox

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, which included several senior adults.

"Not a single negative situation was recorded with this many people who were being registered. We hope to have in the future joint ventures to promote teamwork. It's the whole idea of cooperating and the

what no single church can do by itself."

Besides the local officials, Raymond Smith, TBC Information Services manager, served along with others on the technical staff to set up the computers and train the volunteers on the SBC software.

"Each of the students chosen for the mission trip was asked to see this service as a ministry to Southern Baptists," said Joe Wright. "Our goal was to reach each and every messenger with a smile and make the registration process as less painful as possible."

"The only problem we had with the students was that they wanted to talk to people about Jesus while they were registering them," added Cavness.

Other university's represented by the students were: East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, and Carson-Newman College, Jefferson City.

Dyer Association is already talking with people in Greensboro, N.C., to see if the students can work registration for the 2006 SBC annual meeting, according to Wright. □



**WITH** David Dockery, second from right, president, Union University, Jackson; from left, Lance Taylor, executive pastor, Long Hollow Baptist Church, Henning; David Landrith, pastor, Long Hollow Church; and Angel Ellis of LifeWay Resources, Nashville.



**PROVIDING THE AUDIO-VISUAL** recording operation of the SBC annual meeting is Tom Mooty, right, pastor, West End Baptist Church, Newport; with help from, from left, Mike Winters, Eureka Baptist Church, Rockwood; and Lance and Alan Lloyd of First Baptist Church, Wartburg. — Photos by Connie Davis Bushey



# Southern Baptists ready to carry out 'Everyone Can' challenge

By Lonnie Wilkey  
Baptist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — As the final gavel sounded on the 148th annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention, and balloons were released from the top of the Gaylord Entertainment Center, messengers chanted "Everyone Can and I'm It" in response to a challenge from SBC President Bobby Welch to witness, win, and baptize one million people in the coming year.

Building upon momentum from his bus tour of the Southern Baptist Convention this past year and in sessions of the annual meeting, Welch exhorted messengers to leave the convention united in one purpose.

"It's going to take every body doing everything with all they can and it has to happen now," Welch told messengers.

"We're going out there and we're going to attack the gates of hell for the sake of souls."

## Draper challenge

Prior to Welch's closing comments, messengers were challenged by Jimmy Draper, president of LifeWay Christian Resources, to stop "hiding in the stuff" and to respond to the challenge Welch placed before them.

Basing his message on the story of Saul, found in I Samuel, Draper noted that he was an "incredible talent" presented with an "incredible opportunity" by God. Yet when it came time to anoint Saul as the king of Israel, he could not be found. Scripture says Saul was found hiding among the supplies "or as the King James puts it, hiding away in the stuff," Draper said.

"Saul, the son of Kish, presents a timeless picture of great-

ness that was diminished by petty pursuits, detours, vendettas, and sidetracks. He squandered great opportunity at the fee of unworthy triviality," Draper told messengers and visitors at the final session.

"Saul's tragic story has been repeated in the life of many a minister, church, and even denomination," Draper observed.

Draper recounted how God has blessed the Southern Baptist Convention. "God passed by the great magisterial denominations of this land and He put His hand upon a group of people considered by the elitist of society to be under classed, backward, ignorant, and prejudiced.

"God took a group of people huddled around little churches in the south and on the frontier and elevated them into the greatest denomination in the strongest country in the world."

Yet, Draper noted that after 160 years "of His singular blessing" Southern Baptists may be "hiding among the stuff."

The LifeWay leader cited stagnated baptism figures over the past 50 years. "In spite of the struggle for 25 years to recover biblical faithfulness we are still witnessing a stagnation in evangelism," Draper said. "Our passion for souls has cooled. It has slipped away from us."

He challenged Southern Baptists to stop hiding "in the stuff of personal, church, and convention prayer struggles and of bitterness, resentment, and cynicism." He noted some churches today are filled with chaos and division.

"While the world around us slides toward hell, our churches are often battlegrounds instead of lighthouses, refusing to abide



**AS FIREWORKS** ignite by center stage and balloons drift down from above, SBC President Welch presents the "Everyone Can!" Kingdom Challenge Launch at the final session of the SBC annual meeting in Nashville. — Photo by Kent Harville

by clear, biblical principles of reconciliation and restoration," Draper said.

"Many churches are torn to shreds by carnal members and arrogant leaders. We can't hide in that stuff anymore," Draper exhorted those in attendance.

"Southern Baptists have been called by God to be the leader in evangelism and missions in confronting our culture with the gospel of Lord Jesus Christ.

"Let's rise up and follow Him and His story to its glorious conclusion," Draper said.

During the annual meeting three other "Everyone Can!" challenges were presented throughout the sessions.

## Singer's testimony

Singer, songwriter and

author Dawn Smith Jordan reminded messengers and visitors that everyone can forgive those who have caused them even the most grievous hurt.

The former Miss South Carolina 1986 and second runner-up for Miss U.S.A. described how God has convicted her through the years of her need to forgive others, beginning with the man who kidnapped and brutally murdered her 17-year-old sister, Shari, in 1985.

Jordan, who is a member of First Baptist Church, Columbia, S.C., recounted the letter Shari's murderer allowed her to write before he murdered her, which her family received after her death. In it, Shari told her family not to worry about her — she

knew she would be safe with God — and to not let her emotion and fate ruin their lives. She further assured them some good would come out of this terrible wrong.

Years later, Jordan said she and her mother had the opportunity to visit with the man who had been convicted of the act and to assure him of forgiveness.

God's Word calls Christians to forgive others like Jesus forgave them, Jordan reminded her brothers and sisters in Christ, pointing them to exhortations to forgive in Romans 12:17 and Colossians 3:13.

## Bivocational pastor

A bivocational pastor in Oklahoma exhorted messengers to "have a lifestyle of evangelism. Everyone can witness. Everyone can reach people for Christ," said Anthony W. Durant, pastor of Grace Baptist Church in Durant, Okla.

"Folks, we need to be people of the message that saves. It is our obligation, our job."

## Texas pastor

Michael Lewis, senior pastor of Great Hills Baptist Church of Austin, Texas, pointed out that people today are miserable as the lepers in II Kings 17. When asked to name the church's purpose in the world today, only 11 percent of respondents said the church exists to reach people for Christ.

With baptisms declining since 1962, churches are asking themselves: "Should we sit here until we die?"

Southern Baptists cannot sit still, Lewis said, because God has given them a goal to baptize one million people this year. □ — John L. the Baptist New Mexico Vicki Brown of the Word (Missouri) contributed report.

## Baptists need to become 'deep-water disciples,' Welch says

By David Winfrey  
Western Recorder (Kentucky)

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptists can win and baptize one million people if they will be "deep-water disciples," leaving the safety of the shore to take risks and share Jesus with others, SBC President Bobby Welch told messengers at last week's annual meeting.

During a presidential address that featured dead frogs and history lessons, Welch spoke from Luke 5, in which Jesus asks his soon-to-be disciples to cast out into the deep water to catch fish.

God "expresses an urgent call to go out into deep water and do great things," said Welch, pastor of First Baptist Church of Daytona, Fla.

Welch, who has challenged Southern Baptists to baptize one million people in the next year, said too many Christians are choosing the safety of the shore over the willingness to follow God out into the deep.

"In fact, this shore fishing we've caught into is what is going to kill evangelism in this convention, in this nation."

Too many Christians employ a "facility-based" evangelism strategy, he said, that encourages Christians to stay warm and

comfortable in the church and requires non-Christians to visit a church before they hear about Jesus.

"That's not New Testament evangelism, and that's not what you see in the model of Jesus," he said. "That's too close to the shore. You're not out in the deep."

Welch said the text in Luke outlines "Jesus' personalized systematic theology for soul winning": The father must catch the followers; the followers have to catch the faith; and the faithful catch the fish.

Recalling LifeWay President Jimmy Draper's analogy last year to the convention becoming a "frog in the kettle," slowly dying and not realizing it, Welch produced one of the more memorable sermon props in recent history when he displayed a dead



**BOBBY WELCH**

frog from the pulpit.

"You know how that flat dead frog got this way? A concrete truck ran over it, just down from my house," he said.

"This frog's cause of death was not that concrete truck. This frog's cause of death was confusion. This frog belonged in the deep, but he hopped in the street. And that's where his end came," he said. "You see, if you're destined for deep water, you better go that way. The consequences can be dangerous."

Welch said he regularly sees dead flat frogs when he leaves his home. "And you know what? Just about every day I go around and in the countryside I see a flat dead church and a flat dead bunch of Christians because they got confused and they left the deep."

Welch urged Southern Baptists to realize they come from a rich spiritual heritage filled with people willing to follow God's call.

"They had enough spiritual guts to get out of the bank and go out into the deep," he said.

"That's how you got the International Mission Board. Some people said, 'We've got to go deeper. ... We've got to go everywhere.' And they did." □



## Over 400 attend second wild game dinner of FBC Decatur

Marcia Knox  
Men's Ministries Newsletter

DECATUR — Over 400 men and boys from East Tennessee, some coming as far away as Sevierville, Knoxville, and Chattanooga, attended the 2nd annual Wild Game Dinner here on April 8 at First Baptist Church. The event reached out to the local community and reached people in a 50-mile radius outside the area offering a variety of wild game, door prizes, a guest speaker while focusing on an outdoor theme of hunting and fishing.

The special guest speaker was Chuck McCallister, producer of the TV show "Adventure Bound Outdoors," which airs on the Outdoor Channel on Tuesday evenings.

McCallister spoke on outdoor hunting experiences with his father and grandfather, and how these experiences affected his spiritual life.

"Men, you may not have had a father who spent quality time with you as a child, but it's important to know that our Heavenly Father loves and cares for you deeply," McCallister said. "He has adopted you as His prized possession and has a plan for your life."

He also encouraged the men to take an active role in the spiritual development of their sons, or another boy that doesn't have a positive role model in his life. "Boys need faithful men to offer them passage into manhood and exhibit living out the Christian life."

After sharing the plan of salvation, 48 men and boys accepted Christ and committed their lives. While following up on these decisions, First Church Pastor Jerry Plaster said, "God has truly blessed this event. Some of these men whom accepted Christ have gone back to their homes and shared Christ with their families."

"Lives and families have been changed as a result of the impact of salvation within the heart of the father figure. We will never know the extent of the exponential effect of the life-changing experiences seen through this wild game dinner."

"Most all attendees were unchurched and that was the whole point of the dinner to reach the lost and unchurched," said Steve Harmon, associate pastor. "The 48 men and boys who were saved went home to tell their families and friends that added the plus number to the salvation report."

The church got the word out for the

dinner by word of mouth, advertising in a local county newspaper, and members taking posters and flyers to work and local sporting good stores.

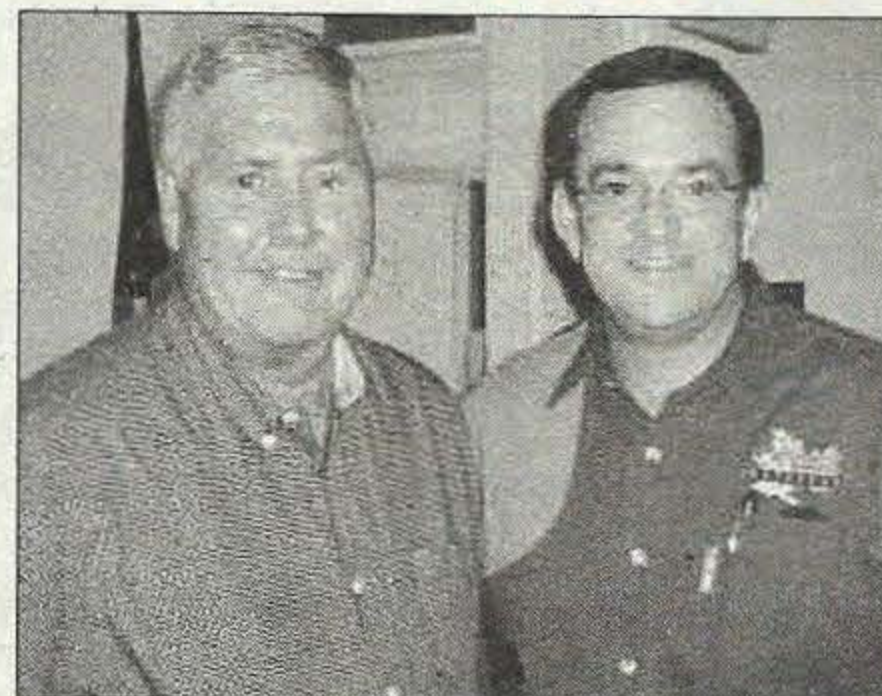
"We gave out double tickets for the prizes," added Plaster. "One side had a place for names, addresses, and phone numbers. We asked the 48 who made decisions to mark their tickets, and then we called them to make sure that they understood their decisions."

"One 12-year-old boy in Knoxville assured me of his salvation experience and asked if I wanted to talk to his friend sitting next to him that he just led to the Lord."

According to Plaster, in Dunlap and another community he talked to two women who cried over the phone telling him that they now have new husbands, because their husbands led them and their children to the Lord. Both marriages were headed for divorce before their husbands attended the dinner.

"We gained 16 additional salvations from the follow-up calls. The men and boys went home and changed their whole families. It's all about the Lord and not about us."

"The supper also brought a lot of the local key leaders in the community who don't attend church, and they also got



**JERRY PLASTER**, left, pastor, First Baptist Church, Decatur, welcomes Chuck McCallister to the wild game dinner.

saved. We got to serve them, and the church men did the serving with the help of the ladies.

"I always dreamed about being able to do ministry like this event, and I had heard about other churches offering Wild Game dinners. When I started teaching a young couple's class in the church, one young man, John Sims offered to take the project and run with it."

The first year that the church offered the supper there were 300 men and boys who attended with four salvation — See Over 400, page 12

## Brotherhood in Union City helps widow

Marcia Knox  
Men's Ministries Newsletter

UNION CITY — A 12-member construction team from First Baptist Church of Union City's Brotherhood helped a pastor's widow May who needed her trim work done on her brick home, according to Jim Kizer, Brotherhood president. Richard Skidmore, TBC Brotherhood Ministers Financial report specialist, called to Ima Wilson needed any trim done.

Mrs. Wilson, 86, is the widow of Joe Wilson, retired pastor of Aldridge Baptist Church, Obion. Pastor Wilson served Dyer Baptist Church, Dyer; Hickman Baptist Church, Hickman; First Baptist Church of Obion; and several other churches over the years.

"My husband was a wonderful person," she said. "I still miss him, but he still seems so close to me after being gone for 26 years."

She told Skidmore that she had a brick home, but she could use her trim work painted. Then Skidmore called the Beulah Baptist Association office to help with her painting request. Jack Long, Beulah Association director of missions, called Kizer to help her out with the project.

Mrs. Wilson, who has been a member of First Church of Union City since 1940, had the First Church team paint her home's windows, carport, gutters, and woodwork.

"They did a marvelous job on my house," said Mrs. Wilson. "I just couldn't of asked for anything better, and I

appreciate it so much. I wrote each one of them a thank you note."

"There are still a lot of wonderful people in the world. There is so much violence in the world that I know that the Lord is coming soon. I read my Bible through each year."

"Our Brotherhood is always here to serve," said Kizer. "We began our Brotherhood program in August 2004, and we have always had good attendance at the meetings."

"Our purpose is to serve members of our church and members of our community who need help by contributing labor for work projects. We've done four projects since August. We've done landscaping, roof repair, and also cleaned up lots and yards." □

## Speedway event draws 2,500

Men's Ministries Newsletter

BRISTOL — Over 2,500 people attended Family Day at Bristol Motor Speedway here April 2, which featured a Praise Celebration in the morning under the grandstands at the Bristol Drag Strip due to severe weather.

