



November 12, 1996

98-198

- TENNESSEE--BSSB '96 revenue represents more ministry, Warren says. BRAZIL--Baptists 'throw out lifeboat' on streets of Recife, Brazil; photos. BRAZIL--Little School of Love 'faithful to be there;' photo. BRAZIL--Baptists in Brazil mobilize to assist homeless children; photos. VIRGINIA--Information box: Suffer the children; photos. VIRGINIA--Analysis: Christ's words, 'Don't hinder,' poignant words about children. NEW YORK--Roberts continues to explain resolution on Jewish outreach. MINNESOTA--Minn.-Wis. convention becomes missions base. IOWA--First native Iowan elected as convention's president. NORTH DAKOTA--Dakota fellowship adopts first \$1 million budget. TEXAS--Christian circus offers more than just clowning around.

BSSB '96 revenue represents more ministry, Warren says

By Charles Willis

Baptist Press 11/12/96

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A second consecutive year of positive financial results at the Baptist Sunday School Board translates into more ministry resources than ever before, according to Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer.

In an employee meeting in Nashville, Tenn., Nov. 11, Warren said revenue of \$261,314,000, a total \$13.5 million ahead of 1994-95, includes funds necessary to sustain current and future operation of ministries and to provide for new products and services.

The figures represent a second year of positive results following two years of anticipated losses during reorganization and actions to fix business problems.

Funds Provided from Operations (FPO) -- revenue remaining after all product costs, operating expenses and contributions for convention support have been deducted -- reached \$9.8 million, exceeding the 1995 FPO by \$4.2 million.

Since the board receives no Cooperative Program funds, Warren said, the revenue from products and services meet needs such as support for new assignments, ministry assets, upgraded and new Baptist Book Stores, equipment repair, working capital, debt repayment, minimized future price increases for curriculum and meeting the SBC requirement for contingency reserves. The revenue also supports board-sponsored events and cooperative projects with other SBC agencies.

Warren said the agency's business and financial objectives call for an FPO of 4 percent to 6 percent on a rolling five-year average. At the end of 1993-94, with two consecutive years of losses, the five-year FPO average stood at -0.1 percent. In 1994-95, the average improved to +0.1 percent. With the achievement of this year's FPO, the five-year rolling average is +0.5 percent.

A portion of the 1996 FPO will be used in several areas, including funding for new assignments from the Southern Baptist Convention as part of the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring. Assuming responsibility for stewardship and church history education, capital fund-raising, men's and women's enrichment ministries and Christian schools and home school ministries is expected to cost \$1.25 million the first year.

At the same time, a planned 3 percent across-the-board literature price increase has been canceled. Only the prices of some individual products will increase in instances of improvements in color or paper.

Also, the board will absorb increased costs in the transition in 1997 to seasonal quarters in response to requests from churches. Production costs for the April-May issue will be approximately 81 percent of a three-month quarter, but prices will be held at 67 percent so that churches will pay the same cost per session for dated curriculum.

**Baptists 'throw out lifeboat'
on streets of Recife, Brazil**

By Mary E. Speidel

RECIFE, Brazil (BP)--Walter Ferreira de Souza lifts a sleeve of his T-shirt. Scars cover his arm. They're all over his body.

When Souza lived on the streets of Recife, Brazil, sometimes he'd "shoot up" with intravenous drugs nearly 10 times a day. He'd smoke about 10 marijuana cigarettes, pop about 30 pills and drink four bottles of liquor. All in a day. If "crack" cocaine had been around then, "I'd be dead already," says Souza, 35.

He came close several times during nearly seven years of street life. Once, drugs he took stopped his heart. More than once, he was shot and left for dead. He was even buried alive, with his head sticking out of the ground.

"It was awful. I suffered a lot." That in itself gives him instant rapport with street kids. "I tell them I've been there, and the only one who could help me was Jesus," says Souza. "They listen to that."

Souza, a Brazilian Baptist, works for "Youth Challenge," an evangelical program that helps Recife street kids. The project includes a ranch with a rehabilitation program for up to 100 men and boys from the streets. Some of those boys later move to a Baptist home staffed by Brazilian Baptist house parents in Recife. Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary Ravina Towe opened the home, financed by human needs funds from the board.

This morning Towe, from Fort Worth, Texas, and Souza stoop on a Recife street, listening to a shirtless street boy. The "boy" -- actually a young man of 23 -- sits on the curb sniffing glue. He sounds agitated.

