



News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

---FEATURES

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US-2ers Settle in New Jobs, Develop New Lifestyles

By Sandy Simmons

MANY FARMS, Ariz. (BP)--Margie Carothers is studying basket weaving this quarter, not because she has a lot of extra time on her hands, but so she can learn the customs of the Navaho Indians.

Last quarter her husband, Ron, studied the Navaho language. The natives of Gastonia, N.C. are not, however, just curious students.

They are US-2 volunteers assigned by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board to work with mission pastor Ted Trent in Many Farms, Ariz., and surrounding area.

Part of their work includes establishing a ministry on the campus of the nation's only Indian-operated and oriented college, Navaho Community College. Their first six months have been spent establishing relationships with the youth, most of whom they meet through their own classes. They also work with youth in the public schools, including a girl's club in the local high school.

People are sparse in Many Farms. Government boarding schools run by the Bureau of Indian Affairs have been built in central locations, and provide most of the job opportunities in the area. Many of the Navaho are shepherds, roaming the vast landspread.

Margie Carothers, a registered nurse before she and her husband volunteered for the two years of mission work, works in her spare time as a volunteer nurse in the town's health clinic. The nearest hospital is 60 miles away.

The Carothers are part of a mission task force of 52 volunteers appointed for two years. Appointed each year, last summer's 25 appointees are on the fields as of January. The remaining 27 will be completing their terms during this year and will return to school or professions.

Serving in mission fields from Alaska to Vermont, all the appointees are college graduates and several have seminary degrees. More than half of the new appointees are former student summer missionaries; others were in Baptist Student Unions during college.

Among the force is Gwen Williams of Alexandria, La., the first black US-2er. She is working in church music consultation in a heavily-black populated area of Detroit, where she served as a summer missionary for two summers.

Other US-2ers are involved in goodwill centers, musical programs for youth, inner-city outreach ministries, beginning Baptist work for colleges and local church programs. One US-2er is an interpreter to the deaf; another is helping the SBC's Brotherhood Commission in Memphis develop a lay program oriented to young men.

Their days are different now from the usual days in school or summer jobs.

For Dick Lemaster, his first few weeks in Taos, N.M., where he works with members of Hippie communes and in resort areas, went like this: "Finished unpacking and settling in apartment--looked for and acquire transportation--helped Jasper put up teepee--helped plan Jesus-concert--helped one day with hay crop--cleaned up after fire damage in church member's home--distributed 11 copies of Gospel of John--did catch-up reading on world religions--took blankets to Morningstar, New Buffalo and Jesus Ranch communes..."

"Lemaster is representative of this crew," observed Joel Land, assistant secretary in the Home Mission Board's department of special mission ministries. "They're a creative, innovative bunch and early reports indicate they're doing a good job already."

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Lemaster has recorded some significant experiences already. One was a seven-hour visit to Lama-Found, a commune. Following the visit he said he found "community in rapping and visiting and particularly in their worship service, where we could read a whole lot of the essence of the gospel, and hugging them all when we left."

Bill and Linda Gaddis, a US-2 couple in Montpelier, Vt., found their work already begun by student volunteers prior to their arrival. They carry on week-day programs at Baptist Chapel in a low-income neighborhood. Missionary Merwyn Borders who began the work in the chapel, preaches on Sunday, and lends a guiding hand.

"Merwyn didn't want to tie himself down here all week," Gaddis said, "so we came to take the weekday programs. But he still preaches on Sunday. That way we maintain an identity here and the people know the work will continue after Linda and I are gone."

Gaddis has discovered a special key in US-2 work--cooperation with other groups in the community. The Episcopal Church three blocks away runs a government-funded coffee house, which serves as a major hangout for local high schoolers. Through visits Gaddis has made himself known, and is listed as a volunteer counselor.

"I make it over once or twice a week and have begun to be able to relate to a few kids. I've also discovered that I needn't be afraid of being known as a minister--as long as I'm real."

And being "real" to other people is what being a US-2er is all about.

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Cooperative Program Gifts
Top \$3 Million First Time

2/6/73

NASHVILLE (BP)--For the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention, contributions through the denomination's Cooperative Program unified budget exceeded \$3 million in one month.

A record \$3,194,938 was contributed to support all national SBC mission causes through the Cooperative Program during the month of January, 1973.

It marked the second month in a row that Cooperative Program gifts had reached a new record high. December, 1972, Cooperative Program contributions was the previous top month of giving, with \$2,968,131.

Cooperative Program contributions for January, 1973, represented an increase of 14.3 per cent, or \$399,230 over the month of January for 1972.

For the first four months of the 1972-73 fiscal year, Cooperative Program gifts totalled \$11.2 million, an increase of \$773,612 or 7.42 per cent over the same four months period last year.

Porter W. Routh, executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee which receives and distributes to SBC causes the budget funds, was elated at the news of the \$3 million milestone of giving in one month, and the big increase for both the month of January and the entire year.

"The 14 per cent increase in Cooperative Program receipts for January represents a healthy condition in the churches," Routh commented on learning of the increase.

"But more important," he continued, "it represents a concern in all that Southern Baptists are seeking to do on the part of deacons, Sunday School teachers, and just the average church member who doesn't say much, but has a deep conviction about his stewardship."

Concerning the 7.2 per cent increase in receipts for the first four months of the fiscal year, Routh observed that if the current trend continued, Southern Baptists will be able to meet the 1972-73 operating budget and make a substantial reduction in the current capital needs program.

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The 12 million-member convention is currently operating on a budget of \$31.8 million, plus an additional \$1.2 million for capital needs. The total combined 1973-74 budget is just over \$33 million.

John H. Williams, assistant to the treasurer and director of financial planning for the Executive Committee, attributed the big 14.3 per cent increase for January to big increases in giving by about half-dozen states, including one state which sent in a Cooperative Program check that should have been received the previous month.

Williams said the really significant figure is the 7.42 per cent increase in Cooperative Program giving for the first four months of the fiscal year, since it is not inflated by any big checks which should have come in during other months.

In addition to almost \$3.2 million contributed through the Cooperative Program unified budget during January, Southern Baptists gave an additional \$5.18 million to specific designated mission causes during the month, making a grand total of \$8.38 million for the month of January.

Of the \$5 million in designated gifts, \$4.7 million went to foreign missions through the annual Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

Just over \$6 million has been given to designated causes during the first four months of the fiscal year. January, obviously, was the biggest month of designated giving for the year, primarily because of the special mission offering. Designations for the year are up 4.69 per cent, or \$272,983 over designations for the same period last year.

For the four month period, grand total mission gifts (both Cooperative Program and designated contributions combined) reached almost \$17.3 million, an increase of more than \$1 million or 6.44 per cent over combined gifts last year during the same period.

The missions gifts reflected in the tabulations include only amounts given to support national and world-wide Southern Baptist causes, and do not include gifts to local and state Baptist mission efforts.

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CORRECTION

In Baptist Press story mailed 2/2/73, headlined "Louisiana Baptist Home Receives \$200,000 Gift," the headline should be changed to read, "Louisiana Baptist Home Receives \$100,000 Gift" to correspond with the copy.

--Baptist Press