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**Kuwaiti's appeal slated
for Sept. 15 hearing**

**Baptist Press
7/5/96**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Robert Hussein, declared an apostate from Islam by a Kuwaiti religious court on May 29 for his Christian faith, filed an appeal of the decision on Saturday, June 29. The hearing for his appeal was set for Sept. 15.

Hussein was the subject of a June 27 news conference in which Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board President Jerry Rankin denounced the ruling as a "miscarriage of justice" and appealed to all "freedom-loving Americans" to raise a cry.

The news conference and details of Hussein's circumstances were reported in Baptist Press June 28. More details will follow as they are available.

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**16-year-old dies from 'huffing;'
his parents hope to help others** By Terri Lackey

**Baptist Press
7/5/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A quick glance under the bill of Ricky Stem Jr.'s baseball hat is testimony that he really was a good kid. There, among the sweat stains and doodles, is the reference of a Scripture verse penned in the handwriting of a child. Philippians 4:13 -- a verse about hope and strength.

Ricky won't be wearing that hat anymore. A Christian since age 7, the 16-year-old died June 20 after "huffing" fluorocarbons from his home air conditioning unit.

"We're claiming that verse as our own," his mother, Diane Stem, said of the Scripture that has been Ricky's favorite since he was a young child. Through their pain, Stem, a 16-year employee of the Baptist Sunday School Board, and her husband, Ricky Sr., are hoping to warn other Christian parents their child could be next.

"Ricky's in heaven, and I'm going to see him again someday," Diane Stem said during a recent interview at the family home. "I can't think of a better person that the Lord would have at his table than my son, but I wanted him a little longer here."

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Huffing is one of many ways young people use inhalants, according to Valerie Handy, an alcohol and drug specialist in Nashville, Tenn., who said the chemicals produce mind-and behavior-altering effects.

"All kids have to do is look under the kitchen cabinet," Handy said, to find one of more than 1,400 products that can be used as inhalants. Some of those include airplane glue, butane, paint thinner, cleaning products, any aerosol sprays, gasoline, correction fluids, even whipped cream.

"This is just a cheap and easy high for the kids," Handy said, "and it can turn their brains into silly putty."

That is, if they live. Ricky Jr. was one of more than 1,000 Americans who die each year from inhalants -- 500 of those are first-time users. Those who don't die can possibly suffer damage to the liver, lungs, kidneys, brain and nervous system.

The Stems, who have a daughter and grandson, say they were caught completely off guard by Ricky's death by inhalants. He had attended church services three times the week before he died. That is the same number of times he tried the dangerous teenage fad, taught to him, his parents say, by a fellow member of his church youth group.

"He hadn't even tried it enough for us to notice any symptoms or a change in his behavior," Ricky Stem Sr. said. "After church on Wednesday night, the day before he died, we sat out on the deck for two hours, just laughing and talking. Within a week of the first time he tried it, he's dead."

Ricky Jr. would have been a junior at Friendship Christian School in Lebanon, Tenn., next fall. He was an outstanding student and star athlete. The Stems received his report card in the mail the day he died. A first-string pitcher as a sophomore, Ricky Jr. led his high school team to the state tournaments. Pro-baseball scouts had watched him play, his father said.

"Ricky was a leader in his youth group at church; he was all mid-state baseball player, he was a health nut, he worked out all the time and watched his eating habits," Diane Stem said. "I don't want some Joe Blow like me reading this article and saying, 'Oh, well, that kid was probably into all sorts of bad stuff, and his parents were too stupid to know.'"

"I want Christian parents -- and all parents -- to know that the kids who wouldn't do the other types of drugs, the heavy drugs, are doing this."

Ricky Sr. added: "If Ricky could come back, he would tell his friends, 'Don't do this, this is crazy, this is just silly.'"

But Ricky can't come back. He ministers now through death. At least seven people accepted Christ following his funeral, his parents said.

"Ricky was not afraid to witness to people," his mother said. "He led a lot of people to the Lord. There were over 1,000 people at his funeral, and I told all those kids, 'Look close at him in this casket. That could be you.'"

"Kids Ricky's age think they are invincible. They think nothing can touch them. Ricky was on top of the world. He had everything going for him," she said. "But he made a bad choice, and now he's dead."