The Sharpie Professional 250 race scheduled for later in the afternoon on Saturday at the Speedway was rained out and postponed to the next day.

"Even in cold rainy weather, people remained for the Family Day program under the stands," said Tom Elam, Bristol Raceway Ministries director and minister of music at First Baptist Church of Bluff City. "The temperatures remained in the 30s, and there were some snow flurries."

"Though Family Day had a damper put on it, 40 first-time decisions for Christ were recorded, 93 rededications, and 43 committed to full-time service," added Elam. "The Family Day event is on positive ground reaching the young people as far away as Nashville. We feel Family Day is a significant part of a youth thing in the spring."

The Praise Celebration highlighted "Cross Country," a musical group, and Comedy Relief, a drama group. Teri and Randy McDonald, sister and brother racing competitors, were the guest speakers. □

## Baptist Men on Mission, Challengers, RAs, and MissionKids can register online

Men's Ministries Newsletter

RENTWOOD — All Baptist Men on Mission, Challengers, Royal Ambassadors, and MissionKids groups are encouraged to register their units, groups, chapters online with the North American Mission Board, according to Men's Ministry specialist Gene Williams.

To register groups online go to Namb.net to each Mission age program section and select the registration links. Baptist Men on Mission can also be registered at Bmen.net at [http://sub.namb.net/educate/bmom/bmen\\_reg.asp](http://sub.namb.net/educate/bmom/bmen_reg.asp). Challengers groups can be noted at Challengers Central at Studentz.com.

See [www.studentz.com/challengers/registration.htm](http://www.studentz.com/challengers/registration.htm). RA chapters can be registered at [Kidzplace.org](http://Kidzplace.org). See [www.kidzplace.org/adult/royalambassadors/ra\\_chapter\\_registration.aspx](http://www.kidzplace.org/adult/royalambassadors/ra_chapter_registration.aspx). MissionFriends can be also listed at [Kidzplace.org](http://Kidzplace.org). See [www.kidzplace.org/adult/mission-kids/missionkidsregister.asp](http://www.kidzplace.org/adult/mission-kids/missionkidsregister.asp).

"Information about groups who register online with NAMB is then sent on to the TBC Men's Ministry team," said Williams. "This enables the Men's Ministry team to contact the groups when special events are held and distribute information and news. After registering online, the groups will receive promotional items from NAMB." □



## A Word from Gene

It is a wonderful blessing to know that we can wake up each morning singing a new song. Just to know that God has redeemed us through the blood of Jesus Christ should stir within us new melodies of thanksgiving praise.

Psalms 33:3a says, "Sing unto him a new song." The story of the Christ is the greatest ever told. He loves us just as we are, saved or not. There's nothing you can do to make Him love you more, and there's nothing you can do to make Him love you less. He has unconditional love for us, and we have unmerited favor with Him. That is wonderful inspiration for a song.

Eugene Peterson in *The Message* encourages us to invent our own new song. Our rejoicing should be as unique as our personality. No one can sing your song. God created you to sing your part in the melody of praise toward Him.

No one quite fits in the position God created you to fill. God gives you permission to invent new songs to sing for His glory.

We must answer yes to four eternity-based questions if we are to enjoy a God honoring relationship with Him that will produce new songs every day.

Will you say yes to faith in Christ? Admitting to God what He already knows about our sin debt, believing that Jesus is the Christ and paid that debt for you, and confessing Him before men is our first opportunity to say yes to God. This is primary and must precede the next three.

Will you say yes to sharing the Good News? This is the first major yes after salvation that many Christians neglect, but it is also the first major step toward developing a relationship with God that puts a new song in our heart. Tremendous blessing comes to the obedient believer faithfully distributing God's plan to redeem the lost. Not one believer is exempt from this calling, and singing this song will bring Him glory.

Will you say yes to the call to constant prayer and meditating on Scripture? God reveals Himself through Scripture and prayer. Christians who have no song to sing do not know about the

deep desire the Lord has for a vibrant relationship with us. God's Word and the Holy Spirit encourage us to love Him with all our being (Mark 12:30, the greatest commandment). Consider choosing a verse and contemplating its significance on a personal level possibly for several days. You might experience the closeness of God that results in a new song.

Will you say yes to an ever-deepening level of faith? This is not to be confused with taking on a new office or responsibility. Religious activity is a poor substitute for spiritual transformation. At least four things precede deepening faith.

We must shun more and more of the world. Our value system must grow steadily unimpressed by the accumulation of earthly treasure.

We must begin to seek things eternal. Life on earth is a temporary assignment. One day we will stand in His presence, proclaim His excellence, and recognize His proper place of honor. We must learn to exalt God by approaching every circumstance with caution and considering its effect in eternity. Scripture encourages us to look toward Heaven as Jesus did.

We must step away from the boundary. Due to a lack of transformation, men are prone to live life on the edge of the permissible. We might even occasionally step across the boundary just to sample what this world declares is thrilling. God's men, ones who seek to sing a new song in His honor, find the limits and stay way back from them.

We must learn the benefit of total surrender. A man who can sing new songs every day is ready to go anywhere and to do anything at any time the Lord calls. Men are not given to surrender. Through accumulated life experiences, God's man has learned to rejoice because he has learned that God is who He says He is, and He will do what He says He will do. For that reason God's man has come to trust Him and is willing to surrender all to Him.

Please let me encourage you to get closer to Him. Let God help you invent new songs that bring Him honor, and praise, and glory.

*Gene*

Gene Williams  
Men's Ministry specialist

## Church Renewal Journey team serves

Men's Ministries Newsletter

**BRENTWOOD** — In addition to serving Tennessee churches, the state Church Renewal Journey (CRJ) Team is also offering its training to neighboring states who are reaping the benefits, according to Don Hanle, NAMB Tenn. CRJ coordinator.

Sponsored by the TBC Men's Ministries Team, the Tenn. CRJ team has held events this year in North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama.



HANLE

Greg Lauderback, pastor of West Highland Baptist Church in Athens, Ala., recently said: "Thank you so much for all that you allowed our Lord to do through your team during our Lay Renewal Weekend. God answered our prayers

and worked in a wonderful way to renew and unite our people.

"Our Sunday night service was all that I could of asked for with the Tenn. team. It lasted over two hours as person after person testi-

fied to the ways God had spoken to them during the weekend. I was blessed by reading evaluation forms.

"Around 33 said that they wanted to be of a small group; 28 said that they wanted to develop a daily quiet time; and many other decisions were recorded.

"One lady stated that in the 48 years she has been a member of church which was a her life that she had never felt as close to fellow church members.

"I believe God used the weekend to bring healing during a difficult time in the life of church. Folks are excited and seem ready to move forward.

"We are all deeply grateful to you and to the ministry team for your faithfulness and willingness to come and minister to God's to us."

"CRJ is a NAMB program, which is really explained for churches to understand before they begin the experiencing process," said Hanle.

Churches or associations who are interested in an overview of the CRJ may call Hanle 865-681-1465. □

## Association holds motorcycle prayer ride

By Marcia Knox  
Men's Ministries Newsletter

**KINGSPORT** — Holston Baptist Association held its first Motorcycle Prayer Ride in Sullivan Baptist Association, and participants visited seven churches in the Gray and Colonial Heights areas, according to ride organizer Jimmy Phipps Jr.

"A threatening sky kept all, but the most die hard motorcyclist away," said Phipps. "However, once again the

Lord held off the rain until we were finished with our appointed rounds."

Besides Phipps Jr., others participating in the prayer ride were: Jimmy Phipps Sr. and Don Brown, members of Tennessee Avenue Baptist Church, Bristol, and Richard Mettler, a member of Unaka Avenue Baptist Church, Johnson City.

"We were met at our first stop by pastor Stanley Sims of Blessed Hope Baptist Church, Kingsport, and some

of its congregation," added Phipps Jr. "When that circle of prayer went up then the Holy Spirit came down at church."

The next prayer ride will be held Saturday, July 16, leaving at 9:30 a.m. from the Bristol Motor Speedway to continue visiting churches in the Sullivan Association. The same team earlier visited Ston and Watauga Baptist associations while praying during the past three years. □

## Inmates participate in Crossover

By Marcia Knox  
Men's Ministries Newsletter

**BRENTWOOD** — One of the seven Crossover Nashville 2005 Ministry Venues was prayer journeys June 17-19 which included prayerwalks inside a 40-mile radius of the city. However, over 241 of these prayer journey participants were confined to their prison cellblocks that weekend across the state of Tennessee.

These inmates made commitments to pray before and during the Crossover weekend, according to Gene Williams, TBC Men's Ministry specialist.

Williams, who serves as a volunteer for the Tennessee Prison for Women (TPFW) in Nashville and the Williamson County Jail (WCJ) in Franklin, also works as the TBC coordinator for the use of Golden Offering for Tennessee Missions funds for restorative justice.

"As a result of prayer emphasis with Crossover, I

asked the inmates to pray for fertile ground in the hearts of Nashvillians and bold witness for the volunteers," Williams said. "We also invited each chaplain across the state to enlist inmates who would pray kingdom prayers to join us in praying for Crossover."

Besides TPFW and WCJ, other institutions with inmates that prayed were: the West Tennessee State Penitentiary in Henning, the Bradley County Jail in Cleveland, and Brushy Mountain Correctional Complex in Petros, and others.

"This prayer effort partially began in preparation for establishing a network of prayer partners in prisons and jails," Williams added.

"The idea also excited TBC Prayer Strategist specialist Don Pierson, who saw the possibility of a new avenue of ongoing prayer intercession."

"As far as we know, this is the first time that Christian inmates have been enlisted for any Crossover ministry." □

## Planning fall training

For Men's Ministries Newsletter

**BRENTWOOD** — Get on the right track with Royal Ambassadors, Challengers, and Baptist Men by now planning your fall training events, according to Frank Green, RA/Challenger field worker.

The TBC Men's Ministries team has nationally certified trainers in RA, Challengers, and Baptist Men that are available to help churches plan and train leaders.

Contact Green at [mktracks@blomand.net](mailto:mktracks@blomand.net). Gene Williams, TBC Men's Ministry specialist, at [gwilliams@tnbaptist.org](mailto:gwilliams@tnbaptist.org) call the Men's Ministries Team at 1-800-558-2099 ext. 2025 to schedule a trainer for your church.



## A Word from Frank

In a recent staff meeting a minutes were given to sharing of some of our favorite scenic places we entered while traveling Tennessee. We all agreed God did a real good job in He laid out Tennessee. I am blessed to live on the edge of the Cumberland River.



GREEN

I am constantly reminded of the beauty in nature. From my window, I look out over lush green pasture where cattle are gently grazing. I also see a freshly plowed field where a new corn crop has just been planted. Across the lake I see a pine forest near the water. Canada geese are fond of the water and they often make their nests in the edge of the thickets.

In the early morning, I can usually see a large blue heron or two standing in the edge of the water. Of course there are many birds in the oak trees around the pond and yard. It has always amazed me how such loud beautiful music can come from such a small animal. I believe that nature is one of the things that God constantly reminds us of how great His creation is.

brother Lyle and I

were talking just last week about God's plan. Now, you need to know a couple of things about Lyle. For many years he was a "closet Christian." He knew the Lord, but he did not let many other people know that. Lyle has also endured a severe case of "crippling" arthritis for over 20 years.

But, Lyle is now out of the closet. Sunday morning, you will find him in church. He once worried that his disability would prevent him from being a good parent. He now testifies how God has blessed him with two great children. Even though Lyle was not where he should be with the Lord, the Lord stayed with him. Lately, every conversation that we have will include how God has blessed him.

Remember the birds? Lyle reminded me recently that if God cares enough for these little creatures to see that they are fed, how much more He must care for us whom He created in His own image.

There are many things I do not know or understand. I do know that God loves me. He loves everyone. Thanks, Lyle, for the reminder.

*Frank*

Frank Green  
RA/Challengers field worker

## RA wilderness challenge draws 350

Men's Ministries Newsletter

NASHVILLE — Over 350 Royal Ambassadors and their leaders attended the Nashville Baptist Association's (NBA) fourth annual RA Wilderness Challenge April 15-16 at Boxwell Boy Scout Reservation near Gallatin, according to Brian Holt, NBA RA Team leader.

Sponsored by the NBA RA Leadership Team and the Tennessee Baptist Convention Men's Ministries Team, Wilderness Challenge is a camping adventure, designed to test the campcraft skills RAs learn during their weekly chapter meetings.

"This year's attendance marked their best attendance yet with over 350 participants," said Holt. "Friday night opened with a praise band that rocked Camp Boxwell with the love of Jesus, which was followed by worship and a night hike to Old Hickory Lake."

"However, Saturday opened with several early risers hitting the lake for some fishing.

Even though not a lot of fish were caught, there were plenty of big fish tales. Especially the one told about a father that was caught by a fish, but was spit back out, because he tasted bad. This was not a bad tale to cover up how the parent slipped and fell into the water."

The Royal Racer competition with double elimination pine wood derby races divided into three divisions, Lad, Crusader, and Adult, was fast and furious and featured more close finishes than any stock car race.

The most anticipated event of Wilderness Challenge, Campcraft Rodeo, featured the best time events in tent pitching, fire building, knot tying, and compass competitions with several boys finishing within tenths of a second ahead of the next RA. "All of the boys did great," added Holt. "Almost everyone that attempted an event was able to successfully complete the task."

Many of the RA Chapters set up their campsites with

themes and displayed the crafts and mission projects that they had done. Spring Hill Baptist Church, Spring Hill, made their first appearance at Wilderness Challenge with a military theme, which earned the nickname "Commando Baptist Church."

"This first year church came prepared for battle," noted Holt. "They camouflaged their entire camp, dressed in military clothes, and had a winner in virtually every event there. They have set the bar high for 2006."

"Wilderness Challenge was a great success, and the NBA RA Leadership team wishes to thank all of the churches for coming and hopes to see them back next year. They also want to invite all churches RAs to attend next year's Wilderness Challenge, which is set for April 7-8, 2006."

For the 2006 registration information, a copy of the event rules, and a tentative schedule call the NBA office at (615) 259-3034. □

## Stone Association holds annual RA Camp

By Marcia Knox  
Men's Ministries Newsletter

COOKEVILLE — Stone Baptist Association, based here, held their annual RA Camp June 6-9 at Camp Sandy Stone in Monterey with 31 boys ranging from grades 1-7 and 6 counselors attending.

Besides the usual camping activities, the boys participated in mission activities and worship services. Three decisions for Christ were recorded. Participants at the camp represented seven churches.

In the campcraft competition, campers raced against the clock with knot tying, fire starting, log sawing, and RA racers. They also took night hikes and played on a water slide.

Frank Green, TBC RA field worker, served as the NAMB missionary. Gordon Vasseur, IMB mission volunteer, used clowning in his ministry. Mike Prowse, retired Stone Association director of missions served as a NAMB/TBC

missionary. Steve Thornton, pastor of Caney Fork Baptist Church, Cookeville, served as the camp pastor.

Other staff and their churches were: camp directors, Bill Hicks and Tom Howard, both of Caney Fork Church; counselors, Randy Walker, Woodcliff Baptist Church, Monterey; Brian Hickey, Midway Baptist Church; and Jeff Burnside, Poplar Grove Baptist Church, both in Cookeville; and junior counselors, Josh Thornton and Andrew Bilbrey, both of Caney Fork Church. □



WORKING AT THE Stone Association RA Camp were, from left, Mike Prowse, retired director of missions; Frank Green, TBC staff; Tom Howard, association RA director; Brian Hickey, Midway Baptist Church, Cookeville; Randy Walker, Woodcliff Baptist Church, Monterey; and Bill Hicks, association Men's Ministries director.

