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NEVADA--Parents have options to bar kids from Internet dangers.
MISSOURI--His gift for storytelling finds a home in his novels.

CALENDAR

NORTH CAROLINA--Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, trustees meeting, Oct. 14-15, Wake Forest.
KENTUCKY--Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, trustees meeting, Oct. 14-16, Louisville.

**World needs still greater
than resources, Rankin says**

By Mark Kelly

**Baptist Press
10/11/96**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Encouraged by stronger missions giving, trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board adopted an optimistic \$205.5 million budget that will send \$4.89 million more to overseas work in 1997.

Yet the available resources don't begin to address the needs and opportunities God has laid before Southern Baptists, board President Jerry Rankin told trustees, who met in Richmond, Va., Oct. 7-9.

For the first time in many years, all three major sources of income for the board -- the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program unified budget, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and investment income -- are projected to increase significantly in 1997, Rankin noted.

"But even as we rejoice in increased support, I want you to be aware that this 3.58 percent budget increase doesn't begin to seize the kind of opportunity we have to evangelize our world," Rankin said.

Board members heard a series of exciting testimonies about how God is moving around the world. But they were sobered when Rankin recalled one mission administrator who divided his annual budget by the number of lost people in his area -- and found he had 1.7 cents for each lost soul.

The 1997 budget anticipates a 2.42 percent increase in Cooperative Program support and reflects an 18.01 percent increase in income generated by the board's reserves, said board Vice President and Treasurer Carl Johnson. It also counts on a 5.59 percent increase in giving toward the \$100 million 1996 goal for the Lottie Moon offering, the largest increase since 1988.

In 1995, Southern Baptists gave more than \$89 million to the Lottie Moon offering, named for the 19th-century missionary to China whose appeals moved Southern Baptists to give sacrificially so more missionaries might be sent overseas. In 1997, proceeds of that offering will provide 47.12 percent of the board's basic operating budget.

The \$6.89 million increase in the basic budget over 1996 includes \$4.89 million more for overseas work. That money implements missionary longevity raises approved this past summer and provides the first increase in many years for missionary operating budgets, Rankin said.

The budget sets aside an additional \$1 million for emeritus missionary medical and dental expenses, for which the board is self-insured. An increase in the stateside support portion of the budget from 12.8 percent to 13.35 percent will help bring staff salaries more in line with those at other Southern Baptist agencies.

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Southern Baptists are giving more to world hunger and relief, reversing a dangerous four-year decline, human needs consultant Bill Cashion told trustees. Last year, receipts totaled \$5.7 million. While the human needs office had projected receiving \$5.1 million for human needs ministries this year, gifts are expected to pass \$5.9 million and may reach \$6 million.

That's good news in a world where 41,000 people die every day from hunger-related problems -- half of them in "Last Frontier" countries with little or no access to the gospel, Cashion said. Because a crisis-filled world presents so many opportunities to share God's love, Southern Baptists simply must do everything in their power to "both heal and tell," he said.

A revitalized partnership between the foreign and home mission boards and the convention's Christian Life Commission has sparked renewed interest in hunger concerns, CLC Executive Director Richard Land told trustees. A 600 percent increase in requests for world hunger offering envelopes indicates "unprecedented" response, he added.

Southern Baptists need to know the Foreign Mission Board is the only agency that sends every penny of each world hunger gift directly to the ministry field, without using a percentage for expenses, Cashion said.

Trustees also adopted a resolution of appreciation for Thailand missionary Danny Hill, who died May 22 in a car wreck in Kentucky. The board recognized Hill's 23 years of faithful service and pledged special prayer support for his family, including his wife, Delores, who decided to continue her ministry in Thailand.

In an Oct. 8 service at Richmond's New Bridge Baptist Church, trustees appointed 30 new career missionaries, almost half of them headed to "Last Frontier" countries. Eighty-eight retiring missionaries with a combined 2,287 years of ministry received emeritus status in an Oct. 6 service at Richmond's Derbyshire Baptist Church.

Southern Baptist Convention President Tom Elliff challenged trustees to devote themselves to prayer for spiritual awakening in the United States. Elliff recently completed a series of prayer for spiritual awakening convocations at the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

Every great mission movement in our nation's history was born in the "fever pitch" of spiritual awakening, and the country desperately needs another one, Elliff said. If Americans want to preserve their religious freedom and the privilege of sending missionaries around the world, another awakening is a necessity, he said.

