

(BP)**-- BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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**Two Agencies Join
Discipleship Forces**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The church training department of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board and the evangelism section of the Home Mission Board will join efforts toward increased emphasis on discipleship training.

"It's really a new day," said C. B. Hogue, director of the evangelism section. "Two agencies have united themselves to do the job that really needs to be done in Southern Baptist life.

"We're excited about working with the Sunday School Board. When we're able to win people to Christ, by whatever means, we can move them right into a good program for training and discipleship so they can grow in Christian maturity."

The two Southern Baptist agencies believe the unified effort will give a balanced alternative to a wide variety of approaches to discipleship training from nondenominational sources which ignore Baptist traditions, polity and doctrine and may not be rooted in the local church.

Roy Edgemon, director of the church training department, said a proliferation of discipleship training concepts, whether intentional or not, "tear away at the local church and fragment Christians."

"As the Southern Baptist Convention continues to grow in new areas, especially in this era of a Bold Mission Thrust to reach the world and nation for Christ, we must emphasize our distinctives more than ever or lose our identity," he said.

Hogue and Edgemon, who was Hogue's associate for two years before joining the Sunday School Board at the end of 1977, have been meeting since January to develop ideas for the approach.

Their agencies will each call on the other's personnel, materials and resources to produce discipleship training materials in Baptist doctrine, dated curriculum, church training equipping centers and special projects.

During January, February, and March 1979, church training personnel will conduct 13 regional seminars related to salvation and witnessing.

"Churches are being challenged to participate and support state evangelism conferences in January and February, Baptist doctrine study in March and April and spring revivals in April and May, in hopes of initiating a new surge of growth in churches," Edgemon said.

In a different approach, the church training department has asked persons selected by the evangelism section to write both the Baptist doctrine study books for adults and youth in 1979 and the church training periodical materials on discipleship for both age groups for the April-May-June quarter of 1979 to provide a comprehensive approach.

Hogue, for example, wrote the doctrinal study book for adults "The Doctrine of Salvation," and Lavonn D. Brown, pastor of First Baptist Church, Norman, Okla., wrote the youth study book "Youth Affirm: The Doctrine of Salvation."

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Also, a common unit in youth and adult periodicals, "How to Witness," represents the first time that similar unit themes have appeared in all periodicals.

In the spring of 1979, the church training department will introduce equipping center materials and concepts on discipleship for Southern Baptist churches as an additional adult training method. Several short-term studies in the areas of evangelism and discipleship will be released through 1982.

Discipleship training will be a priority in the adult and youth dated curriculum materials and an entire year of growth in discipleship training will be offered in the periodicals in 1980-81.

A final combined project is production of follow-up and personal growth materials for new Christians to be used in crusades, revivals, and continuing church evangelistic efforts.

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Television Commission
Takes Three Awards

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Three documentary films produced by the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission took top awards in the Long Island International Film Festival.

"A River to the Sea," (which premieres Oct. 29 on CBS) was voted the outstanding film in the history and anthropology category. Narrated by actor Alexander Scourby, the film traces development of the English language from the Roman occupation to modern times.

"Malcolm Muggeridge," already recipient of the Chris Statuette from the Columbus Film Festival, earned second place in the religion category. The film is an overview of Muggeridge's years as a journalist and the conclusions he developed over a lifetime of thought and writing.

"Symphony" was voted second place in the arts category. Focusing on the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra, the film showed the contribution music makes to the enrichment of man's spiritual life.

John Stevens, vice president of script development, wrote, produced and directed all three films. The three are part of the commission's 1979 "The Human Dimension" television series which is seen nationwide.

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Carl Duck To Head
Nashville Association

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Carl Duck, pastor of Lakeside Baptist Church, Dallas, has been elected executive director of the Nashville (Tenn.) Baptist Association.

Duck, 50, who chaired local arrangements for the 1974 Southern Baptist Convention in Dallas and has chaired the SBC Committee on Boards, has been pastor of churches in Tennessee, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas, including his current pastorate of 12 years.

A native of Alabama, Duck is a graduate of Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and received an honorary doctor of divinity degree from East Texas Baptist College. He has had numerous leadership positions on local, associational, state and national Baptist committees and boards.

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Evangelist Robison
Gets Large Tract

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--A Virginia businessman has purchased and given to the James Robison Evangelistic Association for its use, the east Texas branch of Ambassador College.

F. William Menge paid \$10.6 million for the 1,600 acre facility, formerly owned by Herbert W. Armstrong's Worldwide Church of God. It's located north of Tyler in Big Sandy, Texas. Robison's association puts the property value at between \$30 million and \$50 million.

The property includes 330 buildings, 25 houses, a 16,000-seat convention center, 60-acre lake, 9-hole golf course, a landing strip, airplane hanger, four large dormitories, and a gymnasium which seats 3,500.

