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-- FEATURES

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Southern Baptist Couples
Leaves Home For Music

By Charles Willis

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (BP)—Two years ago, Lois and Ron Swafford gave away almost everything they owned, left behind family and friends, and took up an itinerant lifestyle to help small churches in the United States with music.

A self-taught vocal musician, Swafford holds no degree in music, nor a seminary diploma. In fact, he spent his early adulthood as a traveling railroad employee and later as a macaroni salesman. But on weekends, he was part-time music director for several churches in his native Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas.

In 1972 he became full-time minister of music and youth at First Baptist Church, Smackover, Ark. Swafford, then in his mid-30s, finally had an established career with a solid income.

During his more than seven years there, he took the church's youth on annual missions trips. Through these experiences, the Swaffords started to feel the call to music missions.

Swafford recalls that many times the people in the churches they visited seemed so thrilled and spiritually moved by the music that he began to wonder, "How many churches are there that are hungry for music?"

An article in the Arkansas Baptist Newsmagazine about the Southern Baptist Convention's Mission Service Corps prompted Swafford to take action on his dream to start and improve music ministries for small churches.

Swafford was so sure of his calling he bought a travel trailer for the task and took vacation time to meet with David Bunch, director of the Home Mission Board's Mission Service Corps in Atlanta. "Many churches are struggling through music programs," he told Bunch. "There are people in those congregations who can lead music. They just need training."

Armed with suggestions for gaining financial support for his proposed ministry, Swafford returned to Smackover to work out the details. In the summer of 1979, he resigned his church to become the first full-time Mission Service Corps music missionary for the Southern Baptist Convention.

About the same time, a concern for music missions was also on the hearts of leaders in new work areas. In 1980, three state music secretaries attending church music leadership conferences at Glorieta issued an appeal for music missions work.

Wesley L. Forbis, secretary of the Sunday School Board's church music department, said that "out of that appeal grew a music liaison between the church music department and the Home Mission Board. We must never let the program of church music become more important than the purpose of church music. We need to help committed persons leave their churches to help other congregations."

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Doing just that, the Swaffords took with them only what would fit in a furnished travel trailer and headed toward Skyway Baptist Church, Colorado Springs, Colo., where they worked for 13 months. In September 1980, their first "on the road" assignment took them to Yuma, Ariz.

From Arizona, the Swaffords moved in February 1981 to California to lead music clinics, train choir directors and begin music programs. Swafford has done concerts in convalescent homes, schools, civic club banquets, churches, and, on one occasion, sang at the funeral of a man he did not know because there was no one else who could sing.

In each church, Mrs. Swafford has volunteered to lead Bible studies, work in the media library, teach Sunday School and be a secretary. In one church, she was the featured speaker for the World Day of Prayer.

While their many moves prohibit long-term friendships and emphasize occasional homesickness, the Swaffords say they have handled the situation well.

"Ron and I are each other's best friend," said Mrs. Swafford. "That's an important consideration for couples who want to do this kind of work."

Swafford has observed one of the great needs is to "show the churches the excitement and importance of music to the life of the church. Music directors need to bring life to the church."

To that end, Swafford has conducted, on occasion, congregational singing 'rehearsals' to encourage enthusiastic participation "to build the people up before the sermon."

He also sees spirited singing as a very real outreach tool. "Churches that praise the Lord through music make you want to be a part of that," he said.

"I can list scores of reasons why we cannot afford not to be here," he said. "I don't see how I can do what I'm doing, but I'm doing it!"

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

Editor Takes Post
With Glass Group

Baptist Press
10/12/81

DALLAS (BP)—Russell Kaemmerling, editor of the Southern Baptist Advocate, has accepted the post of executive vice president of the Bill Glass Evangelistic Association.

Kaemmerling, 32, said, however, that the Advocate, established in July of 1980, "will continue publication as a national newspaper designed to keep Southern Baptists informed of convention activities from a conservative viewpoint."

He began publication of the Advocate after a five-month stint as editor of the Southern Baptist Journal, a publication of the controversial Baptist Faith and Message Fellowship. His leaving of the Journal editorship reportedly caused a split in the BFMF.

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Since beginning the Advocate, Kaemmerling published seven issues, financed mostly through subscriptions and private donations. No issues, however, have been published since the annual meeting of the Southern Baptist Convention in June of 1981.

The shift to the Bill Glass Evangelistic Association, Kaemmerling said, "is an opportunity to be involved in an evangelistic endeavor and ministry, as well as to continue publishing the Advocate. Evangelism has always been very close to my heart."

With the association, he will be responsible for the operation and administration of the work, primarily conducted through city-wide crusades, a prison ministry and a television outreach.

"I got to know Bill (Glass) when I was pastor in West Columbia (N.C.) and was director of a city-wide crusade there. I told him then that if there was ever an opportunity for a full-time position, to keep me in mind. The position came open and I was given consideration," Kaemmerling said.

Kaemmerling, a native of Beaumont, Texas, and a graduate of Lamar University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was pastor of First Baptist Church of West Columbia prior to relocating in Dallas to establish the Advocate.