## Royal Ambassador University to be held Aug. 19-29

Men's Ministries Newsletter

NASHVILLE — The Nashville Baptist Association (NBA) invites all churches to attend the first Royal Ambassador University Aug. 19-20 at Creeewood Baptist Church in Nashville.

This will be the most comprehensive training sessions ever offered by the Nashville

Baptist RA Leadership Team, according to Brian Holt, NBA RA Team leader.

The training will begin on Friday with dinner at 6:30 p.m. RA General training as well as learning games that can be played with RA boys at church and how to tie the games back to the RA Virtues will be offered.

Saturday beginning at 9

a.m. is training on how to teach boys, lead a chapter meeting, and how to teach campcraft skills to young boys. Nationally Certified RA Trainers and experts in their field of training will teach the classes. The cost of the event is \$20 to cover the cost of food and materials.

For more information, contact the NBA office at (615) 259-3034. □

## Chapter at FBC, Lakeland, helps missionaries in Alaska

Men's Ministries Newsletter

LAKELAND — While the Royal Ambassadors in Lakeland were busy about NAMB missionaries in Kiana, Alaska, Johnny Par-due, a RA leader at First Baptist Church here, learned the missionaries needed to give to Eskimo children where they worked.

Par-due called missionaries and Kim Piepmeier in to ask if there were other needs that they have. He learned the missionaries might terminate ministry if another need met. The missionaries need of oil for their generators for next winter. Their sponsoring church had helped the missionaries but the church would not be able to help them with this need if there were no oil and if there were no missionaries.

Pardue was overwhelmed, because it would take about 500 gallons of diesel fuel at around \$2.29 a gallon to meet the need. He knew that his church could not meet this need alone so he called and e-mailed several RAs and their leaders.

He is encouraging RAs to wash cars, collect cans, have walkathons, collect pennies, or find some other way to help keep these missionaries equipped to take Jesus to the Eskimos. The funds need to be sent before the end of July, because winters come early in Alaska and last a long time.

Groups who can help First Baptist Church, Lakeland, RAs meet this urgent need, contact Pardue, at 5268 Summer Wind Lane, Arlington, TN 38002. His phone number is 901-867-3277, or e-mail him at pardue@integrity.com. □



## Fishers of Men hold competitions

For Men's Ministries Newsletter

BRENTWOOD — Tennessee's three grand divisions of the Fishers of Men (FOM) Tournament Trail are finishing up their tournament seasons.

FOM East Tenn. Division held its fourth tournament of the year Saturday, May 7, on Douglas Lake near Dandridge. The Friday night meeting, May 6, was held at First Baptist Church of Dandridge, which was a success thanks to the staff of the Men's Ministry at the church and FOM staff for making the event possible. Following the inspirational message and the music, there were four rededications. Thanks go to Leadvale Baptist Church in White Pine who assisted.

On Saturday, 37 boats blasted off from Douglas Dam. The first place winners were: Rod Garrett and his son Steve Garrett. The team of Yeary and Yeary came in second place; Sanders and Sexton were third place winners.

The final tournament was held Saturday, June 4, at Ft. Loudon/Tellico Lake in Loudon at the canal ramp as the region qualifier with 4 boats outside the top 20 in points trying for 4 spots in the region championship.

The pre-tournament meeting was held Friday, June 3, at Kingston Pike Baptist Church, Lenoir City with dinner. Pastor Ronny Jones and church members were very hospitable.

Chris Wells, FOM volunteer evangelist from Greer, South Carolina, brought the message. Wells has been a blessing not only to the division but also to the entire Fishers of Men ministry. Wells directed his message mainly to those who have been in the tournament throughout the year and challenged all to spread the gospel. There were four rededications.

The second tournament stop for FOM Central Tennessee Division was held Saturday, April 2, at Center Hill Lake near Smithville. The Friday night, April 1, meal was held at Whorton Springs Baptist Church, Smithville, and pastor David Mahan did another great job.

Even though 23 teams registered for the Saturday event, only 6 teams came in with a limit of fish due to the cold and heavy rain creating tough conditions. First place went to the team of Sentell/Sentell. Second place went to the team of Thompson/Wilson. Third place went to the team of Terry/Kemp.

The third tournament was held Saturday, May 28, on Kentucky Lake. The father/son team of Tom Bradford and Troy Bradford came with a



**FIRST PLACE** winners in the June 4 West Tennessee FOM Division tournament were, from left, West Tennessee Regional Tournament director, Terry McCormick; Micah Cruse, and Scott Barber.

mission to win, and they walked away with first place. Team Wakefield/Shivers finished second place. Team Blackburn/Bornstein, a new team to Central Tennessee, came in third place.

A great pre-tournament event, meal, and service were held Friday night, May 27, at New Harmony Baptist Church, Paris, where pastor Jeff Hardy and his church fixed a meal fit for a king. There was one profession of faith and one rededication. What are you running from, what are you searching for, what are you fighting for, and what are you faithful to were the points that Hardy made in his sermon.

The next tournament was held Saturday, June 18, at Saunders Ferry Park on Old Hickory Lake. The pre-tournament meeting was held Friday, June 17, at Harper Road Free Will Baptist Church in Joelton with the Band of Brothers Men's Group in charge of the meal.

The third tournament stop for the FOM Tennessee West Division landed Saturday, May 7, at Pickwick Landing State Park, Counce. Sharon Baptist Church, Savannah, was the host for the pre-tournament meeting Friday, May 6.

Of all the 52 teams competing, Gowrylok and Murchison managed to bag 1 of the 5 limits that was brought to the scale, which resulted in a first place. Cheek and Vires won second place. Rounding out the top three were Amerson and Martindale.

The fourth stop for the Tennessee West Division of the Fishers of Men National Tournament Trail was held Saturday, June 4, at Perryville Marina in Parsons on Kentucky Lake. First Baptist Church of Linden was the host for the pre-tournament meeting Friday, June 3.

For information on the upcoming FOM tournaments contact: Central, Bill Anderson at 615-746-2269; East, Randy Frazier at 423-869-3215; and West, Terry McCormick at (731) 632-4246. □

## Outdoor network connects with Montanans

For Men's Ministries Newsletter

HUNGRY HORSE, Mont. — Jason Cruise, senior pastor of Belmont Heights Baptist Church, Nashville, and founder of the Tennessee Outdoor Network (TON), led a Family Camp June 14-16 here for deacons and pastors using Outdoor ministry as the model.

TON will further our new TBC partnership with Montana as we go and teach outdoor ministry to Montana's pastors and leaders.

"We taught the leaders how to establish outdoor ministry in their local church setting. A few of the foundational concepts the TON team taught were: Understanding the mindset of a non-believing outdoorsman; How to build your outdoor leadership; Promoting your ministry to the community; Post-Event follow up strategy; and Moving from events to ministry."

According to Cruise, he has felt a surge of energy ever since he knew that Tennessee Baptists were in talks formalizing a partnership with Montana.

"Now that it's a reality, Tennessee Baptists really need to find ways to engage the partnership. Montanans mean business when it comes to getting it done for the kingdom. Every pastor and ministry leader that I've met knows what it means to sacrifice some things for the cause of Christ. I've been to Montana several times since the birth of our partnership; we are spoiled here in the South.

"This is the second training conference we've done in Montana, and I can think of no better way to help their churches than by helping them reach the many outdoorsmen who live all around their communities." □

## Over 400 attend second wild game...

— Continued from page 9

decisions. "For the next year, we are trying to double the supper to 600 participants, and we hope to get the whole church involved," noted Plaster. "We plan to split the attendants and run a simultaneous service in the sanctuary and meal in fellowship hall."

According to Plaster, everybody went home with something, because of the door prizes. "It's not just about the prizes; it's about Jesus."

"Even though we average around 200 in worship, we are a church that is large in ministry," he said. "We have the event scheduled again in April 2006 with McAllister." □

## Baptist leads fishing event

By Carla Cody  
Men's Ministries Newsletter

MORRISTOWN — The sixth annual Kid's Hooked on Fishing Day Camp was held here May 14 at Wallace Hardware and sponsored by Anglers for Christ team and led by Tony Sellars, member of Manley Baptist Church, Morristown.

Sellars, founder of Anglers for Christ, a ministry with to be fishers of men by providing children across America free fishing opportunities, loves to see both parents and children come to know Christ through a child like faith.

Several hundred children and their families enjoyed lunch, and several other activities during the Hooked on Fishing Day Camp.

"Watching children catch their first big catfish or watching a father help his son or daughter reel in 'a big one' was an incredible feeling, but it was no comparison to the joy I felt as they gave their hearts to Christ," Sellars said.

"We had both children and adults make professions of faith. That was the best part of the day. It truly blessed me to see adults be touched by a sermon geared to children."

A love for fishing, combined with a heart for teaching children about the love of Jesus prompted Sellars and his wife, Susan, to begin Anglers for Christ Ministries in 1999. Since then, the Sellars, who are missionaries with the Mission Service Corp. of the North American Mission Board, have traveled across the country teaching children to fish while showing them the love of Jesus. The ministry also hosts several adult-fishing events across the country.

While he enjoys hosting events for "grown-ups," Sellars noted that his heart is drawn to the children who come to the Hooked on Fishing Day Camps.

"Fishing is an experience that often provides memories that will last a lifetime," he added. "It is wonderful to be a part of watching a child build these memories. I hope they will remember the opportunity was given to them, because we wanted to show them in a small way that Jesus loves them."

At each event, Sellars and the team, which includes volunteers across the state, recruit the help of other volunteers. In Morristown, several area churches joined the effort to help serve, register children, and provide entertainment.

Chris Wells, an evangelist from Greer, South Carolina, brought the message. Hunter Knight, a 13-year-old from Morristown, who has attended the event since its inauguration 10 years ago, noted that he was amazed by Wells' ability to capture the attention of the crowd.

"Many of the families are unchurched families," said Knight. "Some of them are not used to listening to sermons, so I imagine the challenge Wells had to redirect the attention from the fun of fish to a sermon. God really blessed Wells though because he captured the attention of the families. I think he prepared them without them even realizing they were getting a sermon."

Another Tennessee "Hooked on Fishing" Day Camp was held in Kingston on Aug. 13. Sellars noted that New Mission Baptist Church, Kingston, will join his team in helping provide volunteers to help with serving the families who attend. Also watch for Sellars on "The Christian Angler Television" on Saturdays.

For information, call Tony Sellars at (423) 581-6326 or email him at tony@anglersforchrist.com. — Carla Cody is a freelance writer from Morristown.



**DIVISION WINNERS** were from left, Ages 11-13, Doyle Williams; Big Fish, Sloane Biggs; Ages 7-10, Joe Parete; Cash, Jacob Mills; Ages 0-6, Madison Ricker; Ages 0-6, Jacob Mills.

## Baptist Men's Ministry Dates 2005

September	
30 - Oct. 1	Tri-State Camp-O-Ree, Camp Cordova, Cordova, Tenn.
October	
22	Smoky Mountain Regional RA Challenge, Maryville Baptist Church, Maryville
28-30	National Prisoner Re-entry Conference, Hotel, Nashville



# Rogers, Tidwell address Southern Baptist pastors

ist Editors' Network

NASHVILLE — Retired Tennessee Baptist pastor Adrian Rogers headlined the two-day Southern Baptist Pastors Conference here, wrapping up the conference June 20 after 10 other speakers.

Steve Gaines, pastor of Gardendale's First Baptist Church in Gardendale, Ala., and president of the Pastors Conference, gave a time of prayer for Rogers, who is fighting cancer. Rogers, who retired earlier this year after 32 years as pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, Tenn., spent three days at the Anderson Cancer Center in Nashville before returning June 20 to his Memphis-area home.

Wisdom, valor, vigilance, vitality and victory are the five components of a man of God's ministry, Rogers told those attending the conference. "With God, Adrian Rogers would do nothing, nothing, nothing," Rogers, now pastor emeritus of Bellevue. "But God is mighty, and He has the ability to take your life and my life and give you and me a man of God." Rogers, preaching from Judges 6-7, described Gideon as a "just small enough and weak enough" for God to use.

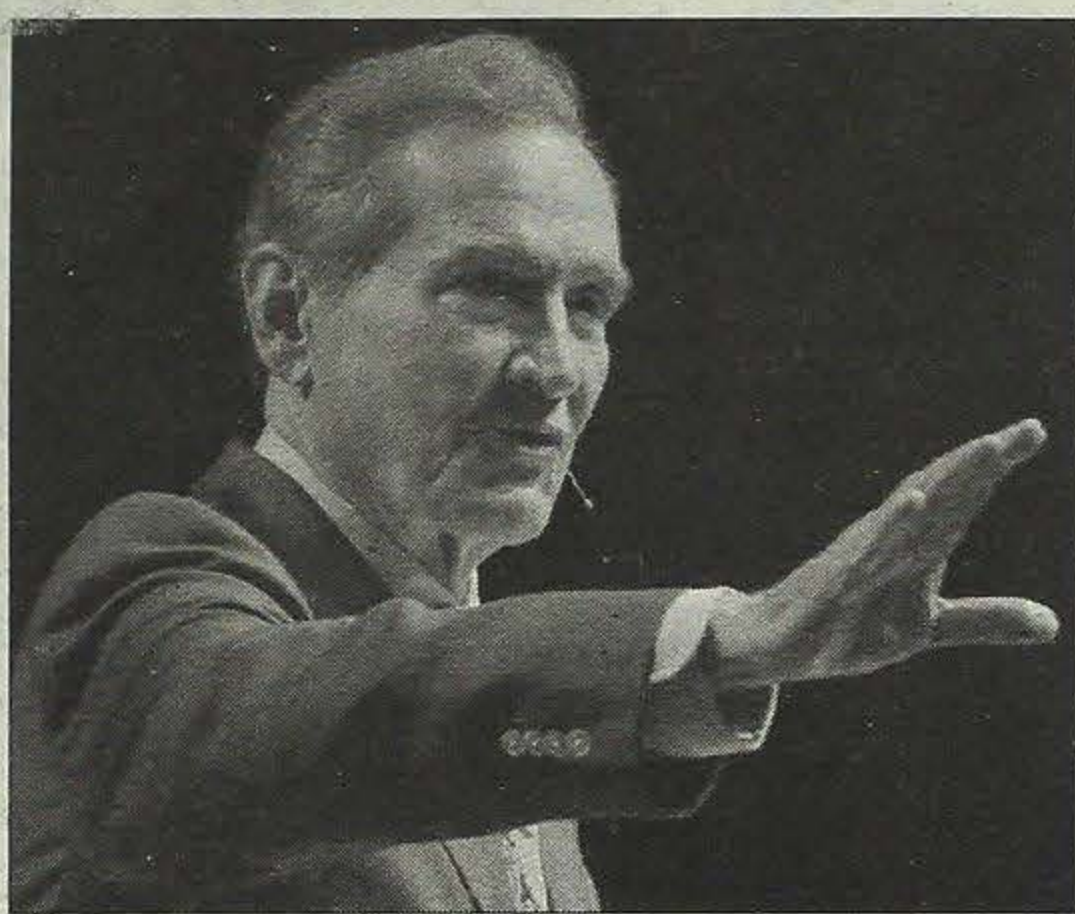
"I have seen men too big for God to use, but never one too small," Rogers said. "Gideon was not for what he was but for what God could make out of him."

Rogers noted that Gideon's vision resulted directly from his encounter with God.

"We have so many preachers who are living lives of desperation, drawing their breath, drawing their salary, waiting for retirement," he said. "They need to get a fresh vision of Almighty God. Never has there been a day, an age, or an opportunity to preach the Word of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ like there is today."

**Jerry Tidwell**

Jerry Tidwell, pastor of



**ADRIAN ROGERS** exhorts pastors during the 2005 Southern Baptist Pastors Conference at the Gaylord Entertainment Center in Nashville.

