



**BAPTIST PRESS**  
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

September 11, 1996

96-160

GEORGIA--HMB president takes Mission America post; photos.  
WASHINGTON--Senate votes opposition to homosexual rights.  
NORTH CAROLINA--Brotherhood president visits eastern N.C. disaster area; photos.  
TEXAS--RTVC president says no to NAMB president bid.  
TENNESSEE--BSSB building 'a new house' of VBS materials; logo.  
TENNESSEE--Jim Henry appointed chairman of Glorieta-Ridgecrest campaign.  
DALLAS--'See You at the Pole' expects 100,000 in Texas.  
DALLAS--Moratorium on gambling urged, pending study.  
TENNESSEE--Housing form for Dallas SBC meeting now available.

**HMB president takes  
Mission America post**

**By Sarah Zimmerman**

**Baptist Press  
9/11/96**

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP)--Larry Lewis is retiring as Home Mission Board president to work with Mission America, a network of 100 denominational and para-denominational evangelical organizations.

After nearly 10 years as president, the Missouri native will step down Jan. 1, 1997. Lewis, 61, will continue to be paid by the Home Mission Board but receive "significantly less salary" than his package as president, said Greg Martin, chairman of the HMB board of directors. The agreement was approved by the administrative committee of the HMB directors in their Sept. 10 regular meeting.

Lewis will be a national facilitator for Celebrate Jesus 2000, an HMB initiative that involves praying, sharing the gospel individually and in groups and helping new Christians become disciples.

"I know of no one more qualified for this than Larry Lewis, qualified both with experience and spiritual vision," said Paul Cedar, chairman of the 2-year-old Mission America movement. "We are truly thrilled at this unexpected and extravagant gift from God."

The Mission America mission statement is, "The whole Church in the United States taking the whole gospel of Jesus Christ to the whole nation in our generation -- and to all the world." In addition to evangelical denominations, Mission America is endorsed by groups such as Campus Crusade for Christ and the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Lewis will work closely with Southern Baptists and other evangelicals in participating Mission America groups. The Celebrate Jesus strategy was introduced May 1 to representatives of 175 Christian organizations and received hearty endorsement across denominational lines. Representatives of five evangelical organizations showed support for the strategy by participating in this year's HMB report to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting.

"Needless to say, I'm challenged and excited to be part of one of the most extensive evangelistic thrusts in our nation's history," Lewis said.

Lewis' resignation comes less than a year before the Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission are dissolved and combined into one organization, the North American Mission Board.

"I felt a very definite leadership when I became your president in 1987, but my vision is for the 20th century, not the 21st," Lewis told board members and HMB staff. "I believe the new agency needs a new president with a new vision for a new century."

"Nobody asked me or pressured me to do this or even suggested it to me. It was my recommendation and I am the one who suggested it," Lewis said. "At the same time I have not felt any release from the work of home missions."

--more--

Lewis received a standing ovation from board of directors and HMB staff after announcing his resignation. Speaking for the HMB staff, J.B. Graham, associate vice president for church extension, thanked Lewis for his "excellent and heroic leadership."

Board members discussed asking Ernest Kelley, HMB executive vice president, to serve as interim president, but official action will not be taken until the December board meeting.

Prior to coming the Home Mission Board, Lewis was president of Hannibal-LaGrange College in Hannibal, Mo. Lewis earned master's degrees in divinity and religious education from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and his doctorate from Luther Rice Seminary. He formerly was pastor of churches in Ohio, New Jersey and Missouri.

During Lewis' HMB tenure, the number of home missionaries increased from 3,637 in 1986 to 4,857, including 1,277 full-time volunteers working in one place more than two years. Home missionaries serve in all 50 states, the Caribbean, Canada, Guam and American Samoa.

Financially the board increased total assets from \$146 million in 1986 to \$226 million currently. Last year a record \$38.9 million was given to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, and the HMB staff moved to new facilities. The new office building, now debt-free, was funded by the sale of the former offices and special gifts.

Under Lewis' direction the HMB staff was reorganized to focus on three primary areas: church starting, ministry and evangelism.

The convention's Bold Mission Thrust goal is to have 50,000 congregations by the year 2000. Having served as a church starter in Ohio, Lewis made new churches one of his priorities. He led the HMB staff to identify places where churches are needed and to recruit missionaries to begin congregations. More than 10,000 congregations were started since Lewis became president.

