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**Search process announced
for first NAMB president**

By Art Toalston

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The process for receiving nominees for president and chief executive officer of Southern Baptists' new North American Mission Board and an overview of qualities sought in the new executive have been released by C.B. Hogue, chairman of NAMB's 13 incorporators.

NAMB, which will become operational at the conclusion of the 1997 SBC annual meeting in Dallas, will replace the current SBC Home Mission Board, Brotherhood Commission and Radio and Television Commission.

Naming the 13-member incorporator group was among steps approved by messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting June 11-13 in New Orleans to implement the "Covenant for a New Century" restructuring that include's NAMB's creation and an overall reduction in SBC agencies from 19 to 12.

Key among the NAMB incorporators' duties is the search process for the agency's first president. The incorporator positions were part of NAMB's charter documents; the 13-member group is to act in the agency's behalf until NAMB's initial trustees, to number around 80, are in place in June 1997.

NAMB trustees then will vote on the nominee recommended from the incorporators' search process.

According to NAMB incorporators, the search process includes these guidelines for a person to submit a nominee for NAMB president and CEO:

-- "The recommender must obtain permission from the person being recommended before a resume is given to the Incorporators."

-- "The resume must be full with applicable education, personal background, and other pertinent data, such as experience, etc."

-- "The resume should have sufficient worthy and honest references."

Resumes should be sent to Hogue at 41771 Auberry Road, Auberry, CA 93602, or to Hogue in care of the SBC Executive Committee, 901 Commerce St., Suite 750, Nashville, TN 37203.

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NAMB incorporators will follow two further guidelines:

-- "Resumes will be examined by the Incorporators and organized according to levels of applicability."

-- "All resumes will be kept confidential to protect the person nominated and the church or position of employment now held by the nominee."

The incorporators' overview of qualities sought in NAMB's new president and CEO states:

"The primary focus of the President & CEO of The North American Mission Board will be to promote reaching the lost for Christ, planting new churches, doing ministry, and the edification of Christians and churches within North America. Therefore, the President & CEO should be a Spirit-filled man of God who meets the qualifications of 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9.

"The President & CEO must be firmly committed to the Bible as the inspired, authoritative and inerrant Word of God. He must hold to the historic Baptist doctrines set forth in the Baptist Faith and Message and be in agreement with the purpose and mission of The North American Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Convention. The President & CEO should be a strong leader in cooperative relationships between The North American Mission Board and the state conventions.

"The President & CEO should understand and accept the Covenant for a New Century, and the vision for this office as set forth in the bylaws of The North American Mission Board. He must be committed to the mission statements and ministries statements of The North American Mission Board and be willing to lead in a strategy for their fulfillment.

"One of the greatest challenges facing the President & CEO will be leading a new board with a new organizational structure designed to fulfill the expectations of the Southern Baptist Convention. With the manifold diversity of churches, cultures, races, styles, and methods in North America, he should be sensitive to all groups and be able to lead in a fashion that will be inclusive of each in order to do evangelism, plant new churches and do ministry.

"As we approach the 21st century, within our nation, Canada, and the Southern Baptist Convention we face the certain prospect of enormous change. The President & CEO will be called upon to lead this change in a positive direction within the mission and vision of The North American Mission Board and on behalf of Southern Baptists. The task will require one of proven Christ-like character, unquestionable Christian integrity, uncompromising commitment to the call of evangelism, church planting, and ministry in North America and around the world. The President & CEO must be a visionary leader and strategic thinker with organizational and managerial skills."

According to the Covenant for a New Century, the North American Mission Board's work will entail nine "ministry statements:"

- 1) "Assist churches by the appointment and support of missionaries in the United States and Canada."
- 2) "Assist churches in the ministry of evangelism."
- 3) "Assist churches in the establishment of new congregations."
- 4) "Assist churches through Christian social ministries."
- 5) "Assist churches through the involvement and coordination of their members in volunteer missions throughout the United States and Canada."
- 6) "Assist churches by involving their members in missions and missions education."
- 7) "Assist churches by communicating the gospel throughout the United States and Canada through communications technologies."
- 8) "Assist churches by strengthening Associations and providing services to Associations."
- 9) "Assist churches in relief ministries to victims of disaster."

Hogue is the retired executive director of the California Southern Baptist Convention. He was the messenger to the 1993 Southern Baptist Convention in Houston who made the motion to study the denomination's structure, which led to a 1995 SBC vote approving the Covenant for New Century.

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Other incorporators are B. Carlisle Driggers, executive director of the South Carolina Baptist Convention; Fred Lowery, pastor of First Baptist Church, Bossier City, La.; Alice Sanders, a homemaker from Frostproof, Fla.; John O. Yarbrough, pastor of First Baptist Church, Perry, Ga., and Georgia Baptist Convention president; Michael Hamlet, pastor of First Baptist Church, North Spartanburg, S.C.; Robert Sorrell, associate pastor of Bellevue Baptist Church, Cordova (Memphis), Tenn.; C. Donley Brown, a retired businessman from Jefferson City, Mo.; Keith D. Corrick, pastor of Liberty Baptist Church, Lisbon, Md.; John P. Avant Jr., pastor of Coggin Avenue Baptist Church, Brownwood, Texas; Charles G. Fuller, pastor of First Baptist Church, Roanoke, Va.; Omer Ray Finch Jr., a businessman from Catoosa, Okla.; and William G. Underwood, pastor of First Baptist Church, Texarkana, Ark.