Stem said she believes peer pressure was at the root of her son's experiment with inhalants.

"It's so important to fit in at that age," she said. "We don't drink, so we don't fit in a lot of places, but as adults, we don't give a rip. But when you are at that young age, it is important to fit in with the crowd. And even though Ricky is a Christian, he probably didn't want to seem too good."

Stem said she called to alert all the parents of the teens she later learned were huffing.

Some appreciated the information; others denied it could be possible.

"Parents should assume their kids are doing it before they assume they are not," she said. "We had no reason to think he was doing anything."

A 1995 study by the National Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education (PRIDE) indicates parental intervention can significantly deter drug use, even among older teenagers.

Drug use, the study showed, declined sharply among teens whose parents frequently discussed the subject with them. Of those whose parents "never" talked about drugs, 34 percent smoked marijuana versus 24 percent who indicated their parents talked to them about drugs "a lot."

Diane Stem said now when she looks at a boy with a baseball cap and realizes "it's not Ricky," she becomes more determined to warn parents about the danger of inhalants.

"My life will never be the same. I've got a story to tell, and that's all I've got," she said, fingering the Mother's Day card Ricky gave her this year. "The Lord is going to use Ricky's death. We cannot let it be in vain."

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(BP) photo (horizontal) color photo accompanies this story. The photo is called Ricky and is posted in the SBCNet News Room. The outline is called Rickytxt.

Facts, figures about inhalants
may deter youth from 'huffing'

Baptist Press
7/5/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--"Inhalants" refers to substances that are sniffed or "huffed" to give the user an immediate head rush or high.

Users of inhalants tend to be between the ages of 7 and 17, but can also be as young as 4.

National Drug Abuse figures show:

-- In 1995, almost 22 percent of eighth-graders had tried inhalants, an 8 percent increase over 1994.

-- An estimated 359,000 kids between the ages of 12-17 use inhalants each month.

-- Using inhalants once can put a person at risk for sudden death, suffocation, visual hallucinations, severe mood swings, numbness and tingling of the hands and feet.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services lists five ways a person can die from using inhalants: 1) asphyxia (solvent gases limit oxygen, causing breathing to stop); 2) suffocation (seen when plastic bags are used); 3) choking on vomit; 4) careless and dangerous behaviors which result in death by accident; and 5) sudden sniffing death syndrome (presumably from cardiac arrest).

Prolonged use can result in: headache, muscle weakness, abdominal pain; decrease or loss of sense of smell; nausea; nosebleeds; hepatitis; violent behaviors; irregular heartbeat; liver, lung and kidney impairment; irreversible brain damage; nervous system damage; dangerous chemical imbalances in the body; involuntary passing of urine and feces.

Short-term effects of inhalants can result in: heart palpitations; breathing difficulty; dizziness; headaches.

Clues to spot inhalant abuse: paint, marker or correction-fluid stains on clothes or skin; empty spray cans, rags or plastic bags in child's room; rashes or sores around the nose or mouth; red, runny eyes or nose; drunk, dazed or dizzy behavior; excitability; anxiety or irritability; nausea or loss of appetite; increasingly poor school performance, apathy or absenteeism

For more information or help regarding a person who may be using inhalants, call the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at 1-800-729-6686.

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**Criswell College exec resigns,
citing different end-times view By Art Toalston**

DALLAS (BP)--A difference in view over a key point of end-times theology between W.A. Criswell and Richard R. Melick Jr. has prompted Melick to resign the presidency of Criswell College in Dallas.

"It's become apparent that, at this point, we're not in full agreement," Melick said, on one key point of eschatology, or end-times study: whether the church is raptured before or after the tribulation, a fierce seven-year period described in the Bible as preceding Christ's return.

"So the best thing is for me to step aside," Melick, 51, said.

He said, "I lean to a historic premillennial view," that the church is raptured after the tribulation.

Criswell, meanwhile, is widely known for a premillennial pre-tribulation view, that the church is raptured before the tribulation.

Melick's resignation was announced July 3 in a news release circulated by Jack E. Brady, trustee chairman of the 450-student college named for Criswell, longtime pastor of First Baptist Church, Dallas. Criswell remains the college's chancellor and is pastor emeritus of the church.