"My aunt used to beat me with pieces of steel," he says, pointing to scars on his back. "I was treated like trash, so I left home. I've been on the streets since I was 6. I've been robbing and sniffing glue since I was 9."

Scars on his stomach came from knife and bullet wounds, he says. "I've already killed someone" in self-defense. "I've been in jail three times." His voice chokes with emotion, and he begins to cry. Souza and Towe try to comfort him. The younger boys on the sidewalk watch, with little reaction. Most sniff glue from plastic juice bottles. A few play with some puppies.

A 20-year-old prostitute -- dressed in shorts and a bikini top -- joins the group. "Excuse me," she says, grabbing a filthy piece of foam rubber from the sidewalk. "I have to take this, because it's where my baby girl sleeps."

Souza remembers when he, too, slept on sidewalks in this neighborhood. When Youth Challenge workers helped him leave the streets at age 24, he weighed only 80 pounds. He'd lost most of his teeth, a side effect of the drugs. "I was like a person drowning in the midst of the ocean," Souza says. "So when someone threw me a lifeboat, I got in."

Today, Souza and his Youth Challenge colleagues are "throwing the lifeboat" of Jesus Christ to Recife's street kids. They rescue them one life at a time.

One of those kids is Junior Gutenberg, 16. Towe remembers the first time she saw him. At a stoplight, he asked to wash her windshield for money. But he was so small he couldn't even reach it. He washed her side mirror instead.

"That just killed my soul," recalls Towe.

Junior had run away from home to escape an alcoholic father who beat him. The boy sought refuge in the streets, where Baptist pastor Joel de Oliveira Bezerra convinced him to enter the Youth Challenge program. Bezerra, the program's director, helped to start the project through his church -- First Baptist in downtown Recife. Street people often sleep at its doorstep.

Local evangelicals run Youth Challenge. Towe has taught MasterLife and Experiencing God discipleship materials to the program's workers. All of them are Christians; most have overcome drug addictions and street life through Youth Challenge.

Through the Baptist home, several boys attend vocational-technical schools where they're learning a trade. Others go to military and public schools. Junior attends a school run by a Recife soccer club. He wants to study medicine someday. Or be a soccer star.

Towe has high hopes for Junior and all "her boys" at the home. "If God opens the door, I believe we'll have some of them in the university," she says. "That's my goal."

--30--

Adapted from October 1996 issue of The Commission, the Foreign Mission Board's monthly magazine. (BP) photos (2 horizontal, 1 vertical) and cutlines mailed 11/8/96 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted in SBCNet News Room.

Little School of Love
'faithful to be there'

By Mary E. Speidel

SAO PAULO, Brazil (BP)--Sylvia Howard winds her way through a maze of shacks in a Sao Paulo, Brazil, favela (slum). She guides two young boys down a narrow passage between houses. Each boy holds one of her hands.

More Brazilian children follow them. Giggling and chattering, they seem like kids from anywhere. They are. And they aren't.

"Despite their circumstances, they're kids. They're loving, trusting," says Howard, a Foreign Mission Board missionary from Schulenburg, Texas. "But they've seen a lot that kids shouldn't see and heard a lot that kids shouldn't hear."

Drugs. Guns. Fights. Abuse. Hunger. Gangs. Prostitutes. Drunks. It's no wonder children like these often seek "refuge" on the streets.

"It hurts me to see where they've come from," says Howard, 29, a wife and mother.

Today she walks the children home after a day of activities at nearby First Baptist Church, Jabaquara. At the church they receive nutritious meals, Bible stories, help with school work, social guidance and room to play. Not to mention unconditional love.

Howard and Brazilian Baptist Maria da Silva Santos began this program, Little School of Love, more than a year ago. Volunteers from the church staff it. At first, 50 children attended. Workers had to cut that to about 30 in order to better manage the children.

"They were all rebellious," says Santos, a 56-year-old grandmother. "Some of them even hit the teachers."

In the program's early stages, some volunteers quit in frustration. But those who stuck it out are glad they did. "In the beginning there were Saturdays I'd come home and say, 'Is this worth it?'" Howard admits. "But the kids saw that we were there every week, despite how bad they acted. And to see them now: they've really changed."

Some of the children come from rivaling favelas, so they wouldn't even talk to each other at first, Santos says. "Now we see them hand-in-hand, playing together."