One of the fastest growing areas in ministry is volunteers. Last year more than 70,000 people were home missions volunteers, contributing time valued at \$100 million. Also under Lewis' leadership, the ministry section created an office for alternatives to abortion ministries. Last year the 37 crisis pregnancy centers relating to that office reported 806 professions of faith and 1,823 babies born.

Evangelistic thrusts preceding the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting were established during Lewis' tenure. Begun in 1989, the events are now multi-faceted examples of evangelistic approaches, from block parties to prison ministries.

During Lewis' speech to board members, he stressed the need for continued evangelistic efforts in America.

"The United States is one of the world's largest nations with a population exceeding 263 million... According to our best estimates, at least 184 million of these are lost."

Throughout his tenure, Lewis emphasized the need to saturate communities with the gospel by going door-to-door, perhaps because he made his profession of faith when his Sunday school teacher visited his childhood home.

"It was 50 years ago that I knelt down beside my Sunday school teacher, under an old mulberry tree in the back of our country home, and he led me as I prayed and invited Jesus into my heart," Lewis told board members, pausing to wipe away tears as he remembered his profession of faith.

"I would never have imagined I would one day be leader of our Home Mission Board. You have honored me beyond anything I ever imagined or deserved. I will ever be grateful to you and to all Southern Baptists, and especially to our blessed, wonderful Lord who allowed it to be so."

--30--

Photo of Larry Lewis with over evangelical leaders during the SBC annual meeting is posted in SBCNet News Room as "joint support" filed Aug. 15. Head and shoulder shot to be posted Wednesday. Candid photos to be posted Thursday. For pictures to be mailed, call Sarah Zimmerman at (770) 410-6533.

## Senate votes opposition to homosexual rights

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U.S. Senate overwhelmingly passed legislation designed to strengthen states' authority to refuse recognition of same-sex marriages but barely defeated an attempt to grant civil rights status in the workplace on the basis of homosexuality.

The Senate adopted the Defense of Marriage Act Sept. 10 by an 85-14 vote. On the same day, senators rejected the Employment Non-discrimination Act, sponsored by Sen. Edward Kennedy, 50-49.

The House of Representatives approved the Defense of Marriage Act in July with a 342-67 vote.

President Clinton has said he will sign DOMA. The president had endorsed the Employment Non-discrimination Act last year.

DOMA says no state shall be required to recognize a homosexual marriage from another state. It also amends federal law to define marriage as "only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife" and to define a spouse as "a person of the opposite sex who is a husband or a wife."

A staff member of the Southern Baptist Christian-Life Commission, which supported DOMA and opposed ENDA, said he wanted to preface his "reaction to the passage of the Defense of Marriage Act by saying the Bible could not be clearer that as Christians we are to love all people with a love that comes from God.

"However, we also believe that the Scriptures could not be clearer that marriage is to be between one man and one woman," said Will Dodson, the CLC's legal counsel and director of government relations. "God has ordained it. God has created us, and he knows what is best for us. And he knows what is necessary for a stable society.

"Having said that, obviously we are relieved that Congress has passed this legislation. But again we are relieved not because we have animosity toward homosexuals but because as Christians who care about a stable society we want what is best for society. The sanctioning of homosexual marriages would have caused significant unraveling of our social structure.

"These same principles apply to the Kennedy bill, which was only narrowly defeated," Dodson said. "The vote on this bill shows just how divided we are as a nation over how to address our moral issues. We simply must never allow ourselves to equate moral choices that people make with inherent physical attributes. The Bible could not be clearer that the decision to engage in homosexual conduct is a sin against God."

ENDA would have established homosexuality, under the title of sexual orientation, as a classification deserving protection in the same way race, gender and age now have protected status in the workplace.

DOMA has been on a fast track since it was introduced in both the House and Senate in early May in response to an expected Hawaii court ruling which threatens to legalize homosexual marriage in a sweeping way. In a case which went to trial the same day as the Senate voted, it is expected a Hawaii court will declare homosexual marriage constitutional. If such a union made in Hawaii is legal, it likely would be considered legal in all other states, unless a state is able to show it has a compelling policy opposing such unions.