Recreational facilities include a track, soccer fields, baseball diamonds, a 60-acre lake for fishing and boating and a white sand beach and swimming area. Robison plans to hold youth camps, retreats, conferences and Christian discipleship training on the site, as well as to build a retirement center.

He anticipates expanding his present camp attendance to accommodate 1,000 to 3,000 young people per week. Using the facilities for family conferences would allow as many as 1,000 families to attend Bible study session.

A program to train short-term missionaries, patterned after the Peace Corps, is envisioned for lay people and students who want to devote two years or more to spreading the gospel in foreign countries. Those plans are unrelated to similar efforts of the Southern Baptist Convention's Home and Foreign Mission Board's which already place short-term volunteers beside career missionaries for one and two year periods at home and abroad.

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Baker Retirement
Involves Same Work

By Lynn P. Clayton

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BATON ROUGE, La. (BP)--John Baker, church starter/missions executive, did what most everyone who knows him figured he would do when he retired--he started another mission.

Baker, who retired in December 1975 as executive secretary-treasurer of the Northern Plains Baptist Convention is now the mission pastor of Harrell's Ferry Baptist Chapel in Baton Rouge.

"We have a choice location of five acres in the fastest growing area of our city," Baker said with the glow normally associated with a father of a new baby son. "It is ideally located to minister to the total area of this growing edge of Baton Rouge."

The mission meets in a residence across the street from the church site, but has building plans in the mill. Twenty-eight people have joined, 44 are enrolled in Sunday School.

The work began like a rocket sled taking off at the beginning of summer when the three-week old mission had 108 children show up for its Vacation Bible School.

Baker, 67, and his wife, Lula Clide, belie their years as they enjoy their enthusiastic outreach. "Last Monday Clide and I were out visiting in a driving rainstorm," Baker said with delight. "We had great visits."

"Florida Boulevard and Broadmoor Baptist Churches and the association have been great to work with. I laugh and say they asked me to help not because I'm so smart, but because I'm so cheap," Baker says.

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Although Baker is not in danger of loosing Social Security benefits because of his salary, he is smart--extremely smart and experienced--when it comes to starting churches.

After leaving what he considers his native Louisiana to attend Hardin Simmons and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, he moved to Lubbock, Texas, to start a mission for First Baptist Church there. He worked with that congregation for eight and one-half years, until it became a strong church.

Then he moved to Colorado Springs, Colo., to start another mission for First Baptist, Lubbock. In five years he organized a church with 600 charter members.

A couple years later, he joined the Colorado Baptist General Convention staff as missions and stewardship director. That area included churches in Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota which later formed the Northern Plains Convention, and called Baker as the first executive secretary-treasurer.

During the next nine years Baker helped increase the number of churches in the four-state area from 72 to 112. That involved knowing the 400,000 square miles of territory like most people know their neighborhoods.

Baker retired as a well respected, greatly loved missions man. Representative of this love was the action of First Southern Baptist Church, Casper, Wyo. When the congregation heard of Baker's new mission endeavor they sent the mission \$25.

"I'm just the interim pastor now," Baker said of his work. "One of these days they will get into a building and be able to afford a pastor. Then I'll step aside."

And most folks who know the Bakers figure they will step aside--right into another mission work.

Seminary Wife
Stings Crooks

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By Rex Hammock

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Neighbors of a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary student probably got pretty curious when his wife left the apartment with different men at all times of the night.

But when police closed the loop around a huge fencing operation, much of the credit for recovery of \$2.5 million in stolen merchandise and the indictment of 119 suspected criminals could go to Sherry Pegram.

Mrs. Pegram, wife of Wilson Pegram, a religious education student at the seminary, posed as the girlfriend of an undercover buyer of stolen goods, or "fence," while working for the Jefferson County Police Department.

She and the agent bought stolen items and narcotics in a Louisville apartment while the transactions were recorded secretly on videotape.

In July, while the undercover agent was on vacation, Mrs. Pegram alone purchased more than 50 vehicles, including a truck carrying seven 1978 Cadillacs valued at more than \$150,000. She bought the cars for \$6,000.

After the police closed down the fencing operation, Mrs. Pegram admitted that she had "surprised herself" by remaining so calm throughout the undercover work.

"But," she explained, "you can't be scared at a time like that. The criminals can tell."

She said her husband was supportive during the undercover work, but was worried about her safety until he saw the apartment set-up. "When he saw that I was always under surveillance by armed police, he didn't worry as much," she said.

When her husband graduates from seminary, Mrs. Pegram said that she might like to become a police officer. But she said, "I'm committed to Wilson's ministry and don't want to make such a permanent decision."



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