The news release cited Melick's four years of leadership at the college and noted that trustees had offered him a two-year extension in employment.

Then it stated: "Dr. Melick announced that out of respect for Dr. W.A. Criswell, for whom the college is named, and its Trustees, and in view of his differences regarding the prophetic interpretation of the church and the Great Tribulation that occurs prior to Christ's second coming, he was voluntarily submitting his resignation."

The news release noted Melick, at the request of the trustees, "will continue in an advisory capacity for further assistance to the Board and the Chancellor while his successor is being sought."

Listing examples of Melick's leadership, the news release noted, "Enrollment at the College reached a record level during the last school year and included students from 34 states and 37 countries. Criswell College is poised to include in its current curriculum an innovative urban ministries degree to train ministers and missionaries to reach the inner-city population with the life-changing gospel of the Bible."

Melick also is a consulting editor for the New American Commentary series being produced by the Baptist Sunday School Board's Broadman & Holman division and was the author of its first volume, on Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.

Melick said, "Within the last few weeks, discussions have revealed a preference for a president who holds to Dr. Criswell's eschatology." Criswell did not request his resignation nor had he voiced any question of administrative ability, Melick said, noting, "He and I have worked extremely well together."

"I love Dr. Criswell. I have the highest regard for everybody at the college. We just reached an issue that had to be resolved," Melick said. "The timing (of the resignation) is what I think is best for the college."

Melick said he had disclosed his eschatological view when he was hired, "but I don't know how widely it was disseminated."

Neither Criswell nor Brady could be reached the morning of July 5 for further comment.

Melick said he has no specific plans on the heels of his resignation.

"My career has been in academic ministry, both administration and professorship," Melick said. "I hope to remain in theological or church-related education in the future, and I wish the best for Criswell College."

Before going to Criswell College, Melick was chairman of the doctor of theology program and New Testament department at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, Memphis, Tenn., serving on the faculty there from 1983-92 and, at Palm Beach Atlantic College, West Palm Beach, Fla., he was chairman of the religion and philosophy department from 1979-81, acting president in 1981 and vice president for academic affairs, 1982-83.

Possibilities include friendship ministries to major on relationships, respite care for caregivers, education, help in finding employment, specialized day care, Bible studies, support groups and many others, she noted.

"You may discover 10 different things you can do," White said. "Do one thing and get it going well. Then get something else started."

The next steps include recruiting and training volunteers; removing physical, psychological and stereotypical barriers; and promoting the ministry through letters, presentations to local agencies, advertisements in the local newspaper and church newsletter, she said.

With those steps accomplished, personal visits to disabled people and their families should be made.

"Don't ever go into the home of a disabled adult and talk to the family and not the disabled person," White warned. "Ask what the needs are. Communicate that you want the family to be part of your church."

Then, White said, begin the ministry and evaluate it regularly.

"Involve disabled persons and families in the evaluation. Keep the ministry before the congregation on a regular basis," she said.

To increase awareness of disabled people and the need for church ministries, White said Disabilities Awareness Sunday is being added to the Southern Baptist Convention calendar beginning in October 1997.

Also, the Baptist Fellowship of Developmentally Disabilities Providers and Advocates will be organized at a national conference to be held April 3-6, 1997, in Atlanta.

"We miss out on a lot when we exclude disabled persons from our churches," White said. "We need them."

Jericho is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home and Foreign Mission boards, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

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Joni Eareckson Tada materials
to underscore heaven's reality

By Linda Lawson

Baptist Press
7/5/96

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--"If your belief about heaven does not affect your behavior, then there's something wrong with your belief," Tommy Dixon told participants in a seminar during Jericho: A Southern Baptist Missions Festival, June 29-July 5 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Too many Christians think of heaven only as "the sweet by and by" or they rarely think about it at all, said Dixon, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family adult department. Others think of heaven as a distant place where streets are paved with gold.

"Why do we need to renew our belief that heaven is our real home?" Dixon asked.

He cited hope and the capacity to keep life in perspective as two key factors.

Dixon based his comments on a new interactive course, "Heaven -- Your Real Home" by Joni Eareckson Tada. Produced by the board's discipleship and family development division, the course is available in adult, collegiate and youth editions.