While opponents of the legislation charged it is politically motivated and mean-spirited toward homosexuals, supporters said it is a timely response to an attempt to legalize same-sex marriage through the decision of one state. Defenders of the bill also said it reflects the traditional view of marriage and does not prevent a state from granting legal status to homosexual marriages performed in other states.

Sen. Don Nickles, R.-Okla., and Rep. Bob Barr, R.-Ga., were the chief sponsors of DOMA in their respective chambers.

Sen. Edward Kennedy, D.-Mass., was the prime sponsor of ENDA.

**Brotherhood president visits  
eastern N.C. disaster area****By Steve Barber**

GOLDSBORO, N.C. (BP)--The young mother and her two-year-old daughter knew what to expect by now at the Disaster Relief feeding unit run by North Carolina volunteers at the Goldsboro municipal building parking lot.

It was lunchtime on Monday and Linda Lininger's power had been off since Thursday night, when Hurricane Fran made landfall near Wilmington, N.C., and headed inland to this quiet county seat town.

"We've lost most everything in our refrigerator, and you can't wash clothes. It's about to drive us crazy," Lininger said, over a meal of ham, slaw, peaches and bread.

"I think it's great that you're doing this. I'm so thankful."

What she didn't expect was a chat with James D. Williams, president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Brotherhood Commission, who stopped by while making a five-stop tour of disaster units between Raleigh and Wilmington all in one afternoon. With thousands of households across eastern North Carolina still without electricity, Williams heard stories like Lininger's all day.

His message to the hundreds of Southern Baptist volunteers, who were serving meals at the rate of 30,000 per day, was equally consistent.

"By my being here today, I just wanted to thank our volunteers for living out the theme of Disaster Relief, and that is 'Serving Christ in the Crisis'," Williams said. "I'm also letting them know that the Brotherhood Commission, and by extension all Southern Baptists are thinking about them and praying for them. We're with them all the way."

"All the way," as it turns out, may be a while. Williams heard reports that units may be needed in the area for two weeks or more, depending upon the need.

Aside from the North Carolina feeding unit at Goldsboro, Williams stirred enormous pots of stew at a unit staffed by Georgians in Warsaw, N.C., thanked a Georgia chain saw unit doing cleanup nearby, joined the serving line at another North Carolina feeding unit at Wilmington, and talked with radio dispatchers at the communications control center in the town of Burgaw.

A volunteer in the control center, Margie McDonald, Flowery Branch, Ga., told Williams what she saw when the units pulled into town over the weekend.

"A man was standing along the roadside, clasping his hands above his head to welcome us," McDonald said. "And I just cried I was so happy."

Mickey Caison, the Brotherhood Commission on-site coordinator who served as tour guide, explained the chain saw-wielding cleanup crews are a form of outreach.

"Our local pastors in all of these communities call the disaster relief headquarters and inform us about trees down and other debris. It's a great linkage from the church to the community," Caison said, adding crews often save homeowners several thousand dollars in cleanup costs.

As of Sept. 11, several other disaster relief feeding units were scattered across eastern North Carolina. Aside from the units visited by Williams, South Carolina units were at Wilmington and Wilson, Alabama was in Raleigh, Florida was in Fayetteville and Kentucky was in Jacksonville. Two associational units from North Carolina were active in the Raleigh-Durham area.

The Brotherhood Commission coordinates multi-state disaster response on behalf of all Southern Baptists. The American Red Cross estimates Southern Baptist volunteers have prepared 80 percent of the meals served under ARC auspices since Hurricane Hugo in 1989.

The response to Hurricane Andrew in August 1992 stands as the largest in the ministry's 26-year history. Feeding and child care units were called into service, with 10,000 volunteers providing 2.6 million meals and care for hundreds of children in south Florida and Louisiana.

Contributions in support of the disaster relief effort may be made to the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104.

--30--

(BP) photos (horizontals) mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Brotherhood Commission.

## RTVC president says no to NAMB president bid

By C.C. Risenhoover

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The president of the SBC Radio and Television Commission said Sept. 9 he is not a candidate for president of the North American Mission Board.

Jack Johnson, RTVC president since 1990, made the statement during a regularly scheduled trustees meeting at the commission's production center in Fort Worth, Texas.

