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Grady Cothen Would

Rather Be Fishing

BSSB

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--If Grady Cothen were inclined to place bumper stickers on his car, his would probably proclaim, "I'd Rather Be Fishing."

Beginning in the creeks of rural southern Mississippi as a "barefooted boy in overalls with a cane pole and worms," the president of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board now prefers saltwater fishing off the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

"Fishing gets me away from people and the telephone," says Cothen, 61, who heads an institution which publishes church literature, music, books and Bibles and operates two conference centers and 65 bookstores.

"I can turn off my radio, let my thought processes and physical processes slow down and get back in touch with reality."

The Gulf Coast from Florida to Texas, Canada, Alaska and Baja California are among the places he has dipped his line.

Another water sport he tried while president of New Orleans Theological Seminary from 1970-74 was parasailing--dangling 100 feet in the air from a parachute, towed behind a boat.

"Most people don't believe I ever did that," quips Cothen, who also is a pilot.

Since Nashville is hundreds of miles from the nearest ocean, Cothen relaxes from work by playing racquetball at the downtown YMCA one block from the board.

"Racquetball is fun and competitive and helps me work off tensions," he says. "The principal problem with it is that I can't do it often enough to stay in condition to play."

Translated, that may mean "stay in condition to win more regularly," as Cothen describes himself as competitive. "However, I've gotten a little bit less intense now than when I was younger," he says.

Almost two years ago Cothen's life took a sudden turn when he was diagnosed with an abdominal malignancy. The pre-surgery diagnosis included the fact that most similar malignancies are found to have spread to other organs.

Doctors were pleasantly surprised to discover that Cothen's had not spread and he did not even have to undergo radiation or chemotherapy treatments after the operation. But removal of most of his stomach created some limitations and the experience made him pause for reflection.

"When one faces the possibility that your career may be over and that you may be facing death, it certainly contributes to a sober evaluation of how you've spent your life and how you want to spend the rest of it," says Cothen.

"When I examined the priorities of my life, I discovered all over again that in addition to my faith in God there were only two things in my life of real significance--my work and my family."

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After his recovery, Cothen succeeded for a time in slowing down--traveling less and sleeping later. But by the spring of 1981 he had bowed to the demands of the board and the denomination and resumed his former pace.

When Cothen returned to his doctor in October bringing symptoms of stress and exhaustion, the doctor was far less gentle in urging a slower pace.

"I'm re-evaluating travel, trying to be even more selective and trying to slow it all down," he says.

But in the next moment, his eyes light up, and he leans forward energetically to talk about the board's efforts to create a telecommunications network to churches.

"I see telecommunications as the greatest opportunity we have to do more things better for more churches than we have been able to do," he says. "I'm prepared to give it whatever time it takes."

Of his family priority, Cothen describes his wife Bettye as "the only woman in my life since I was 15 years old. She is a warm, friendly, people-oriented kind of person. She has been totally dedicated to me, our children and our work. We have shared ministry in the richest sense, and I think she has been what a wife ought to be."

The Cothens were married one week after he graduated from Mississippi College in 1941. They have two children and a foster daughter. His son, Grady Jr., is married to the former Lelia Routh, daughter of retired SBC executive secretary Porter Routh.

Cothen's Southern Baptist heritage goes back to Richton Baptist Church in Mississippi, the town where SBC Stewardship Commission Executive Director A.R. Fagan was born. There he was saved, baptized and ordained. His preacher father and his mother reared three sons, all preachers.

Ironically, Cothen is the third of the board's chief executives to come from southern Mississippi. T.L. Holcomb, James L. Sullivan and Cothen grew up in towns within a 30-mile radius.

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Lawson is director of news and information for the Sunday School Board.
(BP) photo mailed to Baptist state newspapers by the Sunday School Board.

Brotherhood Commission
Names Men's Director

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Baptist Press
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MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Doug Beggs, pastor of Hampton Road Baptist Church in DeSoto, Texas, has been named Baptist Men's director for the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

Beggs, 41, will assume duties March 1, 1982. He succeeds David Haney, who resigned in December to become a church renewal and management consultant in Memphis.

