

(BP)

BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522, CompuServe 70420,250
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232, CompuServe 70420,115
NASHVILLE Linda Lawson, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300, CompuServe 70420,57
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151, CompuServe 70420,72
WASHINGTON Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223, CompuServe 71173,316

April 1, 1996

96-55

DALLAS--NAMB 'incorporators' plan embraced by agency heads.
TENNESSEE--SBC Cooperative Program, designated gifts dip in March.
GEORGIA--Ga. church criticized for request that infant be buried elsewhere.
DALLAS--Gambling foes applaud ruling on Indian gaming.
TENNESSEE--Authors address caregiving needed by elderly parents.
DALLAS--500-plus retirees receiving aid from Southern Baptists; photo.
MARYLAND--Northeastern Baptists restructure education ties; photo.
MISSOURI--'Missionary kids' recount culture shock experiences.
TENNESSEE--Corrections.

NAMB 'incorporators' plan
embraced by agency heads

Baptist Press
4/1/96

DALLAS (BP)--The Implementation Task Force approved a process by which the North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention will be brought into legal and organizational existence and received the endorsement of the presidents and trustee leadership of the Home Mission Board, Radio and Television Commission and Brotherhood Commission.

Under the restructuring plan approved by the Southern Baptist Convention last year, the North American board is assigned the work of those three agencies which will be dissolved.

The ITF is a 10-member group appointed last fall by the SBC Executive Committee to assist the various SBC agencies in the transition required by the convention's "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring.

In a special meeting at the Dallas-Fort Worth Airport March 28, ITF representatives met with trustee leaders and heads of the affected entities. ITF officials presented the proposal and invited discussion and participation of agency leadership.

The process, which involves the use of "incorporators" in the establishment of the NAMB, is expected to be voted upon at the SBC annual meeting in New Orleans, June 11-13. Provided the SBC approves amendments to SBC Bylaw 15 for the second time, the recommendation will be one of several presented by the ITF and the SBC Executive Committee as a part of the transition plan restructuring the denomination.

The recommendation is for 13 incorporators as follows: two people each nominated by the HMB, RTVC and Brotherhood Commission; six at-large members from the SBC to be nominated by the ITF; and a chairman to be nominated by the ITF from among its members. The at-large members could be anyone in the SBC but participants agreed no more than two of the incorporators would come from any of the three agencies or the Executive Committee.

The leadership from the three agencies agreed to ask their respective boards to nominate two of their current trustees, who are eligible to be elected to the initial NAMB trustee board, to be part of the incorporators. The NAMB charter calls for those trustees currently serving on the Brotherhood Commission, RTVC and HMB whose second term expires in the years 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001 to be elected to the initial NAMB board.

--more--

Each of the three boards has a scheduled board meeting in April, at which time the question is expected to be considered. The ITF will add its nominations to these and recommend them to the SBC Executive Committee in its June meeting for inclusion in the charter.

Among the more significant duties of the incorporators of the NAMB will be to conduct a search for the first president and nominate trustee officers of the board. The ITF intends to ask the incorporators to be prepared to offer a presidential nominee to the NAMB trustees at their organizational meeting at the end of the SBC annual meeting in 1997.

The recommendation also will instruct the incorporators to perform all necessary legal duties to incorporate the NAMB, such as filing the articles of incorporation with the secretary of state in Georgia and reserving the name, "The North American Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention."

Additional responsibilities of the incorporators will include suggesting bylaws, resolutions and other documents, prepared under the direction of the ITF, to the NAMB trustees which need to be acted upon in the organizational meeting.

"It is important to remember," said Bob Reccord, ITF chairman, "that the final decision on the election of a president for NAMB resides with its board of trustees. In fact, only the trustees may make this decision as well as the other decisions necessary for the operation of NAMB." Reccord is pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va.

The recommendations were unanimously endorsed by representatives of the agencies. Jack Johnson, RTVC president, said, "It appears to me that this is the best possible solution to a very complicated and important demand."

Larry Lewis of the HMB said, "... the proposal of the ITF to create a committee of incorporators with equitable representation of each agency and the SBC Executive Committee is the best approach to the transition. I affirm the proposal and pledge my full cooperation."