"I pray God will hold our feet to the fire as we seek him for awakening in this nation," Elliff concluded. "And I encourage you to join us in praying diligently that God would bring a great, stirring spiritual awakening to our nation."

The next Foreign Mission Board trustee meeting, set for Dec. 9-10 in Jackson, Miss., will be preceded by a Dec. 8 missionary appointment service at First Baptist Church there.

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(BP) photos (2 horizontal) and cutlines mailed 10/11/96 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted in SBCNet News Room.

**Lottie Moon gifts
help in remote region**

By Wally Poor

**Baptist Press
10/11/96**

METETI, Panama (BP)--What happens to Southern Baptists' sacrificial gifts through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions?

Some might help Foreign Mission Board missionaries Jackie Cooper spread the gospel in the Darien, Panama's most remote region.

Jackie and his wife, Arlene, live in Meteti. It's only 150 miles from Panama City, but the road to their house is actually eight spine-jolting hours long.

The Coopers go up and down that road and others to various mission points every week. Because of the condition of the roads, distances where they live are measured in hours, not miles.

Such roads take their toll, even on tough four-wheel-drive vehicles such as the Toyota Land Cruiser the Coopers drive. Four-wheel-drive vehicles are the only ones that can get to Meteti.

The Coopers use their Land Cruiser as an evangelistic tool. Often, people need help getting to a hospital. One time Cooper even carried a body into Panama City for a funeral.

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Other persons just need to get from point A to point B. There aren't many people with cars in Meteti, so the Coopers and their Land Cruiser are well known among the people. Each passenger receives a verbal witness -- or at least a tract.

But the Land Cruiser costs about \$20,000. A set of tires, \$500. A battery, \$90. This is one place where the Lottie Moon offering pays off.

Jackie and Arlene Cooper are the only Foreign Mission Board missionaries in the Darien. The Lottie Moon offering helps keep ministry there alive.

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(BP) photo (horizontal) and cutline mailed 10/11/96 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted in SBCNet News Room.

**6 burned to death in purge
by Indonesian extremists**

**Baptist Press
10/11/96**

SITUBONDO, Indonesia (BP)--A pastor, his family and two others were burned to death in their church Oct. 10 during extremist Muslims' latest attack on the minority Christian community on Indonesia's most populous island.

Mobs destroyed 18 churches, two Christian schools and an orphanage in four cities of East Java, according to sources close to the Christian church in Indonesia. Churches affected were of the Reformed, Pentecostal and Catholic denominations. No Baptist churches are located in any of the cities.

A mob riding in three trucks and 20 motorcycles was stopped as it was heading toward Banyuwangi, however, where a Baptist church is located. The mob destroyed three churches in a nearby village, the sources said.

Two weeks ago a Catholic church in Jakarta, the nation's capital, was destroyed by extremists. In June, a pastor was seriously injured when mobs attacked 10 churches in Surabaya, the capital of East Java.

No group has claimed responsibility for the attacks, which appear to be well-planned and implemented. Indonesia, a string of islands in southeastern Asia, is the world's most populous Muslim nation. East Java is on Java, the most populous of Indonesia's islands, with 60 percent of the country's population of 200 million.

Indonesian Christians are asking others around the world to pray that they would remain faithful and boldly stand for Jesus Christ, and that the government of Indonesia will be just in applying the law, sources said. They are also asking for prayer that communities near the destroyed churches would be opened to the gospel.

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**Staff to work from homes
under Utah-Idaho proposal**

By Debbie Ward

**Baptist Press
10/11/96**

SALT LAKE CITY (BP)--The west was settled by pioneers. Long lines of covered wagons slowly rolling across the prairie come to mind when thinking of the westward expansion. Today, people in the West are still pioneers, only the tools of the trade are computers, modems and fax machines.

Program directors for the Utah-Idaho Southern Baptist Convention will use those tools as "teleworkers" if a proposed long-range plan for the years 1997-2002 is approved by messengers to the annual meeting Nov. 12-13 in West Valley City, Utah.

In September, the convention's executive board unanimously approved the proposed long-range plan, which would make the Utah-Idaho the first Southern Baptist-related organization with a majority of its staff teleworking.

Board members were enthusiastic. "The accessibility is tremendous," said David Carver, pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Caldwell, Idaho. "Now it takes days to receive information or reach someone who might be out of town. With the new technology, access will be almost instantaneous."

