



-- FEATURES

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SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

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82-15

EDITORS: Following is the fourth in a series of features on the heads of Southern Baptist agencies, boards and institutions. Baptist Press will run one each week, with photo, in no particular order. Each article has been written by a public relations person within the agency.

Agency Head Series

Historical Commission Leader
Profits from Rural Background

By Charles W. Deweese

CO

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--From rural background, a family man, sports enthusiast and committed churchman is Lynn E. May Jr., executive director of the Historical Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention.

A product of the rural South, May fondly recalls his Aunt Mary Jane Kennedy, who lived on a farm in northeast Louisiana. "I used to spend several weeks with her each summer as a child and early teenager. She taught me how to milk cows, chop cotton, plow and do other things on the farm. She worked hard and taught me how to do the same and love it."

May's farming interests continue. A 4-H Club member as a boy, he now manages a 396-acre farm near Winnsboro, La. He administers leasing arrangements and other uses of the property.

May, 52, also enjoys trimming his shrubs and lawn and garden work at his Nashville home.

Southern Baptists profit from May's rural background. He makes certain that Historical Commission programs seek to meet the needs of rural Southern Baptists, as well as those of all other Southern Baptists.

May loves his family and arranges to spend a lot of time with them. Since his two daughters, Debbie and Diane, have both graduated from Belmont College, he and his wife Alta, whom he married in 1951, have more time to shop together, cook together, vacation and attend conventions together.

May credits strong emphasis on family life to his parents. "My parents were wonderful Christians who provided great love and a wonderful home for my older brother, sister and me," he says.

May, his brother and sister gave their lives to Christ in the same revival meeting in First Baptist Church, Winnsboro; were baptized together (with all three in the pool at the same time); and all later graduated from Louisiana College, as both their parents had done.

May's devotion to his family makes it easy for him to lend the support of the Historical Commission to the 1982-85 Bold Mission Thrust emphasis on "Strengthening Families." The January 1982 issue of "Baptist History and Heritage," which he edits, focuses on the theme, "The Family in Baptist History."

Basketball is May's favorite sport. At 6-2, why not?

May and his wife have had season tickets to Vanderbilt University basketball games for 15 years. He grimaces with obvious pain when he realizes that an important meeting has been scheduled on the night of a home game.

"I'm an avid fan, attending Vanderbilt home games and cheering my team," he says. "I usually come home and watch the delayed TV broadcast of the games as well. I listen to away games on the radio."

May's impassioned conduct at the games shatters his "ice man" reputation. He jabs the air with his fists and cheers or moans wildly following action on the floor.

Above all, May is a churchman. Trained for ministry at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, he has been a member of Crievewood Baptist Church for more than 25 years.

A member of the adult choir the entire time, May sings bass and periodically sings solos and in ensembles. He has been choir president and bass section leader several times.

He has been chairman of several church committees and is currently Sunday School class teacher for adult men. He also advocates and practices a generous approach to financial stewardship.

An employee of the Historical Commission for over 25 years, May has been executive director since April 1971. Only one Southern Baptist Convention agency, the Christian Life Commission, has a chief executive whose tenure exceeds May's.

May is a man captivated by Baptist history but unwilling to live in the past. Whether at work, on his farm, in his home, in Vanderbilt University gymnasium, at Crievewood Baptist Church, or in any other setting, he loves life and lives it fully.

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Deweese is director of editorial services for the Southern Baptist Historical Commission. (BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers.

Allen And Falwell To Give
Differing Views On Family

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—A Southern Baptist television executive and a well-known television preacher will present differing viewpoints on the role of families during a Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission seminar.

Jimmy Allen, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, and Jerry Falwell, pastor of Thomas Road Baptist Church in Lynchburg, Va., will speak during the seminar on "Strengthening Families," March 22-24 in Atlanta.

According to Harry Hollis, director of family and special moral concerns for the commission and director of the seminar, "Jimmy Allen and Jerry Falwell have taken different approaches in the way they have dealt with family matters. This should make for a lively exchange of ideas as the two deal with the same subject, "Strengthening Families in the Nation."

The seminar, which will help kick off a three-year denominational Bold Mission Thrust emphasis on "Strengthening Families," also will feature leading family and marriage specialists David Mace, James Dobson, Joyce Landorf and Dorothy Sample.

Sneakers slated for the seminar are U.S. Congressman Claude Pepper of Florida; Wayne Oates, professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the Louisville University School of Medicine; and former Vice President Walter Mondale.

Other seminar speakers include Kenneth Chafin, author and pastor of South Main Baptist Church, Houston; Charles Petty, executive director for the North Carolina Governor's Office of Citizen Affairs; David Edens, director of family and community studies at Stephens College, Columbia, Mo., and William Lawson, pastor of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church, Houston; and Nal T. Jones, pastor, and H. Dale Keeton, counseling minister, both of Columbia Baptist Church, Falls Church, Va.

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE
SBC Executive Committee
460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219
(615) 244-2355
Wilmer C. Fields, Director
Dan Martin, News Editor
Norman Jameson, Feature Editor

BUREAUS

ATLANTA Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041
DALLAS Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 103 Baptist Building, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 741-1996
NASHVILLE (Baptist Sunday School Board) Lloyd T. Householder, Chief, 127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300
RICHMOND Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va. 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151
WASHINGTON Stan L. Hastey, Chief, 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4226

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**Anti-Era Ruling Set Aside
Pending High Court Review**

WB

WASHINGTON (BP)--The U. S. Supreme Court has temporarily set aside a Dec. 23 lower court ruling which dealt a sharp blow to proponents of the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA).