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**Southern Baptists extend
North Korea hunger relief**

By Mark Kelly

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptists have shipped almost two dozen containers of food and given hundreds of thousands of dollars to help stave off the starvation that threatens up to 5 million North Koreans.

The response has been strong enough to allow the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to release another \$350,000 to the North Korea relief project.

To date, 23 containers of food -- each carrying 450 boxes of rice, beans, noodles and other nonperishables -- have been shipped to North Korea by Baptist state conventions, said Bill Cashion, director of the Foreign Mission Board's human needs office. One other container is being prepared for shipment.

"We've had a very good response from state conventions and individuals and even overseas Baptists," Cashion said. "This will allow us to keep the commitment Southern Baptists made to feed a city of 50,000 people for six months, and even go beyond that."

The \$350,000 allocated July 23 will provide rations that, combined with the containers of food, will feed the city through the end of this summer and beyond, Cashion said. Extending the aid was necessary because the starvation threat in the country continues to worsen, he said.

North Korea's first harvest after last year's catastrophic floods will be meager at best. New flooding is expected to destroy most of this year's harvest. Before this year's floods, up to 5 million people already faced starvation, the International Red Cross estimated. Young children reportedly were getting only about a third of the calories they need.

The meager diets leave children and the elderly vulnerable to disease. Outbreaks of diarrhea and measles have been reported.

In isolated northern mountain villages and rural areas, people have been subsisting on grass and roots, even soil, said a Korean-American Christian who has seen the suffering firsthand.

The Foreign Mission Board, Woman's Missionary Union and the Brotherhood Commission challenged Southern Baptists to meet the dire needs in North Korea as a witness to God's love for all people. Leaders in Baptist state conventions organized campaigns to fill shipping containers with food. Congregations, including many Korean Baptist churches in the United States, gave offerings for hunger relief.

Even Baptists in Asia responded to the appeal for help, giving money to help purchase foodstuffs.

"People have responded to this need out of compassion for the suffering and obedience to our Lord," Cashion said. "Jesus told us to give and expect nothing in return."

"We think about the love Christ had for us, and it overflows into love for others," he added. "Our prayer is that North Koreans will recognize we are doing this for no other reason than to share the message that God loves them and cares for them."

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**North Korea prisoner of war
forgives, now lends a hand**

By Jim Watters

VANCOUVER, Wash. (BP)--"I don't hold a grudge," said Roy D. LaFleur, who survived as a prisoner of war in North Korea for three years.

"I have forgiven those people for what happened during those years and am glad to help in this food drive," LaFleur said of Southern Baptist relief efforts to help combat starvation threatening up to 5 million North Koreans.

"Those folks need all the help we can give them," said LaFleur, a member of Trinity Baptist Church, Vancouver, Wash., who led the congregation to become involved in the relief effort, which has reached almost two dozen containers of food shipped and hundreds of thousands of dollars donated.

LaFleur joined the military as a kid in 1939 to find something more exciting than the Cajun country down around Elton, La., where he was born and reared.

He spent the next two years aboard ships traversing the North Atlantic, including the dangerous U-Boat patrol during the Battle for Britain. When that part of the world cooled down, he was shipped to San Diego -- just in time to make the historic U.S. island-hopping campaign in the South Pacific.

By 1948, LaFleur's military career had settled into a comfortable niche in the Army's 2nd Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington -- until North Korea broke the fitful peace in 1950 by pouring across the 38th parallel in the middle of the night.

The 2nd Infantry was sent to Korea soon after the invasion, going ashore at Pusan. They fought their way up the peninsula inch by inch over the next several months, but were pinned down when Chinese troops stormed across the frozen Yalu River to join the war.

"We just couldn't fight our way out," LaFleur said, recounting the frightful days and nights after their unit was surrounded. "Their air superiority kept our unit pinned down during daylight hours."

It was December in North Korea and the snow was deep. LaFleur's unit split up in an attempt to escape.

"We were fighting from a hill and men were falling all around me," LaFleur recounted, adding, "God was with me, as he had been so many times in the past."

LaFleur's best friend was hit in the stomach. He carried the wounded man down from the hill to a lower spot, hoping to get him as far as possible. "It was at night and he was growing weaker and weaker. He ordered me to just cover him up with his sleeping bag and try to get out and save myself. There wasn't anything I could do for him, but to pray with him. He spoke of his wife and son, and cried."

After LaFleur was captured, he and other prisoners were grouped together for the march back north -- marching only at night and eating only when they could find abandoned food.

Christmas Day, 1950, found LaFleur confined in a mud building somewhere in North Korea. His Christmas dinner was a handful of dried corn which had been boiled.

"We had a New Testament and passed it around and we all read a verse and then sang 'Silent Night.' That was a Christmas I'll always remember. I never at any time (after that) feared what was happening to me and knew that God would see me out."

Those first six months in captivity were bad. Food was nonexistent except for boiled dried corn, with a few weeds thrown into the pot when they could be found. LaFleur was down to 78 pounds. POWs were lying down quietly to die. Burial details carried the bodies across the frozen Yalu to a hillside where they were covered with rocks.

"I'll always remember one young Korean guard. We always took the little New Testament and this guard would hold his hands together, telling us to read a verse for the burial service. I'll always believe, when he was a young boy, his family was helped by Christian missionaries."

Things got worse before getting better. LaFleur was put in the death house because the guards figured he wouldn't make it.

"But God was on my side again. ... An American brought me a cup of soupy rice, like a paste. That gave me the will to eat.

"At that time, I became blind for about two months because of the lack of vitamins. Water built up in our bodies, and we couldn't lie down to sleep because of drowning in our own fluids. Later we were given vitamin B-1, which drained off the fluid, after one of our doctors complained to the Chinese. Then I began to get better and could see a clear spot. Later all my vision returned."

