

(BP)

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention 460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
Telephone (615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Jim Newton, Assistant Director

---FEATURES

produced by Baptist Press

10/30/73

Portland SBC Helped
Northwest Baptists

q75

By James Lee Young

PORTLAND (BP)--Dan C. Stringer Jr., executive secretary of the Northwest Baptist Convention, still encounters people who remember the "good, warm impression of Southern Baptists," who met in convention here early last summer (1973).

Baptists are now the best known of any groups in the greater Portland area and possibly in Oregon and Washington, Stringer insists. The Southern Baptist Convention sessions played a major role in creating that new, favorable position in this northwest corner of the United States, he believes.

Stringer worked doubletime, as did his staff, to ensure success of the SBC meeting here last summer. At the time, Baptist Press surveyed a cross section of residents here and found that Southern Baptists were viewed positively.

"It was worth the effort and expenditures," Stringer said of work by the Northwest Convention to host the SBC, which drew more than 9,000 people to this City of Roses.

Churches affiliated with the Conservative Baptist Association of America, already well-established in Oregon, also met during the summer in Portland. The Conservative group has added greater strength to the Baptist name with their seminary, located in Portland, Stringer said.

The SBC was a boon for the Northwest Baptist Convention, Stringer continued. Probably the greatest single contribution, in addition to local awareness of Southern Baptists as a denomination, was recognition and greater understanding among Northwest Baptists of the convention's Cooperative Program, he noted. More than 34,000 churches pool a percentage of their unified budget funds for worldwide missions operations through the Cooperative Program.

Stringer said that about 5,000 of the Northwest convention's 44,000 church members were represented at the 12-million member SBC's annual meeting in Portland.

Though Washington and Oregon Baptists were giving to the Cooperative Program before, some of them didn't understand what it was or what it did, Stringer noted.

He gave an example. "One of our churches was made up largely of people without a Southern Baptist background, and some of the people were very negative about the Cooperative Program."

He added, "They went to the SBC sessions, strolled through the exhibit areas and heard the Foreign Mission Board report. This church has since become one of our convention's strongest supporters of the program."

The SBC's meeting in Portland didn't hurt church attendance either, nor did the Conservative Baptist convention here, Stringer said. "Our churches in Portland were packed out on Sunday mornings during both conventions."

Baptist church attendance in the greater Portland area is up about 15 per cent overall, which Stringer called a "dramatic increase. "I think this will be a good year for baptisms in that area," he said.

A contributing factor for attendance at one of the larger Portland SBC churches, Lincoln Street Baptist Church, was initiation of a bus ministry which has contributed greatly to the church's attendance, Stringer said.

The SBC was also partially responsible for new enthusiasm for Baptist work on the part of many Northwest Baptists. There is more of a willingness to be involved, Stringer continued.

-more-

"We budgeted \$9,700 for the convention and spent \$8,200. The biggest cost was in subsidizing of shuttles for the convention.

"My staff didn't complain about the extra work load. In fact, we regained time in our convention with the enthusiasm brought on in this area by the SBC meeting here," he added.

A first-hand view of the Portland scene reveals that Stringer's good reputation and that of Southern Baptists has been strengthened by the convergence of SBC messengers on Portland.

Committee chairmen and officials of the Baptist World Alliance were here recently to plan for the 8th Baptist Youth World Conference, July 31-Aug. 4, 1974, in Portland. Stringer was present for a Greater Portland Association breakfast meeting, at which the BWA dignitaries were introduced.

The Southern Baptists were happily remembered by members of the Portland association who represent many of the city's leading business men and women.

Stringer's "expert handling" of SBC preparations in June, 1973 was remembered by members of the association and helped to pave the way for a favorable reception to the BWA youth next summer (1974).

Northwest Baptists are happy about the improved image the SBC meeting helped to give their convention and that of other Baptists, but Stringer also gave credit to the ongoing work of churches within the Northwest convention.

He noted that "although the figures aren't in yet, it looks like our baptisms will reach 3,500 this year (Oct. 1, 1972 to Sept. 30, 1973). Baptisms for the same period last year were 3,000, Stringer said.

A big increase for the year, according to Stringer, is in Cooperative Program giving by the convention. Northwest Baptists have given 21 per cent of undesignated receipts over the first nine months of calendar year 1972, Stringer said.

When the convention has met its 1973 goal of a one per cent increase for Cooperative Program giving, "from then on, one-half of all (1973) receipts (Cooperative Program) will go to the SBC," rather than remain within the Oregon-Washington convention, he explained. The convention's Cooperative Program goal for 1973 is \$362,856. Receipts were expected to hit \$390,000 by December, 1973, Stringer said.

That would push the Northwest convention's total outgoing receipts to between \$90-95,000 this year, compared with \$68,000 designated last year, according to Stringer.

"Next year will be the first year in history that we will be giving more than we get (from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board), "Stringer emphasized.

"This should be encouraging to older conventions cooperating with the SBC, to know that a pioneer area is able to contribute more than it receives."

The Northwest convention receives about \$200,000 from the Home Mission Board but expects to give more than \$100,000 through the Cooperative Program and another \$100,000 through the SBC's special offerings for home and foreign missions.

A benefit of the SBC coming to Portland is "increased interest in missions for our area from more established areas of Southern Baptist work," Stringer said.