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Suspects Charged
In Decatur Assault

Baptist Press
10/12/81

ATLANTA (BP)—Three Atlanta men have been arrested and charged in the Sept. 21 sexual assault and beating death of Jean Bulce, daughter-in-law of Atlanta pastor Lester Bulce.

Arrested Oct. 9 and charged with murder and robbery were Lopaz Ventura Favors, 24, and his 20-year-old brother Rodney William Favors. The third man, Anthony "Amp" Wiley, 21, surrendered to authorities Oct. 11, and was charged with murder, aggravated battery and armed robbery in connection with the death of Bulce, 35, and the beating of her co-worker, Bettye Ann Miles. The two women, both employees of Decatur Federal Savings & Loan, were attacked while having lunch in a Decatur city park.

The Favors brothers were stopped when police noticed a headlight on their car was out. Their vehicle matched descriptions of the suspects' car, including a radio antenna fashioned from a bent coat hanger—a detail known to police but withheld from previous public descriptions.

Police also noted the two men looked "very similar" to composite drawings of the suspects, based on information provided by Mrs. Miles and another witness.

Wiley, who had been free on bond awaiting trial on a Fulton County (Atlanta) rape charge at the time of the Decatur slaying, surrendered peacefully. Bond was not set pending an October 30 arraignment.

Jean Bulce was an active member of Rehoboth Baptist Church in suburban Atlanta, where her father-in-law, Lester Bulce, has been pastor for 34 years. Bulce is a former vice president for the Georgia Baptist Convention and presently is on the executive committee for the Georgia Baptist Convention.

Bulce said he intends to see the three in the DeKalb County Jail. "I'm going to try to do what Jesus said we should do—love our enemies. I am going to talk to them about giving their hearts to Jesus and repenting of their sins," he said.

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Former SBC President
Brooks Hays, 83, Dies

WASHINGTON (BP)--Brooks Hays, 83, a former eight-term congressman from Arkansas who was president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1957-1959, died at his home about 2:30 a.m. Oct. 12.

Funeral services were scheduled for 4 p.m. Wednesday in the Joseph Gawler's Sons Funeral Home in Washington and at 11 a.m. Friday in Second Baptist Church in Little Rock, Ark.

A special memorial service was to be held Sunday in Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, which already had scheduled Sunday as "Brooks Hays Day" in his honor.

Hays, born Aug. 9, 1898, near Russellville, Ark., had dedicated his entire career to public service. For 16 years--1943-1959--he was representative from Arkansas in the U.S. House of Representatives.

After confronting then Arkansas Gov. Orval Faubus during the 1958 Little Rock school desegregation crisis, he lost his seat to an avowed segregationist.

He was a special adviser to President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who appointed Hays to the board of the Tennessee Valley Authority. Hays was assistant secretary of state for congressional relations for President John F. Kennedy, who later named him a special presidential assistant. He also worked under President Lyndon B. Johnson.

In 1966, he ran unsuccessfully for governor of Arkansas, and then lost a congressional race in North Carolina in 1972.

In between, he has been visiting professor at Rutgers University, the University of Massachusetts and at North Carolina State University. He founded the Ecumenical Institute at Wake Forest University, and headed it for five years.

Since 1974, Hays has been involved in speaking and writing. His autobiography, "Politics Is My Parish," was published in September by the Louisiana State University Press.

He also wrote "This World: A Christian's Workshop," "A Southern Baptist Moderate Speaks," "Hotbed of Tranquility," and, with John Steely, "The Baptist Way of Life."

He was elected president of the SBC in 1957, a time he described as a tense period during which Southern Baptists were handicapped by a racist image.

He also was chairman of the SBC Christian Life Commission in the 1960s, and was actively involved in other facets of denominational life.

For 40 years, Hays was involved with the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and in October 1980, the NCCJ premiered a film they commissioned on his public career, called "Return to Little Rock."

Hays is survived by his wife, Marion; a daughter, Betty Brooks Bell of Bethesda, Md., a son, Steele Hays of Little Rock, five grandchildren and three great-granddaughters.

"Brooks Hays was one of the great lay presidents of the Southern Baptist Convention," said Harold C. Bennett, executive director-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee. "His

insights, leadership and at times humorous stories were a blessing to all of us. Southern Baptists will miss him."

James Dunn, executive director of the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs in Washington, D.C., commented: "Brooks Hays translated into flesh and blood the compassion of our Savior for all sorts of folks, especially those who are poor and suffering and victims of a society that they cannot comprehend and with which they cannot cope."

Foy Valentine, executive director of the SBC Christian Life Commission, called Hays "an authentic Christian, a loyal Baptist, a true patriot, a national and denominational statesman, an exemplary family man, a stalwart friend."

Valentine added: "He was a champion of the Christian way in race relations, peace with justice, universal human rights and responsible Christian citizenship. Thank God for the marvelous legacy left us by so fine a human being."

Jimmy R. Allen, president of the denomination's Radio and Television Commission, who, like Hays, is a former SBC president, said about his personal friend: "Brooks Hays was a man of great humor, compassion, conviction and courage. He helped us all to see the world as the Christian's workshop. His death reminds us of an era of pain and crisis in achieving racial justice. He was a victim of that prejudice but the ultimate victory belongs to him and to his Lord. Few remember the names of his enemies while many remember him as friend."