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As the peace talks at Panmunjom started up, food got a little better. Their captors brought in some musical instruments, so the prisoners made up a little band and played for Sunday services. One man who had been an altar boy remembered the Bible passages and quoted them the best he could.

After three years as a prisoner in North Korea, they were released at Panmunjom, and LaFleur went with two others to a little chapel where they got down on their knees and thanked God for all his blessings and help.

"When we were in the POW camp, I learned about the problem North Korea has about raising enough food," LaFleur said. "For a while we had only rice and occasional boiled dried corn. You can starve to death on that kind of diet."

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(BP) photo available from the Northwest Baptist Witness newsjournal, (503) 238-4545.

Baptists continue aid to Chechnya war victims

**Baptist Press
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GROZNY, Chechnya (BP)--Southern Baptists continued to help victims of the Chechnyan war as sporadic fighting in the rebel republic intensified through mid-July.

So far, more than 2,000 refugees have received food and basic supplies through \$60,000 in hunger and relief funds allocated by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, reported Jack Shelby, the Moscow-based missionary overseeing the relief program.

A Baptist church in Grozny, the capital, is serving as the distribution agent, Shelby said. Each supply packet contains dry soup, flour, sugar, rice, macaroni, powdered milk, tea and soap powder. Grozny and four other cities have been targeted for help.

Emergency shelter and blankets also have been provided through the Grozny church, Shelby said.

As many as 40,000 people, most of them civilians, are estimated to have died since December 1994, when Russian President Boris Yeltsin sent troops to stop the republic's independence efforts. Clashes between rebel forces and Russian troops have become increasingly common since a cease-fire collapsed soon after Yeltsin won re-election July 3.

Chechnya is located on the northern slopes of the Caucasus Mountains in southwestern Russia, on the border of the former Soviet republic of Georgia, between the Black and Caspian seas.

Southern Baptists can help relieve suffering and provide a gospel witness through their contributions to the Foreign Mission Board's hunger and relief fund. Contributions may be sent to Human Needs Ministries, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230. All donations are allocated strictly for relief projects.

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Leaders see optimistic future for Mega Focus Cities effort

By John Loudat

**Baptist Press
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ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--Leaders of a multi-agency strategy to reach America's cities for Christ stressed the importance of continuing to work together after the Southern Baptist Convention restructuring takes effect next June.

Meeting in Albuquerque, N.M., July 26-27, agency leaders celebrated 15 years of the Mega Focus Cities process and considered the ongoing challenge of America's largest cities.

Mega Focus Cities is a cooperative effort of SBC agencies, 26 state conventions and 68 associations. Its purpose is "to assist associations of churches in megalopolitan areas to plan and implement strategies to reach people with the good news of Jesus Christ."

The MFC process targets America's 50 largest cities, all of which have a population of approximately 1 million or more. While 52 percent of the U.S. population lives in those cities, only 18 percent of Southern Baptist churches and 26 percent of Southern Baptists are there.

"This process, more than any one thing, has shown how Southern Baptists can work better when we work together and focus on a common agenda," said James Williams, Brotherhood Commission president.

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While the Brotherhood Commission will be absorbed into the new North American Mission Board next year, Williams expressed hope the convention will "continue to work out of this model" and work together.

Jack Johnson, president of the Radio and Television Commission, said reaching people in the cities has never been easy.

Johnson, another president whose agency will be merged into the NAMB, expressed confidence that when the SBC restructuring is complete, more tools will be available to reach people in the America's cities for Christ "than ever before." He said he was excited as he sees the future beginning to take shape.

While he applauded the accomplishments of the past 15 years, Johnson said his prayer was that "we'll use those tools in the most effective way possible."

Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board, the third agency to become part of NAMB, said MFC "has been vital to what we've been seeking to do to reach America for Christ." He said it has forced the participating agencies to get serious about "what are we going to do to reach the cities."

Lewis called MFC "unifying," and added, "Fragmentation of our efforts is not going to work."

While acknowledging he could not speak for the future NAMB or its president, Lewis said, "I can't imagine that there will be anything less than a renewed and even expanded effort of the Mega Focus Cities process."

Woman's Missionary Union Executive Director Dellanna O'Brien said, "God has been good" to provide visionaries who developed the MFC strategy.

She stressed the ongoing need for the emphasis on meeting needs in the cities, which, she said, are not the same as 15 years ago and won't be the same 15 years from now.

She pledged WMU's commitment to double its efforts and expressed her hope there would be a 30th anniversary celebration of MFC in 15 years.

The Baptist Sunday School Board's president, James T. Draper Jr., noted the success of the 15-year effort, calling attention to statistics indicating greater growth in the number of churches, membership, baptisms and Sunday school enrollment in "mega associations" than in all other associations.

"It's been a great thing for us; we're expanding our involvement," Draper said of the MFC strategy.

Former Stewardship Commission director Rudy Fagan told the gathering of a twofold prayer he had for those who will carry on the process: first, that all the prayers of those involved in MFC during its first 15 years had prayed will be answered and, second, "that God will continue to give you dreams to be dreamed."

Also commenting during the response portion of the meeting was Lewis Myers, Foreign Mission Board vice president for world A strategies.

Myers affirmed MFC's focus on people groups in the cities, which he said is in line with the FMB's strategy.

He called the cooperative effort between the various agencies "very fulfilling to me" and pledged the agency's continuing commitment to provide resources to the MFC process.

