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(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the next in the Baptist Press feature series on executives of SBC agencies and related organizations.)

Family Reaches Out To Help Other People

By Mary Lane Powell
For Baptist Press

"Anne, could we use a grandfather clock? I found an old one here in the basement that nobody wants," says an antique-loving husband in a phone call to his wife.

With her agreement, the man of the house drags home another one of his "finds." The clock turns out to be, with the help of some sandpaper and furniture stain, an indispensable addition to the furnishings of their 15-room French Colonial home in New Orleans.

"The whole house is really a product of family cooperation," says the wife as she points to the paneled den which was completely remodeled by her husband and son.

The home often is a haven for travelers and for people who need help. "This family is always looking out for people they can help," reports a close friend. "One Christmas, in addition to the family, they invited a young student nurse and her husband, a friend of one of the family members, and then before the week was over they added a denominational worker and later friends from Birmingham who attended the Sugar Bowl game."

For this family--the family of T. Sloane Guy Jr.--this is a fairly typical week. They love to entertain, and their guest rooms are hardly ever vacant.

Guy is executive secretary and superintendent of Southern Baptist Hospitals, an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. The home in New Orleans is owned by the hospital agency.

"People" have been the consuming interest of Sloane Guy for as long as he can remember.

Born the only child of a North Carolina Baptist preacher, young Sloane and his parents soon moved to Virginia, where he graduated from high school and made plans to study toward some service vocation. "Nothing really crystalized," explained Guy. "I considered law and took a liberal arts course at Wake Forest College, but I turned down a scholarship to law school at the end of my senior year."

Graduation from the Baptist school demanded a decision, so Guy went to work for an insurance company. "Not long afterward, I led the singing in a North Carolina revival. At the meeting's end, the young revival preacher asked me to take the position as assistant pastor at his church, for \$25 a week," chuckled the slight, wiry administrator.

He soon accepted, taking with him a new bride, who had been warned for years by her mother to marry anybody but a preacher. "I had to give the ministry a try if I was ever to really know what God's will for my life was," said Guy, who followed the assistant pastorate with a pastorate in a small ~~town~~ church.

Seminary was the next logical step. The young preacher studied at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, and received his bachelor of divinity degree from Yale University.

His first association with hospital ministry came in 1953 when he entered the department of pastoral care at North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem. "It's strange the way the path has turned," pondered Guy. "I have never had a simple choice."

He received a call to a church and the call to serve as hospital minister for Birmingham Baptist Hospitals at the same time. He decided to go to Birmingham. Eventually he also served as pastor of the First Baptist Church of that city.

"There's really not a great deal of difference between the hospital ministry and the church ministry," Guy explained. "No matter what the context, there is always the concern. I don't preach to people, but I do talk to them, perhaps more personally than I could from the pulpit; and people will come to a hospital who would never come to a church."

The administrator-minister did feel that institutions operate on a different calendar from churches. "We think in terms of decades, generations and centuries," he said.

Such thinking necessarily calls for a great deal of traveling. Guy is personally accountable for the successful operation of the two Southern Baptist Convention-owned hospitals; in New Orleans and Jacksonville, Fla. He also works very closely with the 51 other Baptist hospitals, owned by state or associational groups. In line with these duties, he travels more than 33,000 miles a year.

"I have a special bag that stays packed with drip-dry shirts and credit cards," Guy confided. Another indispensable item is his brief case, which carries business notes and a collapsible rod and reel.

"I love to fish, and when I can't go, I like to think about it and dream about it," he said longingly. Occasionally, on trips between Jacksonville and New Orleans, Guy will stop for a day's fishing at Destin, Fla., a fisherman's paradise. Back home, an extra deep freeze holds his bait and catch. He also owns his own boat.

The North Carolina native is an enthusiastic lover of the outdoors. For years, the annual family vacation was a camping expedition to some part of the country. "We did all the things good campers are supposed to do--even snake-hunting," he mused.

Most of the camping is history now, because the Guys' three children--Linda, Tom and Christy--have grown into other interests.

The oldest, Linda, is the wife of John Alford, who taught at Oklahoma Baptist University. They are spending a year in Europe, camping across the continent in a Volkswagen bus. "I recommend camping as the perfect vacation for any family, because you meet more genuine people that way," said the experienced outdoorsman, who has now turned most of his person-meeting activities into his hospital ministry.

With vision and enthusiasm, he is working to retain and incorporate in the care of the sick specifically Christian principles. "Our biggest drawback in this ministry is the scarcity of it. We're operating a Model T in a Cadillac age," said T. Sloane Guy, who has proved that he is certainly no admirer of antiques where the ministry of Christian love is concerned.



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(with feature on T. Sloane Guy Jr.)

SETS THE CLOCK--A grandfather clock no one wanted, that is no one except T. Sloane Guy Jr., makes an indispensable addition to the furnishings of the 15-room French Colonial home in New Orleans owned by Southern Baptist Hospitals, an agency of the Southern Baptist Convention. Guy, as the agency's executive secretary and superintendent, occupies the home. (BP) Photo