Left paralyzed from the neck down after a 1969 diving accident, Tada spent two years in bed. Once she was able to use a wheelchair, she learned to paint with a brush held between her teeth. She has become a popular speaker and prolific writer. Her life story was the subject of a movie.

Heaven, for Tada, in part is a place where she will have a perfect body.

Dixon said she approached the board about producing the course on heaven because she felt the subject was one Christians need to study and discuss in their churches.

"The world has dulled us," Dixon said. "We've lost the perspective of what heaven is all about."

In addition to being the place where believers will spend eternity, "heaven helps us deal with things we confront every day," he said.

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A graduate of Columbia (S.C.) Bible College, now Columbia International University, Melick subsequently earned a master of divinity degree from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Ill., and a doctor of philosophy degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

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**Ministries with disabled people
needed, HMB worker maintains**

By Linda Lawson

**Baptist Press
7/5/96**

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--A Southern Baptist church of 250 members should have about 48 members with physical and mental disabilities if it reflects the average makeup of the population, according to a consultant on disabilities awareness.

According to the 1990 census, 19.4 percent of the U.S. noninstitutionalized population are disabled, and 9.6 percent are severely disabled. Of the total population of 258 million, approximately 50 million are disabled and 24.7 million have severe disabilities.

Almost 11 percent, or 27.9 million people, use wheelchairs.

Jean White, associate director of church and community ministries for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, said leaders of a church with no disabled members should be concerned because they clearly are not reaching a large segment of the population.

"There are a lot of people who would go to church if they could go to church," White said.

She led a conference on starting church ministries for people with disabilities during Jericho: A Southern Baptist Missions Festival, June 29-July 5 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

White cited the Bible verse, 1 Corinthians 12:22, as foundational for church ministries with disabled people. The verse states, "The parts of the body which seem to be weaker are indispensable."

"Their (the disabled) examples of courage and hope will inspire you," White said. "You can't be around disabled persons long before they will minister to you."

White listed 13 steps to starting a ministry, beginning with prayer. Church leaders, members and volunteers committed to the ministry and disabled people all should be involved in praying for the ministry, she said.

Next, the person interested in starting the ministry should talk with the church staff or missions committee and then secure a committee of people committed to the vision for the ministry. White suggested calling the committee Advocacy Committee for People with Special Needs.

"These people don't just have disabilities," she emphasized. "They also have abilities. We must major on their abilities. We want them to become integral members of our church."

The fourth step is to do an accessibility inventory of church facilities, White said. A suggested inventory form is available from the HMB.

"Start out on the parking lot in a wheelchair," she suggested. "Try to get off the parking lot and into the church. Then try going down the hall and into the classrooms. See if you can get into the choir loft."

Fifth, White said churches should conduct a survey to discover people with disabilities in the church and community. A product, "Survey for Discovering People with Disabilities in Your Church and Community," may be obtained from the HMB.

The sixth step White suggested was contacting local agencies about the numbers of people they service and the services they provide. A survey of the telephone book and talking with people in known agencies about others will reveal many and varied services, she said.

After identifying and prioritizing ministry needs, she said the committee must determine what ministries to start with.

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He listed common experiences such as love, arthritis, heartache, praise, cancer, grace, broken relationships, peace and sin.

"How many of those things are part of our life here on earth?" he asked. "All of them. How many are we going to take with us when we go? Only the good things -- love, praise, grace and peace.

"As we build Christian virtues in our lives, they're going to go with us," he said.

Dixon said he worked his way through college and seminary playing the organ for funerals, sometimes as many as three or four per day.

"I began to notice the difference that faith made at funerals," he said. "The worst funerals were when the people obviously had no faith. The ones of believers were dignified and filled with joy."

Noting some people find the image of streets of gold difficult to comprehend in human terms, Dixon said, "Who in the world is going to notice that when you're in the presence of God?"

In addition to member pieces for adults, college students and youth, a kit for leaders also is available. Information may be obtained and orders placed through the board's customer service center, 1-800-458-2772.