The new Baptist Men's leader is a native of Lubbock, Texas, and a graduate of Baylor University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married and the father of three children.

He has been pastor of five churches in Texas, and was a staff member of First Baptist Church of Dallas prior to becoming pastor of the suburban Dallas church in 1978. He has been active in Texas state Brotherhood programs, working as a Brotherhood regional director for six associations, as a state Royal Ambassador camp craft and counselor trainer and in lay renewal activities.

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O'Brien To Help Raise \$7 Million
FMB Defends Hunger Fund Policy

By Bob Stanley

RB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has assigned Executive Vice President Bill O'Brien the task of raising an additional \$7 million needed to build its new missionary orientation center near Richmond.

The action, announced at the board meeting Feb. 9, means O'Brien will be relieved temporarily of some of his duties but will continue as executive vice president, President R. Keith Parks said.

Ground breaking for the new orientation center is scheduled for May 11, with completion in 1984. The multiple-use facility will be used for debriefings of furloughing missionaries and for orientation of both missionaries and long-term volunteers.

The center will be built without using either Cooperative Program or Lottie Moon Christmas offering funds. So far, some \$2 million has either been pledged or received toward the estimated cost of \$9 million.

Ray Spence, chairman of the board's development council, said the group will continue to look for a full-time development director who can lead "the largest Protestant denomination and one of the wealthiest" in Bold Mission Thrust, the convention-wide program to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people of the world by the year 2000.

Spence said the primary job of the new development officer will be to seek "over-and-above" contributions from wealthy Southern Baptists who can be challenged to invest in Bold Missions.

In other actions, the board reported a 15.7 percent increase in overseas baptisms last year, defended its policies on use of world hunger and relief funds, and named two new associates to area directors for west Africa and Europe.

Overseas Vice President Charles Bryan reported that churches related to Southern Baptist mission work in 95 countries baptized 127,337 persons in 1981, surpassing the previous year's record of 110,032 by 15.7 percent.

Board member Mark Corts of Winston-Salem, N.C., urged the board to do a better job explaining why interest from world hunger funds awaiting allocation is put into the general fund to offset administrative costs in Southern Baptists' worldwide hunger and relief program.

While affirming the need for proper interpretation, Board Chairman Travis Berry of Plano, Texas, said such a program obviously cannot be administered without costs. "I have some very strong feelings that our stewardship has been excellent at this point," he said.

Parks said some who criticize the use of this interest to offset administrative costs are unaware that many of the major relief groups "take 25 percent off the top for administration and promotion costs" before sending the remainder to the needy.

The board guarantees that 100 percent of Southern Baptist hunger and relief contributions is used for these purposes overseas. In addition to meeting immediate hunger and relief needs, the board is initiating long-range community development programs which will "creatively and effectively channel the backlog of funds that has emerged" because of record Southern Baptist giving, Parks said.

Board members and staff have been getting inquiries about the use of this interest and about a \$4 million backlog that developed when world hunger giving reached its peak in the latter months of 1980.

David N. Mayhall, a missionary teacher at the Liberia Baptist Theological Seminary, Paynesward City, Liberia, was named associate for English-speaking west Africa. He will take over part of the responsibility formerly handled by Billy L. Bullington, who beginning March 1 will be associate for non-English speaking west Africa. Both work under the supervision of John Mills, director for west Africa.

G. Keith Parker, associate professor of practical theology at Baptist Theological Seminary, Ruschlikon, Switzerland, will assist Isam E. Ballenger, director for Europe and the Middle East, as the on-the-field associate responsible for missionaries in Europe, assuming his new duties in July.

Mayhall will work with missionaries in Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria. Bullington will work with missionaries in the French-speaking countries of Senegal, Upper Volta, Ivory Coast, Togo, Benin and Niger Republic and Spanish-speaking Equatorial Guinea.