James D. Williams, Brotherhood Commission president, said the proposal "addresses basic issues of leadership and structure in a timely manner that is fair" for the existing agencies. He endorsed the plan, concluding it has the potential for objective decision-making in the creation of NAMB.

Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Executive Committee, said, "Southern Baptists can be proud and thankful for the leadership and cooperative spirit demonstrated by these agency heads. Today they have helped the ITF take a gigantic step toward the successful implementation of the Covenant for a New Century."

Reccord described the meeting as a "defining moment" in the history of the SBC, saying, "We have chosen to ride the wave of God's Spirit into the 21st century ... in this unified strategy to facilitate the best possible startup of the North American Mission Board. Organizationally, it makes great sense; practically, it works; thankfully, it has the unanimous support of our agency leaders."

Other participants in the meeting included Mike Day, executive vice president of the Brotherhood Commission and chairman of the commission's internal transition team; Donley Brown, chairman of Brotherhood Commission trustees; Steve Swofford, chairman of HMB trustees; Charles Fuller, chairman of the HMB transition team; and Wyman Copass, chairman of RTVC trustees.

--30--

SBC Cooperative Program,
designated gifts dip in March

Baptist Press
4/1/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for the month of March were down slightly compared to the previous year, as were designated gifts, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

--more--

The March 1996 total of \$12,652,229 compared with the March 1995 CP total of \$12,798,612, or a difference of \$146,382 or 1.14 percent. For the SBC's fiscal year, since Oct 1, CP gifts totaled \$72,971,906 compared to the same six month total the previous fiscal year of \$73,676,952, a difference of \$705,046 or .96 percent.

Designated gifts were down 3.43 percent for March, with \$17,507,489 compared to \$18,128,922 the previous year's month, a difference of \$621,433. However, for the year to date, designated gifts were still above last year by more than \$5 million -- \$87,087,489 compared to the previous year to date of \$81,995,342, a difference of \$5,092,147 or 6.21 percent.

For the SBC's Program Allocation Budget, the first six months show CP gifts more than \$2 million above the budget requirement. For the year-to-date, CP gifts total \$72,971,906, compared to the budget requirement for that period of \$70,814,563, a difference of \$2,157,342 or 3.05 percent. The March 1996 CP total of \$12,652,229 is 7.2 percent above the required monthly budget total of \$11,802,427.

The SBC Cooperative Program total includes receipts from individuals, churches, state conventions and fellowships for distribution according to the 1995-96 Cooperative Program Allocation Budget.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

--30--

EDITORS' NOTE: The following story replaces one in Baptist Press Friday, March 28, titled, "Ga. church criticized for asking that infant be buried elsewhere."

Ga. church criticized for request
that infant be buried elsewhere By James Dotson

Baptist Press
4/1/96

THOMASVILLE, Ga. (BP)--A request to move the body of a mixed-race infant from a previously all-white cemetery has brought national attention and widespread criticism to a small Georgia Baptist church near the Florida state line.

Mutual apologies were extended March 29 by leaders of the 130-member Barnetts Creek Baptist Church and the family involved, but the family says they still have concerns that some of the apologies were insincere and legal action remains a possibility.

The incident began with the death of Whitney Elaine Johnson on March 19, only 19 hours after she was born with only a partially formed skull. She was the daughter of Jamie Wireman, 18, and Jeffery "Bubba" Johnson, 25, who is black.

The church allowed the infant to be buried between the plots of her great-grandfather and great-grandmother, who is still alive and an active member of the church. The infant's grandmother, Sylvia Leverett, 41, has been a member of the church for about three years but has been inactive, said Leon VanLandingham, the church's pastor.

After the funeral and burial March 22, church leaders discovered the child was biracial. It was a first for the cemetery in a section of the country where racial segregation historically has meant separate cemeteries for whites and blacks.

A meeting of deacons was held on Sunday, March 24, but recollections of what church leaders actually decided to do about the situation differ.

--more--

The day after that meeting, a call was made by deacon Logan Lewis to Leverett, who said deacons had voted unanimously to ask the family to allow the body to be moved. Arrangements had been made with the funeral home to move the grave free of charge to another cemetery.

The family initially gave tentative approval, Lewis said, but later they decided they did not want the grave disturbed. Lewis said deacons were polled by phone the next evening and everyone agreed to respect the family's wishes.

