



-- BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
W. C. Fields, Director
Robert J. O'Brien, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Walker L. Knight, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30309, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Richard T. McCartney, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Tex. 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
MEMPHIS Roy Jennings, Chief, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, Tenn. 38104, Telephone (901) 272-2461
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) L. Bracey Campbell III, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2798
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hasteley, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

April 24, 1979

79-66

BPRA Awards Dominated By Home Mission Board

FT. WORTH, Texas (BP)--The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board dominated the awards competition at the 25th annual meeting of the Baptist Public Relations Association, collecting 14, including the three major grand prizes presented.

The Home Mission Board surge was led by Everett Hullum, the top individual award winner with six, including the newly inaugurated Fon H. Scofield Jr. Award for overall best photography; Walker L. Knight, with four, including the Arthur S. Davenport Award for best in total publications or public relations categories; and Celeste Loucks, whose first place winner for feature series also captured the Frank Burkhalter Award for best in the writing categories.

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, led by John Seelig with five, captured seven awards. Other agencies winning multiple awards were the Baptist General Convention of Texas, four; the Baptist Sunday School Board and Woman's Missionary Union, three each; and Baptist Press of the SBC Executive Committee, the Foreign Mission Board and the Brotherhood Commission, two each.

Besides the Scofield grand prize, Hullum won three firsts in photography categories, first for a feature story and second for a feature series. Seelig won three firsts (annual report, total public relations and general information brochure) and two runnersup (total publications and bulletin). Knight finished first in magazine for "Home Missions," first in special publications for "One Day in the Life of Southern Baptists," and first in total publications, which also won the Davenport grand prize.

Other multiple award winners, with two each, were Richard T. McCartney, Baptist General Convention of Texas, first advertising series and second in total public relations; Mary Ann Ward, Woman's Missionary Union, second place awards in feature photo series and advertising series; and Philip Poole, Southwestern Seminary, second place awards in special publications and letterheads.

Other first place winners were Robert O'Brien, Baptist Press, Executive Committee, news series on legalized gambling; Robert Stanley, Foreign Mission Board, news story; Mike Chute, Word and Way, Missouri Baptist Convention, news photo single; Dan Martin, Home Mission Board, development brochure; Mike Davis, Brotherhood Commission, advertising single; Sarah Rice, Judson College, catalog; Lloyd Householder, Baptist Sunday School Board, newsletter; Horace Barefoot, Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina, poster and promotional flyer; Catherine Allen and Debbie Bule, Woman's Missionary Union, letterhead; and J. Robert Clarke, Harrison-Chilhowee Baptist Academy, filmstrip or slide presentation category.

Other runnerup awards went to Norman Jameson, Baptist Press, Executive Committee, news story; Ronald Tonks and Charles Deweese, Historical Commission, slide/cassette presentation; John Hopkins, Baptist Digest of the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists, news publication; Mark Sandlin, Baptist Sunday School Board, news photo series; Don Whitehouse, Sunday School Board, advertising single; Alston Morgan, Wayland Baptist College, newsletter; Mike Creswell, South Carolina Baptist Convention, feature story; Irma Duke, Foreign Mission Board, feature photo single.

Runnerup awards also went to Carol Franklin, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, news series; David Clanton, Baptist General Convention of Texas, news photo single; Lynn Yarbrough, Baptist General Convention of Texas, poster and promotional flyer; John Bloskas, Annuity Board, annual report; Phil Burgess, who recently joined the Sunday School Board, for a Brotherhood Commission magazine; Eugene Baker, Baylor University,

-more-

general information brochure; Rod Byard, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, development brochure; and Larry Goddard, Home Mission Board, radio or TV production category.

-30-

Rufus Harris, 82,
Resigns Mercer Presidency

Baptist Press
4/24/79

MACON, Ga. (BP)--Rufus C. Harris, 82-year-old "dean of college presidents in the United States," will step down as president of Mercer University and become the Baptist university's first chancellor when a new president is elected.