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The building in Salt Lake City that had housed the convention 13 years was sold in July as part of the plan to get the convention out of debt by the end of 1997. If the long-range plan is approved and program directors choose to work from their homes, a smaller building will be purchased.

Teleworking, working from one's home, is a national trend in the corporate world. John Niles, president of JALA International, a Los Angeles telecommuting consultant firm and author of "Making Telecommuting Happen," estimates the number of teleworkers in the United States between 10-12 million, with around 20 million by the turn of the century.

Teleworking would allow program directors to live anywhere in the two-state area rather than in Salt Lake City where the convention office had been since 1964. The result? More frequent contact with pastors and church members, providing a better sense of belonging especially for those in outlying areas.

The Utah-Idaho convention covers almost 1,100 miles, from the Canadian border in the north to the Utah-Arizona border in the south and includes churches in Nevada and Oregon. With limited travel budgets, it is difficult for program directors to have frequent contact with pastors in the outlying areas. Nor can these pastors afford to travel to Salt Lake City very often for meetings. As teleworkers living throughout the two states, however, it will be easier for staff to stay in touch.

A lower-cost building will free up funds to invest in the latest computer technology. Each program director will have a home computer, modem, fax and business phone. In addition, e-mail and voice mail will make communication quick and inexpensive between both the convention staff and those in the field.

Computer links with national agencies such as the Home Mission Board and the Baptist Sunday School Board will enable faster retrieval of information.

In the future, portable laptop computers may be added to the teleworking tools. These would allow program directors to connect with national agencies while on the road. For example, demographic data from the HMB about population growth in southern Utah could be printed from the laptop and given to pastors attending an associational meeting. In the past, that information would take weeks to get.

Since the July sale of the building, the program directors have been working from their homes without the benefit of such technology. Even without the computers, results are promising. "The volume of calls I receive has increased greatly," said Bea Conrad, state WMU director. "People seem to feel better about calling knowing they will get to me right away rather than having to speak to a secretary first."

Several program directors said they were able to get more work done at home. Flexible hours are another plus. Rob Lee, state director of religious education, spends the morning receiving and returning calls to agencies in the eastern United States, where the times are an hour or two ahead of Utah. Being flexible makes working around family commitments possible as well.

"The kind of change that is taking place today is unprecedented. But God has always asked his people to make changes in their lives," said Jim Harding, executive director of the convention.

"Although moving into uncharted territory, we are striving not to move ahead of the Lord. Fifteen months of prayer, research and planning have gone into this new idea," Harding said. "I feel strongly we are following his will."

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Parents have options to bar kids from Internet dangers

By Clay Renick

Baptist Press
10/11/96

SPARKS, Nev. (BP)--The recent actions of Cash Morris, who calls himself "The Dark One," highlight a growing problem.

The 18-year-old from Nevada, who created the "Vampire" chat room on the Internet, left an e-mail message for two girls in South Carolina last August.

"I can show you fear in a handful of dust," it read.

One girl was 15 years old and began a relationship with Morris via the computer network. Her friend was 13.

They disappeared in Morris' car after a prearranged meeting. Their week-long trip ended in Nevada as police booked them as runaways.

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According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, approximately 30 cases have been recorded in the last two years where children disappeared with people they met through computer networks.

"The number is definitely rising," said Ernie Allen, the center's president, in an Associated Press story.

"I recommend that parents not let their children go into chat rooms," said Donna Rice Hughes of Enough is Enough, a nonprofit organization in the fight against pornography. "They're too dangerous."

The problem is a struggle for parents and a threat for children. According to Internet World Magazine, more than 30 million pages are on the Internet's World Wide Web, with thousands added every day. That increases the Internet's value as an information resource -- and the danger of unrestricted material.

"Child molesters have easy access to children on-line," Hughes said. "Any child with a computer and modem can access pornography in a matter of seconds."

The National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families cited a case involving Donald Matthew Deatherage. He met a 14-year-old boy on-line and arranged a visit. Deatherage then shackled, tortured and molested the child before police arrived. The boy's father discovered sexual e-mail between the two.

Officials with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said 1 million children are forced into the sex trade every year around the world. Experts at the World Congress Against Sexual Exploitation of Children put some of the blame on the Internet. They claim a million pictures of child porn are on the World Wide Web amid 40 million pages about sex with children.