The pastor, however, said the deacons at the March 24 meeting were concerned about deception primarily on the part of the funeral home, which they believed should have informed the church that the baby was biracial. They passed a verbal resolution "chastising" the funeral home primarily for not giving them the opportunity of being aware of the race of the child in making their decision, he said.

There was some discussion of moving the baby, he said, "simply because of the deception." But he said there was no decision to ask that the child's body be moved.

"The total opinion of every one of those people was 'No, we cannot touch that baby,'" VanLandingham said. "It may not have been understood by Mr. Lewis, and here is where the confusion has come. And for that misunderstanding Mr. Lewis has paid a terrible price."

After several days of national coverage of the issue, the parties met the afternoon of Friday, March 29, to resolve their differences. VanLandingham said deacons agreed to stand behind Lewis in the incident.

"If the deacons or any part of the group did anything wrong, then apologies have been extended," VanLandingham said. "... We've admitted that an error was committed.

"(Lewis) apologized for the phone call, he apologized for the deacon board if in fact that statement was made (regarding a request to move the body), and he apologized for calling the baby half-black," VanLandingham said, noting that Lewis denied using the term "half-breed" as was alleged by the family. "In turn, the family apologized for the problems they had brought upon the community" as a result of the intense exposure given the incident.

A written agreement to drop the matter was drawn up to be signed by all parties, but family members decided by Sunday, March 31, that they had changed their minds.

Leverett's husband, William, said the family was not satisfied with the outcome of the meeting and its aftermath.

"It took us 30 minutes to get (Lewis) to apologize just for the word he said, then he comes back (in news reports) and states that a reconciliation has been made rather than an apology. ... We feel that they weren't sincere in anything that they said," Leverett said. He said legal action is a "slight possibility," although he would give no further details on the advice of his attorney.

Also, the NAACP has formally requested a U.S. Justice Department probe of the incident.

In defense of the church's role in the situation, VanLandingham said the burial probably would not have been a problem in the first place if leaders had been given a chance to make an informed decision regarding the burial.

If deacons had known the child's race, "I'm sure they would have gone to the family, and they would have talked to the family, and the decision would have been made to bury the child," the pastor said. "... I just cannot imagine that any other decision would have been made They would just have liked to have made it with all of the facts."

The fact that the family was not a participating part of the church also was a factor, he said.

"Here was a family that, had they been churched to begin with, had they been a part of the (church) community, there would never have been a question on anybody's part," VanLandingham said, conceding, "and perhaps there should not have been anyway."

He also defended the church's overall views toward blacks. He and Lewis said they were confident there would be no problem with a black person being denied the opportunity to attend or join the church solely on the basis of race.

"Our church is a loving and caring church, and they would accept anybody that is a true Christian," said Lewis.

Lewis said cemeteries had always been segregated in the area, and he did not consider it racism to oppose change. "It's not a racial thing. It's a way of life," he said. "It's been that way."

VanLandingham said, "The problem is not, Are you going to bury a white person or a black person in the cemetery? The problem is, Are you going to open your arms to a white person or a black person in your church?" he said.

The pastor also expressed regret at the lack of support from fellow Baptists during the first few days after the incident.

"Surely a church that is 140 years old and has been a stalwart church in the Georgia Baptist Convention, somebody could have called and said we loved you. But they didn't do it," he said on March 28. "I am so frustrated. ... I have never been so pained in my life as this has caused me to be pained."

The next day, however, he said he learned several area churches had made the incident a special concern during Wednesday night prayer meetings, and others later called expressing support and encouragement.

The incident also raised the issue of Baptist church autonomy, with both Georgia Baptist and Southern Baptist Convention officials being asked to give opinions on the matter.

Richard Land, president of the Christian Life Commission, noted, "While each Southern Baptist church is an autonomous body, all Southern Baptists are free to offer their autonomous opinion about a local church's actions.

"I am confident that most Southern Baptists join me in finding the proposed actions of Barnetts Creek Church reprehensible and an embarrassment to the gospel of Christ," Land said. "I would urge the church deacons to consider the fact that their church is under the lordship of Christ. They are not autonomous in relation to him, and he has made it clear that racism in any form is the antithesis of his gospel."