So far, 11 children have accepted Christ as Savior. "But the Lord has done the work," Howard says. "We've just been faithful to be there."

"I like learning about Jesus," says Davi, 11. "I've learned to respect and obey my mother. And to talk to Jesus."

Davi was one of the worst-behaved kids in the beginning. "But I immediately loved him," says Howard.

One day when Davi caused trouble during a Bible story, Howard took him aside and spent time with him. She taught him how to say his name in English.

As she got to know him, "I realized he's very smart. When I give him some work -- math problems, mazes or puzzles -- he's done in two minutes."

But Davi seems under-challenged in school, so he misbehaves or just doesn't go. "It's boring," he told her. "He'd just as soon spend his time in the street, hanging out with other guys, making money or whatever," Howard says.

Howard has seen lots of kids like Davi, washing windshields or selling trinkets at stoplights. One night she saw a boy -- the age of her 4-year-old son, Michael -- dodging cars as he sold candy.

"I just wanted to take him home," Howard says. "I thought, You should be home watching a 'Winnie the Pooh' video like Michael is doing right now." But that's only a dream for many favela kids.

"You have to have a special kind of patience to work with these kids," says Alexandre Ferreira Pereira, a member of the church's youth group who teaches them music. Sitting outside a favela house where some of the kids live, he balances some children on his knees. They laugh with delight as he squeezes them with a hug.

It's a picture of what the Little School of Love is all about.

--30--

Adapted from October 1996 issue of The Commission, the Foreign Mission Board's monthly magazine. (BP) photo (horizontal) and cutline mailed 11/8/96 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted on SBCNet News Room. Cutlines available in SBCNet News Room.

**Baptists in Brazil mobilize
to assist homeless children**

By Mary E. Speidel

SAO PAULO, Brazil (BP)--"God is so good. He's so good to me," Southern Baptist missionary Karen Bilbo sings in Portuguese.

Musical notes mounted on red and yellow paper decorate the chalkboard behind her. Bilbo teaches music at a Baptist children's home for girls in Sao Paulo, Brazil.

"If I can bring a little bit of joy to their lives through Christian music, that's such a witness," says Bilbo, from Marietta, Ga. "They're so hungry to learn."

Standing in the back of the classroom, fellow missionary Dora Harbin listens to the Brazilian girls sing. She remembers when children like these first captured her heart.

In the early 1980s, she started working with Foreign Mission Board human needs projects at this and other orphanages and in favelas (slums) in Sao Paulo, population about 20 million.

"I'd seen children as young as 3 begging on the streets," says Harbin, from Hattiesburg, Miss. "But when I actually got involved, I realized the needs are so great. I thought, 'Where do I start? What can I do?'"

Those questions later led Harbin to a Sao Paulo park, where she spent several nights with street children in 1990. That was during filming of a video on street kids, produced by freelance film makers Laurie and Ken Hoen for the Foreign Mission Board. Harbin helped with translation and logistics. The board donated the video -- in Portuguese -- to Brazilian Baptists to help them motivate churches to help street kids.

Harbin shows the video when speaking to Brazilian Baptists about the issue. So does Sandra Regina Centurione, editor of a Brazilian Baptist handbook on street children's ministries.

"The video leaves all the hearts open for me to teach," says Centurione, who leads seminars on how churches can help.

She presents information from the handbook, produced by the Brazilian Baptist Home Mission Board with aid from Foreign Mission Board human needs funds.

Baptists always are surprised to learn these children aren't just from "worldly" families, Centurione says. Research cited in the book says many street kids come from evangelical families, too.

When Brazilian Baptists learn more about the problem, they are "challenged and motivated to help," Centurione adds. "Many are already doing something and decide to do more. Others who didn't feel they were capable (of working with street kids) change their minds when they see that just a little bit of help goes a long way."

"I take my hat off to Brazilian Baptists -- that they're trying to do something," says Marilois Kirksey, of Throckmorton, Texas, the FMB missionary who supervised the handbook's production. "I think the answer (to helping street kids) lies in the local church, Christians loving and working with a few children at a time."

Brazilian Baptist pastor Fortunato Capuano Neto has seen that idea work in his family. He and his wife adopted seven street kids in Sao Paulo, where he works in child protective services for the local government. His oldest adopted son, 20, studies law.

"I think adoption is perhaps the best solution," says Neto, who preaches frequently on the problems of street children. "But many evangelicals fear that. They're afraid to bring these children into their homes and churches."