Ellendale Baptist Church in Bartlett, described his church's G.R.O.W. (God Rewards Our Work) ministry. He said the concept follows the same natural line as the reality of creation: sowing and reaping.

Many believe that an organized outreach is not necessary, Tidwell said. "I tell them theoretically, you're right, but practically you're wrong."

Christians are five times more likely to witness on a daily basis if they have some sort of organization, Tidwell said, adding that G.R.O.W. gives a framework for outreach.

"God's still at work, and if we are out there doing our part, God will give us the harvest," he said.

## Other speakers

Johnny Hunt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Woodstock, Ga., said evangelistic churches are led by evangelistic pastors unafraid to move toward simplicity, simply preaching the gospel of Christ.

Hunt spoke from Acts 8, in which Philip was led into the desert in the middle of the day, an unlikely destination but a place where he was ordained to meet someone who needed to hear the gospel.

"I have heard pastors question whether or not they should

go to a church because they don't know if the church has an evangelism program in place," he said. "I say to them, that's exactly why they need you, to come in and be evangelistic and set the model."

Mac Brunson, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas noted that many ministers desperately seek a friend as they face trials and tribulations.

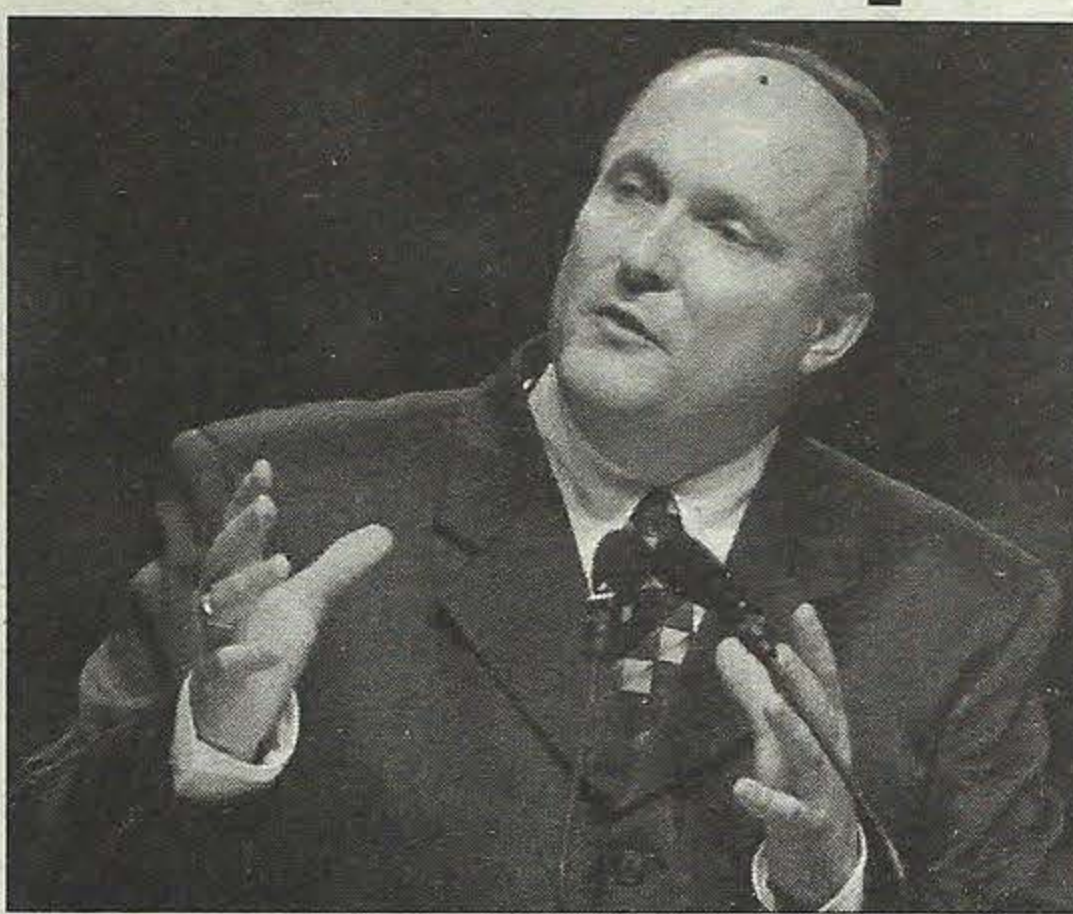
Many pastors who are "the most committed to ministry are those who are the least concerned about [the hurting], he said. He preached from II Timothy 1 in which the apostle Paul, who is imprisoned, seeks encouragement during his time of need yet is abandoned by most fellow believers.

"We won't even stop in the halls and speak to those ... who might not support our image," Brunson said. "God save us for refusing to minister to ministers."

Ergun Caner, a dean at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va., urged pastors not to choose popularity over power.

Jerry Falwell, in his first outside engagement since being hospitalized in May, focused on having a message, a mission, and a vision.

Falwell, pastor of Thomas



**JERRY TIDWELL**, pastor of Ellendale Baptist Church, Bartlett, shares the G.R.O.W. evangelism strategy. — Photos by John Swain

Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., said the message for Baptists included several fundamental beliefs such as the inspiration and infallibility of Scripture, the deity of Christ, and the "substitutionary" atonement of Christ for all men.

Preaching from II Peter 1, Voddie Baucham of Spring, Texas, said Southern Baptists "are to be ready to give a reasoned response to anyone who asks us 'Why do you choose to believe the Bible?'"

The answer, he said, is "because it is a reliable collection of historical documents seen by eye witnesses during the lifetime of other eye witnesses. They report to us supernatural events, and those events took place in fulfillment of specific prophecies."

Roy Fish, professor of evangelism at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, exhorted pastors to "preach Christ."

Southern Baptists "seem to be losing a sizable portion of our evangelistic passion," Fish said, noting pastors also can get caught up in defending the gospel rather than preaching it.

As Fish concluded his sermon, he was honored with a video and ovation for his 40 years as evangelism professor at

Southwestern. Fish was presented a check for \$31,000, collected from former students and others in honor of him.

Jerry Vines, pastor of First Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Fla., said true satisfaction comes only from Jesus.

Don Miller of Fort Worth, Texas, encouraged Southern Baptists to pray simply and with a tithe of their time — two hours and 40 minutes a day.

"You must want to become a prayer warrior before you ever become one," he said. "There are no instant prayer warriors."

Former Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore spoke on the importance of acknowledging God, even in adverse situations.

Moore was ousted as Alabama's highest judge in 2004 after refusing to remove a monument of the Ten Commandments he had erected in Alabama's state judicial building in Montgomery. The famed memorial was on display in Nashville in the exhibit hall during the Pastors Conference and SBC annual meeting.

Preaching from II Timothy 1, Alabama evangelist Junior Hill said anyone involved in ministry must deal with the discouragement of difficulties, the danger of diversions, and the disgrace of disqualification.

"You are headed for a life of hardness," Hill said. "Serving Jesus is a rather difficult task. If you haven't discovered it yet, get ready it is coming down your path."

## Officers elected

Bryant Wright, pastor of Johnson's Ferry Baptist Church, Atlanta, was elected president of the 2006 Pastors Conference.

Also elected were Doug Munton, pastor of First Baptist Church in O'Fallon, Ill., vice president; and Gary Urich, pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church in Bolivar, Mo., secretary. □ — This article contains reporting by Stella Prather, Jennifer Rash, Grace Thornton, Lisa Watson, and Erin Webster.

# avoid 'Titanic' mistake, Whitten says in convention sermon

by Cartledge  
al Recorder (N.C.)

NASHVILLE — Southern Baptists remain faithful to the conservative message to avoid making a "Titanic" mistake, Ken Whitten told messengers at his convention sermon at the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting here.

Whitten, senior pastor of Idlewild Baptist Church in Tampa, Fla., said the Titanic was thought to be unsinkable, but unsinkable did the unthinkable.

Drawing analogies between Paul's wreck in Acts 27, the sinking of the Titanic, and the Southern Baptist Convention, Whitten said the Titanic's makers made the mistake of dividing the ship into compartments, rather than making it as a unified whole. When an individual, family, church, or denomination is compartmentalized, they will sink and capsize, he said.

The "conservative resurgence" saved Southern Baptists from sinking, Whitten said. The movement never was about power, politics, or position, he said, but always about integrity, about "keeping a denominational ship afloat."

A denomination can't have literature and schools and pulpits going in different directions, he said. The "tongue in your mouth and the tongue in your shoes" have to go in the right direction, he said, or else "you'll make a Titanic mistake."

Whitten said Southern Baptist seminaries had stopped teaching that the Bible was authoritative by the late 1950s, using "doublespeak" and "holy jargon" to disguise what they were really teaching. "The preservation of a denomination" resulted from people who recognized that lack of integrity, he said.

The question for the current generation is not inerrancy, Whitten said, but "do we believe in the sufficiency of God's Word?" It is not whether the Bible is

inerrant and infallible, he said, but "whether we have integrity is relevant and believable."

"Our great captain" is asking whether we will rescue those who are sinking and perishing, Whitten said.

In the story recounted in Acts 27, Paul gave four warnings, Whitten said: warnings against doubting, drifting, discarding, and despairing. Paul had counseled against sailing at that time of year, but the captain doubted him. After running into a storm, the ship was left drifting and the crew started discarding cargo, food, and the ship's tackle. Ultimately, they despaired for their lives.

Whitten warned against the dangers of contemporary believers doubting God, drifting away from the Bible, discarding core values and worship practices, and despairing of hope. To counteract the dangers, Paul threw out four anchors, Whitten said: the anchors of God's presence, purpose, promise, and provision.

God has used Southern Baptists to throw out those anchors, Whitten said, listing Southern Baptist authors who have promoted God's presence and God's purpose, and a roll call of SBC presidents and supporters who have "held to the infallibility, inerrancy, and full plenary truth" of the Bible as God's promise, rather than compromising just to keep people together. "I'd rather have 15,000 people here in unity loving each other with one purpose in mind reaching people for Christ than 45,000 people fighting each other any day," he said.

Whitten listed evangelists and pastors to illustrate Southern Baptist efforts to declare God's provision of salvation.

Southern Baptists might not all agree on literature or worship style or what to call Sunday School, Whitten said, but they can agree that "God has taken a denomination and turned it around ... to rescue the perishing and care for the dying." □



## Statewide Events

◆ The annual **Tennessee Baptist Church Weekday Education Conference** will be held Friday and Saturday, Aug. 5-6, at Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Nashville. The conference features Willa Ruth Garlow, an internationally-known speaker, teacher, and child specialist from Oklahoma. In addition, five age group conferences and 13 elective conferences will be offered. For information contact, Barbara Owens, Tennessee Baptist Convention staff, at 1-800-558-2090, ext. 7905, (615) 371-7905, or bowens@tnbaptist.org.

## Churches

◆ **Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova**, will host a Kids' EE (Evangelism Explosion), Adult EE, and Hispanic EE Leadership Training for adults Monday - Friday, Aug. 1-5. For information on Kid's EE visit [www.kidsee.org](http://www.kidsee.org) or contact Kathy Lewis at (901) 347-5479.

◆ **Clinch River Baptist Church, Lake City**, held a one-day revival June 12 with Morris Anderson, evangelist of Maryville, as speaker. Five people made professions of faith.

◆ **Fort Hudson Baptist Church, Dyersburg**, will hold its 50th annual homecoming service Sunday, July 10, followed by lunch at noon. A song service will follow at 1:30



**THIS 33-MEMBER TEAM** of Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, Hermitage, prepare to leave for Western Europe on a 10-day mission venture. They will join other young adults from other churches including Hildale Baptist Church, Clarksville, to serve in five countries. They are, from left, first row, Alison Akard; Dwight Moody, associate pastor; Erin Norris; Amanda Toombs; Belynda Rogers; and Rachel Holland; second row, Nikki Foutch; Anna Wiginton; Angela Gibbons; and Courtney Graves; third row, Marilyn Bridger; Pat Griffin; Heather Binkley; Carolyn Fregoe; Ginny Stonecipher; Kathryn Riley; Courtney Fenwick; and Katie Moody; back rows, Phillip Kays; Joe Graves; Lisa Moody; Margaret Surita; Brett Coco; Dan Newell; Angela Coco; Angela Presley; Andrea Moore; Richard Presley; Dan Carl; Ray Bass; Jason Horn; and Alex Stevens. They will conduct surveys, backyard Bible clubs, softball clinics, worship services, and plant churches.

p.m., featuring Blessed Assurance, Angela Hollowell, and others.

◆ **First Baptist Church of Joelton** will hold its 90th anniversary celebration Sunday, July 10. A 9:30 a.m. service will feature Dean Anderson as speaker. The 11 a.m. service will feature Barry Voorhies as speaker. Covered dish meals will follow each service. For information, contact the church office at (615) 876-0527.

◆ **North Knoxville Baptist Church, Knoxville**, will hold concerts on Mondays,

July 11, 18, 25, and Aug. 1. Performers are The Greenes, Triumphant, The Whisnants, and Greater Vision. For more information, contact the church at (865) 525-8677 or [www.mynkbc.org](http://www.mynkbc.org).

## Leaders

◆ **Mike Bowers** of Bells has been called as pastor of Eastview Baptist Church, Huntingdon.

◆ First Baptist Church of Cleveland has called **Rob LaLiberte** as associate minister of music and worship. Coming to the church from the



**ELEVEN MEMBERS** of Walnut Grove Baptist Church, Cordova, served in Guadalajara, Mexico, June 4-11. They worked International Mission Board missionaries distributing the Scripture and tracts to 5,000 homes. They saw 44 people make professions of faith and 18 families request home Bible study. They are, from left, kneeling, Gene Nell; second row, Mic Bartemus, team leader; Courtney VanGunda; Lindsay Miller; David Haney; back row, Matt Land; Jonathan Brin; Ashley Iley; Steve Haney, pastor; Julie Wallis; Kim Milligan.

University of Mobile, Mobile, Ala., LaLiberte recently completed his worship leadership degree.

◆ **Jason D. Groe**, pastor of Milan Baptist Church, Maynardville, received his doctor of ministry degree May 13 from Luther Rice Seminary in Lithonia, Ga. He also holds a master of divinity degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C.

◆ New Vision Church of Athens ordained **Dillard Sneed Jr.** to the ministry June 12. Sneed accepted Christ and was baptized in 2003 by the church.

## Schools

◆ **Belmont University**,

Nashville, won the Atlantic Sun Conferences' All-Academic Trophy June 14 for fourth consecutive year. The award is given annually to the conference school with the greatest percentage of student athletes earning a GPA of 3.0 or higher at the end of the academic year. Of Belmont's student athletes, 152 or 100 percent received Academic All-Conference honors the 2004-05 school year. Sports, sponsored by Atlantic Sun Conference, include cross-country running, soccer, women's volleyball, basketball, tennis, golf, softball, and track and field.

## NOBTS, SBTS graduate folks with Tennessee connections

For Baptist and Reflector

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISVILLE — The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky., and New Orleans (La.) Baptist Theological Seminary held graduations recently.

NOBTS graduated the following students with Tennessee ties (the school sent name, current position, home church in most cases, and degree) —

Chad Crawford, youth minister, First Baptist Church, New Orleans, La., First Baptist Church, Bolivar, master of arts in Christian education; Matthew Moore, North Cleveland Baptist Church, Cleveland, master of arts in Christian education;

Mark Murphy, First Baptist Church, Cleveland, master of divinity; Philip Wells, Clinch River Baptist Church, Lake City, master of divinity.