The theme of the 1996 update was "Celebrating the Past, Embracing the Future."

As part of celebrating the past, special recognition was given to those who have led the MFC process including Bob Wiley, HMB director of associational missions; Jere Allen, executive director of the District of Columbia Baptist Convention; Larry Rose, director of missions in Texas' Tarrant Baptist Association; George Bullard with the South Carolina Baptist Convention who was called "the Thomas Jefferson of Mega Focus Cities" because he gave structure to the process in MFC's early years; and Don Hammer, described as "the original dreamer," who, in the late '70s and early '80s, was credited for voicing the original idea and fighting for it. Formerly director of the Home Mission Board associational missions division, Hammer is now a professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo. The current MFC national manager is Hugh Townsend of the HMB associational missions division staff.

Urban challenges continue to face Southern Baptists

By John Loudat

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--After celebrating 15 years of Southern Baptist progress in the nation's largest cities, the Mega Focus Cities' national manager detailed challenges still remaining in reaching the urban masses for Christ.

"Today, we celebrate 15 years of work. God has been gracious, and we continually report positive results," said Hugh Townsend of the Home Mission Board associational missions staff. He immediately admitted, however, Southern Baptists' impact on the cities "has only been minimal," while the problems cities face have become more pronounced and complex.

Townsend voices his observations July 26 to leaders involved in the Mega Focus Cities inter-agency effort to make an impact for Christ in the 50 largest cities in the United States, where 52 percent of the nation's population resides. The meeting commemorated the 15th anniversary of MFC work in American cities with a population of approximately 1 million or more, entailing the cooperative efforts of Southern Baptist agencies, 26 state conventions and 68 metropolitan associations.

Townsend suggested three areas Southern Baptists should address:

1) Reclamation or intervention of churches in the cities and planting new churches. The flight of churches to the suburbs contributed significantly to the decline of city life, he observed.

Townsend specifically commended efforts of First Baptist Church, Houston, "that developed a model for helping to re-establish viable churches and mission/ministry centers in the inner city."

"Suburban churches," he continued, "must be willing to invest or, as the case may be, reinvest in the city."

Townsend told the denominational leaders of a recent letter from author and speaker Lyle Schaller which said Southern Baptists should aim to establish at least three or four dozen large center-city churches in northern cities by 2010.

It is important that new churches be "strategic, culturally relevant and indigenous," Townsend said, as opposed to "chasing license plates of cars from the South," a strategy used in the past in pioneer areas to find southerners for church membership.

2) Ministering to the large population of baby boomers and baby busters.

Townsend described boomers as the generation that claimed the deceptive promises of liberation from the traditional family, unrestrained expression, pharmaceutical (drug) enlightenment, sexual freedom, the death of God, an end to poverty, preferential treatment for the young and strong, progressive education, and the notion that "bigger government will do it all for you."

Noting that many baby boomers will be 50 this year, Townsend said, "As they begin to evaluate life, many will realize the pursuit of self-fulfillment has proven to be unfulfilling, since the exclusive focus on self has left many of them feeling anxious and alone.

"This shift," Townsend continued, "not only offers challenge, but tremendous opportunity for the next generation of churches as the boomers start to refocus and begin the journey of searching for a life of significance, meaning and purpose."

Existing churches should re-evaluate their programs and ministries, Townsend said. "They will need to be flexible and offer many choices.

"New churches will need to understand how to effectively reach the boomer generation, and it will take more than a band and singing contemporary choruses."

Townsend then expressed optimism in light of the challenges: "Boomers may very well want to make up for lost time and will offer themselves as volunteers and their resources in unprecedented ways. ... Perhaps God is about to usher in a new springtime."

3) Adaptation to the new "informational age."

"When I grew up in a Southern Baptist church during the 1950s and 1960s, the primary means of communication and material support were the use of quarterlies," Townsend said. "It's 40 years later, 1996, and the primary means of communication and material support is still the use of quarterlies."

The generation growing up today, he continued, "is not focused on the printed word as much as they are on the visual and the electronic."

"To remain viable and relevant, we must face the challenge and begin now to create technological and visual teaching. ... We will need to learn to effectively use video conferencing and other new technologies for teaching, learning and communicating."

Townsend warned of conflict between generations and churches, one that is already being seen among traditional- versus contemporary-style churches. New forms are essential, however, "in every sphere of social life, in our families, our schools, our businesses -- and our churches."

And churches must be "missional," not built around programs or even great preaching, but ministry-based, caring for the whole person.

"It will not be easy nor will it come without cost," Townsend concluded, "but we must face and accept the challenge. A lost and dying America is counting on us."

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SBC growth in cities outpaces other areas

By John Loudat

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--Associations in America's 50 largest cities reported greater growth in the past 15 years than Southern Baptist associations located elsewhere.

Steve Whitten, director of the Home Mission Board program research department, gave that report July 26 to national leaders of the Mega Focus Cities process. The cooperative effort of Southern Baptist agencies, 26 state conventions and 68 metropolitan associations is designed to help "plan and implement strategies to reach people" in the nation's largest cities.

Mega associations, those ministering to cities with a population of 1 million or more, "compared favorably" with smaller associations in eight of 10 Uniform Church Letter/Annual Church Profile items, Whitten said. Notable comparisons are:

- Number of churches: The number of new churches in mega associations grew by 35.4 percent since 1981, compared with a 9.2 percent increase of the number of churches in non-mega associations.

- Membership: Total church membership in mega associations grew by 20 percent, almost twice the pace of non-mega associations.