Harris came to Mercer in 1960 from Tulane University, where he had been president since 1937. Before that, the Monroe, Ga., native served as dean of the Mercer Law School, 1923-27, and dean of the Tulane University Law School, 1927-37.

"I have passed 80 years of age, and solely in view of that fact I stated recently to the (Mercer) executive committee that I expected to invite the board of trustees to authorize the chairman to appoint a nominating committee," said Harris, who has spent 42 years as a college president.

The trustees voted to create the position of chancellor after accepting his resignation as president.

During the tense days of the civil rights movement, Mercer, led by Harris voted, in April, 1963, to admit all qualified students without regard to race before all colleges were required to do so by the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

The Harris years saw Mercer enrollment grow from around 1,000 on one campus to about 3,800 on four campuses in Macon and Atlanta, endowment increase from \$5.3 million to \$16.5 million and budget grow from \$1.2 million to \$21.3 million, and the school merge with Atlanta Baptist College forming Mercer University in Atlanta and head toward acquisition of a medical school.

Harris, who has served in numerous national and regional leadership positions in education, is former president of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the Council of Southern Universities and the Southern University Conference.

After graduation from Mercer in 1917, he earned the bachelor of laws and doctor of jurisprudence degrees from Yale University and has been awarded 14 honorary degrees.

-30-

James Teel Accepts
Hardin-Simmons Post

Baptist Press
4/24/79

ABILENE, Texas (BP)--James O. Teel Jr., assistant director of Cooperative Program promotion for the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission, Nashville, will join Hardin-Simmons University, July 1, as assistant vice president for development.

Teel, 51, a native Texan, and his wife, the former Georgie Lee Williams, spent 20 years as foreign missionaries in Ecuador and Argentina before he joined the Stewardship Commission in 1976. She is a registered nurse.

A pastor in Texas before missionary appointment, Teel served in various capacities on the foreign mission field, including field evangelist, pastor, associational missionary, regional secretary of evangelism, promoter of radio and television ministries, public relations director, film library director and press representative.

-more-

He is a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and is an accredited member of the Public Relations Society of America. Mrs. Teel, also a graduate of Hardin-Simmons, has studied at Southwestern Seminary, Hendrick Memorial School of Nursing and Belmont College.

-30-

Newport Will Address
Baptist Campus Ministers

Baptist Press
4/24/79

HOUSTON, Texas (BP)-- John Newport, vice president for academic affairs and provost at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, will be the featured speaker at the third annual meeting of the Association of Southern Baptist Campus Ministers, June 10-11, at the Religion Center, University of Houston.

The meeting is one of several convening in conjunction with annual sessions of the Southern Baptist Convention, June 12-14, at the Summit in Houston.

Newport, who also teaches philosophy of religion at the seminary, will make three presentations. Other speakers include Wendell Belew of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Atlanta, Ga., and Louis R. Cobbs of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Va.

The meeting gets underway at 3 p.m., Sunday June 10, and will convene sessions at 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. on Monday.

-30-

'Good News Alabama'
Blitzes the State

By Robert M. Duck

Baptist Press
4/24/79

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (BP)--The Alabama Baptist Convention reports more than 6,500 phone calls and 205 conversions via telephone during a five-week media blitz in connection with "Good News Alabama," the convention's Bold Mission Thrust emphasis for sharing the message of Christ with every person in Alabama by 1980.

The five black Baptist conventions in Alabama are participating with the Alabama convention.

Names, addresses and phone numbers of persons converted to Christ on telephones will be provided to the Good News Alabama county task force for referral to a local church for a personal visit, according to Earl Potts, overall coordinator for Good News Alabama.

Many of the 6,500 phone inquirers requested prayer, encouragement in their faith, or Scripture portions. Many hung up the phone, expecting to get a recorded message. Before the phones were installed, however, the convention staff insisted that the message be "live."

A convention committee chose 11 laypersons to give a brief testimony about God's love in some area of their life, and to tell that his love was available to anyone who would phone a toll-free number or mail a coupon in a newspaper ad.

