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Baptist PR Group
Creates Scholarship

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BILOXI, Miss. (BP)--Members of the Baptist Public Relations Association voted here to establish a journalism or public relations scholarship to be awarded each year to some Baptist college student looking toward a career in church-related communications.

The association also voted to increase its annual dues from \$10 to \$15 to provide necessary funds for the scholarship program.

The association approved unanimously a recommendation of its projects committee, which suggested the amount of the scholarship be \$500, payable at \$250 per semester "to a senior in a Baptist college studying in the journalism or public relations field."

In other action, the public relations group elected John D. Blosskas of Dallas as its new president. Blosskas is director of publications and communications for the Southern Baptist Convention's Annuity Board.

During the association's opening address, outgoing president David K. Morris of Montgomery, Ala., suggested establishing communications scholarships for promising students, and proposed increasing the organization's dues to take care of the expenses.

Morris, public relations director for the Alabama Baptist Convention, also suggested the need for publication of a quality Southern Baptist publication like Life or Look with full-color feature articles on Vietnam and other major issues of the day, and the possibility of providing funds to sponsor a network television variety program for children.

Both Morris and another major speaker, Purser Hewitt of Jackson, Miss., urges re-establishment of the Southern Baptist Convention's teletype communication's network.

The teletype system, which once connected more than 30 Baptist agencies in 19 cities, was begun in 1960 and dropped in 1965 because of increased rates and, according to Morris in his speech, "lack of participation by many SBC and state offices. A partial system," he said, "just wasn't doing the job."

Hewitt, executive editor of the Jackson (Miss.) Clarion-Ledger, said that the SBC teletype network ought to be re-instated and expanded.

Hewitt, one of the top editors of the largest daily newspaper in the state, expressed "concern...that Southern Baptists do not do the job they ought to do in the print media," including newspapers and magazines.

A Baptist layman, Hewitt said that Baptists "are going well, but we need to go better in relations with the print media."

Another major speaker, Claud O'Shields of Wilmington, N.C., told the Baptist public relations workers that Southern Baptists rank third in the amount of time broadcast by radio and television stations around the world, exceeded only by Radio Free Europe and Voice of America.

O'Shields, eastern representative of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, predicted future changes in the broadcast media, saying transistor radios would become so small they could become a part of a wrist watch, powered by body heat or by the sun.

He also predicted global television coverage, and that color television will become as common as the transistor radio now is. "Imagine an eight-foot color TV screen on your wall," he said, "that responds to human voice controls such as 'a little less volume.'"

"There is no end in sight to the technical advances ahead," O'Shields said. "How will it affect Southern Baptists?" he asked.

O'Shields answered by saying that Baptists must not fall behind the times, but must use every device, technique and modern method possible to "reach into the cracks and crevices of a secular city" with the message of Christianity.

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"We cannot move down the Fifth Avenue of a new and modern world in a 1923 fliver," he said.

In another major speech on future Baptist communications, Owen Cooper of Yazoo City, Miss., declared that the church cannot escape the dramatic changes that are going on in the world, especially the communications revolution.

Calling communications "a Christian imperative," Cooper observed that "the fact that Southern Baptists for several years have been struggling on a statistical plateau...is largely because we are failing to adequately and effectively communicate."

"Our denomination cannot fulfill its destiny continuing to depend upon 32,000 ministers and 5,000 missionaries to do its communicating," said Cooper, an industrialist and head of several large Mississippi corporations.

Other major speakers for the meeting, attended by more than 100 Baptist public relations people, included Pierce Harris, retired pastor of First Methodist Church, Atlanta, Ga.; Lee Franklin, pastor of Pintlala Baptist Church, Montgomery, Ala.; and Albert McClellan, program secretary for the SBC Executive Committee, Nashville, Tenn.

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21 Baptist Agencies
Awarded PR Citations

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BILOXI, Miss. (BP)--Forty-seven awards for outstanding public relations work were presented to 21 Southern Baptist-related organizations here by the Baptist Public Relations Association.