- Baptisms: While non-mega associations reported 5.5 percent fewer baptisms in 1995 than in 1981, the number of baptisms in mega associations showed a 5.6 percent increase. In addition, mega associations have had higher baptism rates than other associations for the past 15 years.

- Sunday school: Sunday school enrollment grew three times faster in mega associations than in non-mega associations. Average attendance in mega associations grew by 5.3 percent while declining 4.1 percent across the rest of the Southern Baptist Convention.

- Woman's Missionary Union: The WMU enrollment decline in mega associations of 3 percent was lower than the 5 percent decline in other associations.

- Receipts and missions giving: Total receipts in mega associations were 128 percent higher in 1995 than in 1981, compared with an increase of 114.8 percent in non-mega associations.

While the percentage of total receipts given to mission causes declined in non-mega associations from 16.3 percent in 1981 to 15.2 percent, the decline in mega associations was even greater -- from 14.5 percent in 1981 to 11.3 percent in 1995. Cooperative Program giving as a percent of total receipts saw a similar decline.

Attending the annual update meeting were agency leaders James Williams, Brotherhood Commission; Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board; James T. Draper Jr., Baptist Sunday School Board; Dellanna O'Brien, Woman's Missionary Union; Jack Johnson, Radio and Television Commission; and Morris Chapman, Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee. Other agency representation included Rudy Fagan, formerly with the Stewardship Commission, and Lewis Myers of the Foreign Mission Board.

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**BWA Olympic celebration
exhorts: Fill empty souls**

By Sarah Zimmerman

COLLEGE PARK, Ga. (BP)--While the world focuses on athletes winning gold medals, Baptists should concentrate on telling people how to fill their empty souls, said Denton Lotz, the Baptist World Alliance general secretary.

Also during a July 28 BWA Olympic Celebration, Wendell Belew, Home Mission Board staff retiree, was recognized for leading the board to minister during events such as the Olympics.

As Lotz represents Baptists around the world, he is asked a number of questions. A Russian man said to him, "Not only are our shelves empty. Our souls are empty. Who will fill our empty souls?" A Jewish woman who survived a concentration camp asked, "Where is God in the tragedy of life?" A Burmese student at Harvard asked, "Why only Jesus?" saying Christians are prejudiced for insisting that Jesus Christ is the only way to salvation. "Where are the Baptists?" is another question Lotz hears frequently as he visits places where religious freedom is denied, human rights are violated and racism is rampant.

To answer such questions, Baptists must "point to the cross of Jesus Christ," Lotz said, because "God chose to reveal himself in Jesus Christ." Baptists also must put aside issues that keep them from being involved in ministry, such as greed and materialism.

The BWA Olympic Celebration was a joint service of Christian Fellowship Baptist Church, College Park, Ga., and McDonough Road Baptist Church, Fayetteville. "We've been told to go to the ends of the earth. God has brought the ends of the earth to us" during the Olympics, said Emmanuel McCall, pastor of Christian Fellowship. A natural avenue of follow-up for internationals who make decisions for Christ during the Olympics will be the Baptist World Alliance, he noted.

This year's Olympic games are the seventh world event in which the Home Mission Board has been involved in ministry, including three world fairs and four Olympics, said Don Hammonds, Home Mission Board associate vice president for ministry.

"The person who made it possible and certainly the one who encouraged the Home Mission Board to be involved in such events was Wendell Belew," Hammonds said. Before giving Belew an innovative leadership award, Hammonds described Belew as a creative dreamer, missions strategist, secure leader and challenging supervisor.

Belew joined the Home Mission Board staff in 1956 as director of church-centered missions. After serving in various roles, the Kentucky native retired in 1988 as associate vice president for missions strategy interpretation. He wrote several textbooks on home missions, and in 1983 he was given the Victor T. Glass award for racial reconciliation. He earned degrees from the University of Kentucky, Georgetown College and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

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**Baptist hospital chaplains
aid Olympics bomb victims**

By James Dotson

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist hospital chaplains were among those called upon to respond to the more than 100 wounded in the April 27 bomb blast of Atlanta's Centennial Olympic Park. Chaplains at two of the hospitals that treated victims said despite the crisis they were well prepared and able to help meet the variety of emotional and practical needs of family members and hospital staff.

Franklin Duncan, director of pastoral care at Georgia Baptist Medical Center, said about six or seven chaplains were mobilized to deal with the crisis soon after the 1:19 a.m. explosion. A special room was set up for family members, where chaplains were available to help meet whatever needs arose.

Fifty-three of the bombing victims were taken to Georgia Baptist, one of the closest hospitals to the downtown park.

"The primary thing was in terms of our allowing families to have a place where they could be comforted -- a place where they could land, have a cup of coffee and have some support, where they could be cared for while their loved ones were being cared for. And that freed up the medical staff to do their work," he said.

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In addition to disaster drills that in some cases focused on just such a terrorist attack during the Olympics, Duncan said the hospital also learned a great deal from the experience of chaplains who ministered in the aftermath of the Oklahoma City bombing last year.

"They indicated the role of chaplains was very important in dealing with the large number of families they had," he said.

In this case, much of the pastoral care work also was done over the phone with family members from all over the world who wanted to find out if their loved ones were among the victims.

Larry Connelly, director of pastoral care at Piedmont Hospital in north Atlanta, said he left for the hospital immediately after hearing about the bombing on the news. Piedmont chaplains also set up a room especially for family members of bombing victims.

Connelly also said everyone was well-prepared through recent disaster drills.

"Everything went amazingly smoothly even amidst all the chaos," he said, later noting with so much uncertainty about where victims were sent there was surprisingly good communication among affected hospitals. "It was almost like the interconnectedness of the Olympic rings was coming to bear," he said.

