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February 14, 1978

78-20

Scarborough Retires  
As Preschool Editor

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP)--"I hope I have helped people understand how children learn," says Alma May Scarborough, beginning retirement after 23 years as editor of preschool materials at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

"People generally expect young children to deal with more content than they are capable of understanding," she explains. "I have tried to help parents to understand their children better and to learn how to develop biblical concepts so their children can understand them."

In recent years Mrs. Scarborough has been the only editor of *Living with Preschoolers*. Its circulation has increased steadily since its beginning.

Living each day to the fullest while looking to the future with anticipation is characteristic of the retiring editor. She moved with her five children to Nashville in 1955 to edit Training Union materials after her husband had died suddenly. The youngest child, Clark, was born seven months after his father's death.

Mrs. Scarborough brought to the Sunday School Board a rich background of teaching early childhood education at the college level and five years as director of the nursery-kindergarten at First Baptist Church, Ruston, La.

"But I knew nothing about editorial work when I came," she says, recalling periods when she worked all day, went home and spent one hour with her children, and continued editing until 10 p.m.

She has placed strong emphasis on her own continuing education. While her children were small she began a habit of getting up at 5 a.m. for an hour of Bible study, devotional reading, and prayer. At present, she is working her way through a commentary on the book of John by William Barclay and she has taken courses in auto mechanics, upholstery, tailoring, woodworking, and most recently, stained glass.

She also tries to read the latest books on early childhood education. "She's the best read preschool worker we've ever had," according to Gene Chamberlain, supervisor of the special ministries section of the Sunday School department and a former preschool editor.

She has done most of her own home maintenance, "with a lot of help from my friends." And friends of all ages are a commodity Alma May has in large supply.

She has many "adopted grandchildren" four of whom attended her retirement reception. In addition to the personal benefits, Alma May says she deliberately cultivates friendships with families which include preschoolers in order to keep up with the kinds of activities parents do with them.

Mrs. Scarborough builds adult friendships with the same care. Polly Hargis Dillard, a longtime friend and writer of preschool materials, recalls her first impressions of Alma May. "Here was an individual who could add a new dimension to my life," she says. Her was someone who cared not only about children but about all people."

Mrs. Scarborough has approached retirement with the same discipline with which she would tackle a new job. She took two retirement courses. She has accepted assignments to lead conferences in Ohio and at Ridgecrest and Glorieta. She will continue work with the Southern and Tennessee Associations on Children Under Six. And in November she plans to spend six weeks in England.

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She will continue to live in Nashville, a central location for visiting all of her children.

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(BP) Photo will be mailed to Baptist state editors by the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

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Harry Piland Leads  
By Caring For People

By Charles Willis

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HOUSTON (BP)--"Harry Piland is the greatest Sunday School man that ever came along," says John Bisagno, pastor of Houston's First Baptist Church.

But Piland, newly-elected Sunday School director for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, has never wanted to be "the best" at anything.

"I've always wanted to do my best," he says. "My definition of winning is doing the best that I can.

"I've never had the slightest inclination or desire to do the thing I'm about to do," he says. "It has never been in my mind."

But the minister of education for Houston's First Church consented to the task because he feels that "Christ has constrained me to."

As the leader of a team of age-group directors and as coordinator of staff and programs, Piland has seen the church's average Sunday School attendance grow from 1200 to 2500. But numbers have not been his goal.

"I believe in an individual approach to each person. People happen to have come in large numbers, but they've come one at a time because of a dynamic pulpit and a strong music program," he says. "Our goal has been to build a solid, basic, stable, quality education program. The people have stayed because of quality teaching of the Word of God."

Piland recalls childhood Sunday School teachers whose influence he still feels.

"Mrs. Dean Smith--she loved me--and Mr. Lou Sweet always got up and put his arms around me when I came in. I don't remember the specific lessons they taught, but I remember what kind of people they were."

Piland feels that "you can teach most by what you are. If I'm interested in statistics only, I don't have integrity. You can't see Jesus' life without seeing caring about people," he said.

"I have no problem in having high attendance day goals, but never without the caring element for every single person. A person-centered ministry. Absolutely. But that's never an excuse for a small ministry. Quantity and quality are both a part of the Great Commission--'all people' and 'teaching them to observe all things.'"

For more than an hour ahead of the scheduled Sunday School time, people come into the building in large numbers. Four mini buses make multiple trips to bring people from a rented parking lot several blocks away. In all, more than 2,000 cars occupy available spaces by 9:30 a.m. and streets in every direction are lined with parked cars.

The people who meet for Bible study and worship are enthusiastic and happy. Friendliness in a church so large? Definitely. Even with a resident membership of 7,500 people, the warmth is there.

Moving down the corridors past departments that are filled, some to overflowing, with Bible students one can see that Harry Piland, at least in part, sets the pace for warmth.

"You just can't leave us, you know," beamed one worker as she hugged Piland. "Congratulations," "we love you" and "we'll miss you" are the often-heard words of the day.

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Through it all, Piland is touched, gracious and unassuming. Clearly, the people feel he's a personal friend as well as a leader.

Is it hard to lose Harry Piland ?

"It's like losing both your right arm and your left arm," says John Bisagno.

"When Harry Piland came to First Church four and one-half years ago, our Sunday School was running about 1200 people. Today it averages 2500, and that is a solid 2500, with 1800 adults. Departmental meetings on Wednesdays will average as high as 80 percent in attendance," he observed.