But Baptists who risk ministry with street kids don't regret it. "I've realized they're much like my children, with the same needs and desires," says Harbin.

--30--

Adapted from October 1996 issue of The Commission, the Foreign Mission Board's monthly magazine. (BP) photos (2 horizontal, 1 vertical) and cutlines mailed 11/8/96 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted in SBCNet News Room.

**Information box:
Suffer the children**

**Baptist Press
11/12/96**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The following facts are gleaned from various sources who have done extensive research about the world's children:

There are at least 145 million street children worldwide.

There are twice as many street children in Latin America as there are people in Canada.

--more--

More than 1 million children are lured, forced or sold into the child prostitution industry each year. In Thailand alone, there are an estimated 800,000 prostitutes under age 16.

A third of the world's population consists of children under age 15. Of that number, 85 percent live in the developing world.

More than 1.4 billion children are growing up in non-Christian settings.

Children ages 10-14 working outside the home number 73 million. Many of them are sold to or kidnapped by slave dealers (often called "child catchers" or "cats") in poor and unstable countries.

Each minute of each day, more than 25 children die from preventable illnesses such as diarrhea, tetanus and pneumonia.

More than 8 million babies die each year before reaching their first birthday, primarily from disease and inadequate care.

About 300 million children live in slum conditions.

Over the past 10 years, wars have killed 2 million children, disabled up to 5 million and left 12 million homeless. About 200,000 children, mostly in Africa, have become combatants themselves.

--30--

Adapted from October 1996 issue of The Commission, the Foreign Mission Board's monthly magazine. (BP) photos (3 horizontal, 1 vertical) and cutlines mailed 11/8/96 to state Baptist newspapers by the Richmond bureau of Baptist Press and posted in SBCNet News Room.

ANALYSIS

**Christ's words, 'Don't hinder,'
poignant words about children**

By Erich Bridges

**Baptist Press
11/12/96**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--"Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Jesus said that when his disciples rebuked people for bringing children to him. He also said this, after calling a child to himself: "Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven And whoever receives one such child in my name receives Me" (Matthew 18:3,5).

In light of those words, what would Jesus say to us about 145 million children living on the streets of our supposedly civilized modern world? Or about the 1 million children forced into child prostitution each year? Or the 8 million babies who die each year from preventable diseases and inadequate care? What will we say to him about them, when we see him face-to-face?

These are questions we should ponder, for if God treated his children the way we treat (or fail to treat) our own, what would become of us?

Large numbers numb our comprehension of suffering. "One death is a tragedy; a million deaths is a statistic," sneered Stalin, one of the chief mass murderers of our murderous century.

But to our Lord, each child's needless death is a tragedy. And beyond physical death, more and more children in our time face spiritual death.

The United States might be a society dominated by aging baby boomers and their parents, but the world as a whole is growing younger. One of every three people on earth is under age 15. Of that number, 85 percent live in the developing world.

More than 1.4 billion of these children are growing up in non-Christian settings, according to mission research. More than half of the 1 billion-plus people of the Muslim world, to cite one very large example, are children under 15.

Yet as Christ reminded us, children are far more responsive to him than adults are. Consider these statistics from the "Handbook of Children's Evangelism":

- 86 percent of today's Christians gave their hearts to Christ before the age of 15.
- 10 percent of Christians were saved between the ages of 15 and 30.
- Only 4 percent of Christians came to faith after age 30.

--more--

"The younger you present the gospel to them, the more open they are," says Jim Slack, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's evangelism and church growth consultant. "The longer you wait the harder it's going to be."

But Christians face several dilemmas in evangelizing children. For one thing, churches cannot survive with children alone.

"It's hard to build a church with children," says Bill Bullington, FMB vice president for overseas services and a veteran of missions in west Africa. "They'll come and you can teach them and many of them will come to know the Lord. But without the family heads involved, the church doesn't have the stability and possibility of getting rooted."

Can children lead their elders to Christ? Yes, but in most traditional cultures of Africa and Asia, children have little status and less influence.

"The family expects a child to own the family's religion, the family's business and the family's values," Slack explains. "So a child (convert) is in a position of going against cultural norms or family structure. The child is witnessing upward."

Christian workers should try to reach parents and children, and build churches around both, Slack advises. When children are won to Christ first, help the children grow in their faith while affirming and respecting their parents, as God commands. Such an approach can open the door for winning their parents too.