All of the victims taken to Piedmont had been released by the afternoon after the blast. The last of the patients treated at Georgia Baptist -- the daughter of the Albany woman killed in the bombing -- was released July 30.

Connelly and his staff also spent hours on the phone with people from around the country and helped staff deal with the stress. "Amid all the heat of what was going on it was pretty traumatic for folks," he said.

The chaplains at Piedmont were assisted by two psychologists from the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games, four volunteers from a victim's assistance program and a volunteer chaplain from the Salvation Army.

At 11 a.m. the morning of the bombing, Connelly led a prayer service that ministered to him as much as anyone. "It was meaningful to me just to have the time to be still and meditate, and weep with those who wept. It was just a deeply meaningful time. Even as ministers, we need it," he said.

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Creative arts teams draw crowds to gospel message

By Julie Nall

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

ATLANTA (BP)--In the midst of a busy Atlanta street, surrounded by mobs of brightly clad spectators under an oppressive sun, a man dances a jig and sings, "This is the Day That the Lord Did Do."

His partners? A Christian clown in a pink dress and a puppet with purple hair. Pinky the clown is from Waterloo, S.C., "where smiles are frowns turned upside down and giggles are a dime a dozen."

They are part of Atlanta Expressions Entertainment, one branch of Atlanta International Ministries '96, the Southern Baptist organization coordinating volunteer efforts during the Olympics.

Pinky, also known as Theresa Garrett, attracted pedestrians to The Bottom Line, a hospitality center in downtown Atlanta. Her cotton candy-like hair, sparkling cheeks, bright dress and happy smile drew crowds of children and adults to the center where a host of volunteers waited to share the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Priscilly, or "Cilly" for short, is Pinky's main helper. Cilly is a three-foot puppet with a porcelain collector's doll. "They are amazed. People will stop to talk to the clown and doll when they won't talk to a regular plain-clothed person." And adults are just as excited -- usually even more excited -- than children are by the clown.

In addition to The Bottom Line, AIM was coordinating many other hospitality sites in Atlanta as well as Savannah, Columbus, Athens and Lake Lanier, Ga.; Birmingham, Ala.; and Benton, Tenn., said Karen Cheatham, creative arts coordinator for AIM '96. More than 100 performing arts groups entertained guests at these sites.

The artists groups performed 70 percent wholesome, secular material and 30 percent Christian material. The secular material was used to "catch the attention of people who otherwise wouldn't give us the time of day," Cheatham said.

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At Stone Mountain Village, just west of Georgia's Stone Mountain Park where tennis and biking competitions were held, four groups from St. John's Baptist Church, Charlotte, N.C., were "Building a Better World," the theme for their trip.

Through "Preaching Puppets with an Attitude" (puppet team), "Image Makers" (mime troupe), "Jolly Disciples of Joy" (clowning) and "The Finish Line" (music group), the youth hoped to minister to the world during the Olympics, said Fran Cook, minister of youth and young singles at St. John's church.

"Sometimes you've got people in the audience from other countries who can't understand the words to the songs, but they can understand the movements and the message," said Katie Phillips, director of Image Makers.

At another site, New Edition, a drama troupe from Hannibal-LaGrange College, Hannibal, Mo., encountered mysticism, Satanism, homosexuality, unique body piercing and "the strangest hairdos in the world," said Kimberly Weast, chair of the school's communications arts department.

"We knew that if we could just affect one life in a positive manner and point him to Christ, it would be worth the special rehearsals and having to raise \$8,000 to come," Weast said.

Baskin 'n' Sonshine, a.k.a. Terry and Pat Powell of Atlanta, left their positions with Fortune 500 companies for creative arts ministries as clowns. Serving with AIM '96 was especially important, Baskin the clown said, because of the opportunities to reach people with the gospel who may never be reached again.

"It's been good to work with AIM," Sonshine the clown reported. "They were smart using the arts because the arts -- like mime, clowning, puppetry and drama -- draw people in."

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Nall is a newswriter for Missouri Baptists' Word & Way newsjournal. (BP) photos, 5 black and white, posted on SBCNet. Four color photos and cutlines of Olympic related ministries to be posted this week.

**Founders Conference leader
reflects on movement's growth**

By James A. Smith Sr.

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--What began nearly 14 years ago as a prayer meeting of seven people seeking God's will concerning the advancement of the "doctrines of grace" has become a movement which is the source of delight, fear or confusion for many Southern Baptists.

Since that 1982 prayer session, the Southern Baptist Founders Conference has convened 14 annual conferences, 10 annual youth camps and a number of regional conferences. The group also established a theological journal six years ago and an Internet World Wide Web site this year.

The Founders Conference is attended by Southern Baptists who hold to the doctrines of grace, known most widely by the title, "Calvinism," and who contend this system of theology was held by the men who established the Southern Baptist Convention.

At this year's annual conference, July 23-26 on the campus of Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., the conference announced the next step in its development: Founders Press, a publishing arm of the movement.

In an interview during the annual conference, Tom Ascol, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Cape Coral, Fla., reflected on the growth of the Founders Conference, its critics and its future.

Ascol was elected by the planning committee of the conference as its first executive director, although he will continue to hold his pastorate.

Stressing the conveners of the conference had no intention of establishing a movement with political aspirations, Ascol said, "We have been about spiritual and theological renewal. We believe that we need reformation and revival within our ranks," referring to the SBC.

The conference planners were "euphoric" when the first meeting held in Memphis in 1983 drew nearly 100 Southern Baptists, Ascol said.