The annual awards presentations were made during the association's annual workshop, meeting at Edgewater Gulf Hotel near here.

The public relations department of the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma, headed by Floyd Craig, won nine of the 47 awards, the greatest number for any one Baptist organization.

The public relations office for Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, headed by John Earl Seelig, won the second largest number of awards, with four winning entries. All four were first-place "awards of exceptional merit."

There were 250 entries in 19 categories in the competition, 65 more entries than last year and the greatest number of entries in the association's history.

Judges in the competition were professionals in the field of public relations for commercial firms. Jay Durham of the SBC Home Mission Board, Atlanta, and former president of the association, was awards chairman.

Awards were presented for the best examples of production of catalogs, annual reports, brochures, folders, posters, letterheads, advertisements, magazines, newsletters, news stories, feature stories, photography, motion pictures, filmstrips, public relations projects, and direct mail campaigns.

The Oklahoma Baptist Convention won three first place awards among its nine honors.

Three other Baptist groups won two first-place awards each: the SBC Annuity Board in Dallas, the SBC Home Mission Board in Atlanta, and the Baptist General Convention of Texas in Dallas.

Five organizations won a total of three awards, either the award of exceptional merit, merit, or award of honor.

The five are the SBC Annuity Board, Baylor University in Waco, Tex.; Baylor University College of Medicine in Houston; the SBC Radio-Television Commission, Fort Worth; and the SBC Home Mission Board.

Two awards were won by Birmingham Baptist Hospital, Birmingham, Ala.; Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.; the SBC Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.; and the Baptist Sunday School Board, Nashville.

Other award winners were William Jewell College, Liberty, Mo.; Virginia Baptist Hospital Lynchburg, Va.; Arkansas Baptist State Convention, Little Rock; Georgetown College, Georgetown, Ky.; California Baptist College, Riverside, Calif.; European Baptist Press, Ruschlikon-Zurich, Switzerland; South Carolina Baptist Convention, Columbia, S.C.; and the Missouri Baptist Convention, Jefferson City, Mo.

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~~46~~ Bloskas Elected Head
Of Baptist PR Group

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BILOXI, Miss. (BP)--John D. Bloskas, director of publications and communications for the Southern Baptist Annuity Board in Dallas, was elected here president of the Baptist Public Relations Association.

The 150-member organization met for its annual workshop at the Edgewater Gulf Hotel near here.

Bloskas, who previously was membership vice president of the group, succeeds David K. Morris, public relations director for the Alabama Baptist Convention, who automatically becomes awards chairman for the association.

Elected membership vice president was Jim Cox, copy editor in the retail advertising department of the SBC Sunday School Board, Nashville.

Floyd Craig, communications director for the Baptist General Convention of Oklahoma and association's newsletter editor, for two years, was elected program vice president.

New secretary-treasurer is Jimmy Morriss, secretary of the program service department for the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, Raleigh; and re-elected as the association's Inter-Agency Council representative was R. T. McCartney, public relations director for Texas Baptists.

The 1968 meeting of the association will be held in St. Louis, Mo., next April. Picked as the site for the 1969 meeting was Gatlinburg, Tenn., with a January meeting date.

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~~47~~ Dallas Pastor Named
College President

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DALLAS (BP)--Charles P. Pitts, pastor of Highland Baptist Church in Dallas since 1954, has been named president of Dallas Baptist College in a unanimous decision by the 24-member board of trustees.

Pitts officially will assume the post Feb. 1. Until that time, Fred A. White, head of the college's division of Christianity, will continue as acting chief administrator. He has held that post since Otis Strickland resigned as president to return to the ministry last August.

Strickland had been president of Decatur College since 1950. The school was moved to Dallas in 1965 to become Dallas Baptist College. Strickland then became president.

The college has 950 students. It is developing a 4-year curriculum and facilities to serve an eventual estimated enrollment of 7,000.

A native of Cleburne, Tex., Pitts received his bachelor of arts from Howard Payne College (Baptist), Brownwood, Tex., and a bachelor of divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

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