MOORE



MURPHY



WELLS

SBTS graduated the following students with Tennessee ties (the school sent name, home church in most cases, and degree) —

James P. Alsop II, Belle Aire Baptist Church, Murfreesboro, doctor of education; Matthew A. Brown, Central Baptist Church, Martin, master of divinity; Frederick Cardoza II, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Oneida, doctor of education; Cheryl D. Coffman, Westwood Baptist Church, Cleveland, doctor of education;

Benjamin R. Cripps,

in Christian education; Jason C. Hayes, First Baptist Church, Concord, Knoxville, master of divinity;

Twyla Fagan Hernandez, College Grove, doctor of philosophy; Scott D. Hood, Beaver Dam Baptist Church, Knoxville, master of arts in Christian education; Erik Juntti, Haywood Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, master of arts in Christian education; Steven Kearfott, Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova, doctor of philosophy;

David B. Kruse, Stevens Street Baptist Church,

Cookeville, master of divinity in Christian education; Gregory S. Love, Leewood Baptist Church, Memphis, doctor of ministry; William D. Marshall, Cornerstone Community Church, Jackson, master of divinity; Mark S. Martin, Smoky View Baptist Church, Maryville, master of divinity;

Sean E. Maxwell, Stuart Heights Baptist Church, Chattanooga, bachelor of science in biblical studies; Timothy J. Mercer, Gladeville Baptist Church, Gladeville, master of divinity; Christopher S. Mills, First Baptist Church, Hendersonville, master of divinity; Stephen M. Moore, First Baptist Church, Goodlettsville, master of arts in worship;

Chris Morgan, Wallace Memorial Baptist Church, Knoxville, master of divinity; David J. Rader, Sevier Heights Baptist Church,

Knoxville, bachelor of science in biblical studies; Valeri Rader, Grace Baptist Church, Knoxville, bachelor of science in biblical studies; Ben Shaffer, First Baptist Church, Knoxville, master of divinity;

Allen D. Summey, Sevier Baptist Church, Clinton, master of divinity; Gary Thompson, Cherry Hill Baptist Church, White House, bachelor of arts; Lemuel Wade, Glenwood Baptist Church, Nashville, doctor of ministry; Garry S. Weaver, West Broadway Baptist Church, Lenoir City, master of divinity;

Stephanie R. Weems, Sevier Baptist Church, Knoxville, master of music; James Wheelington, Bartlett Baptist Church, Bartlett, master of education; and Williams, Shelbyville Baptist Church, Shelbyville, master of divinity. □



# BC, Nashville's 'passion' featured during WMU meeting

Marcia Knox  
List and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Historic First Baptist Church here has a vision for Nashville as evidenced by its ongoing ministry in the city and especially the women of Nashville, according to three speakers during the June 19-20 SBC Woman's Mission Union missions celebration and annual meeting with a theme of "Pass on the vision," WMU members heard monies and challenges missionaries, agency s, and WMU leaders along the trio from First Baptist during the two-day meeting.

Representative Frank Lewis, Linda Leathers, The Door Ministry Director, and Sumrall Christian Women's Job Corps, Nashville, site coordinator.

The Next Door ministry created a passion of love of women, use there gaps in services women in need," Leathers, described the ministry to women who transitioned out of prostitution began with First Church's acquisition of an old property, (which was the former Anchor Inn for travelers and the Nashville Rescue Mission for homeless).

Leathers wanted to facilitate a transition to the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of women in crisis equipping them to develop a life of wholeness so we started meeting with the wardens of the city's prisons." According to Leathers, what church women found out was that once the door rolled open for the women inmates, it was not long before the door opened for the women to meet people who would take them back into the system.

First Church gave birth in the Downtown Ministry Center, a separate non-profit organization designed to meet the needs of women in crisis. The ministry Center now houses the Next Door Ministry and the CWJC in the former Anchor

The Next Door has over 200 volunteers who assist the women residents from prayer partners to mental health counselors, and the women residents also take classes from the CWJC on life skills, GED training, and computer skills among others. Both programs work together to assist the women.

In addition, the Next Door program provides Bible studies, personal physical fitness trainers, other assistance, and 30-hour a week jobs as well as a residence.

"We also found that 90 percent of the women that we helped were incarcerated for drugs, and that over 80 percent had been victims of abuse," Leathers noted. "These women needed more than just a band aide for help."

During the WMU annual meeting Leathers was presented the Dellanna West O'Brien Leadership Award for her work with the ministry center. The award is named in honor of O'Brien, a former executive director of WMU who is now retired.

Sumrall, who oversees the CWJC, told of more women who were crying out to the Lord especially those who have had unfortunate circumstances.

She also praised 12 "magnificent mission mommas" and other women who helped form the first CWJC in the state in 1997. Five years later, in 2000 when Sumrall's heart was called to inner city missions and God did not remove the passion, she took the job as the CWJC site coordinator.

The CWJC moved to the Downtown Ministry Center in 2003. Now through the CWJC, women are ministered to in Tennessee, which rates as the 9th highest poverty area in the United States. In Tennessee where 14.2 million people live in poverty 40 percent are women.

Both the Next Door and the CWJC are working together to raise up women in the city. Recently 15 women just graduated from the CWJC, and over 400 women have been served over the years. This year alone there were 119 graduates.

Lewis talked on what motivates First Church to stay downtown. "We are motivated by passion when we look at the miracles," he explained.

Lewis told the story of the "Wild Praying Women of First Church" who met in 2002 to pray about that possible addition to the property. The women's prayer group soon grew from 4 to 100 women. "We knew that God was going to bring a miracle," he said.

According to Lewis, the church looked at a community needs assessment to start something in ministry. "We go focused, and the congregation prayed and sought God for the



**JANET HOFFMAN**, attending her final WMU annual meeting as president, joins with the 1,400 who attended sessions June 19-20 at First Baptist Church, Nashville.

ministry. We began to raise money for the purchase of the building for the Ministry Center for Crisis. The praying group of women took the needed steps, and we witnessed a miracle with the formation of the Downtown Ministry Center, which houses the Next Door and the CWJC."

Lewis also described the church's ministry to the homeless through encouragement to those that attend from the Nashville Union Rescue Mission. He admitted that if the congregation moved, he and the church might not deal with as many problems that come with the downtown area.

"God called us to be here," he said. "Call it passion, interest, and anxiety. It's God's call, and you can do it from this steeple."

## Leaders speak

Attendees heard words of challenge and encouragement from **James Porch, executive director, Tennessee Baptist Convention**; Jerry Rankin, president, International Mission Board; and Bob Reccord, president, North American Mission Board.

## NAMB missionaries

Arkansas missionary Diana Lewis shared her passion for those who live in poverty and for matching people in the pews with mission opportunities in their own back yards.

"God has given us in Arkansas a passion for those in our state who are lost without a Savior," Lewis said. "God's desire is for all of them to know Him."

West Virginia missionary Debbie Cannada explained how she and her husband, Norman, reach out to non-Christians, welcoming sinners as they are. "We're fishers of men," she said. "You catch 'em, He'll clean 'em!"

## From IMB

Rebekah Naylor, a missionary surgeon to India for more than 30 years, described the satisfaction she has ministering to people through Bangalore Baptist Hospital and in church planting.

With almost 1.1 billion people, predominantly Hindu and Muslim, India is the world's second largest nation and its largest democracy, Naylor said.

"God planted in my heart a passion for the people of India," Naylor said. God answered prayer in marvelous ways, ultimately giving Naylor management responsibility for the hospital. In that role she fostered an environment where doctors and staff prayed regularly and shared their faith freely.

"What is passion?" she asked. "That for which you are willing to sacrifice anything, even your life. ... Perhaps my greatest joy comes from being a partner in church planting."

Southern Baptist worker Carrie McDonnall, whose husband, David, was slain in a terrorist attack in Iraq just over a year ago, spoke of the many opportunities God has given her to glorify Him since the attack, which also took the lives of three other Southern Baptist humanitarian workers.

Acknowledging that the past year has been a time of "recovering physically and learning to live with grief," McDonnall emphasized, "We are all called to glorify our Lord."

She said she would have been "just fine" remaining one of the many "nameless, faceless" people on the WMU's prayer list. But God had something else in mind, she said. "God will be exalted ... and His glory will fill the whole earth."

## Final challenge

Outgoing WMU President Janet Hoffman of Farmersville, La., challenged participants to have a passion for missions and to pass it on to the next generation. A passion for missions is always only one generation away from being extinguished or from explosive growth, she added.

Hoffman urged the women to fan the spark in their hearts



**CARRIE McDONNALL** spoke during the annual meeting of WMU held at First Baptist Church, Nashville. McDonnall is a worker for the Southern Baptist Convention's International Mission Board. Her husband, David, was killed in Iraq on March 15, 2004. — Photos by Justin Veneman

for God's mission. "Stir it up daily in your intimate time with Christ, and pass it on."

## New president

Kaye Miller of Immanuel Baptist Church of Little Rock, Ark., was elected president of Woman's Missionary Union during the meeting (see additional story on page 18). Miller, president of the Arkansas WMU since 2002, is the daughter of Harland and Jo Willis, who were medical missionaries to Thailand. □ — Also contributing to this report were Tony Cartledge, William Perkins, Bill Webb, John Loudat, and Charlie Warren.

## Korean Baptists meet at FHBC

Baptist Press

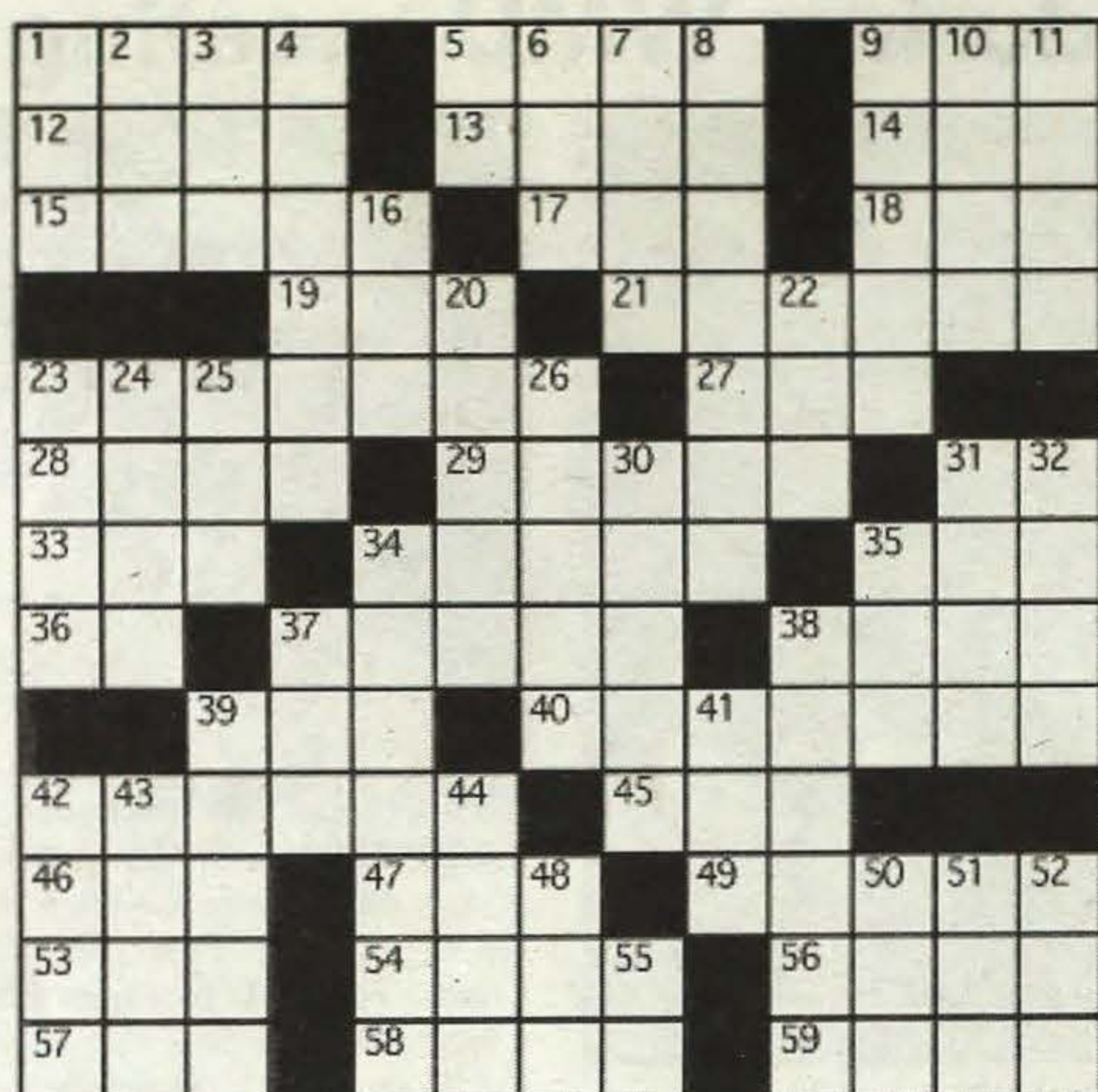
NASHVILLE — A new president, executive director, and increased budget due to the purchase of a headquarters building were among matters addressed during the annual meeting of the Council of Korean Southern Baptists in America, held in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting.

More than 730 people registered for the sessions at Forest Hills Baptist Church here. Some meetings also were held at the Tennessee Baptist Convention Baptist Center in Brentwood.

Ki Tak Kim, pastor of Korean Baptist Church of Sonoma County, Calif., was elected council president. **Seong Bin Park, pastor of Korean Baptist Church of Memphis, was elected first vice president.**

During the meeting Korean Baptists honored Choi Chi Lee, outgoing executive director of the organization encompassing 761 congregations and adopted a budget of \$243,000 budget for 2005-06, an increase of \$14,000 over last year. □





See answers on page 19

Barbour Publishing

## ACROSS

1. "A stormy wind shall \_\_\_\_ it" (Ezek. 13:11)
5. "Jonah was gone down \_\_\_\_ the sides of the ship" (Jon. 1:5)
9. Ration
12. "My cup runneth \_\_\_\_" (Ps. 23:5)
13. "Every one had \_\_\_\_ faces" (Ezek. 1:6)
14. "A vineyard of \_\_\_\_ wine" (Isa. 27:2)
15. Prevent
17. To be announced, abbr.
18. "Nathan the prophet and Shimei, and \_\_\_\_" (1 Kings 1:8)
19. "Prince of the power of the \_\_\_\_" (Eph. 2:2)
21. "Neither will I \_\_\_\_ an offering at your hand" (Mal. 1:10)
23. "Those virgins arose, and \_\_\_\_ their lamps" (Matt. 25:7)
27. "The \_\_\_\_ was come to the place of the arrow" (1 Sam. 20:37)
28. Charged particles
29. The disciple who denied Christ
31. Interrogatory syllable
33. "I have stretched out my hand, and no \_\_\_\_ regarded" (Prov. 1:24)
34. "Number all the firstborn of the \_\_\_\_" (Num. 3:40)
35. Fruit drink
36. "The children of Gad called the altar \_\_\_\_" (Josh. 22:34)
37. "But ye are a chosen generation, a \_\_\_\_ priesthood" (1 Pet. 2:9)
38. Colored layer of the eye
39. "A third part shall be at the gate of \_\_\_\_" (2 Kings 11:6)
40. December 31
42. "They shall take up a lamentation for thee, and \_\_\_\_ over thee" (Ezek. 27:32)
45. Cup
46. "\_\_\_\_, even the ancient high places are our's in possession" (Ezek. 36:2)
47. Anger
49. "\_\_\_\_, Mahalaleel, Jered" (1 Chron. 1:2)
53. "Bring unto thee pure \_\_\_\_ olive beaten for the light" (Lev. 24:2)
54. "I went down into the garden of \_\_\_\_ to see the fruits of the valley" (Song of Sol. 6:11)
56. "He went into a city called \_\_\_\_" (Luke 7:11)
57. Sun, Sp.
58. Equipment