"The man is a genius, a master of himself and a master worker with others. The organization, the preparation, the personal touch that goes into everything he does is absolutely incomparable.

"But proudly we send him off to Nashville to lead the work of not just one Sunday School, but 35,000," said Bisagno. "How grateful we are to God for what he has meant to us, but even more grateful for what he will mean to the cause of our great denomination."

Among the family photographs and framed commendations in Piland's office hangs a sign that says "Every Person is Worth Understanding." From the spontaneous testimonies offered by church members in his behalf, you know he believes that motto.

"Pain in leaving, yes," Piland told church members, "but we would have it no other way, for that means we have loved you deeply."

And of the coming work as leader of the Southern Baptist Sunday School movement, he says, "If I can be used, that is all I can ask."

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Radio-TV Budget  
Tops \$4.6 Million

By Bonita Sparrow

Baptist Press  
2/14/78

FORT WORTH (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission meeting here last week moved busily through an agenda that included a 1978-79 budget request, new officers, new executive staff members and the status of the Richmond Radio and Television Commission office.

Trustees approved the commission's budget request to the Southern Baptist Convention's (SBC) Executive Committee for \$4 million from the Cooperative Program (unified budget), voted to close the Richmond, Va., Radio and Television Commission office, elected Harold E. Martin of Montgomery, Ala., chairman of the commission and ratified eight new executive staff positions.

The \$4 million request from the Cooperative Program must now be finalized by the SBC Executive Committee and submitted to the annual SBC, which will meet in Atlanta in June 1978.

An additional \$650,000 for the Radio and Television Commission budget is expected from contributions to the commission from radio and television program listeners; investment income, miscellaneous income, cost recovery of the commission's technical assistance program to churches and conventions and the sale of Southern Baptist Convention tapes and recordings.

This will bring the projected budget to \$4,650,000.

"The largest portion of the commission's budget--nearly \$3 million--will be used for its preaching programs on the air," said Paul M. Stevens, commission president.

"The other money will be used to build audiences for those programs, to counsel people who contact the commission for spiritual help and for technical assistance to churches and conventions," said Stevens.

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The commission's board of trustees elected for the Richmond Radio and Television Commission office which was opened in 1972 to close "no later than March 31, 1978." Fred T. Laughon Jr. pastor, First Baptist Church, Gainesville, Fla., moved to Richmond to act as liaison between the Radio and Television Commission and the Foreign Mission Board.

"This move (to close the office) was made possible by the changes in the relationship between the Radio and Television Commission and the Foreign Mission Board," said Stevens.

"Improved relations between the two agencies have occurred as a result of Fred Laughon's work. Because of those improved relationships it is no longer necessary to maintain the special office."

Stevens said the Radio and Television Commission and the Foreign Mission Board are presently co-producing several television documentaries and JOT films. Future plans include a series of films on biblical basis for missions.

Alan Compton, the Foreign Mission Board's media coordinator for Latin America, is working with the Radio and Television Commission's television department to produce a "Listen" segment "The Sea," in both English and Spanish. Two new JOT episodes are in production. Plans are to eventually co-produce eight new JOT episodes at a cost of about \$20,000 each.

During the three-day session in Fort Worth, trustees also previewed two half-hour pilot films video-taped for the SBC Sunday School Board in the commission's new production center.

"This was the beginning of the Radio and Television Commission's joint venture with the Sunday School Board in the production of a Bible teaching series for television," observed Truett Myers, senior vice president for production services. One pilot was called "At Home With the Bible." The other was called "A Whole New World." Frank Pollard, pastor, First Baptist Church, Jackson, Miss., was host for both programs.

Harold E. Martin, the new chairman of the trustees, is editor and publisher of the Montgomery (Ala.) Advertiser Journal. He is a 1970 Pulitzer Prize Winner who has received numerous other Christian and secular awards for his journalistic skills. He will take office after the Atlanta convention.

Martin succeeds James W. Waters of Macon, Ga., who has completed a two-year term as commission chairman. Waters rotates off the board in June, after serving two consecutive four-year terms.

Other trustees include E. Ray Scroggins of Houston, Tex., first vice chairman; Frederick W. Isaacs Jr. of Cosby, Tenn., second vice chairman; Robin H. Mathis of Houston, Miss., recording secretary; and Tommy Joe Payne of Greenville, S. C., assistant recording secretary.

In other action, the trustees ratified eight new executive titles, effective immediately. Charles Roden, vice president of technical assistance, was named senior vice president of administration. Clarence Duncan, assistant executive vice president, was named senior vice president of personnel. Jerome Pillow, vice president, marketing services, was made vice president and administrative assistant. Paul Brown, assistant vice president in engineering, was named vice president of engineering coordination.

Four new assistant vice presidents were named. Mrs. Glenda Morrow, was named assistant vice president, management services, Mrs. Bonita Sparrow, press director, was named assistant vice president in charge of promotion, Paul Schmidt was named assistant vice president, management services, and Ms. Cheryl Turner, was named assistant vice president of audience research and response.

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#### CORRECTION

In Baptist Press mailed 2/10/78, story titled "Biomedical Ethics: A 'Now' Christian Concern" graph three, line two, graph beginning "Before suggesting which of the ..." please change "This energizing..." to "This emerging..."

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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