"We couldn't believe that there were that many people in the convention that would affirm our theological heritage and not be ashamed or afraid of publicly acknowledging it," Ascol recalled.

This year's annual conference drew its largest number of registrants, 342, a 30 percent increase over the previous high, Ascol reported.

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In the earlier years of the conference, its critics who rejected Calvinism would often say, "You're not Southern Baptist. Southern Baptists don't believe that and have never believed that," Ascol said.

Now, however, Ascol believes, "The historical argument largely has been won." Through persistence in reprinting the theological works of early Southern Baptists leaders which expressed support for the doctrines of grace, the opponents of the Founders Conference have shifted their critique, arguing that Southern Baptists no longer hold to Calvinism, Ascol commented.

"That's not saying that just because it's old and just because our forefathers believed it, makes it true," Ascol said. "But if it was true then, it's still true today. And that's been a theme that we've harped on."

Although the conference has had to answer critics from both the conservative and moderate camps within the Southern Baptist Convention, Ascol said, "We ought to be willing, as brothers who might disagree, to sit down with an open Bible and say, 'OK, let's talk about these things.'"

The theological debate which has been spawned by the resurgence of Calvinism in SBC ranks is "healthy," according to Ascol. "I don't see this as a divisive movement at all."

Ascol asserted some moderate leaders hope a fight among conservative leaders of the SBC over Calvinism will result in a return of the moderates to leadership of the denomination.

"The number one item on the moderate wish list in the SBC is that Calvinism will become a divisive issue," Ascol said.

"I'm not speculating on that," he added. "That has been told to me by Jack Harwell," editor of Baptists Today, a newspaper supported by the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship and moderate Southern Baptists.

Ascol quoted Harwell as saying he has been encouraged by moderates to "ride this horse until it drops and I intend to do so," referring to Calvinism, believing it will result in a break among conservative leaders in the SBC. Harwell was not available at Baptists Today's Atlanta office July 31 for comment and was said to be attending a business conference until Aug. 12.

"This is a whole different ball of wax because we're not deviating from the authority of Scripture," Ascol explained. "We're trying to contend for a reading of the Scriptures that has been historically at the very mainstream of our theological heritage and that we believe is relevant to us today."

The unity on the question of biblical authority among conservatives who are Calvinists and those who are not will prevent a major fissure in the SBC leadership, Ascol said, adding that conflict is "not the heartbeat of those involved in the Founders Conference."

Ascol credited the record registration at this year's annual conference to "Mission 150," the mailing of a special edition of the "Founders Journal" last year. The journal was mailed to more than 60,000 Southern Baptist pastors, professors, denominational workers and missionaries in an effort to draw attention to the Calvinist roots of the SBC during the sesquicentennial year of the denomination.

Although the Founders Journal started with a subscription base of 200, the quarterly periodical has added 1,100 subscribers in its six years of publication. Including subscriptions, more than 2,500 copies of each issue of the Founders Journal are distributed, Ascol said.

"I don't think there is any way to overestimate the usefulness of literature," Ascol said, commenting on the marked increase in registrants. "It's one of the reasons we just felt compelled to go ahead and establish Founders Press -- to try to produce even more literature consistent with our theological heritage."

Founders Press was kicked off with the publication of "From the Protestant Reformation to the Southern Baptist Convention: What hath Geneva to do with Nashville?" authored by Ascol. Part of the "Founders Heritage Series," the booklet is the first effort of "Mission 2000," which was announced at this year's conference as a means of gauging the level of support for the establishment of a publication arm of the movement.

"With the renewal in theology which is taking place ... there has been created in its wake a vacuum" concerning the availability of literature consistent with the goals of the Founders Conference and the theological heritage of the SBC.

"No one is publishing specifically with our focus and theological conviction in our context," Ascol said. "I feel like it's a matter of stewardship -- we must try it."

Ascol said Founders Press will publish various types of literature, including devotional, doctrinal and expositional materials for use by laymen, pastors and scholars. While Founders Press will attempt to republish some older Southern Baptist works, plans also are under way to produce contemporary literature "rooted in our historic theological heritage," Ascol said.

The first book which Founders Press will publish was written by Tom Nettles, professor of church history at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School near Chicago. "Introduction to Southern Baptists" is a revision of an earlier work by Nettles, who also serves on the planning committee of the Founders Conference.

Ascol stressed it was not the intention of the leaders of the Founders Conference to become "just another para-church organization." Instead, "this movement has been, from the beginning, focused on local churches. We want to strengthen churches and encourage pastors."

People interested in further information about the Founders Conference may contact the organization at P.O. Box 150931, Cape Coral, FL 33915; phone, (941) 772-1400; or Internet site at www.founders.org.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Please substitute the following story for one with the same headline in (BP) 7/29/96.

**Hawaii pastors voice rebuttal
to 'apology' for missionaries**

By Karen L. Willoughby

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

HONOLULU (BP)--Pastors and church leaders here sputtered when they read page 3 of the July 27 edition of the daily newspaper.

The headline announced in bold letters at the top of the page: "Hawaiians to hear apology."

It was an accurate headline.

An apology was made the night of July 26 in Honolulu's Aloha Stadium for some actions of some missionaries in Hawaii's distant past.

Steve Solesbee, founding president of the International MK Fellowship, made the apology at the direction of his board during the opening evening service of a week-long conference for the fellowship.

The conference was designed to draw attention to the needs of the adult children of missionaries who serve or have served outside the United States.

Solesbee used the phrases "concerned for many years" and "our sincere regret" in the apology.