59. "And came to the strong hold of \_\_\_\_" (2 Sam. 24:7)

## DOWN

1. "Thy \_\_\_\_ and thy staff they comfort me" (Ps. 23:4)
2. "The serpent beguiled \_\_\_\_" (2 Cor. 11:3)
3. "The fishes that are taken in an evil \_\_\_\_" (Eccles. 9:12)
4. "The diviners... have told false \_\_\_\_" (Zech. 10:2)
5. "\_\_\_\_ they shall enter into my rest" (Heb. 4:3)
6. "\_\_\_\_ by might, nor by power" (Zech. 4:6)
7. Large wind instrument
8. "Unto them were committed the \_\_\_\_ of God" (Rom. 3:2)
9. "Cause me to understand wherein I have \_\_\_\_" (Job 6:24)
10. "\_\_\_\_ thou not silence" (Ps. 83:1)
11. Blue-pencil
16. Edge
20. "I will \_\_\_\_ it" (Philem. 19)
22. Auto
23. "I set him a \_\_\_\_" (Neh. 2:6)
24. "Whither have ye made a \_\_\_\_ to day" (1 Sam. 27:10)
25. "There was no room for them in the \_\_\_\_" (Luke 2:7)
26. "Thou shalt no \_\_\_\_ to offer the first of thy ripe fruits" (Exod. 22:29)
30. "Ziph, and \_\_\_\_, and Bealoth" (Josh. 15:24)
31. First garden
32. "Hairs of your \_\_\_\_ are all numbered" (Luke 12:7)
34. "Thou shalt seek me in the \_\_\_\_" (Job 7:21)
35. Latin expression of greeting
37. "Ye tithe mint and \_\_\_\_ and all manner of herbs" (Luke 11:42)
38. "The king's commandment was \_\_\_\_" (Dan. 3:22)
39. "I am \_\_\_\_ and despised" (Ps. 119:141)
41. Diving bird
42. East Asian country
43. "Uzzah and \_\_\_\_, the sons of Abinadab" (2 Sam. 6:3)
44. "That was the \_\_\_\_ Light" (John 1:9)
48. Approximate time of arrival, abbr.
50. "I tell you \_\_\_\_; but rather division" (Luke 12:51)
51. "Meet the Lord in the \_\_\_\_" (1 Thess. 4:17)
52. Compass point
55. Twelfth-grader, abbr.

## During Crossover 2005

## Last visit pays off for Bradford couple

By Michael Foust  
Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — It was the last house on the street, and the last visit of the day. Steve and Jeal Atwood, two Southern Baptists from Bradford, Tenn., were about to experience a divine appointment.

As part of Crossover door-to-door visitation June 18, the Atwoods had combed every house on Hillside Road in north Nashville, planting seeds for Christ but seeing no decisions for Christ.

Minutes from ending their day, they knocked on one more door — this one of a 67-year-old widower who had lost his wife a month earlier.

After Steve Atwood guided him through the FAITH evangelistic outline, the man — tears streaming down his face — prayed to receive Christ.

But the visit nearly didn't take place — the man's address wasn't on the official visitation list. Earlier in the day the Atwoods felt led to sweep both sides of the street and visit every house.

"Isn't that something?" Jeal Atwood asked. "... He's the last one we talked to."

A local church, Inglewood Baptist, plans to conduct a follow-up visit with the man, who said his wife was also a Christian.

"He's lonely and he's grieving, and he wants to join his wife someday," Steve Atwood, pastor of Mt. Pleasant Baptist in Bradford, said.

The Atwoods visited approximately 20 houses on the street.

At one house a woman said her son was sent to jail that morning and her whole family needed God. At another house, a woman said she was interested in hearing about Christianity but was pressed for time and needed to leave. Neither visit resulted in a decision but seeds were planted.

When they encountered a house with no one home, the Atwoods left a Bible on the doorstep.

Local media coverage of Crossover had been heavy, and many of Nashville's residents knew ahead of time that thousands of Southern Baptists were going door to door.

One elderly lady opened the door and told the Atwoods, "Y'all must be the Baptists." She was a Free Will Baptist and had been told by her

daughter earlier in the day, "the Southern Baptist everywhere."

The Atwoods began the day like many other Crossover teams — with a few jitters and butterflies.

Before stepping out of their car on their first visit, Jeal asked, "Are you going to talk?"

"Whatever you'd like," Steve responded.

On one of their first visits, they encountered a surprise.

"There's a major dog problem," Jeal said out loud.

They survived.

Bill Bearden, a 77-year-old member of Inglewood Baptist, was the third member of the team and the driver for the taxiing the Atwoods around the neighborhood.

A longtime Southern Baptist, Bearden jokingly said he had been to every Southern Baptist home in the neighborhood.

"Methods change, but the basic message of winning people to Christ hasn't changed," Bearden said. "... Go for it, cultivate 'em and get 'em to church."

On this day, the Atwoods hoped they did all three.

## Conference reorganizes; Couey elected president

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — The Great Commission should compel Southern Baptists to conduct ministry among visually impaired men and women, Paul Ferrara said during a reorganization meeting of the Southern Baptist Conference of the Blind June 18-19 here.

During the meeting, the conference elected Charles Couey, a master of divinity student at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., as president and Ferrara as vice president. Couey, who helped lead the organization when it was active in the early 1990s, and Ferrara will serve on the conference's constitution committee along with Randall Beasley.

"The Great Commission commands us to minister to blind people," said Ferrara, a Ph.D. student at Southern. "... The Great Commission is very clear: We are to teach. We are to preach, baptize, and do everything else that it says for us to do to make disciples of sighted people and of blind people."

When doing ministry among blind people, Christians must remember blindness is not caused by a person's sin but is the result of God's mysterious providence so that He can accomplish His purposes, Ferrara said.

"God loves blind people and made them blind for purposes

we often can't understand," he said. "... He makes them the way He wants to make them for a particular reason for some particular work He wants them to do."

Believers should feel an urgency to provide Braille and audio resources to blind people because many groups advocating false gospels produce a large quantity of Braille and audio resources proclaiming their faith, Ferrara said. For example, Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and the Unitarian Universalist Association all offer materials for the visually impaired, he said.

"If we don't minister to blind people, someone else will," Ferrara said. "... It's not up to us to make sure that every blind person gets saved. That's not what God calls us to do."

"But we need to make sure that the resources are available in one form or another because it's only fair; it's only right that if any average individual can walk into a bookstore and get a resource and buy it and walk out in 20 seconds, a blind person should be able to do it."

In addition to electing officers and forming a constitution committee, the conference adopted five objectives:

- Propose opportunities for fellowship among blind members of Southern Baptist churches.
- Provide opportunities for

blind Southern Baptists to develop leadership through planning and participating in conference projects and activities.

• Encourage blind members of Southern Baptist churches to participate actively in the total life of their church.

• Make Southern Baptists aware of the many blind persons among their church communities and encourage Baptist leaders to make materials and ministries available to blind individuals.

• Offer assistance with development and distribution of educational and evangelistic materials for the use of individuals.

Churches need members who can participate in ministries each week, said.

Whether those members are sighted or blind should make no difference. But for us to make a difference we have to have available to us resources. And they can be available if we put enough prayer and effort. □ — David Roark

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# Nashville site encourages several Tennesseans to attend SBC

Connie Davis Bushey  
Artist and Reflector

NASHVILLE — Several Tennessee Baptists attended the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention last week because it was held here and thus, relatively close to their homes. Wayne and Tonda Strong of Colonial Heights Baptist Church, Kingsport, attended the annual meeting because it was within driving distance. This was their first annual meeting to attend. Wayne, a retired accountant who worked at Eastman Chemical Company, said the spirit of the meeting was good, "like the Tennessee Baptist Convention." He and Tonda attend the TBC annual meeting and TBC Executive Board meetings, of which Tonda is a member. He was glad motions were made following a period of time before anyone

could speak to them. That allows for "processing" by messengers, he said.

"I think it's real important for laypeople to be involved in the convention. The more lay involvement you have the better the convention will be — the Southern Baptist Convention and the Tennessee Baptist Convention — because we're the soldiers you know," said Wayne Strong.

Brian Smith, pastor, Valley View Baptist Church, Cleveland, said "when it's closer it's more conducive to going." He broke away despite the fact the church was holding Vacation Bible School at the same time.

Earl Farris, pastor, First Baptist Church, Georgetown, and Richard Bray, pastor, First Baptist Church, Woodbury, both said the close location of the SBC annual meeting led them to attend.

Layman Ron Stallings of First Baptist Church, Bolivar, attended the annual meeting and brought his family since

it was in Tennessee. He said he probably would have eventually traveled to an annual meeting, but the location enabled him to come this year.

"Since it was in Tennessee we wanted to come and see all of the inner workings," he said, referring to the denomination.

Dana Mathewson, pastor, Buffat Heights Baptist Church, Knoxville, said he attended along with his wife, Jennifer, because of the location and his participation encouraged him to begin attending regularly. He said he hasn't attended the annual meetings for some years.

He benefited from renewing many acquaintances at the meeting and making connections with people. "I plan to come again," said Mathewson.

Marty Comer, pastor, Sand Ridge Baptist Church, Lexington, and member of the Tennessee Baptist Convention

Executive Board, agreed with Mathewson. He also hasn't attended the annual meeting for several years and plans to reconsider that decision. He noted the summer is such a busy time for churches and families. This year he and his wife have a new baby.

However, he said, "it has been a good week." He has renewed acquaintances which are 20 years old and had at least one serendipitous experience. While visiting with a staff member of the North American Mission Board, Comer learned the man's parents are from a village in Mexico where Sand Ridge Church serves regularly.

Comer also said he believes Nashville is a great site for the SBC annual meeting. People in general are drawn to Nashville as a tourist site and Southern Baptists are drawn because of all of the SBC offices and entities located here, he said. □

## Number of Crossover decisions reach nearly 2,600 and could climb

See Weeks  
ist Press

NASHVILLE — For Tim Hill, view at the Tennessee State grounds could be described in one word — heavenly.

This is kind of a microcosm of what we've got [in Tennessee]," Hill, an ethnic church specialist with the Tennessee Baptist Convention. "We've got a lot of Africans, Asians, Hispanics, Arabs, Russians, and others — we've got them all here. A snapshot of heaven is to be



HILL

international festival sponsored by the Nashville Baptist Association and Tennessee Baptist Convention was one of 100 evangelistic events held June 18 as part of Crossover Nashville, the evangelistic thrust preceding each

year's Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting. Six other Baptist associations along with the North American Mission Board and LifeWay Christian Resources also were Crossover sponsors.

Within a 40-mile radius of downtown Nashville, Crossover events, including block parties, street evangelism, sports clinics, neighborhood prayerwalking, and door-to-door visitation, were conducted by nearly 10,000 volunteers from hundreds of Southern Baptist churches across the country.

More than 2,500 professions of faith in Christ have been recorded as a result of the Crossover efforts, according to records submitted by 80 of the 100 venues reporting to the Nashville Baptist Association office by June 19 along with reports from the door-to-door Crossover thrust initiated by SBC President Bobby Welch.

The international festival, in the fairgrounds' Vaughan Building, featured cultural exhibits by about a dozen ethnic groups

as well as musical and folk dance performances in native regalia and international cuisine. The festival, which attracted more than 3,000 people, also included a free bag of groceries as well as free haircuts and hand massages.

"All of them have worked together in spite of language differences and cultural differences to put this on," Hill said of the volunteers, "and I'm real proud of them."

More importantly, Hill said, the highlight of the festival was marked by more than 100 professions of faith in Christ recorded during the four-hour event.

In east Nashville, the vision for a new church start was birthed as approximately 80 professions of faith in Christ were recorded during a three-hour block party at Eastland Baptist Church co-hosted by volunteers from Brentwood Baptist Church south of Nashville.

Activities for the 300-plus registered guests included musical concerts, interpretative dance, art displays from South Africa, Brazil, and Indonesia, sack races and hula hoop compe-



PASTOR CHRIS ROYALTY of 24 Church, Pleasant View, visits with Donald Battiatto and family members at the church's block party held June 18 as part of Crossover 2005. More than 600 people attended the event hosted by a congregation that is just six months old. — Photo by Lonnie Wilkey

titions, as well as free food and refreshments.

Tony Higgins, a church planting missionary with the Nashville Baptist Association, said the block party marked the first outreach efforts for the new Eastland Community Church, which plans to launch worship services for its multi-ethnic congregation Sept. 18 on the Eastland Baptist Church campus.

"It was beautiful to see," Higgins said of local residents, both young and old, from neighboring white, black, and Hispanic communities fellowshiping together.

Saturday also marked the end of a weeklong street witnessing outreach by NAMB's Inner City Evangelism (ICE) teams. About 20 ICE team members from Georgia, Tennessee, Illinois, Kansas, Texas, West Virginia, and North Carolina walked the streets of Nashville sharing the gospel June 13-18.

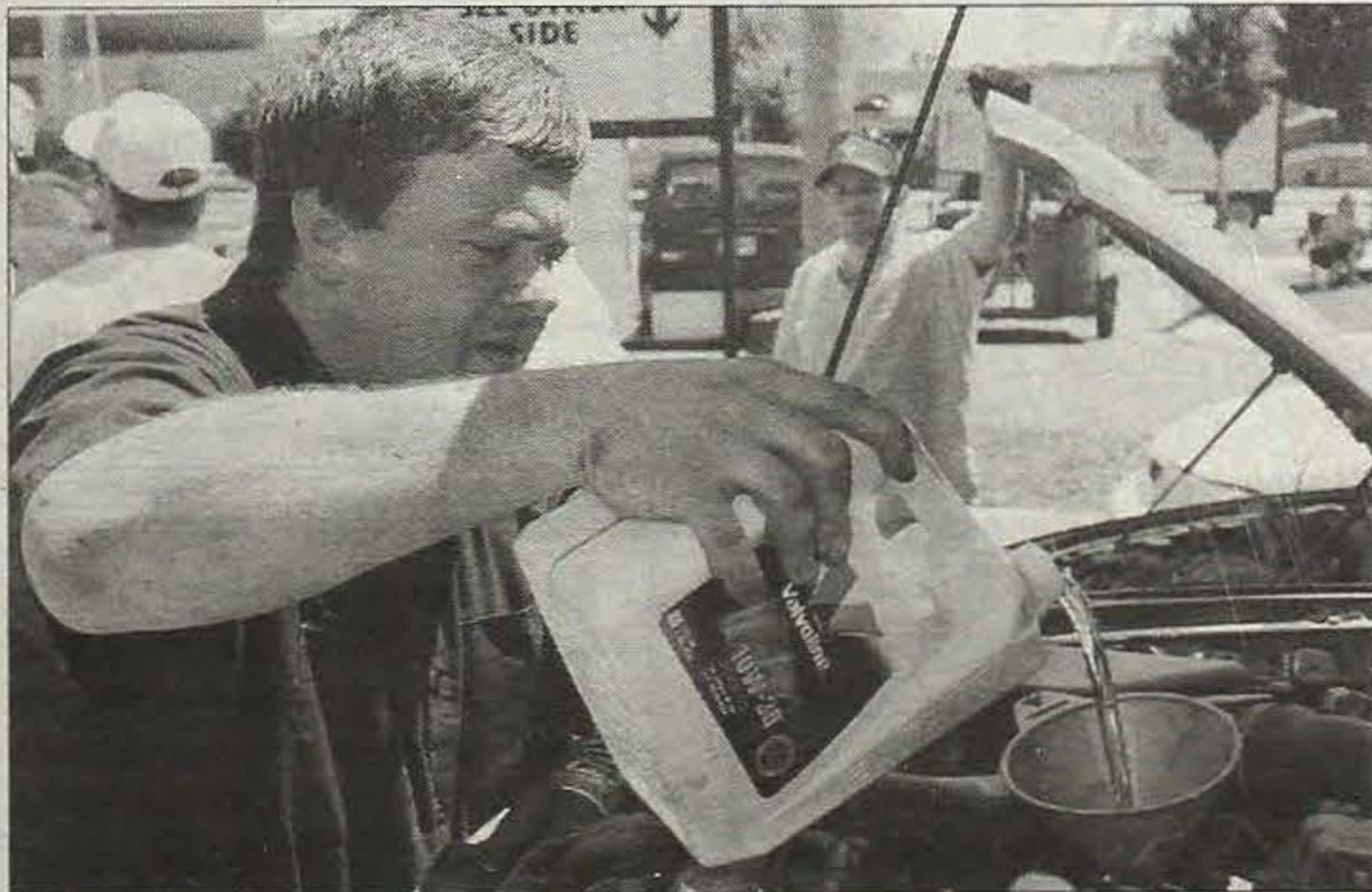
Victor Benavides, coordinator of NAMB's Inner City Evangelism efforts, said 716 professions of faith were recorded in communities near Shelby Avenue Baptist Church and the Church of the Messiah on LaFayette Street.