The CLC has the responsibility of addressing a variety of moral concerns, including the sin of racism.

SBC President Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., said in a statement reported in the Tallahassee (Fla.) Democrat, "It is always disappointing to hear of an action that is so contrary to the spirit of Jesus Christ and the Bible. Southern Baptists, for the most part, have moved beyond this attitude."

Both the Georgia Baptist Convention and Ernest E. Mosley, executive vice president of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, noted that under Southern Baptist polity neither state nor national conventions can exercise any authority over actions of the local church. They noted that both conventions have spoken out strongly against racism in recent resolutions, however.

Said Mosley, "In June 1995 the Southern Baptist Convention, meeting in Atlanta, adopted a resolution on racial reconciliation in which racism in all its forms was denounced and which affirmed 'that every human life is sacred, and is of equal and immeasurable worth, made in God's image, regardless of race or ethnicity' The resolution further called on Southern Baptists to 'eradicate racism in all its forms from Southern Baptist life and ministry.'"

Mosley also noted the SBC Inter-Agency Council in February created a racial reconciliation task force to work as an agent for reconciliation in the Southern Baptist Convention and its agencies and institutions.

A Georgia Baptist Convention news release also noted the convention's own Race Reconciliation Resolution passed in November 1994. "As indicated by these resolutions, Georgia Baptists believe in sharing the gospel of Christ with all people without regard to race or culture," the statement said.

J. Robert White, executive director of the Georgia Baptist Convention, echoed support for anti-racism resolutions of the GBC and SBC and noted he has made a special effort to reach out to African American pastors in Georgia since taking his position in 1993.

"We just want to be supportive of the autonomy of the local congregation in allowing a church to work through affairs of their own congregation without the convention interjecting a position. This is in our agreement within the polity of Southern Baptists, in agreement with our practice and also in keeping with the guidelines of the Georgia Baptist Convention," he said. White added the convention does offer counsel in congregational matters only when requested by the church.

--30--

Gambling foes applaud
ruling on Indian gaming

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
4/1/96

DALLAS (BP)--Gambling opponents hailed a March 27 Supreme Court decision barring federal lawsuits against states in disputes over Indian reservation gambling.

In a case pitting the Seminole tribe against the state of Florida, the court ruled that Congress cannot authorize lawsuits against states over federal policies.

The Supreme Court, in a 5-4 decision, ruled that Congress cannot try to resolve disputes between Indian tribes and states over on-reservation gambling by making the states and their elected officials targets of federal lawsuits.

Writing for the majority, Chief Justice William Rehnquist stated that the Eleventh Amendment prevents Congress from making any state capable of being sued in federal court.

"The ruling put the brakes on a runaway train without derailing the train or destroying the track," said Weston Ware, associate director of the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission.

In 1987, the court had ruled that a state cannot ban gambling on Indian reservations within its borders unless it outlaws that same kind of gambling elsewhere.

Congress responded with the National Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988. It required tribes to negotiate with states before starting any type of gambling on reservations. It also required states to negotiate with the tribes in good faith.

Since Congress passed NIGRA, Indian gambling has expanded as states that allowed some legalized gambling -- such as charitable casino nights for nonprofit organizations -- agreed to on-reservation casinos, fearing federal lawsuits. And the casino industry has been the winner, Ware said.

"Since 1988, a number of states have succumbed to the pressure of outside money funding tribes in their efforts to secure agreements allowing major casinos on reservations," he said.

Nationally, 126 Indian tribes in nearly two dozen states have on-reservation gambling.

The March 27 ruling struck down the provision allowing tribes to sue a state in federal court if they felt the state failed to negotiate in good faith. Federal law still allows tribes to appeal to the secretary of interior as the sole federal arbiter if negotiations with states stall. They also have the right to sue in state court.

Ware praised the decision as protecting the rights of Indian tribes while at the same time making the state "more of an equal partner" in decision-making about what occurs within its borders.

"We wish the Indian tribes no ill will. But we've been concerned that NIGRA has allowed the expansion of gambling in spite of citizen protests," Ware said. "States lacked the ability to say 'no.'"