In California police arrested 13 people from a chat group called the "Orchid Club." They had a digital camera attached to a computer and were showing a 10-year-old girl in sexual poses.

The struggle now involves governments. According to Associated Press, China recently blocked access to more than 100 sites on the World Wide Web. Singapore and Germany also banned some material they described as "pornographic" or "politically objectionable."

Even the comedian Sinbad, who spends hours each night on the Internet, won't let his daughter or son go on-line alone.

"You have to safeguard what they watch," he told Parade magazine. "The pornographers are searching for young boys."

Bob Dasal questions the logic of censorship. He's a former pastor and now managing editor of Christian Computing magazine based in Raymore, Mo.

Christian Computing recommends a software program called "Net Nanny," which allows parents to choose sites visited. Nothing else can be accessed, and the program even records the attempts for other Web sites.

"Kids are smarter than parents on computers," Dasal said.

Internet World Magazine surveyed the computer blocs on the market in its September 1996 issue. The magazine found two approaches in the programs. The first -- filter types -- allows access to the Internet but then blocks the bad material using a list of terms. This happens at the computer via a database and requires an update as new web sites form.

Rating systems are the other blocking approach but are voluntary. They send a questionnaire to each web site. And their block attempts come from that information. Some of the worst sites don't respond.

Enough is Enough recommends another program called "Rated-PG." It uses a rating system but also protects against offensive material on games, CD-ROMS or floppy discs.

Several software packages combine the rating systems with the filter at the computer end. These offer more options for parents.

"Cyber Patrol" is the best known with the combination approach. Internet World gave it the highest marks for total coverage and parent options. The program can be modified for different family members. It also has a feature to prevent the release of family information like names, addresses or phone numbers.

Microsystems Software produces Cyber Patrol with a retail price of \$29.95 and another \$29.95 for yearly updates.

Net Nanny uses a filter approach. The company provides a list of bad web sites. Parents can add to it, and the block will work even with programs not connected to the Internet.

"Surfwatch" is another filter approach. It does well against sexual material. But it allows other offensive ideas to pass through, like references to violent action and drugs.

Two groups lead the effort in rating web sites. The Recreational Software Advisory Council started from a group of software publishers. Another group called Safesurf formed with parents. Both provide a good service, but they only rate 200,000 web sites out of 30 million.

Among ratings-based programs, New View Inc.'s free "Spec For Kids" uses a company-based screening board with a high level of protection. Children first go through the company web site before gaining access to the Internet. That limits the options for children and allows parents to monitor that use from another computer.

"Net Shepherd" is another system, using ratings like those found in movies. It gives G for the least offensive and X for the worst. It does block web-based material but not the "Usnet News Groups," a major source of nude pictures, drug abuse, bigotry and foul language.

Net Shepherd allows parents to add areas off limits. The program is free, but the updated ratings cost \$5.95 a month.

"Cybersitter" is another combination program and comes from Solid Oak Software Inc. It uses a voluntary ratings approach to block offensive areas but won't restrict unrated sites.

The updates are free and automatic. It was one of the few programs that barred access to the Usenet groups. Cybersitter's initial price is \$39.95.

The U.S. government developed the Internet as a communication system during nuclear war. But satellite communications made that obsolete, and the government gave it over to universities.

"The entire Internet could be rated in 15 minutes -- if it wanted to," said Ray Soular with Safesurf. "Our utmost goal in setting up a rating system was the protection of children."

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His gift for storytelling finds a home in his novels

By Julie Nall

Baptist Press
10/11/96

COLUMBIA, Mo. (BP)--Writer Steven W. Wise sits in his upstairs corner office in downtown Columbia, Mo., filling out starchy real estate forms. It is a rather uneventful task requiring little creativity. But later at night, during the 9 to 12 o'clock hours "that nobody else wants," the real estate appraiser relocates to his office/computer room/personal space. There he lets his creative thoughts formulate, build and spill into the form of a novel. His goal: to write about the "little heroes" of the world who make a difference in the fabric of our country but are hardly known.

The most recent of his three novels published by Thomas Nelson Publishers, "Long Train Passing," tells the story of a tiny schoolteacher who, "even in the two-inch heels of her new shoes ... stood only four feet, five inches tall," and a mysterious, awkward man. They work together to help a lonely, forgotten schoolboy ravaged by his father's alcoholism. Set against the backdrop of both World War II and the Korean War, the story takes the reader directly into the lives of Annabelle Allen, Emmett Tragmar and Jewell Cole.