For Mary Donegan, Woman's Missionary Union director at Old New Hope Baptist Church in Fairview, Tenn., Crossover helped mobilize about 20 people, ages 5 to 80, in their small church for ministry. "We told them we were giving this to show the love of Jesus because He gave His all for us," Donegan said.

"We had a blast. The Spirit was there. It was awesome. There were some seeds planted." □



H. RIDER Karl Plankenhorn of First Baptist Church at the Lakeland, Fla., gives a ride to Sylema, 12, a resident at the Good campus of Tennessee Baptist Children's Homes on June 17. He was one of several FAITH riders who gave rides to residents. FAITH riders were in the area for Crossover held prior to the SBC. — Photo by Bob Carey



THOMAS BUSH of Grace Baptist Church, Tullahoma, ministered June 18 by changing the oil at a Crossover event held at First Baptist Church, Nashville. He was one of several from his church who checked out fluid levels in cars while also sharing the gospel. — Photo by John Swain



## Tennessee leads in number of SBC messengers

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Tennessee Baptists sent the largest number of messengers, 1,955 according to unofficial totals, of the 11,641 who registered for the June 21-22 Southern Baptist Convention's annual meeting here.

Other leading states, according to unofficial totals, were Georgia, with 1,021 messengers; Kentucky, 989; Alabama, 857; North Carolina, 814; Florida, 686; Mississippi, 671; South Carolina, 579; and Texas, 519.

The number of messengers registering online was 9,225, according to the unofficial totals, with 7,407 of those registrants present in Nashville.

A total of 4,976 churches were represented, according to the unofficial totals.

Last year's registration total in Indianapolis was 8,600.

SBC Registration Secretary Jim Wells said official totals for the 2005 convention will be available in mid-July □

## Seminary donates rice to Nashville Rescue Mission

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — While it is common for exhibitors at each year's Southern Baptist Conven-

tion to construct displays, never before has a large portion of such a display been eatable. But the exhibit built by Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, was constructed mostly of 25 pound bags of rice — 300 of them.

Southwestern erected a 10' x 20' display booth resembling a U.S. Army special operations base camp. The booth was built with materials such as camouflage netting, rough-cut lumber poles, ammo cans, and sandbags. The theme for the booth demonstrated that Southwestern Seminary is training men and women to take the gospel to places in the world where it has never been heard before, or "behind the lines."

Greg Tomlin and Brent Thompson, Southwestern's staff members, led a team that designed the booth in-house. The team estimated that the booth would require about 300 sandbags for it to have an authentic look.

"As we were drawing up plans for the booth it occurred to us that, instead of putting sand in the sandbags, we would fill the bags with rice. Then, after the SBC annual meeting, we could donate the rice to the Nashville Rescue Mission," Tomlin said.

The seminary purchased all the rice it needed — 7,500 pounds—through Riceland Foods of Stuttgart, Ark. Then it purchased 300 new, but empty, sandbags from a bag manufacturer in California that supplies the U.S. Army. Inside each

green, Army-issue sandbag used to construct the low walls of the exhibit was a 25-pound bag of high-quality rice.

When the SBC annual meeting drew to a close June 22, Tomlin and his team divided the rice from the walls of the display booth to be distributed to the Nashville Rescue Mission, the Union Rescue Mission in Little Rock, Ark., and the Union Gospel Mission in Fort Worth.

As they drove home from Nashville, they stopped by the rescue missions to drop off 100 25-pound bags of rice in each location.

"We hope to show that at the heart of Southwestern Seminary's educational mission is providing for people's deepest and most immediate needs. Of course, the people who eat the rice will be hungry again physically, but our mission is to offer them Christ in order to satisfy their spiritual hunger forever."

Rader Walker is the executive director of the Nashville Rescue Mission which, according to its web site, served 452,134 meals and provided 194,516 nights of lodging to the Nashville homeless population in 2004.

"The Nashville Rescue Mission is excited to benefit from the generosity of Southwestern Seminary," Walker said. "Rice is always something we can use in serving more than 450,000 meals this year to Nashville's poor, hungry, and homeless. We greatly appreciate Southwestern Seminary reaching out to help minister to the needs of our city's needy." □

## MK is new WMU president

Baptist Press

NASHVILLE — Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Wanda S. Lee introduced the newly elected president of national WMU and expressed appreciation for Southern Baptists' support of North American and international missionaries during her report to the Southern Baptist Convention here June 21.

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### Medical Mission Trip Opportunity

Forest Hills Baptist Church in Nashville is sponsoring a medical mission trip to Kenya, Oct. 8-19. We still have space for a doctor and a pharmacist. Please e-mail Ted Holmes at [tholmes@fhbc.org](mailto:tholmes@fhbc.org) for more information.

"For the first time in the history of WMU, an MK [missionary kid] has been elected to serve as president of national WMU," Lee said. WMU is an auxiliary of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Kaye Miller of Little Rock, Ark., was elected to succeed Janet Hoffman of Farmerville, La., as national WMU president during the WMU mission celebration and annual meeting June 19-20 at First Baptist Church in Nashville.

With nearly 1,400 in attendance, participants at the annual WMU event were challenged and inspired to grow closer in their relationship with Christ and to pass on their passion for missions.

Miller brings a lifetime of missions experiences to her new role as the 21st president of national WMU. She grew up in Thailand where her parents, Harlan and Jo Willis, served as medical missionaries for more than 20 years.

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — POSITIONS

Trinity Baptist Church, Bolivar, Tenn., is searching for a pianist and a music director. If you feel God leading you to us, please contact pastor Charles Jeter at (731) 658-2593. Or you may send your resume to Trinity Baptist Church c/o Search Committee, P.O. Box 41, Bolivar, TN 38008.

### MINISTRY

Spiritual formation and ministry coordinator: mature minister experienced as pastor, consultant, and lay leader seeks bivocational position in a middle Tennessee church. Prefer responsibility for organizing and guiding volunteer workers in church organization and mission ministries. E-mail [murchmin@aol.com](mailto:murchmin@aol.com).

### MINISTRY — STUDENT

Union Baptist Church, Lexington, Tenn., is accepting resumes for a part-time youth pastor. Please send to Aaron Armstrong, 330 Union Church Rd., Lexington, TN 38351 or e-mail to [ubcchesterfield@netscape.com](mailto:ubcchesterfield@netscape.com).

### MINISTRY — CHILDREN

Valley Grove Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tenn., is accepting resumes for a full-time associate pastor for children. Send resume to VGBC, Attn. Kim Spangler, 9000 Old Sevierville Pike, Knoxville, TN 37920

Calvary Baptist Church, Tuscaloosa, Ala., is accepting resumes for preschool/children's minister. Send resume to Calvary Baptist Church, 1121 Paul Bryant Dr., Tuscaloosa, AL 35401.

Miller has served as president of Arkansas WMU since 2002 and is the director of Acteens and Youth on Mission Immanuel Baptist Church, Little Rock, Ark.

Lee recognized and thanked Hoffman for the 13 years served on the WMU executive board, having been a vice president and recording secretary before serving as president the past five years. □

## CLASSIFIED

### MINISTRY — PASTOR

Pastor position. Harrison Ave Baptist Church, 1125 Harrison Ave., Harrison, OH 45030, (513) 367-6020. Please send resume through Sept. 30, 2005 or the number above for information.

### MISCELLANEOUS

Needed: multi-audio cassette duplicating machine ministry to blind and low vision persons. Contact Bev Smoot at the Tennessee Baptist Convention, (615) 371-2044.

### MINISTRY — COMBINATION

Full-time minister of administration and education needed. resume to Dr. Mike Shreve, Bellevue Baptist Church, Highway 70 S, Nashville, TN 37221 or for further details contact Don Magee at (615) 782-8411 or Paul Webb (615) 646-2711

Minister of students/recruitment responsible for approximately 100 students, 6th grade/college/ordinating recruitment activities. Four year degree/seminary preferred. Must have passion for soul-winning and discipleship of students. resume to FBC Mt. Olive, 35117, Attn. D. Alford or [family@bellsouth.net](mailto:family@bellsouth.net).

The First Baptist Church of Hixson, Ga., has a position open for a minister of education/outreach. We are seeking experienced seminarian with heart for growing and equipping a loving, mission minded community of believers. Please send resume to the attention of Eugene Dunn, First Baptist Church, P.O. Box 246, Hixson, TN 37725, fax (865) 2330.

### MINISTRY — MUSIC

First Baptist Church of Hixson, Ga., is accepting resumes to fill a full-time position of music position. Responsibilities include planning, conducting, training, implementing and evaluating a comprehensive music and media ministry. interested should send a resume to First Baptist Church Search Committee, 1121 Washington Ave., Hixson, GA 31313.



## Tennessee teens serve as SBC pages

Of the 17 SBC pages serving this year at the SBC annual meeting, six were from Tennessee. They were, from left, first row, Morgan Smalley, First Baptist Church, Bolivar; Dani Westerman, National Acteen Panelist, Sylvia Baptist Church, Dickson; and Jenni Claggett, State Acteen Panelist, Parkers Creek Baptist Church, Bon Aqua; back row, Sarah Ginn, State Acteen Panelist, First Church, Bolivar; Alex Reynolds, First Baptist Church, Greeneville; and Micah Doty, First Baptist Church, White Pine.



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## book review

John Ferguson

Finding God in Unexpected Places,  
Revised and Updated

by Philip Yancey, Waterbrook Press, 2005

God is all around us. Revealing Himself constantly. If we just learn to see Him.

We tend to see what we are looking for," writes author Philip Yancey in this 2005 revision of his 1995 book *Finding God in Unexpected Places*. And, Yancey, who is an excellent author, finds God almost everywhere he looks. He purports that God is present everywhere and that we need to make Him visible — to learn to recognize ourselves and to learn to point Him out to others.

This book is a compilation of 49 thought provoking stories on various locations in which Yancey has discovered God including — Ground Zero — where we all lived caring about ourselves." In fact, the events of September 11, 2001, caused Yancey to revise and update his book.

After 2001 the world changed so much Yancey states the need for a revision. "In 1995 the economy was booming, the Cold War was a fast-receding memory, and the United States stood virtually unchallenged," he writes. "Now everyone who goes through an airport security or opens a suspicious-looking envelope knows the world has changed. Fear now reigns." So Yancey added nine chapters that no longer seemed pertinent and deleted 14 — including an entire section on "Finding God in the Rubble."

Yancey succeeds in finding God in very unlikely places: a Atlanta slum, a Chicago health club, at a meeting of the International, on a weekend retreat with 20 Muslims, in the prisons of Peru and Chile and in the South Africa, in the plays of Shakespeare, and much more.

Some of Yancey's ponderings, it's not so much where God is — but where God seems not to be because we're not listening. For example, in our choice of entertainment. In a chapter entitled "Big Nanny is Watching," Yancey looks at the value our society places on entertainment. Everybody has heard the concerns over "Big Brother" in reference to our government and what we don't know about us. In contrast, big nanny is everywhere on for pleasure ... for entertainment. Aldous Huxley warned against this subtle enemy in his book *Brave New World*. Huxley predicted in 1930 that people would trade away their freedom and autonomy for a technology that promises comfort, safety, and amusement. Would that be television? Especially, reality TV?

Yancey asks "How close are we to a brave new society?" and lists the following characteristics of a brave new society: appears we're pretty close. A Brave New Society: simplifies morality — only two principles — kindness and tolerance (think politically correct); solves problems through technology; and elevates entertainment above all other values (consider what athletes are paid vs. star athletes and movie stars).

Yancey states that the average American family watches seven hours of television a day. In John Ortberg's *You've Always Wanted*, he says if Jesus were alive He'd challenge us not to fast so much from food as from all the noise that distracts us — especially television — and keeps us from thinking about things. He believes that we should train ourselves in discipline of self-control and limit our television viewing.

By doing so, we might find God in an unexpected place. □ — Ferguson is a correspondent for the Baptist reflector.

## Living free

By Michael Adams

Focal Passage: 1 Corinthians  
8:9-13; 9:19-27

Our world has long suffered from a gap between what we are capable of doing and what is the right thing to do. Recently we learned that in the area of embryonic stem cell research, the technology is present to produce new bone structure and skin tissue. This technique provides hope to those who have been paralyzed by crippling accidents. How far does one use available knowledge to solve current problems? Where is the line between our ability and responsibility? In today's world we can track the presence of any individual by the use of an implanted transponder. Sounds like a great idea for sex offenders, prisoners who skip parole, or children lost in the woods. But what if the transponder was required to be placed in every infant and had to remain until death? There has always been tension; what mankind knows, has the knowledge to do, and the moral right to do. Paul explores the proper use of freedom in 1 Corinthians 8 and 9. In this passage he reveals three aspects of living the liberated Christian life.

In 1 Corinthians 8:9-13 Paul warns that our freedom can make us a stumbling block to others. Two common extremes are often present when considering the doubtful matters of the Christian life. On one hand there are those who adopt a position of legalism, and on the other hand there are those who

adopt a position of license. Legalism views every act, habit, thought, or type of behavior as "black or white." Legalism lives by rules rather than spiritual revelation. License adopts the opposite extreme. License has mostly white, little grey, and no black. Either of these positions concerning Christian freedom has potential to provide a stumbling block for the unsaved or weaker Christian and brother. Paul's specific flashpoint for this consideration was the practice of eating meat offered to idols. The language of this passage suggests that being a stumbling block is not only the act of placing a trap before those who are weak, but also becoming an outright obstacle. The problem is not the practice of eating meat but the resulting influence.

In 1 Corinthians 9:19-23 Paul reminds us that our freedom can make us a humble slave. Realizing that he was free from all men, Paul willingly became a slave to others so that he might win some. Here Paul shares a litany of backgrounds that could provide a stumbling block to him. The reader should keep in mind Paul's rich heritage of being of the tribe of Benjamin, being strictly raised as a Pharisee, coming from a good family, having outstanding educational credentials, and being a Roman citizen. Paul willingly surrendered all of these "rights" to influence those who might have clung to these rights. One should be reminded that Christ taught, *No greater love has a man than to lay down his life for his*

Sunday School Lesson  
Family Bible Series  
July 3

friends. As Jesus gave away His life, Paul gave away his freedom for the purpose of leading others to the source of life and freedom.