But if it's not possible to reach the elders, "you can't leave the children without the Lord," Slack concludes. "You evangelize them."

Remember Christ's words: "Do not hinder them from coming to me."

--30--

Adapted from October 1996 issue of The Commission, the Foreign Mission Board's monthly magazine.

**Roberts continues to explain
resolution on Jewish outreach**

By Sarah Zimmerman

**Baptist Press
11/12/96**

NEW YORK (BP)--Whether a Jew remains Jewish when he accepts Jesus Christ as the Messiah seems to be the heart of the friction over Southern Baptists' June resolution calling for more evangelistic efforts among Jews.

Phil Roberts, Home Mission Board director of interfaith witness, spoke to the 83rd annual meeting of the Anti-Defamation League national commission in New York Nov. 7. Roberts was invited to the meeting to explain the resolution.

Roberts said the resolution was supported by "Hebrew Christians," Jewish people who have accepted Jesus Christ as the Messiah. He noted Southern Baptists want to lead non-Christians to spiritual conversion, not cultural conversion and Christians are not expected to deny their heritage. Southern Baptists have about 30 Messianic congregations with Jews who have professed faith in Christ and continue to observe Jewish customs, religious traditions and maintain Jewish heritage.

A commission member replied there is no such thing as a "Hebrew Christian." The 300-plus commission members attending the meeting agreed when Jews accept Christ as Savior they become Christians and are no longer Jewish. Therefore evangelistic efforts among Jews seem like attempts to rid the world of the Jewish population, commission members argued.

Rabbi Leon Klenicki, director of the Anti-Defamation League's interfaith department, said the resolution gave Jews the feeling "you want to finish our presence in the world."

Roberts read Southern Baptist resolutions from 1972 and 1981 condemning anti-Semitism. But Abe Foxman, national director of the Anti-Defamation League, said, "It's a sham to proclaim you are opposed to anti-Semitism and at the same time to say the only way we want you to live is to accept this. You can't have it both ways."

For Christians to be less than evangelistic with both Jews and Gentiles is to be less than biblical, Roberts said. Commission members countered that attempts to convert Jews are arrogant and anti-Semitic.

A Florida representative said trying to convert Jews conveys the message Jews are incomplete and something is wrong with them. That message leads to anti-Semitism and the types of persecution Jewish people have suffered for years.

"Suppose for a moment that the New Testament is true," Roberts said. "If it is, then the most anti-Semitic stand we could take would be to not share the gospel with Jewish people." He added using Christianity to justify violence or hatred is to repudiate the Christian faith.

--more--

Roberts used New Testament verses including John 3:16, Acts 1:8 and Romans 1:16 to explain the Christian perspective of sharing Christ with all people. The major question facing the early church, Roberts noted, was whether to let Gentiles be Christians.

Klenicki, however, said Romans 10:13 says everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. "We don't have to call on a certain figure in history," Klenicki said.

Because Jews believe in God, Klenicki said, "We don't need to be converted or evangelized. Humility, not aggressive evangelism, is the only ethical response by Christians to the Jewish community."

--30--

**Minn.-Wis. convention
becomes missions base**

By Gomer Lesch

**Baptist Press
11/12/96**

ROCHESTER, Minn. (BP)--Messengers to the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Convention approved final steps to move from a mission field to a mission base during their Oct. 31-Nov. 2 annual meeting.

The convention, encompassing 140 churches with more than 15,000 members, will begin a three-year partnership through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to work in the Brazilian cities of Manaus and Maceo.

Also approved was the establishment of the Minnesota-Wisconsin Baptist Foundation, to provide donors with a mechanism for giving to long-term and/or special convention purposes and to provide the convention with the means to promote, receive, administer and distribute such giving. The foundation will be operated under a contractual arrangement with the Baptist Foundation of Texas.

A budget of \$1,727,35 was passed, an increase of \$68,918 over last year. The Cooperative Program budget of anticipated giving from Minnesota-Wisconsin churches was set at \$98,800, with 26 percent designated for Southern Baptist national and international ministries, the same percentage as the current year.

President Glen Land reported for the executive board that total budget receipts for 1996 show a 15 percent increase to date over last year.

Land, pastor of Valley Baptist Church, Appleton, Wis., was re-elected president.