Jericho is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home and Foreign Mission boards, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

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Historic partnership begins at Glorieta

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7/5/96

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--A first-of-its-kind partnership will get its official launch July 29 at the opening of Wayland Baptist University's satellite campus at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

The academic venture is the result of joint efforts by two Southern Baptist institutions, with the Baptist Sunday School Board of Nashville, Tenn., providing physical facilities for the campus and Wayland Baptist University of Plainview, Texas, operating the educational program as an extension of its main campus.

A 10:30 a.m. ribbon-cutting and dedication program for what will be the only Baptist university operation in New Mexico will include remarks by Wayland President Wallace E. Davis and Board President James T. Draper Jr.

Other program participants will include Bill Hardage, vice president for academic and student services at Wayland; Mike Arrington, executive director of corporate affairs for the Sunday School Board; Claude Cone, executive director of the Baptist Convention of New Mexico; Fred Teague, director of Wayland's Glorieta Campus; and Larry Haslam, director of Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

Classes at the new campus will begin Sept. 3, and applications are being received for fall and spring admissions. A "Ski-Study" January microterm is scheduled Jan. 2-22. People desiring information about study at the Glorieta campus may write to WBU-Glorieta, Box 282, Glorieta, NM 87535 or telephone (505) 757-3072.

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Dieterlys began BSU work from scratch at Notre Dame

By Laura Horne

Baptist Press
7/5/96

SOUTH BEND, Ind. (BP)--A nationalist Chinese student invites a communist Chinese student to a Southern Baptist Bible study on a Catholic college campus. Sound impossible? Not with God.

The communist Chinese student continued to attend the Bible studies and after only eight months decided to accept Christ. With the assistance of the University of Notre Dame's Baptist Student Union, the student was able to get his wife and son out of China.

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Thereafter, Yan Xi Gu assisted in beginning a Chinese mission church in South Bend, Ind., averaging as many as 50 in attendance.

Looking back on 15 years of ministry as BSU directors at Notre Dame, this is one of many stories Doug and Deb Dieterly can recount of how God has worked in the lives of students.

However, their work with college students began long before arriving in the South Bend area.

As a fairly new Christian who had grown up a United Methodist, Doug was searching for a way to follow up on his decision to follow Christ. Some guys on his dormitory floor invited Doug to join Ball State University's BSU group. There, Doug found nurture and began to grow in Christ as he enjoyed the fellowship of other believers. So began his involvement in student work.

His senior year, Ball State's BSU director was called to a church as pastor. Recently married, Doug was asked to take over as interim director. He finished out the year and then headed off to law school at Indiana University in Indianapolis. The BSU there had meetings in the Dieterlys' apartment.

After Doug's senior year of law school, the Dieterlys began to pray about where the Lord would lead.

"We set out a fleece, in a sense," Doug said. "We prayed that I would get an offer from one law firm, and that it would be one that would recognize my desire for ministry and be supportive of that ministry."

The Dieterlys also prayed that the Lord would provide a place for Doug to do some preaching and an area where they could be involved in BSU work.

"With my successes in law school based on academics and other achievements, we knew it would be interesting to see how our prayers would be answered," Doug said.

The Lord led Doug to include on his resume that he was a licensed Southern Baptist minister. He had interviews with 23 law firms. Despite his academic record and other achievements, none of them gave a job offer.

One interview with a premiere firm in Indiana remained.

"I knew that either this firm would offer me a position or we would take off to Southern (Baptist Theological) Seminary (in Kentucky)," Doug said.

Doug interviewed with the law firm, now known as Barnes and Thornberg, finding at least two of the partners were ex-seminarians. In addition, the firm saw his ministering as a plus. Following his interview, Doug received a phone call from the firm asking him to become associated with them.

"I accepted on the spot knowing that God had provided. That was one out of three, and there were two other areas to see fulfilled," Doug said.

Just eighteen minutes later, the phone rang again and it was Don Herman, then Baptist Student Union director for Indiana, asking if Doug would be willing to go to a school to begin BSU work. Doug told Herman he had just accepted a position at a law firm, but asked where the school was. It was none other than the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, where Doug's office at Barnes and Thornberg would be located.