Paul closes the lesson text with the truth that our freedom can make us a success. Liberty is not given so that the Christian may live without discipline or accountability. Paul now uses one of his classic athletic images. Just outside of Corinth was the Isthmian Plain which was the right of athletic competition that held as much importance during that time as the Olympics. The term to describe competing was "agonizomai" where we get our word "agony." The prize for winning was the "stephanos" or crown made of wild olive, parsley, wild celery, and sometimes pine. While this is a corruptible crown, as Christians we run for an incorruptible crown. Our success is not in finishing first; our success is found when we run without disqualifications. Accomplishing disciplined freedom that leads to rightful success is to give our bodies a black eye or to give the flesh the "knockout" blow as the buffet (hupopiazō) suggests. We must also make our lives a slave as the Greek "doulagogos" renders. The key to this level of freedom, the successful level, is dying to self and running life's race with Jesus' resurrection life. □ — Adams is pastor of First Baptist Church, Lexington.

## Declaring universal accountability

By Brad Shockley

Focal Passage: Ezekiel 25:1-4a,  
15, 17; 26:2-3; 28:2, 5

We are so blessed to be citizens of the United States of America! What began as a "great experiment" in democracy over 200 years ago has become the greatest success story — as far as the history of kingdoms, countries, and nations goes — of all time. Unfortunately, however, we live in an age of pluralism, radical tolerance, and relativism where it is politically incorrect to elevate our nation's unmatched success over another. The "pc police" can hunt me down and arrest me if they want: the United States of America is the best there is! Unquestionably, our nation's superiority can be attributed to a single virtue: it's founding upon biblical principles and values.

Ezekiel chapters 25-32 read like a to-do list of prophecies against the peoples and kingdoms surrounding Judah that had rejected the principles of God's Word and wronged His chosen people, the Israelites. To deny, resist, or rebel against the ways of God is to assure failure and, ultimately, judgment. So just as the last lesson proclaimed the individual's responsibility before God, this one declares the same for all nations and people groups.

Universal accountability should be a no-brainer for all Christians,

particularly Southern Baptists, yet I've had folks in my own congregation (they are in yours too) express an erroneous view that could be called "practical universalism." When the pastor preaches *there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved* (Acts 4:12) they shout "Amen!" But in their Sunday School class they say, "I just don't believe God will send anyone who didn't have opportunity to hear the gospel to hell." Once again, human reason attempts to handle the mysterious ways of God and falls short.

A lengthy discussion on what the Bible has to say about such a weighty matter is not within the scope of a 600 word article. Still, it would do us well to consider the implications if it is true. If God, in the end, is going to let those who never heard of Jesus into heaven or give them a second chance, why are we expending millions of dollars and sending thousands of missionaries to remote people groups? Wouldn't it be better to avoid evangelizing the hidden heathen at all costs? I'll let you ruminate on that for a while.

The apostle Paul made it plain, *For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse* (Romans 1:20). Now if that is true —

Sunday School Lesson  
Explore the Bible  
July 3

and it is! — the call for missions is urgent. Every day tens of thousands are leaving this life to spend an eternity separated from God in the next. We are living in the eleventh hour of God's plan for mankind and the stroke of midnight is imminent.

I confess, though. So often the cares of ministry, family, and life in general distract me from focusing on the call for missions. It's so easy to neglect things far removed from the comforts of my home, one tucked safely within the hedge of a rural community.

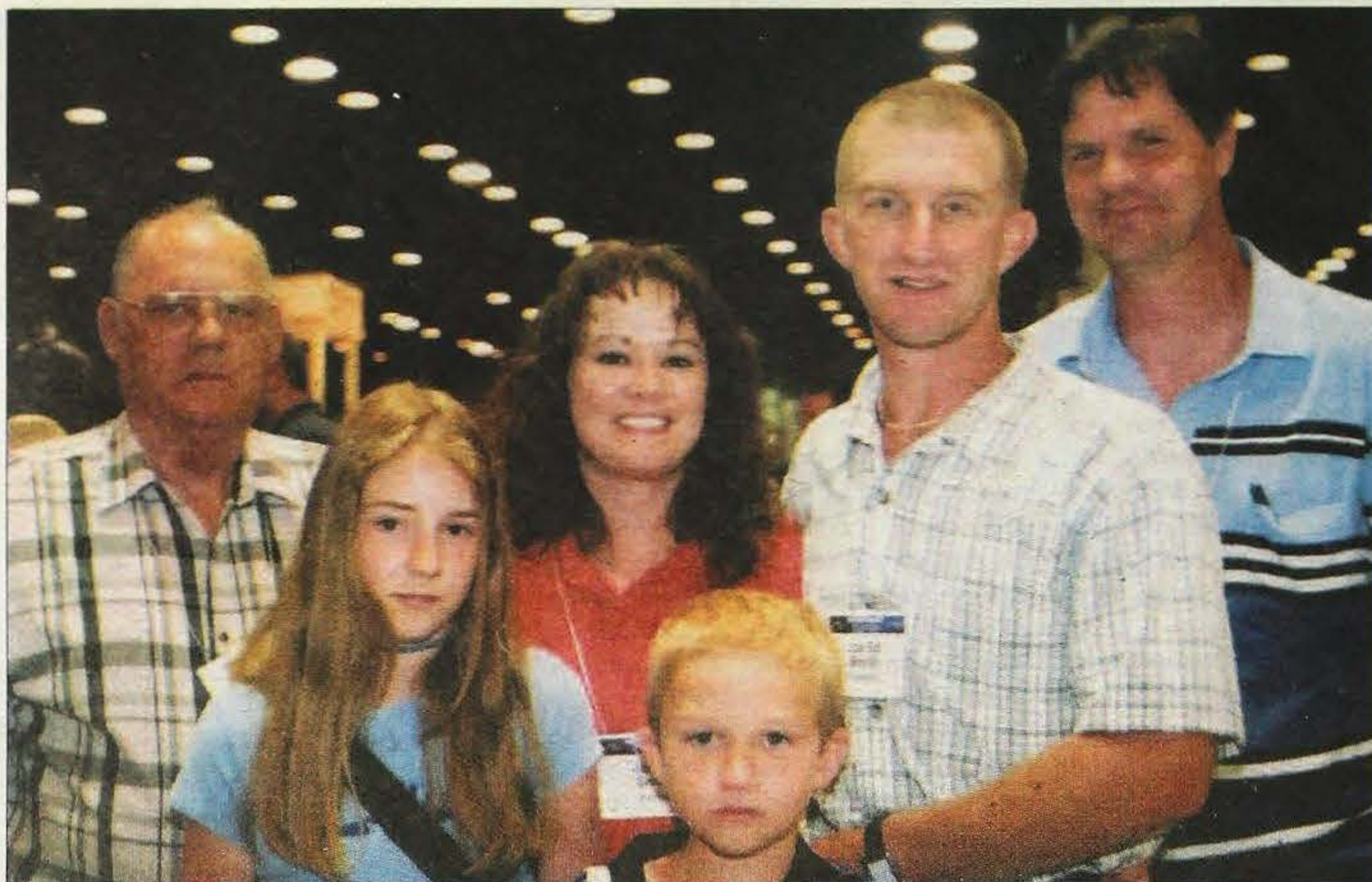
But if I am going to have a heart like Christ's, there must be a spacious place reserved in it for every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (Revelation 5:9).

This July 4 we celebrate Independence Day, the day we became free as a nation. As we celebrate, let's remember a more glorious day of independence, the day we were set free from the tyranny of sin and death — *For ... Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death* (Romans 8:2). And let's zealously and unashamedly carry the good news of our freedom in Christ to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). □

— Shockley is pastor of Cedar Hill Baptist Church, Cedar Hill.

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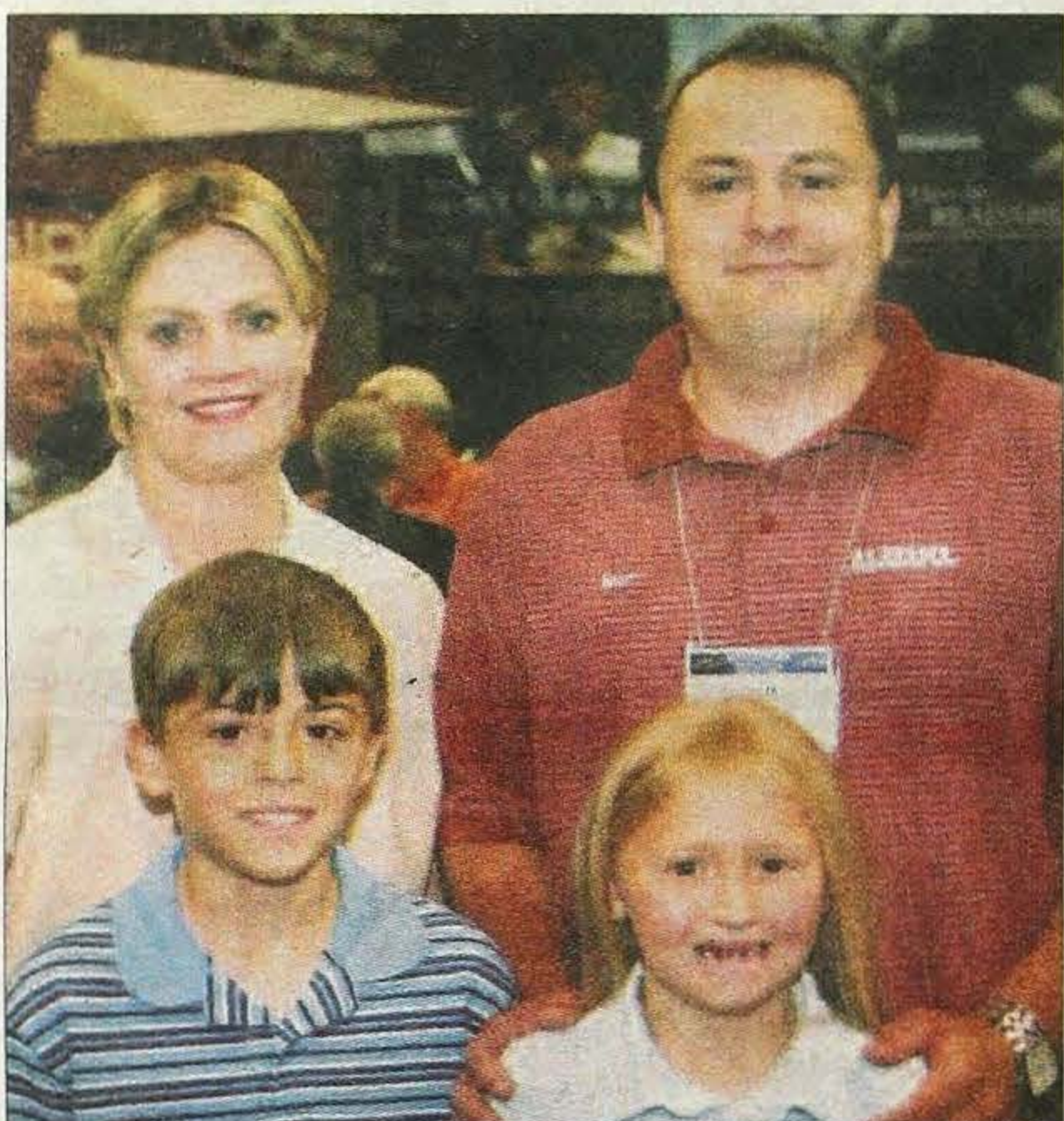


**MEMBERS OF BUCHANAN** Baptist Church, Buchanan, visit the Exhibit Hall. They are, from left, Richard Robinson; Bailey Smith, Janice Smith, Nathan Smith, Joe Ed Smith, pastor; and Danny Robinson.

## Tennesseans enjoy SBC annual meeting



**CLARENCE STEWART** of White House, left, retired partnership director for the TBC, visits with James Talley, retired pastor, Bat Baptist Church, Springfield.



**IN PHOTO TO LEFT**, Jeff Putman, pastor, Liberty Grove Baptist Church, Loretta, stands with his family, Anna, his wife, Hunter, and Hanna.



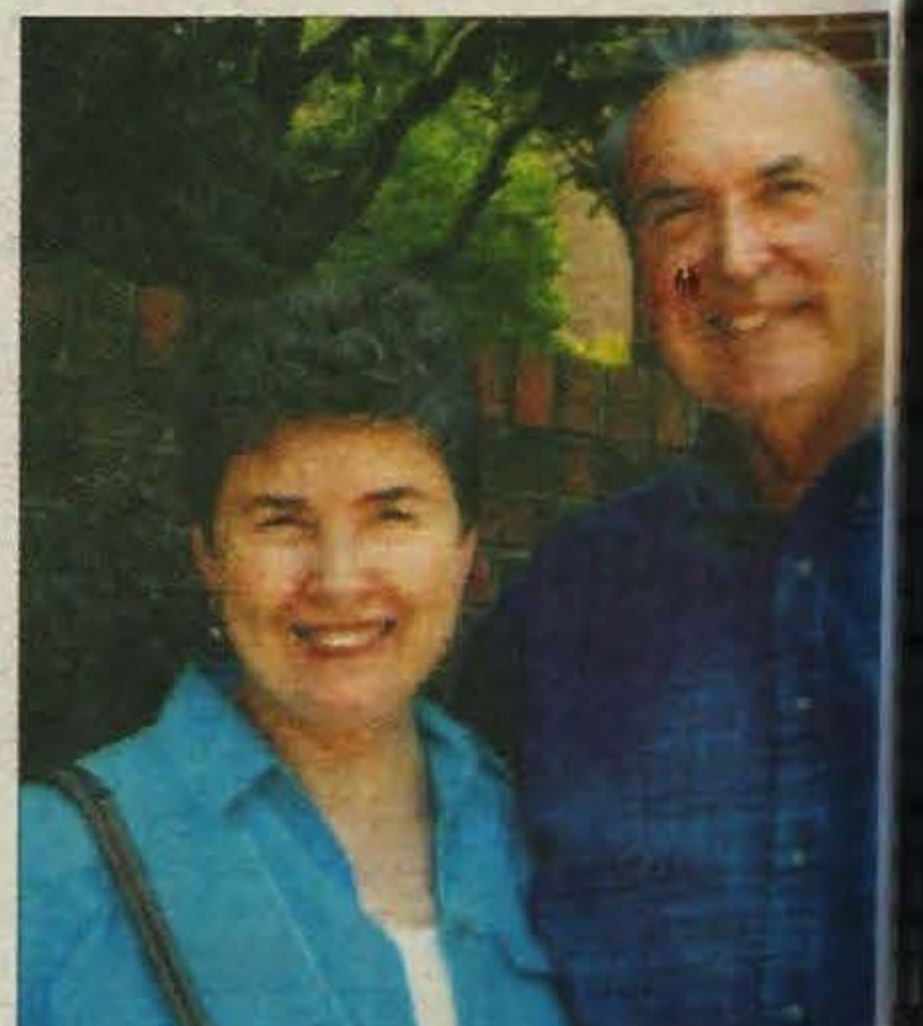
**THE STALLINGS FAMILY** of First Baptist Church, Bolivar, attended the annual meeting. They are, from left, Ron, deacon of the church; Cady; Lisa, wife; Ari, in stroller; and Caleb.

**IN PHOTO ABOVE**, the Imperials sing for listeners from a stage located next to the Gaylord Entertainment Center. The music was provided by LifeWay Christian Resources, Nashville.

**JAMES PIERCE II AND III** attended the SBC annual meeting. James Pierce II, left, serves as pastor of a church in Lexington, Ky. He stands with his wife, Hilda, and his son, James Pierce III, pastor, Towering Oaks Baptist Church, Greeneville.



**VICKIE ANDERSON**, right, of Tennessee WMU staff, visits with Judy Scott of Smith Springs Baptist Church, Nashville.



**ADAM HALL**, retired Baptist Collegiate director, UT - Martin, stands with his wife.