Elected as first vice president was layman Phil Smith of Glen Lake Baptist Church, Minnetonka, Minn.; second vice president, Scott Stoutenberg, pastor of Mapledale Baptist Church, Sheboygan, Wis. Becky Dodson of First Baptist Church of Wausau, Wis., was re-elected secretary. All officers were elected without opposition.

One facet of the new Brazilian partnership will involve evangelistic efforts to reach the citizens of Manaus, on the Amazon River, the capital city of Amazonas, the largest state in Brazil. The other will be a ministry to girls in the Marcolina Magalhaes Baptist Home in Maceo, Alagoas, Brazil.

MWBC teams in Manaus will be witnessing to residents there, using personal testimonies, and planting new churches. As successes in church planting occur, Christian Missions Unlimited, an Alabama-based organization will follow with building projects. This group has build more than 100 church buildings in Brazil.

Maceo is located on Brazil's Atlantic seaboard. The Baptist Home is the residence of about 43 girls, ages 3 to 14. The partnership focus there will be on meeting the spiritual and emotional needs of the girls. There will also be opportunity to assist with a number of building and property needs of the home.

The foundation's creation was proposed by a three-member study committee assigned to explore the desirability of such an arm of the convention.

A nine-member board of directors was elected by messengers to promote and administer the work of the foundation in conjunction with Bill Tinsley, MWBC executive director. The board will establish the basic policies of the foundation, including causes that are to be served and emphasized; detailing of gifts which will be eligible; and setting investment policies.

The 108 Minnesota-Wisconsin messengers, meeting at Emmanuel Baptist Church, Rochester, heard an array of program speakers: Dennis Phelps, associate professor of preaching at Bethel Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minn.; Michael Cox, associate director of the Home Mission Board's associational missions division; William Merrell, vice president for convention relations of the SBC Executive Committee; Ken Loucks, SBC missionary to Brazil; Ken Coffee, associate director, state missions commission of the Baptist General Convention of Texas; and Henry Webb, director, discipleship and family leadership of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Coffee presented Tinsley with a \$10,000 check from Texas Baptists for the MWBC scholarship fund, to be used by Minnesota-Wisconsin students attending Bethel Seminary in a partnership program with the MWBC.

--more--

At a Woman's Missionary Union celebration luncheon, outgoing President Jerane Graham was honored. Holly Lindsey, of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Rochester, Minn., was elected president.

The 1997 annual meeting will be Nov. 6-8 at Jeremiah Missionary Baptist Church, Milwaukee.

--30--

**First native Iowan elected
as convention's president**

**Baptist Press
11/12/96**

DES MOINES, Iowa (BP)--John Shaull became the first native Iowan elected president of the Baptist Convention of Iowa during its Nov. 1-2 annual meeting.

Shaull, pastor of First Baptist Church, Winterset, had served as convention first vice president the past year.

Messengers to the convention also voted to increase Cooperative Program giving to Southern Baptist national and international ministries to 23 percent of anticipated giving by the state's 99 congregations, up from 22 percent.

The convention's overall budget for 1997, \$1,330,239, is a 7.85 percent increase over the current budget, including an anticipated Cooperative Program giving of \$346,810 by nearly 12,000 Baptist Iowans.

Shaull, a native of Ladora, Iowa, has been pastor of the Winterset congregation since 1984. His wife, Sharon, is a native of Council Bluffs.

He was a member of Winterset's board of education from 1988-94, and its president from 1993-94, and is a chaplain for the Iowa State Highway Patrol and Winterset's Middle River Hospice.

Among his Iowa Baptist activities, he has been a member of the convention's executive board the past several years and also during the 1970s. He also has been a member of the board's administrative committee the past two years. He is discipleship training director for the South Central Baptist Association, formerly serving as missions development director from 1987-95.

Shaull was an adult probation officer in Council Bluffs from 1976-80 and minister of youth and outreach at Ridgecrest Baptist Church there from 1975-76. In the early 1980s, he was a master of divinity student at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo., and pastor of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church, Norborne, Mo.

His parents, Ernest and Phyllis Shaull, still reside in Ladora.

Also elected as officers of the Iowa convention were Lonney Hulsey, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Glenwood, first vice president, and Leo Endel, pastor of Southern Hills Baptist Church, Sioux City, second vice president. Jonette Appleton, of the convention staff, was re-elected recording secretary.

The annual meeting, at Crestwood Baptist Church, Des Moines, drew 113 messengers and 93 visitors.