"The Lord couldn't have been leading any more clearly," Doug said. Dieterly and Herman went to visit with the local Baptist association, which extended a call for the Dieterlys to begin student work on a volunteer basis at Notre Dame as well as St. Mary's College, Bethel College and Indiana University at South Bend. Following the meeting, one of the trustees of Plymouth (Ind.) Baptist Church, a mission church, approached Doug, saying their pastor had just moved to a new church and asking Doug to serve as interim pastor, which he did for 18 months until the church grew to full church status and called a pastor.

"The Lord answered specifically, three for three," Doug said.

The Dieterlys more or less began the Notre Dame BSU from scratch in 1980. Other groups had tried to begin Bible studies, but nothing ever really took hold. In addition, a year before the Dieterlys began their work, several groups had been kicked off the campus for proselytizing Catholics.

After a meeting with the campus minister, a list was made to see how many Baptist students were at Notre Dame. Surprisingly, a substantial number of the football players were Baptists. The Dieterlys were given some strict guidelines to work with but were allowed to begin ministering to Baptist students on campus.

The ministry began with a small Bible study and prayer time, and has grown to include such things as local mission work, summer mission work and Big Brother-Big Sister activities.

Doug noted for many years the Navigators, Campus Crusade for Christ and similar groups were not allowed to begin ministries on the campus. Other than the BSU, there was no other Protestant group on campus. Because it was the only non-Catholic ministry on campus, members of many Protestant groups, as well as some Catholic students, have become involved in the BSU ministry.

"Over the 15 years we directed, a huge relationship of trust and good will has grown, and ultimately, there are few restrictions," Doug said.

And the fact the law firm of Barnes and Thornberg, Doug's employer, became legal counsel to Notre Dame certainly hasn't hurt.

Being BSU directors for a Catholic university with such high academic credentials "has allowed us to be foreign missionaries without even leaving the country," Doug said.

The school draws students from every corner of the world, including India, Ethiopia, Japan and even China.

"We have been able to lead some of these students to Christ. They go back to their countries to be Christians in their own communities," Doug said.

"Students in college are the leaders of tomorrow, and it's a very pivotal time in a person's life when they are making important life choices," Deb said. "Reaching students, in a way, is reaching the future."

The Dieterlys recall one freshman girl, Rebecca Krieg, who came to Notre Dame as a young Christian wanting a close walk with the Lord. She got involved in the BSU, became an officer and assisted with the BSU at St. Mary's.

As the Lord began showing the Dieterlys new ministries he wanted them involved in, he began to lay on their hearts that Krieg should take their place. One evening the Dieterlys and Krieg met for dinner, and Krieg shared her desire to serve as BSU director. When the Dieterlys stepped down in 1995 as BSU directors at Notre Dame, Krieg was there to take on the responsibility.

Exactly how do Southern Baptists minister on a Catholic campus? Well, the Dieterlys believe that the New Testament, in Matthew 28:19-20, teaches the importance of discipleship.

Because restrictions kept the Dieterlys from knocking on doors in the dormitories, students were responsible for bringing their friends to Christ.

"Our emphasis was on being disciples, then being disciple makers and then being makers of disciple makers," Deb said. "We wanted to make sure they had the background to go out and share Christ and disciple those new Christians. Our greatest impact while we worked on the campus was to help students be able to do just that."

The biggest obstacle for the Dieterlys, and now Krieg, is the lack of a permanent BSU facility. The association doesn't have the finances to assist in buying a house, so the BSU remains at the mercy of the university for classroom space for its meetings.

"It is such a challenge. It is amazing how much a center can mean. It helps produce cohesion among the group, and it gives the students a place to go to hang out, fellowship and have fun, as well as providing a place for discipleship," Doug said.

Every bit of the Dieterlys work among students has been teamwork, they said.

"I'm not sure either one of us could have done it alone," Deb said.

"Doug led the Bible studies and did the bulk of spiritual guidance because he is really gifted in that area. I was more of a behind-the-scenes person. I did the organizational work and council preparations."

After 15 years at Notre Dame, "It is sometimes hard to believe we're not doing that now," Deb said. "We still love students, and we assist on the associational level. But we feel called on to other ministries now."

Student work is a challenge, and Deb encourages other workers with a love for college students to understand what is going on in their lives, to be flexible, to understand what social life on campus is like and to understand the spiritual and educational pressures college students experience.

"Most of all, student ministers must be called to that ministry just as with any other ministry," she said.