Some Hawaiian pastors say there is no need for an apology.

"I am heartbroken," said Rick Lazor, pastor at Nu'uaniu Baptist Church in Honolulu, to his congregation July 28. Several pastors called him after the article appeared in the Honolulu Star-Bulletin, he said. They were amazed an apology was made.

Lazor talked to the congregation about the earliest missionaries to Hawaii. Because of their influence, he said, the state's first constitution, written in the 1840s, included the clause, "No law shall ever be enacted which is in variation with the Word of God."

"These missionaries never ever need to be apologized for," Lazor said. "Let us praise God for what our missionaries first did. They came to this state with nothing but the gospel on their hearts. We have nothing to apologize for." Lazor's comments were met with applause from Honolulu congregation.

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**Sin is making Christians
miserable, Blackaby says**

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

INTERLAKEN, Switzerland (BP)--Sin, not the devil, is making many Christians miserable today, Henry Blackaby told European Baptists during an assembly July 6-11.

Blackaby was featured speaker during the summer assembly of the European Baptist Convention in Interlaken, Switzerland.

Blackaby is involved in a ministry of prayer and spiritual awakening in cooperation with Southern Baptists' Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board and Sunday School Board. He is coauthor of the widely used discipleship materials, "Experiencing God."

Blackaby said he counsels with increasing numbers of people whose lives are a mess, people who tell him they have done everything they know to do.

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"Invariably those whose lives are in turmoil are not walking in the way of God as they used to," he declared. "They're not praying like they used to. But they've never made the connection. Most often it has ... to do with sin," he said in a message based on 2 Chronicles, chapters 14-16.

A fresh encounter with God came for King Asa not after God gave him a victory over enemies, but later when a prophet came to tell him about sin in the kingdom, Blackaby said.

Often when God does not seem to respond to prayers, it is because sin separates the Christian from God, Blackaby said. "I don't know about you, but if I kept praying to God and heard nothing back, I would hurry to the point of repentance."

Blackaby recounted how Europe has been a center of global evangelism and missions through the centuries -- "an arena of great sacrifice," and added, "I believe God is looking for a whole new generation who have encountered him."

The problem? "In our generation people want to be blessed and hold onto their sins. God says, 'I can't bless you till I get you to repent of your iniquity,'" Blackaby said.

In Acts, early Christians did not pray against Satan, but for boldness for themselves. "They knew the enemy was defeated -- why pray against a defeated foe?" he said.

If for six months those in the assembly could live in the presence of the manifest Christ and be certain he's real, "we'd have revival that wouldn't stop," he assured them.

The European convention is a fellowship of more than five dozen English-speaking congregations with close ties to Southern Baptists. More than 1,100 Baptists from across Europe attended the annual gathering, which featured preaching, Bible study and dozens of special interest conferences. This year's theme was "Fresh Encounter with God."

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**Basketball -- and more --
emphasized at coach's camps**

By Ray Fink

**Baptist Press
7/31/96**

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)--It's a program that sees an average of 100 teenagers make decisions for Christ every summer. It teaches having a personal relationship with Jesus, caring for others -- and the cross-over dribble.

Basketball is not only a job for Oklahoma Baptist University basketball coach Bob Hoffman; it's a ministry. And nowhere does that ministry have a bigger impact than Bison Basketball Camps.

"We try to give them the scope of things they will have to deal with in life, not just basketball," Hoffman said. "When I was a student, I thought we should have camps where we wear the kids out with basketball, but also infiltrate their minds with the importance of a relationship with Christ. There's more to life than basketball."

Hoffman, who has guided the Bison basketball team to a school-best four consecutive NAIA national tournaments, has become known around the NAIA for being as much a basketball teacher as a coach. Bison players usually can be seen with notebooks they work from at most practices.

Notebooks also are a vital part of the six camps each summer for individual kids. In addition to basketball material, the notebook contains a set of devotional materials designed by former OBU Bison and current Oklahoma City pastor Jerry Wells.

Besides the devotional notebook, campers also hear testimonies and are exposed to lifestyle evangelism from coaches and players who serve as camp counselors. Each night of basketball work is followed by a "Prime Time" session at which the campers hear testimonies.

On Thursday nights, the last night of the camps, Hoffman and his staff offer an invitation to the campers. On average, 25 come forward to make decisions. Each of the 25 are counseled. The next day, the campers head for home, but the work continues for the camp staff, which begins follow-up efforts.

"If someone makes a decision who is unchurched, we send their name to someone in their hometown, letting them know about this young person," Hoffman said. "If they do have a church, we let that church know what has happened."

While 100 make public decisions at the camps, about 650 more kids each summer are exposed to the gospel, some for the first time. Another 750 will come in contact with the gospel less formally in the two camps for basketball teams Hoffman also conducts each summer.

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"We don't have an opportunity to have an invitation at the team camp, but we use Scripture when we have our nightly sessions," Hoffman said. "They definitely know our stance before they leave."

Hoffman also has used basketball as a ministry tool on other occasions. His team toured South America in 1994 and several players had the opportunity to share their testimonies.

At the NAIA Final Four luncheon in Tulsa in 1994, while other coaches used their time at the podium to talk about their team and some made predictions, Hoffman told the audience of coaches, media and NAIA officials that there was nothing more important than a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Bison basketball camps are offered every summer. For the past two years, Hoffman has held four of the camps in other cities in Oklahoma and Texas.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "'Doctrines of Grace' expounded at Baptist Founders Conference," dated 7/29/96, please correct the attribution in paragraphs 40 and 41 to DeVine, not Dever.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

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