--more--

"Now, under this court decision, if Texas decided to allow a casino to be built in Dallas, the Tigua Indians presumably still would have the right to put one in El Paso. But this ruling makes the state more of an equal partner in its ability to say 'no' to new forms of gambling."

--30--

Authors address caregiving
needed by elderly parents

By Edith A. Chenault

Baptist Press
4/1/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Children who once received the tender care of their parents today are finding themselves responsible for their aging parents.

In the United States today, a caregiving crisis is exploding.

As Christians, they are commanded to honor and obey their parents. But what happens when a parent gets Alzheimer's disease or becomes cranky with the natural aches and pains of aging? What happens when the parent is forgetful or confused and can't seem to remember what happened two hours ago?

How do adult children balance the needs of the parents with the needs of their spouse and children? How does a church care for the aging portion of its members?

A caregiving crisis is exploding.

"Caregiving to aging parents affects all of us," says Debra Bruce of Jacksonville, Fla., coauthor of "My Parent, My Turn," recently released by the Broadman & Holman publishing arm of the Baptist Sunday School Board. Her coauthor is Harris McIlwain, a board-certified gerontologist from Tampa, Fla.

"Like raising a child, caregiving has no 'manual' to tell you what to do when a parent seems forgetful or depressed or fails to take her medication or bathe," says Bruce, a pastor's wife and author of several Christian books, including "Reclaiming Your Family: 7 Ways to Gain Control Over What Goes On in Your Home." Bruce and her husband, Robert, also are authors of "Becoming Spiritual Soul Mates with Your Child," released in April by Broadman & Holman.

According to U.S. Census Bureau reports, Americans 85 and older are the fastest-growing segment of the country's population, now representing 1.2 percent of its citizens. Unfortunately, they also are the poorest and the sickest segment.

In 1900 there were 3 million Americans 65 and older in the United States, or about 4 percent of the population; by 1991, the number of seniors had increased to about 31.8 million. The United States has more older adults than the entire population of Canada.

Bruce explains she and McIlwain wrote the book to give the facts along with practical and Christian advice. "Our goal through the book is to allow the parent to remain independent and 'age-in-place' for as long as she can, helping her to make the home a safe environment," Bruce says.

Education, prevention and balance are the keys to preventing disasters before they happen, Bruce says.

"Education is the key to maintaining balance," Bruce says. No one can do everything perfectly; they have to be satisfied with being "good enough," she says.

"To achieve balance in your life as caregiver, it is important to get in touch with your feelings," Bruce and McIlwain write. "Talk about the pressures of caregiving with your spouse, a close friend, your pastor or a mental health counselor. Nothing can be clearly resolved without open discussions."

Bruce and McIlwain caution caregivers to realize negative feelings are normal. There is no relationship immune to anger or resentment.

"Balance must be achieved to protect yourself and your immediate family," she says.

The promise to "honor your mother and father" extends to being there during all parts of life, especially during the senior years, says McIlwain, who underscores the need of giving every person dignity, no matter what their health or situation.

--more--

The benefits of caring for the aging are many and varied, Bruce says, noting, for example, it allows Christians to put "feet to their faith."

"We need to realize that God made the strong to care for the weak," she explains. "In this case, the caregivers are the strong ones, but they will receive the benefit of abiding love from parents who once took care of them. It's a feeling you cannot describe; however, it makes you feel a deeper purpose in this earthly life."

The most important factor for caregivers to have is empathy, Bruce says. "Remember that you will be old someday, too," she says. "Remember this as you have to wait for your aging grandmother to get dressed. Reflect on this when you wonder why she complains of 'hurting' all the time. Show the agape love that Christ taught us -- to love that person so much that we will minister to them right where they are.

"Aging is not easy, but knowing this ahead of time, you can make changes in her home so that life will be easier," Bruce says.

The church has an obligation to care for its elderly members, Bruce adds. It can get involved by organizing an adult day-care center, senior lunches, senior activities, Bible studies, an adopt-a-grandparent program or meals on wheels.

"The church is the key to caring for the many elderly who live far away from family members," Bruce says, noting such ministry is much-needed "right now."

Bruce and McIlwain firmly believe age is not a death sentence; age is a state of mind.