The 1997 meeting will be Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at Mount Olive Baptist Church, Sioux City.

--30--

Reported by Jonette Appleton.

**Dakota fellowship adopts
first \$1 million budget**

**Baptist Press
11/12/96**

EMERADO, N.D. (BP)--The first \$1 million budget for the Dakota Southern Baptist Fellowship was approved by messengers to the DSBF annual meeting Oct. 23-24 at Calvary Baptist Church, Emerado, N.D.

The 1997 budget of \$1,005,487 is roughly \$30,000 above the fellowship's current budget. The fellowship was formally organized in 1989.

From anticipated Cooperative Program giving of \$226,000 from the fellowship's 99 churches and missions, 26 percent will be forward to Southern Baptist Convention national and international ministries, the same percentage as the current year.

Elected by acclamation as fellowship officers were president, Garvon Golden, pastor of First Baptist Church, Williston, N.D., and vice president, Ron Rich, pastor of Riverwood Baptist Church, Bismarck, N.D. Kent Atkinson, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, Blunt, S.D., was re-elected recording secretary.

Fifty messengers representing the two states' 9,100 Southern Baptists attended the annual meeting. Next year's meeting will be Oct. 22-23 at First Baptist Church, Williston, N.D.

--30--

Christian circus offers more than just clowning around

By Dena Dyer

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The smell of greasepaint, the sight of clowns and jugglers and the taste of popcorn and cotton candy transcend language and culture. So do smiles and giggles.

"Everybody, no matter what their race or age, loves a circus," insists Eugenio Adorno, professional clown and student in Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's master of arts in communications program in Fort Worth, Texas.

Such broad appeal convinced Adorno to create a unique Christian circus, to be held March 8 in conjunction with the seminary's 1997 student missions conference.

Circa del Rey (Circus of the King) originated when Adorno and his wife, Audria, brainstormed about ways to creatively impact their hometown of Barceloneta, Puerto Rico.

In 1994 and 1995, local churches supplied volunteers, handed out thousands of free tickets and followed up with people who expressed interest in Christianity.

The two circus crusades attracted 4,500 people, and 500 decisions to follow Christ were recorded. "It was a real blessing to see such a response," Adorno said. "The Lord opened all the doors. I was the producer, but he was the director."

Adorno again will produce Circa del Rey -- this time in Texas -- as a gift to the community surrounding Southwestern.

"Our conference theme is 'No Excuses,' and reaching out to our community is the central focus," said Linda Dyck, coordinator of the conference. "The circus allows us to showcase a creative way to make an impact. It's exciting, because it tears down walls."

One such wall is language -- most of the residents around the seminary are Hispanic. Accordingly, Adorno plans to have two ringmasters -- one speaking English, the other Spanish.

He hopes his creative approach will attract sponsors and donors.

"We would love to do the circus under a big tent, but the funds are just not there," he said. Current plans are to utilize Truett Auditorium on the Southwestern campus.

The Fort Worth performance will feature professional magicians, jugglers, animal acts and clowns. "I will audition local people -- especially seminary students -- because I know they have many talents and I want to use them," Adorno said.

Professional clown Rafel Rondon, Adorno's friend who helped in Barceloneta, will begin his own studies at Southwestern in January. "The Lord is really bringing everything together," Eugenio said.

Dyck agreed. "It's exciting to see how God is putting it together piece by piece," she said. "Eugenio is a terrific performer, and this is not just going to be any old circus -- it's going to be a top-notch production."

Adorno's circus truly is a family affair -- 3-year-old daughter Anjelica (clown name: Chorruto) and 2-year-old son Esteban (Little Chagy) also get into the act.

"During the Puerto Rico circus, Anjelica sat on my lap in the clown car -- a Volkswagen we stuffed with 17 clowns -- and she was the last to come out," Adorno explained with a grin. "She always got the biggest applause."

But the ultimate result of any Christian clowning outreach is up to the Creator, Adorno stated. "As I always like to say, clowns make people laugh, but only God fills man's heart with joy."

Adorno has trained professionally with two former members of the Ringling Brothers circus -- Frosty Little and Leon "Buttons" McBryde. Each year, he attends their Advanced Studies in the Art of Clowning camp.

"My dream is to have an international Christian circus which would be on the road all the time, presenting the gospel," he said.

For information on becoming involved in the Circa del Rey as a sponsor or performer, contact Adorno at (817) 926-8393.

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**