A native of Liberty, Miss., Mayhall was a missionary to Nigeria from 1950 to 1973. He resigned in 1973 and was reappointed in 1979 to Liberia, where he also works as a general evangelist.

He is married to the former Ollie Mae Ware, who grew up in Magee, Miss., and they have four daughters. He is a graduate of Mississippi College, Clinton, and holds the master of divinity degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. Before appointment, he served churches in Underwood, Ind., and Pascagoula, Miss. From 1972-79 he was associational director of missions in Greenville, Miss.

Parker, a native of Tryon, N.C., is a graduate of Berea (Ky.) College. He holds master of divinity and doctor of philosophy degrees from Southern seminary, and also attended the University of Heidelberg in Germany.

He and his wife, the former Jonlyn Truesdail of Richmond, Va., are the parents of three children.

Parks briefed the board on the financial crisis many state Baptist papers are facing after a postal subsidy to nonprofit mailers was eliminated Jan. 10.

He urged board members and other Southern Baptists to stand behind their state papers in this time when postal rates have more than doubled for most publications.

The board voted to establish the East Indonesia Baptist Mission as a second mission in Indonesia with work centered in Manado, on the island of Sulawesi.

Missionaries will be working with a "very missions-minded group of Baptists" located on the large Indonesian island northeast of Java, according to Bill Wakefield, board director for south and southeast Asia. The group has missionaries on the northern island of Sumatra and on Kalimantan, the lower portion of the island of Borneo.

Following up a December action, the board approved Clyde and Jean Fant as missionary associates. Fant, formerly pastor of First Baptist Church, Richardson, Texas, has been elected president of Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

Recovering Mission Volunteer
Finds Ministry In Hospital

RB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Paralyzed mission volunteer Roy Church told a committee of Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board members, via a special telephone hookup, he has discovered a rich mission field during two months of hospitalization.

Church, speaking from his room at North Carolina Baptist Hospital in Winston-Salem, told western South America committee members, meeting Feb. 8 in Richmond, Va., he is "feeling very good" and sharing Christ at every opportunity.

Four hospital employees who have accepted Christ at Church's invitation gather in his room when they get off work at 11 p.m. for Bible study--five nights a week, he said.

Church assured board members he is slowly recovering from the paralysis he sustained when stricken by Guillain-Barre Syndrome in December while working as an extended service volunteer in Quito, Ecuador. He has gained strength in the muscles of his torso and continues to regain movement in his fingers, hands and toes.

"My desire is to be able--to the glory of God--to walk into Calvary Baptist Church, Winston-Salem (where he and his wife, Ruth, are members), without crutches or a cane on Easter Sunday," he said.

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Carson-Newman Receives
First \$1 Million Gift

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Baptist Press
2/10/82

JEFFERSON CITY, Tenn. (BP)--The first \$1 million gift in the history of Carson-Newman College has been received by the East Tennessee Baptist institution, according to President Cordell Maddox.

John E. Price, 90, of Fort Myers, Fla., made the gift, which consists of a two-story home, antiques and 8-acres of land bordering the Caloosahatchee River in downtown Fort Myers, Fla.

"I've heard many good things about Carson-Newman College from my former pastor, A.P. Minshew, and I like what I've heard," Price told Maddox. "Through the years, I've enjoyed providing financial assistance to several young people attending Carson-Newman. My knowledge of what the college stands for as a Christian institution has a strong bearing on my decision to make this gift."

College officials said, to their knowledge, Price has never visited the campus of the four-year school, which has an enrollment of some 1,600 students.

Minshew, assistant to the president for planned giving, has been associated with C-N since 1972.

The Fort Myers property will be sold, with proceeds going to the John E. Price and Aliese Price Foundation. The assets of the trust will accrue to Carson-Newman and will be placed in a scholarship fund honoring the Prices.

Price and his wife, Aliese, now deceased, traveled extensively and on their journeys acquired an extensive collection of hand-carved ivory and Meissen and Dresden porcelain, which are included in the gift to Carson-Newman.

Through the years, Price has made generous gifts to the University of Florida, the University of Miami and Stetson University.

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