"Staying active, both mentally and physically, is the key to blocking confusion, as well as some health problems," Bruce says. "There are 80-year-olds we know who are hiking, running races, teaching in colleges and still working. We encourage staying as active as you can, according to your health."

--30--

500-plus retirees receiving
aid from Southern Baptists

By Thomas E. Miller Jr.

Baptist Press
4/1/96

DALLAS (BP)--More than 9,000 retired Southern Baptist ministers or their widows receive \$200 or less a month in pension benefits from their denominational retirement plan.

"It is the old story of too little, too late," said Paul W. Powell, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board. "Thousands of our churches and pastors did not make the Church Annuity Plan a priority in their salary and benefits planning. By the time the reality of need soaked in, it was too late to catch up.

"Now, we look to the Cooperative Program to provide relief funds for the most desperate cases," Powell said, "and to the Annuity Board's Adopt An Annuitant Program as an added blessing."

Powell tells of stacks of letters he receives that recall pastoral ministries reaching 30 or 40 years, always in small churches, and always depending on God and his people to meet modest human needs. "These old soldiers of the cross assumed nothing except a simple faith that God would provide," Powell said. "There is almost never a complaint, but always a humble, gracious 'Thank you' for every evidence of love and care by Southern Baptists."

Powell noted, "Every penny of Cooperative Program money we receive goes to some needy church or missions worker or his widow. That means about \$1.2 million this year will be divided among some 540 individuals or couples as monthly or expense grants. The operating expense of the board is paid from earnings on assets without any subsidy from the Cooperative Program."

Last year, an "average" relief recipient was 78 years old with total monthly income from all sources of \$680 and total expenses of \$861.

--more--

"In many cases," Powell said, "the total amount of the grant barely brings the recipient up to a break-even point. We did give them an extra check for \$175 at Christmas. The maximum regular monthly grant is \$180 for an individual and \$240 for a couple. Grants are approved for no longer than two years, and application for renewal is possible."

Through its relief ministry, the Annuity Board may make specific expense grants to pay heat or utility bills, prescription drug costs, medical bills and help with funeral expenses. Sometimes, household repairs and services are paid.

More than half the relief recipients receive no regular monthly annuity benefit because their churches never enrolled them in the Church Annuity Plan. Some do not even receive Social Security.

"If the Cooperative Program gives life-saving aid, the Adopt An Annuitant Program gives life-living aid," said Joe McIntosh, the Annuity Board's vice president for endowment. This program targets the oldest annuitants with the lowest benefits and uses direct gifts to provide a \$50-per-month supplement to their regular benefit from the board.

"Fifty dollars a month may sound little to most people, but for the 1,900 we are now able to help each month it could be a 25 percent increase," McIntosh said. "For some, it represents a doubling of monthly benefits."

Once a person begins receiving the Adopt An Annuitant benefit, the Annuity Board assumes a lifetime need. "Most of this \$600 annual cost must be raised every year," McIntosh said. The Annuity Board does appeal for large gifts; \$7,500 will endow an "adoption" in perpetuity, but most of the \$1.2 million annual cost is raised in smaller amounts.

"Really, the more modest gifts mean more people are involved and more people are committed to help," said McIntosh. "That's good. We have many individuals, Sunday school classes, WMU organizations, Baptist Men's groups and churches who send a check every month. Last year there were more than 8,300 separate gifts. Smaller gifts are accumulated until there is \$600, enough to adopt for a year. Then we add an annuitant to the roll."

McIntosh said the general board of the South Carolina Baptist Convention has a payroll deduction plan through which nearly half the convention's employees make monthly contributions, providing funds for more than nine monthly adoptions.

A group of volunteers known as the Retired Ministers Support Corps is organized in Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia to share the Adopt An Annuitant story. State annuity representatives in convention offices also provide information.

"Increasingly," said Powell, "our ministers and their churches are making better preparation for retirement. But as Jesus said, the poor will always be with us. These people, for whatever reason, will need help. Their trust is in God; now they are counting on us to rescue them from acute need. We can be God's good hands to lift them up. Pray for us, and ask God how he wants you to help."

The theme for Annuity Board Sunday June 23 in the Southern Baptist Convention calendar is "Their Trust Is in God; Now They Are Counting on You."

For more information, write C. Joe McIntosh, Annuity Board, SBC, P.O. Box 2190, Dallas, TX 75221-2190.