In an unusual and unexpected action, the high court stayed the two-pronged ruling by U. S. District Judge Marion Callister in Boise, Ida., that Congress had acted unconstitutionally when it extended the ratification deadline for ERA and that states do have the constitutional power to rescind ratification.

If upheld, Judge Callister's decision would have the effect of negating the 1978 action of Congress extending the ratification past the original March 22, 1979 deadline and of upholding the actions of five states in rescinding ratification.

However, the Supreme Court ruling is expected to come after the June 30 extended deadline for ratification of the amendment which is currently three states shy of the necessary 38.

Regardless of the outcome in court, the controversial amendment faces a doubtful future. No state has ratified it since 1977 and despite a recent upsurge in activity by ERA supporters, 1982 votes in the Georgia and Oklahoma legislatures show no change in that trend.

ERA backers contend that the Supreme Court's action in staying the Callister ruling will improve their chances during the remaining five months.

In its 1981 annual session in Los Angeles, the Southern Baptist Convention approved a resolution stating "it does not endorse the Equal Rights Amendment."

That resolution, however, called on all persons "to be sensitive to the contemporary pressures facing women" and urged employers "to seek fairness for women in compensation, advancement and opportunities for improvement."

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Union University Gets
Kresge Challenge Funds

CO

Baptist Press
1/26/82

JACKSON, Tenn. (BP)--Just eight months after it entered its Expansion Program fund drive, Union University has reached its \$1,550,000 goal and has qualified for a matching \$200,000 challenge grant from The Kresge Foundation.

The grant is the largest such contribution the Tennessee Baptist college has ever received from a foundation, said President Robert Craig.

The program, the most ambitious undertaking since Union relocated in 1975, calls for nearly \$1.4-million to be earmarked for the first major expansion of the 160,000-square-foot academic complex. Union has experienced a 40 percent growth in the past five years.

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High Court Agrees: Louisiana
Prayer Law Unconstitutional

WB

WASHINGTON (BP) -- Reaffirming a position first announced 20 years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court has held that states and localities may not by law turn public classrooms into worship centers.

The high court unanimously affirmed a decision by the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals striking down a Louisiana law which authorized local school boards to provide for a period of prayer at the beginning of each school day.

Shortly after the state legislature passed the law in 1980, the school board in Jefferson Parish, in suburban New Orleans, announced it would begin permitting prayer led by students and teachers. It also issued guidelines to govern the one-minute proceeding.

Among the guidelines were rules providing first for a student volunteer to ask to lead in prayer. Only if he orally asked to pray and brought along a written permission slip from his parents, however, was any student to be allowed to lead the class in prayer.

If no student volunteered on a given day, the teacher was authorized under the rules to lead in prayer.

Students who did not wish to participate were to be excused to another school location. After the prayer, however, all students were required to report to their classrooms for a one-minute period of silent meditation before regular classroom instruction was to begin.

After the school board announced its rules, three parents took school officials to court, arguing that both the state law and the regulations in Jefferson Parish violated the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion.

Although the U. S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana dismissed the complaint, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed with the parents.

In appealing to the Supreme Court, the State of Louisiana and the school board argued that the so-called "voluntary" features in the law and local rules met current First Amendment tests.

Further, attorneys for the state and school board declared in a written brief, "the 'prayer' may be sectarian or nonsectarian, religious or non-religious."

They argued further that "the time has come when there must be an 'accommodation'" to the rights of the religious majority as over against minorities.

In addition, the brief asked the high court to reconsider and revise its 11-year-old test that to pass the Amendment's ban on establishment of religion, a law must have a secular purpose, have the primary effect of neither advancing nor inhibiting religion, and not result in excessive entanglement between church and state.

In a decision announced last August the court of appeals rejected all those arguments, a rejection affirmed without comment by the Supreme Court.

IRS To Examine Texas
Church's Bank Records

WB

WASHINGTON (BP)-- A Sherman, Texas, bank must produce its records of that city's First Pentecostal Church as ordered by a federal appeals court, following the U.S. Supreme Court's refusal to review the case.

The Grayson County State Bank has refused for more than three years to produce the records as demanded by the Internal Revenue Service in an audit proceeding directed at the congregation's pastor, Charles E. Glass. IRS is looking into Glass's tax liability for 1973 through 1976.

Although IRS obtained a summons to examine the record in November 1978, the taxing agency waited until May 1980 to ask a federal district court in Texas to enforce it. That court denied the government's request but the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the lower court, ordering the bank to comply with the IRS request.

In appealing that decision to the Supreme Court, attorneys for the church labelled the IRS efforts as "clearly an excessive and unnecessary interference" into "internal financial matters." They also cited a portion of the Internal Revenue Code forbidding the IRS from auditing the "books of account" of any congregation, even if it engaged in unrelated business enterprises.

But the government argued that it sought only bank records and not "books of account" kept by the church. It emphasized also that its investigation focused on the pastor not the congregation. The summons of bank records was issued, the government brief continued, "for the proper and strictly secular" purpose of determining Glass' tax liability.