The thirty-three Baptist state papers were favorable in their post-convention comments on Portland as a host city for the meeting of the SBC, Stringer said. "Editorials and stories, without exception were positive about the convention and Portland."

West Virginia Baptists
Urge Honest Government

354

WEIRTON, W. Va. (BP)--Messengers to the annual meeting of the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists here called for honesty in government, adopted a \$260,736 budget and elected a new president.

The resolution on government, citing only limited revelation of wrongdoing, urged "from a non-partisan standpoint" that all "possibly guilty" political leaders "turn from such grossly immoral practices, admit their guilt if such exists and be willing to take whatever consequences their possible, particular immoral actions call for.

"It is the only way," the resolution said, "that we may be able to return to some semblance of honest government and restoration of the confidence in the people in government."

The resolution also urged "great care. . . after much study and prayer" in selecting and voting for candidates who best seem "to fit the moral image that is desperately needed at this time in our country at all levels of government."

". . . When such candidates are elected," the resolution concluded, "we pray daily that God may be so in their lives that conscience will override greed and they will carry out their responsibilities of office with deep concern for the great stewardship entrusted to them."

The budget for the young state convention, largely underwritten by assistance from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and Sunday School Board, anticipates \$131,312 in Cooperative Program contributions from West Virginia Baptist churches.

Of that figure, 21.5 per cent has been designated for the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program unified budget.

According to figures released by John I. Snedden, the West Virginia convention's executive secretary-treasurer, Cooperative Program receipts from churches in West Virginia are running 36 per cent higher through the first nine months of 1973 than during the same period last year. Cooperative Program gifts to SBC causes are 42 per cent higher for the entire fiscal year, Snedden said.

Messengers to the convention elected Carlisle Driggers, a pastor from Morgantown, as convention president, changed terms of office on the convention's executive board from two to three years and scheduled next year's convention for Edgemont Baptist Church, Bluefield, Nov. 14-15.

Fifty-seven churches, with some 15,000 members, make up the West Virginia Convention of Southern Baptists.

-30-

Jerry Clower Joins
Grand Ole Opry Cast

10/30/73

NASHVILLE (BP)--The man who successfully nominated Owen Cooper for president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1971 has become the 64th performing member of the Grand Ole Opry cast.

Country comedian Jerry Clower, who attends the same Southern Baptist church Cooper attends in Yazoo City, Miss., was installed between shows during a Saturday night WSM Opry broadcast here.

Decked out in a bright yellow suit and surrounded by some of country music's stars, the 46-year-old humorist reached what he called the high point of his varied career.

The career of the former fertilizer salesman for Mississippi Chemical Corporation was launched several years ago by the almost chance recording of yarns he had spun in his rural travels.

Now, the 275-pound former Mississippi State football lineman is, in his words, the Opry's "heaviest act."

-30-

Baptist Sunday School Board
Names Youth Consultant

137

NASHVILLE (BP)--Bob R. Taylor, a 10-year employe of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board here, has been named consultant of youth ministry coordination in the board's church administration department.

Taylor will assist local church youth ministry coordinators in relating themselves to the total educational ministry of the church and will help them properly coordinate the youth ministry of all church programs, according to Howard B. Foshee, church administration department secretary.

Before joining the board in 1963, Taylor served as minister of education and administration, minister of education and minister of youth at three churches in Texas, his native state.

He was graduated from Baylor University, Waco, and received the master and doctor of religious education degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth.

-30-

BP PHOTO mailed to Baptist state paper editors.
###

Annuity Board President's
Father Dies in Kansas

10/30/73

79

COFFEYVILLE, Kan. (BP)--Elmer E. Morgan, 81, father of a Southern Baptist denominational leader, died here of a heart attack.

He was father of Darold H. Morgan of Dallas, president of the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Another son, Harold, is pastor of Linn Creek Baptist Church, Linn Creek, Mo.

Other survivors include his wife, a third son and two daughters, all of Coffeyville. He was a member of Emmanuel Baptist Church.

-30-

Stanton to Speak at
Abe Lincoln Awards

10/30/73

192

FORT WORTH (BP)--Frank Stanton, president of Columbia Broadcasting System before his retirement in March, will be featured speaker here at the fifth annual Abe Lincoln Awards to distinguished broadcasters.

The awards, sponsored by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, will be held Feb. 7, 1974.

President Nixon appointed Stanton chairman and principal officer of the American National Red Cross in April, 1973. He remains a director of CBS as well as numerous corporations.

The former CBS executive is considered "a broadcaster's broadcaster," a strong defender of broadcast journalism and "the people's right to know." He received numerous awards for his efforts, one of the most recent being a 1972 Special George Foster Peabody Award.

During the more than 25 years that Stanton was president and chief operating officer of CBS he also served as chairman of the U.S. Advisory Commission on Information.

The awards were established by the Radio and Television Commission in 1970 and represent the belief of its president, Paul M. Stevens, that "broadcasters can best be encouraged by giving them deserved recognition for the positive role they play, as individual citizens and representatives of the industry, in the life of America."

-30-

CORRECTION: In second line of third graph from end of Baptist Press story mailed 10/26/73, headlined Baptist Survey Reveals Black-White Relations, make that read: Only seven of the 191. . .rather than 19. . . Thanks.

--Baptist Press