--30--

(BP) photo distributed to state Baptist papers by the Annuity Board.

Northeastern Baptists
restructure education ties

By Dan Nicholas

Baptist Press
4/1/96

JOPPA, Md. (BP)--The Northeastern Baptist Education Consortium has voted unanimously to restructure itself as the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry, with its representatives from four Southern Baptist state conventions to function officially as a board of directors.

--more--

"This decision will shape the direction of our educational partnership as we approach the next century," said H. David Flumbaum, NeBSM executive director, of the action during a regularly scheduled consortium meeting March 8-9 at Calvary Baptist Church, Bel Air, Md.

After six months of service, Flumbaum, of Joppa, Md., was installed as executive director during a worship ceremony, also held at the Bel Air church.

Accepting the directorship, Flumbaum said, allowed him to face "the greatest spiritual challenge of my life." On behalf of the board, Flumbaum, a former college administrator, committed the new NeBSM to "address spiritual needs, not build an institution."

Before the consortium's streamlining, the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry existed only to deliver theological education at six regional centers through a partnership with Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. While that partnership remains unchanged, NeBSM now encompasses the entire scope of the four-state partnership, including plans for non-degree ministry training and a young leader development track.

Andrew Y. Lee, director of the Northeastern Baptist School of Ministry before the restructuring, continues with NeBSM in directing the theological education program. From his office on Staten Island, N.Y., Lee manages the aspect of NeBSM that relates directly with Southern Seminary through five degree-granting, off-campus centers in Baltimore and Silver Spring, Md.; Boston; New York City; and Pittsburgh and Harrisburg, Pa.

Other locations are being developed for the non-degree aspects of NeBSM's work in close cooperation with the four primary partners: the Baptist Convention of Maryland/Delaware, the Baptist Convention of Pennsylvania/South Jersey, the Baptist Convention of New York and the Baptist Convention of New England. The school of ministry also partners with Southern Baptist Seminary Extension and the Home Mission Board.

In other business, the board approved transfer of up to \$300,000 from a designated gift to provide a ministry development center as part of the Baptist Convention of New England campus. BCNE, based in Northborough, Mass., will be developing its campus on land purchased from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board adjacent to the convention's present location.

The board also adopted a \$332,500 proposed budget for 1996-97 and discussed the procedures they would follow whenever a new partnership is considered for some aspect of their work.

Established in 1984 as the Northeast Task Team on Theological Education, the organization called itself the Northeastern Baptist Education Consortium in 1993 to better reflect the nature of its activity. Doran C. McCarty, now retired, coordinated the organization on a part-time basis from 1989-94. Flumbaum is the first full-time director and Ken Lyle, BCNE executive director, is the NeBSM board president.

--30--

(BP) photo available from Nicholas, NeBSM editor, at SBCNet 71173,1141 or phone/fax (802) 229-6242. For more information on the Northeastern Baptist Education Consortium or for a copy of NeBEC's newsletter, contact Flumbaum at 1-800-749-5956 or fax (410) 671-7795.

'Missionary kids' recount
culture shock experiences

By Julie Nall

Baptist Press
4/1/96

BOLIVAR, Mo. (BP)--The scene was a college campus in Missouri. It was late afternoon on a Friday in September. In the dormitories, a slew of people were scurrying around, collecting baggage, sunscreen and volleyballs. To the beach! To the mountains! It seemed like everyone had someplace to go.

Left in the dorm halls were empty pizza boxes, a dirty sock and a handful of MKs -- missionary kids.

--more--

"We came to the conclusion that everyone was going somewhere, and we didn't even know we were supposed to be planning to go," recalled former MK Julie Ford Dominguez, whose parents were Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionaries to Argentina at the time. Dominguez was a freshman at Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, experiencing Labor Day weekend -- a holiday she and other MKs weren't accustomed to celebrating.

Julie had lived in Argentina with her parents, David and Janene Ford, since 1978. Though she had the luxury of her parents' presence as college began, the Fords soon returned to Argentina, and their freshman began her battle with classic culture shock.

Ford said they expected their daughter's adjustment to United States culture to take three to five years. It was difficult for him and his wife to talk with their daughter frequently since their communication was limited to a ham radio.