The media blitz, coordinated by Claud O'Shields of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, was scheduled March 1-April 6, with the main thrust coming March 12-April 6. It was planned to enhance and fortify a simultaneous door-to-door witnessing effort planned and mapped out with churches by task forces in the 67 counties in the state.

Thirty-second lay-witness spots were scheduled during prime time on every television station in Alabama and in bordering cities in Georgia, Mississippi, Florida and Tennessee. One-minute spots were placed on every radio station in Alabama.

-more-

Teaser and testimony ads were placed in every daily newspaper and in several weekly newspapers in the state.

More than 400 billboards proclaimed the message: "Good News Alabama... God Loves You. To learn about God's love, phone 1-800-392-5700."

Twenty toll-free phones and four Montgomery area phones were installed in the convention building in Montgomery and manned by convention employees and 700 trained volunteers from Baptist churches in Montgomery, Elmore and Autauga counties.

One of the phone inquirers wrote: "I talked with someone a few nights ago. I don't remember the name, but I do want to thank him for his love and prayer. I received the pamphlets in the mail, and they were real helpful. I love the advertisements that come on television..."

A pastor whose church was involved in the witnessing effort and in answering the phones wrote: "'Good News Alabama' is the greatest thing to happen to me since my salvation. It has awakened the people at Prattmont Church to the reality of inviting Christ into people's lives instead of inviting people into our church."

George E. Bagley, executive secretary of the Alabama Baptist Convention, said, "The response to the media blitz has indicated that people are in need of Christ all over our state and that a host of people have heartaches and problems and needs beyond our comprehension."

Good News Alabama, he said, has created an awareness among our people to share the gospel with these people. "Never before in our history has such an effort been made to do this on a one to one basis as church members were trained to knock on every door in the state and share the Good News with the people living there."

Because of the response and need, one of the Good News Alabama toll-free phones has been installed in the convention administration office, beyond the original deadline of April 6.

More than \$550,000 has been spent thus far on Good News Alabama. Of that amount, \$400,000 was used in the media blitz. The total Good News Alabama budget is \$1 million. Churches in the five participating conventions have been asked to take an offering of \$1 per person to help finance the effort.

On the heels of the media blitz and door-knocking effort, Good News Alabama simultaneous revivals were held across the state, April 8-22. Good News Alabama banners, posters, and bumper strips were made available to churches.

Phase seven of Good News Alabama, which will take place later in the spring and during the summer and fall, will include discipling new church members through Church Training; church growth through the Sunday School; and church extension in the form of churches, fellowship Bible classes, mission Sunday schools, and church-type missions.

-30-

Retired Baptist Executive,
Robert Lee Middleton, Dies

Baptist Press
4/24/79

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Robert Lee Middleton, 85, retired director of the business division for the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, died April 23 at his home following a heart attack.

Funeral services were held April 24 at Nashville's First Baptist Church with burial in Woodlawn Cemetery.

-more-

Born in Terry, N. C., April 4, 1894, Middleton was the son of Mary Eva Rigsby and Edwin Lee Middleton. The elder Middleton served as state Baptist Sunday School secretary in North Carolina for 20 years.

Middleton worked at the Sunday School Board from 1925 until his retirement in 1962. During that time was responsible for the accounting and control departments, church literature department, operations department, contracts and insurance office and Ridgecrest (N.C.) and Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Centers.

Following military service in World War I, Middleton, a Wake Forest University graduate, worked with the Commercial National Bank in Raleigh, N. C. Later, he was employed by the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and managed the Baptist Book Store in Raleigh. He was the author of 14 inspirational books.

Survivors include his wife, Sarah Edwards Middleton; a daughter, Mrs. William Lynn Moench of Nashville; a sister, Mrs. J. S. Brown of Tampa, Fla.; and four grandchildren.

-30-

(BP) Photo mailed to Baptist state papers by Sunday School Board Bureau of Baptist Press.

Real SBC Issue Is Biblical
Authority, Moody Says

By James Lee Young

Baptist Press
4/24/79

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--The basic issue at the heart of Southern Baptist discussion is biblical authority, "not inspiration of the Bible," a Southern Baptist Theological Seminary professor declared here.