On June 19, 1997, the RTVC will dissolve. Along with the SBC Home Mission Board and Brotherhood Commission, it will be merged into the NAMB, a new agency.

"My primary focus is to serve in any way I can in the transition that merges the Brotherhood Commission, Home Mission Board and RTVC into the new North American Mission Board," Johnson said. "I think the NAMB presents the greatest opportunity in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention. It brings together unbelievable resources and focuses on evangelizing North America. With the NAMB, I think we now have the engine to drive evangelism in North America through the next millennium. And, I think technology will play a major role in that evangelization."

Johnson made reference to a letter he wrote to C.B. "Bill" Hogue, chairman of the NAMB incorporators, in which he said: "I do not want to appear presumptuous, but I do want to inform you that I do not wish to be considered as a candidate for the position of president of the NAMB. In the infinitely small chance that someone might suggest my name, thank them for their kindness on my behalf and inform them that I am convinced that there are others more suited for the task. Assure your members that I will perform any duty assigned me by the NAMB except the position of president."

"I want to assure you that I personally will be in prayer for you and the incorporators as you undertake one of the most crucial tasks ever assigned to a group in SBC history. I will also encourage our trustees to pray daily for the incorporators."

There are 13 incorporators -- two trustees from each of the agencies that will be merged to form the new entity, six at large members appointed by the Implementation Task Force and the chairman. The incorporators are charged with the responsibility of developing the startup documents for the NAMB, including screening of candidates for the presidency to be presented to the NAMB trustees.

Trustees Ray Finch and Gary Underwood are the incorporators elected by RTVC trustees. Finch is founder and president of Lakeshore Food Systems of Tulsa, Okla. Underwood is director of media operations for the state of Arkansas.

--30--

## BSSB building 'a new house' of VBS materials

By Chip Alford

Baptist Press  
9/11/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The Baptist Sunday School Board's Vacation Bible School materials for 1997 won't be what churches are expecting, but they should be what they've been asking for, Bill Taylor says.

After several years of refining the traditional VBS format, Taylor, director of the board's Bible teaching-reaching division, said he made a tough decision last May -- canceling next year's already completed VBS materials and starting over from scratch.

"We decided we were not going to try to bring this house up to codes anymore. We're going to build a new house," he said.

Taylor's decision set in motion a series of events that will cut the normal production cycle for VBS materials from two years to six months.

After the "Highway to Happiness" VBS materials featured in the 1996-97 Church Materials Catalog were canceled, 20 people including BSSB workers and representatives from a state convention and several Southern Baptist churches gathered in Nashville in mid-July for a three-day VBS Summit. Representatives from churches who use BSSB materials and those who don't were included.

"We started at the beginning by redefining the purpose of Vacation Bible School. Next, we came up with principles which should guide our work, and finally we began developing new ideas for content and teaching approaches," Rob Sanders, newly appointed VBS specialist for the BSSB, explained.

--more--

Summit participants approved as the new theme for 1997, "The Wild and Wonderful Good News Stampede: Telling Others About Jesus."

"We wanted a theme that was fun, that children could relate to and something that would highlight VBS' historically evangelistic thrust," Sanders said. "We also wanted to set VBS apart from Sunday school or anything else offered at church."

Instead of being used primarily for promotional purposes, the "Good News Stampede" theme will be woven throughout the learning environment, content and methodology of the '97 materials, Sanders said.

The new VBS purpose statement approved by Summit participants reads: "Vacation Bible School is a fun-filled spiritual adventure for boys and girls that provides concentrated Bible study and encourages real-life application; the intention of Vacation Bible School is to reach people of all ages, leading them to know and respond to Jesus Christ as led by the Holy Spirit."

With that purpose in mind, the BSSB brought a team of experienced writers to Nashville in early August for an intense week of writing. They worked in age-group teams, churning out a wealth of lessons, activities, music and other materials currently being refined by editors.

All materials are scheduled to be edited, printed and ready for delivery to the Sunday School Board warehouse by Dec. 6, Sanders said.

Despite the "fast-track" production, Sanders said church leaders needn't worry about the quality of the materials.

"We are committed to producing materials that are theologically and biblically sound. And we certainly aren't backing away from our commitment to following sound teaching principles. We will still go through the same set of checks and balances in our work; we're just doing things more quickly."