"Long Train Passing" is dedicated to Lillian Allen, Wise's first-grade teacher, "who was a saint long before she departed earth." The tiny woman in the story is the mirror image of Miss Allen, bears the same spinal ailment and even shares her last name. Emmett is based loosely on an autistic-savant man from Wise's hometown who was befriended by few people, one of them being Wise's father. Jewell is constructed after a classmate of Wise's who had an abusive father and named after yet another classmate.

"The beauty of writing a book like that is it is just in me, I don't have to do a lot of research," Wise said. He spent a grand total of one hour in research to spruce up on World War II and Korean War history, as he already was pretty good with WWII history and "better than most on Korean history, because it's kind of a forgotten war." If his novel writing required a great deal of research, Wise wouldn't enjoy it. He's a storyteller.

Wise, 48, did not plan to be an author. But growing up in California, Mo., he always has been one to tell a story -- "I can spin a yarn with family and friends" -- and tell it well. After he gave a short testimony at Columbia's Memorial Baptist Church, the pastor's wife approached Wise and encouraged him to put his thoughts into written form. At age 40, that was all the encouragement he needed to get started.

"He's a fantastic storyteller," said Kathy Lively, the encourager, whose husband, Bob, formerly was Memorial's pastor. "He paints a story with pictures and he just does a beautiful job of that. He expresses himself incredibly well."

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His other published novels, "Midnight" and "Chambers," also did not require much research.

"Midnight" was sparked by one of his favorite Bible verses, Luke 8:43-48, where a woman reaches out, touches the cloak of Jesus and is healed through her faith. Wise's story flows from his love for the passage and an attempt to make a contemporary application of it.

"Faith healing was a tough subject because it spooks some people, so the publishers stuck their necks out on that, but it was a very successful first novel," Wise reported.

Thoughts for "Chambers" were stimulated by stories of children who are abducted and then "disappear from the face of the earth," Wise said. The story is about a boy kidnapped by a Satanist and demon-possessed people who do undescribably horrible things to children.

"The seeds for novels can come from strange places sometimes," Wise conceded. He enjoys long walks and hikes in the woods, away from all sounds but the wind in the trees, and sometimes stories come to him there. "The scene came to me of a man in a robe at a Satanic ritual. I couldn't get it out of my mind, so I just ran with it and let the story go."

Wise suggested not reading the eerie "Chambers" before bedtime. "My writing is very unstructured and that's the way I want it," he said. "Writing is the out-crop of artistic talent that needed to get out.

"If you think about it, I'm the only one who doesn't get to read my story. I write one scene at a time, so when I sit down at the keyboard again, I'm as excited about what's going to happen next as the reader is. That's what makes writing fun."

Waiting for his first novel to get published was "a pins-and-needles deal like you can't imagine," Wise recalled. He received a call from Thomas Nelson Publishers in Nashville, Tenn., saying the company was interested and would call back in a month. The second call came, and Wise had to wait another month. The third call, accepting the novel, was one of the best phone calls of his life.

"Midnight" required minor editing, changing one scene in the book. "Chambers" required softening some descriptions of violence, scenes and words. But "Long Train Passing" was published exactly as he had written it. The book can be found in most bookstores, as it crosses over between Christian and mainstream fiction.

"I love 'Long Train Passing' -- it is incredible," said Sharon Gilbert, director of author relations at Thomas Nelson Publishing. "The story wrote itself. It was just in him and it came out. It is such a wonderful story of hope."

Of the many authors Gilbert works with, Wise is one of her favorites. "He is a down-to-earth, hardworking family man and he has this incredible gift for writing. He's able to weave a wonderful story."

Wise expresses his Christian faith through his stories, as he would not feel comfortable writing books with gratuitous sex and violence. "If my Christian friends couldn't pick up the story and read it, I would be embarrassed," he said.

"Also, I want to make the point that good fiction can be written without sex and violence. It would be possible to write scenes like those that would captivate readers attention, but to what end?"

A California native, Wise graduated from the University of Missouri in Columbia, then lived in North Carolina 13 years. He and his wife, Cathy, live near Columbia with their children, Travis and Stacey.

Wise knocks a golf ball around occasionally and he hunts a little bit. For the past 10 years his free time mostly has been devoted to his children's activities. His main hobby evolved into a vocation, and a sequel to "Long Train Passing" is in the works.

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