"Theories about the Bible are not sufficient," said Dale Moody, who serves as Joseph Emerson Brown professor of Christian theology for the Louisville, Ky.-based school.

The reference by Moody was to repeated references in the "Southern Baptist Journal," publication of the dissident Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship, to the phrases "without any mixture of error," and "biblical inerrancy."

"The real question is biblical authority versus Baptist traditions that have no biblical basis," Moody told members of the Southern Baptist Historical Commission and Society in their annual joint meeting at the Southern Baptist Convention building.

"Let me have my Greek New Testament and let creeping creedalism be halted in the interest of faith and freedom," he said.

In his address, Moody cited what he viewed as inconsistencies between Southern Baptist polity and the New Testament:

"Concern for the primacy of the local church has, at times, excluded belief in the church as the one body of Christ composed of all true believers in all congregations in all generations," he said.

He cited the New Hampshire Confession of 1833 and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1925, which are silent on the concept of the local church, as opposed to the Baptist Faith and Message Statement of 1963, which is not silent.

After two paragraphs on the local church, the 1963 statement says: "The New Testament speaks also of the church as the body of Christ, which includes all the redeemed of all the ages."

-more-

Moody next took on the points of Baptist baptism, closed communion and pulpit affiliation, which he said were reactions to divisive movements among Baptists such as Campbellism and others.

The three, he said, "are based on the rejection of the New Testament teaching on the church as the one body of Christ and (on the) historical question of Baptist succession (from the first century), but they still shape Baptist polity..."

From there, the professor moved to Dispensationalism, which he said was "based on the belief that there are seven historical periods taught in the Bible. The New Testament always uses the term dispensation (oikonomia) in the singular, but it does speak of two ages..."

"To the seven dispensations was added the system of eight covenants, a teaching that contradicts Hebrews 8 and other New Testament passages," Moody said. "The strangest deviation of Dispensationalism is the teaching on a pre-tribulation resurrection and rapture of the church..."

"It has now been shown rather clearly that belief in a pre-tribulation rapture originated with a Scottish girl named Margaret McDonald of Port Glasgow, Scotland, in 1830, but it has no support in Scripture whatsoever," Moody asserted.

"A survey would perhaps show that most Southern Baptists who have any opinion on the subject now embrace the Dispensationalism now proclaimed by many prominent pastors," he said. "Thus far, Dispensationalism has not become a test of fellowship, but it is not impossible in the future."

He continued, saying in his judgment, "neither Amillennialism nor Dispensationalism has the support of Scripture. Historical Pre-millennialism, which I accept, is not to be identified with either (one)."

Moody cited a movement since 1961 which "has threatened the cooperative but non-creedal policy of the Southern Baptist Convention... Southern Baptist polity has been forced into a new situation in which the convention is being used in a creedal way," he said.

He reviewed a series of controversies, including banning of the book "The Message of Genesis" by Ralph Elliott in 1961 and his dismissal from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, withdrawal of volume 1 of the Broadman Bible Commentary in 1969 and rewrite of its Genesis commentary, a controversial article in 1970 by William Hull on "Shall We Call the Bible Infallible?", and the formation of ultraconservatives into the Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship in 1969 to ferret out liberals among Southern Baptists.

He said a question at issue "is the development of Southern Baptist polity. Is the convention to impose confessions of faith on all the agencies? If so, it should be done honestly and openly with careful preparation of documents."

"A comparison of the position of the Baptist Faith and Message (Statement) with the Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship raises many more questions," Moody said, without identifying the questions.

He said Baptist responses to five basic and "divisive movements"--Campbellism, Dispensationalism, Fundamentalism, Conservatism and Landmarkism--appear in present dissident factions among Southern Baptists in varying degrees and forms.

"Irregularities in doctrine and practice...lead to the withdrawal of fellowship" in Baptist associations, Moody said. "Recent charismatic groups have experienced this associational pressure. Southern Baptists seem to be uncertain where local autonomy ends and associational fellowship begins."