Dominguez was not acquainted with popular culture jokes and references in the States, which proved to be a great source of entertainment for her new friends. "But it was a huge source of distress for me," she confessed. "Things like not knowing how to use a drive-in made me feel like a real idiot.

"People did not comprehend culture shock and that there wasn't anything wrong with not knowing how to do some things. It wasn't a reflection of my intellect if I didn't know how to use a water fountain, because we don't have water fountains like that in Argentina."

Julie felt such an aversion to change that she asked her parents to come home from the mission field to be with her brother, Jonathan, as he started college. "There was a good chance nobody would be there for him if they couldn't be," she said.

With Julie's difficulty adjusting and Jonathan's educational needs in question, the family decided to return to Missouri, where Ford now serves as minister of missions at South County Baptist Church, St. Louis and his wife is a patient care manager of rehabilitation for the Deaconess Hospital system.

Dominguez survived college. An advantage for her, she conceded, was her ease in making friends. It was especially nice to have friends who were MKs.

Laura Sherer, a senior at William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo., had a harder time making friends when she arrived in the United States without her parents, Robert and Claudia Sherer. As an MK from Japan, she went through orientation for the fall semester while suffering jet lag. Then she focused solely on school work. It wasn't until November that she started building her circle of friends.

"There were certain phrases like 'digging a hole for yourself' -- I had no idea what that meant," Sherer said. "At first, I found that I was left out of a lot of conversations. But it just takes time."

For her, adapting to college wasn't the hardest part of facing American culture. Those experiences happened when she was younger. "The most difficult time was on furloughs ... because kids can be really cruel when you're different."

Sherer also encountered a variety of personalities at college, which required adjusting to noisy people. "Japanese people can get loud, but in a quiet way," she explained. "They are very reserved, very polite."

For Tara Williams, a senior at SBU, coming to the United States from the Philippines was not nearly as difficult as she feared. She dreaded leaving her parents, Keith and Suzanne Williams. But the Lord provided her "with some really great friends right off the bat."

Dominguez believes she was very anti-American coming to the United States because it was too painful to prefer to be in both America and Argentina. But Williams found herself in a different situation.

"It's weird -- it really doesn't make sense because I miss being away from home, but I really love the States and my friends here, too."

--more--

Williams attended an international school in the Philippines with several students who either had lived in the United States or were U.S. citizens. Also, English is one of the main languages in the Philippines. Because she loves to read and had read about American culture, Williams expected some of the changes she encountered.

While she has not joined an American church, Williams said she believes that having a strong Woman's Missionary Union and other programs at the church she attends helped her adjust, mostly by helping others to know what life on the mission field is like. Just to have somebody listen with interest about an MK's life on the field and her adjustments to college helps, she said.

A consistent prayer need Williams and other MKs share is the loneliness and bewilderment they feel by being away from home. "I'm always going to be different," Williams explained. MKs were not like the natives of the lands where they grew up, nor are they identical to lifelong residents of the United States. "Other MKs know what it is like to be split between two cultures, so maybe that's why we're close."

But Dominguez, Sherer and Williams and other missionary kids are overcoming the barriers they feel. Dominguez graduated from SBU in 1993 and is integrated services coordinator for the Kansas Elks' Training Center for the Handicapped in Wichita.

Sherer plans to graduate in May and head to Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, to pursue degrees in marriage and family counseling and religious education.

Williams has her heart focused on missions. "I know the Lord had a purpose in me growing up overseas, even if it was just to get me on the mission field myself," she asserted. "I have always been thankful that my parents were called."

--30--

CORRECTIONS: In (BP) story titled "Review & Expositor board votes ties beyond Southern Seminary," dated 3/27/96, the name of the journal mentioned in the next to the last paragraph should be The Journal of Family Ministry, not The Journal of Family and Ministry as reported.

Also, in (BP) story titled "Salt Lake conference examines Mormonism for '98 SBC meeting," dated 3/29/96, please change each reference to the LDS to Latter-day Saints, not Latter Day Saints.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

HOUSE MAIL

(BP)	BAPTIST PRESS 901 Commerce #750 Nashville, TN 37234
F I R S T C L A S S	Southern Baptist Library and Archives