The Dieterlys feel the Lord has called them to develop a discipleship training program in their church, Plymouth Baptist, where Doug serves as a trustee, deacon, church organist and Sunday school teacher. He also is on the board of directors for the Indiana Baptist Foundation. Deb is involved at Plymouth Baptist as a Girls in Action (GA) leader, a preschool Sunday school teacher, choir director and director of the Wednesday night children's ministry.

They have two children, Jennifer, 12, and Robert, 6.

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Horne is a 1996 communications graduate of Hardin-Simmons University, Abilene, Texas.

She found musical gift
after losing her sight

By Bonnie Verlander

Baptist Press
7/5/96

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (BP)--Contemporary Christian artist Amy Grant has a song on one of her albums that Jennifer Rothschild can relate to: "Hats." Grant's song describes a woman becoming overwhelmed at the number of hats she has to wear. While Rothschild can identify with juggling numerous roles, she doesn't often find it too overwhelming.

Among her many jobs are wife, mother, singer, songwriter, pianist, active member of Celebration Baptist Church, Tallahassee, Fla., and, as if these roles weren't a full plate, she also is legally blind.

"When God calls you to do something, he gives you the grace to do it," Rothschild said.

She walks by faith, not by sight. She follows the lead of God; her husband, Philip; her guide dog; and yes, even her son Clayton, who at 2 years of age didn't even realize he was leading his mother around ant piles as they took afternoon walks.

Rothschild, 32, lives with a degenerative eye condition diagnosed when she was 12. By age 15, doctors declared Rothschild legally blind.

Immediately, she was forced to understand what really mattered in life. Rothschild said due to her challenging circumstances it was easier to guard herself from common trials during the teenage years.

"I didn't have the opportunity to settle for shallow things," she said. "God gave me a big enough problem and allowed me to see things that are much deeper and more important."

Although she couldn't read, see color, facial features or anything farther than eight feet away, Rothschild's eyes were opened to see God's vision.

As a 15-year-old, sitting at the piano having just been told she's legally blind, Rothschild began playing, "It Is Well With My Soul." She could no longer read the notes in the Baptist Hymnal, but she played the hymn as she had never played before. That was the beginning of Rothschild's continuing career as a music evangelist.

"It was as if God symbolically closed one door, then opened another all in the same day. From that point on, I played by ear in a style I never had before. I must admit I enjoyed it. It was a way for me to express things that probably words couldn't, at that point. I just believe it was a gift."

--more--

Rothschild continued to live a basically normal life, considering her handicap. Following high school she enrolled at Palm Beach Atlantic College. Having never left home, this caused some anxiety. However, God again provided encouragement through the faculty and students there, she added.

During her years at the Baptist-affiliated college, God offered opportunities for growth that helped define her calling. "As I grew, gifts evolved and God defined my calling."

Rothschild's college years also introduced her to Philip, who later became her husband. "When we met, I couldn't see much of him," Rothschild recalled. "I knew he had curly blond hair and I was really attracted to his personality. He is so charming and dynamic.

"I feel very blessed because God has equipped him (Philip) for the needs that are there," she said. "Philip takes care of me. He helps me with my hair, makeup and even paints my nails. He's my mirror to the world."

Following God's leading, Rothschild entered a full-time music career in 1987 when she recorded her first album. During her career she has performed more than 400 concerts in the United States, recorded three albums, written 29 original songs and been nominated for a Dove Award.

Despite the hectic calendar that keeps her on the road, Rothschild recognizes her main priority is her ministry at home. Two years after she recorded her first album, she and Philip had their first child, Clayton.

"There have been so many ways God has used Clayton," she said. "Number one, (God) has given me a sense of defining my priorities in ministry. My first calling is as a mother and a wife. My ministry at home will have a far greater impact for eternity.

"Secondly, God has taught me stewardship. Just as music is a gift from God, so are Clayton and Philip," Rothschild said. "At times I have to be very careful with stewardship. If I can't manage my home and minister to my family, I have no business running out every weekend to perform and minister to others."

When Rothschild is on the road she wants "people to identify with the God who is strong in our weaknesses," she said. "Everyone experiences some type of loss. That is the place where God has proven to be very strong and sufficient."

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