Pointing out distinctive features of the new materials, Sanders said they will offer rotation schedules requested by many churches that allow older preschoolers and children to stay with the same Bible study teachers throughout the day while visiting other "corrals" of crafts, music, recreation/snacks and missions led by other volunteers. This, in turn, will allow churches to recruit VBS workers according to their abilities, interests and spiritual gifts, he said.

An option for self-contained VBS classes also will be included in the materials, Sanders added.

The new materials, he said, are being designed to be more flexible, simpler and easier to use and also will feature the following:

- common Scripture passages for all age groups so the whole family can learn together;
- a renewed emphasis on age-appropriate evangelism that will make VBS a "flagship outreach event" for churches;
- exciting, contemporary "worship rallies" with active, upbeat songs and fun skits that get everyone involved;
- a strong missions emphasis focusing on Southern Baptists at work in missions settings around the world.

"We're trying to be responsive to what churches have been asking for and preserve what has always been a great way to reach kids and their families for Christ," Sanders said.

A catalog with a complete listing of the new "Good News Stampede" VBS materials will be mailed to churches in October.

--30--

(EDITORS' NOTE: The "Wild and Wonderful Good News Stampede" logo is posted in the SBCNet News Room in both four-color and black and white formats.)

**Jim Henry appointed chairman  
of Glorieta-Ridgecrest campaign**

**Baptist Press  
9/11/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Former Southern Baptist Convention President Jim Henry will chair a national capital campaign for facilities improvement at Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Conference Centers.

--more--

"I am pleased and honored to be part of this campaign to ready Glorieta and Ridgecrest for meeting the ever-changing needs of our congregations," said Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla. "From the time I served as a summer staffer at Ridgecrest, I have personally experienced and witnessed the impact and the commitments that were made as a result of attending one of the centers."

Henry said the campaign will be targeted to about 500 people with the capability to make large gifts. No funds will be solicited that otherwise would go to a local church or to the Cooperative Program (Southern Baptists' plan for funding state and national causes) and no funds will be solicited from churches.

Henry will head a 16-person campaign cabinet comprised of Southern Baptist leaders from throughout the United States.

Vice chairs are: Glenn Wilcox, president of Wilcox Travel, Asheville, N.C., and Fred Roach, president of The Leadership Center of the Baylor Health Care System, Dallas. Committee chairs are Warren Hultgren, retired pastor of First Baptist Church, Tulsa, Okla., prospect review committee; Jess Moody, retired pastor of Shepherd of the Hills Baptist Church, Porter Ranch, Calif., now living in Mansfield, Texas, awareness committee; and Chuck Snyder, vice president of The Maryland Group advertising and marketing agency, Brentwood, Tenn., public relations committee.

At-large members include Mark Brister, pastor of Broadmoor Baptist Church, Shreveport, La.; Dwaine Hoover, layman from Phoenix; Greg Horton, layman from Simpsonville, S.C.; David Maddox, layman from Fullerton, Calif.; George McCalep Jr., pastor of Greenforest Baptist Church, Decatur, Ga.; Frank Pollard, pastor of First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss.; and Bill Tanner, retired executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, Shawnee, Okla.

Representing the Sunday School Board which owns and operates Glorieta and Ridgecrest are President James T. Draper Jr.; Mike Arrington, executive director for corporate affairs; and Nick Garland, pastor of First Baptist Church, Broken Arrow, Okla., and chairman of trustees.

The theme of the campaign is "Renewing the Place of Renewal." The campaign was launched at the 1996 Southern Baptist Convention in New Orleans with the introduction of "Second the Motion." Throughout the summer, hundreds sent in "Second the Motion" testimonies of their experiences at Glorieta and Ridgecrest as a show of support for the conference centers. Testimonies are continuing to be received at the conference centers and the Sunday School Board.

Glorieta is located near Santa Fe, N.M., and Ridgecrest, near Asheville, N.C.

--30--

**'See You at the Pole'  
expects 100,000 in Texas**

**By Orville Scott**

**Baptist Press  
9/11/96**

DALLAS (BP)--"See You at the Pole," the world's largest simultaneous student prayer event, is expected to draw more than 100,000 Texas students to pray around their school flag poles at 7 a.m. Wednesday morning, Sept. 18, said Chuck Flowers, youth evangelism consultant in the Texas Baptist Evangelism Division. Launched by Texas Baptists in 1990 to pioneer a way for students to present a visible, bold witness of their faith on their campuses, "See You at the Pole" has spread around the world, involving millions of students and adults.

Last year, with more than 75 denominations and ministries promoting "See You at the Pole," more than 2 million students participated in the prayer event in at least 20 nations.

"It has no political agenda, and, contrary to some statements, is not a demonstration for a school prayer amendment," said Flowers. "It is simply a prayer meeting where Christian students pray together, asking for God's power to rain down on their campuses and overcome the violence, depression and hopelessness faced by their classmates.

"Many adults meet simultaneously at their city hall flag poles to support the students with their own prayers."

Out of "See You at the Pole" gatherings came prayer groups continuing throughout the year.

Many students reported a renewed encouragement when they discovered there were other believers on their campus they had not known about.

"We are seeing God work toward His goal of reaching every student with the gospel," Flowers said.

"God is impacting our campuses with His presence. The prayers of our young people -- the missionaries to the neglected mission fields of our nation, the school campuses -- are making a difference.

--30--

**Moratorium on gambling  
urged, pending study**

**By Ken Camp**

DALLAS (BP)--Lawmakers should declare a moratorium on any expansion of legalized gambling until the results of a national study on gambling's impact are known, according to a spokesman for Texans Against Gambling.

Richard Blankenship, consultant with the anti-gambling coalition, called for the moratorium while on a week-long speaking tour of a half-dozen Texas cities with Tom Grey, field coordinator for the National Coalition Against Legalized Gambling.

In August, President Clinton signed into law a bill establishing a panel to study the effects of gambling on American society. The National Gambling Impact Study Commission Act provides for a nine-member commission to examine the social and economic effects of gambling on government, communities, businesses, families and individuals.

"Now is the time to ask for a moratorium on any further expansion of gambling in Texas until the study is completed and the findings reported," Blankenship told a Sept. 9 "Action Luncheon" at Prestonwood Baptist Church, Dallas.

He asked participants at the luncheon to join Texans Against Gambling in surveying all candidates before the November election regarding their views on the continued expansion of legalized gambling in Texas.

Grey, a United Methodist minister and Vietnam combat veteran who was nicknamed "Riverboat Rambo" for his role in fighting riverboat casino gambling in his native Illinois, compared anti-gambling activists to "Gideon's army" in the Old Testament.

Although out-numbered and under-financed, Gideon's army can win the fight against the gambling special interests because they have an effective weapon -- "the truth," Grey said.

"We're not prohibitionists," he said. "We simply are for just economics, good government and quality of life."

--30--

**Housing form for Dallas  
SBC meeting now available**

**Baptist Press  
9/11/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The housing form for the 1997 annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas June 17-19 is now available, according to Jack Wilkerson, convention manager and vice president for business and finance for the SBC Executive Committee.

The form, to be used by messengers to request room reservations at hotels in Dallas, is available at all the state Baptist convention offices, at the SBC Executive Committee office in Nashville, and is included in the September issue of SBC Life, the monthly publication of the Executive Committee sent to pastors and others, Wilkerson said.

Reservations will be made on a "first-come, first-served" basis until all hotel rooms in the housing block are taken. All requests are being handled by the Dallas Convention and Visitors Bureau through their computerized housing system.

Forms must be postmarked on or after Oct. 1, 1996, Wilkerson said. No reservations will be processed prior to that date.

Reservations may be made by calling the Dallas Housing Bureau at (800) 792-1029, (214) 712-1980, or faxing the housing form to (214) 712-1981 beginning Oct. 1.

The 1997 annual meeting will be held at the Dallas Convention Center, also the location of the Pastors' Conference. The Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting will be held in the convention center's Arena. The SBC Convention Hotel is the Hyatt Regency.

There are 11 hotels in the downtown area in the housing block and 15 in the Market Center area, Wilkerson said.

A new Dallas light rail system (DART) is beginning operation, Wilkerson added, and will be fully operational by the time of the convention meeting. Detailed information on specific shuttle plans will be published as the light rail becomes completely operational.

--30--

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