



- - BAPTIST PRESS

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
Craig Bird, 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 (Foreign) 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

January 17, 1984

84-9

National Cooperative Program
Lags Behind Budget Needs

By Craig Bird

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--First quarter gifts to the national Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention were almost \$1.5 million above the first three months of the last fiscal year but still fell behind budget needs.

December contributions of \$8,848,602 were a monthly record and reflected a 2.2 percent increase over December 1982. That was the smallest monthly percentage increase since February 1982 and the ninth lowest in the past 10 years.

The first accurate budget projections will not be available until after January figures are included, according to Tim Hedquist, director of financial planning for the SBC Executive Committee. "You never know how much you will be under or over a budget until this last day of the budget year," he said. "You can't just multiply the first quarter receipts by four.

"We are behind but, right now, it's hard to say with any accuracy how much we are behind."

Income the final three quarters has been considerably higher over the past 10 years.

This year 22 of the 34 state Baptist conventions increased their voluntary contributions to the national Cooperative Program. Many of the state fiscal years start Jan. 1 so those increases will not show up at the national level until February.

The agencies which operate the worldwide mission and education programs of the Southern Baptist Convention will have a better idea of what percentage of their allocation will be funded next month when Hedquist completes the projections.

The first quarter gifts of \$25,506,291 are 6.21 percent ahead of the first quarter of 1982-83. Comparatively, the national Cooperative Program received only \$8.87 million the first quarter of 193-74 and \$16.6 million five years ago.

"Southern Baptist giving is still well ahead of the inflation rate," Harold C. Bennett, executive secretary-treasurer of the SBC Executive Committee, said. "Our people and our churches ride the inflation roller coaster like everyone else--but it is inspiring to see that support of our mission efforts has always run ahead of the inflation rate and given us growth in real dollars each year."

The basic operating budget for the SBC in 1983-84 is \$114.5 million and the combined basic and challenge budget is \$125 million.

Texas, Florida, Georgia and Mississippi were the leaders among the state conventions the first quarter as they were ranked in the top 10 in both total dollar gifts and percentage increase in gifts over last year.

Texas was first in total giving (\$4,462,261) and eighth in percentage increase (10.13). Florida was third (\$1,831,829) and fourth (17.44); Georgia was second (\$2,112,212) and ninth (9.94), and Mississippi was ninth (\$1,238,535) and seventh (10.63).

--more--

DARGAN-CARVER LIBRARY
S. B. C. HISTORICAL COMMISSION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

The Kansas-Nebraska convention was the percentage increase leader, giving 134.42 percent (\$111,015) more to the Cooperative Program in the first three months than last year. West Virginia was second (18.91), Maryland was third (18.63), Michigan was fifth (12.80), Arkansas was sixth (11.87) and Illinois was tenth (9.80).

Other total dollars leaders were: North Carolina (fourth, \$1,798,297); Alabama (fifth, \$1,719,063); Oklahoma (sixth, \$1,687,134); Tennessee (seventh, \$1,529,360); South Carolina (eighth, \$1,357,947) and Virginia (tenth, \$1,219,801).

--30--

Ethicist Commends Proposals
To Battle Drunk Driving

Baptist Press
1/17/84

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptists have been urged to support implementation of the recently released recommendations of the Presidential Commission on Drunk Driving.

Ronald D. Sisk of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission said the report "provides a framework" for implementing practical solutions to the national problem.

It calls for sweeping reforms affecting public interaction with persons who drink and drive and urges a comprehensive approach, involving action at local and national levels.

Among the recommendations are broad efforts to increase public awareness of the drinking and driving issue, with particular attention to youth education; national minimum legal drinking age of 21 and other preventive measures;

Immediate, severe penalties for offenders, with no plea bargaining or judicial reduction of sentences; increased involvement by grassroots organizations, including churches, in monitoring drunk driving legislation and enforcement, and funding of needed programs by state and local legislation, designating offender fines and fees to cover costs.

Though it did not recommend a general increase in alcohol taxes, which he supports, Sisk believes the report does "add up to a comprehensive framework for a societal attack on drunk driving.

"The Presidential Commission," he said, "has commendably done the hard work of providing recommendations for basic standards. What remains is for concerned citizens, including Southern Baptists, to stop drunk driving by working with other concerned citizens to put these recommendations into practice."

The Christian Life Commission, which deals with the abuse of alcohol and other drugs, has produced a series of materials to provide "handles" for local Baptist churches to confront the problem, he added.

--30--

National Bi-Vocational
Ministries Council Forms

Baptist Press
1/17/84

JACKSON, Miss. (BP)--The National Council for Bi-vocational Ministries was organized Dec. 15-16 in Jackson, Miss.

Twenty persons from across the nation were present for the meeting, sponsored by the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Ralph Halbrooks, director of the association missions department for the Alabama Baptist Convention, was elected president. The vice-president is John Saunders, Florida Baptist Convention and James Nelson, director of missions for the Marshall Association in Alabama and Don Evans, rural-urban director for the Missouri Baptist Convention were elected directors.

The council's next annual meeting will be Dec. 6-7, 1984, in Jackson.

--more--

Nelson, former director of association missions for the Home Mission Board, spoke on the development of emphasis on bi-vocational ministries in the Southern Baptist Convention. Jerry Smith, a bi-vocational pastor who is part owner and manager of a ski lodge in Red River, N.M., cited models of bi-vocational ministry, told of his pilgrimage as a bi-vocational pastor and of opportunities for ministry "in the market place."

The group considered 34 priorities of bi-vocational ministry and majored on the three highest: enhancing the self image of the 10,000 bi-vocational pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention; alerting Christian ministry students to choose and nurture a second vocation as an enabler or means for ministry, and providing for multi-staff churches through use of bi-vocational ministers.

The council adopted five projects: develop a handbook for bi-vocational ministers; compile and edit materials for a book, "Models of Bi-Vocational Ministry"; compile and edit materials for a pamphlet, "Experiences of Ministry in the Market Place"; develop a syllabus for a course on bi-vocational ministries, and make a recommendation for a workable, nationwide plan for placement of bi-vocational ministries.

Hollis Bryant, consultant in the Cooperative Missions Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, pointed out five conferences for bi-vocational ministers in Mississippi had been held during 1983 and five are planned for 1984.

The group previewed a video tape being produced in Jackson and funded by the Home Mission Board titled "Whatever It Takes." Holloway; Ken Cook, bi-vocational pastor of Burch Hill Church, Jackson; and Ian Richardson, independent film maker, are scripting and filming the video tape which will be available nationwide, Holloway said.

--30--

Southern Baptists To Open Homes
To Olympic Spectators

By Todd Turner

Baptist Press
1/17/84

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Area Southern Baptists are planning to open their homes to out-of-town visitors during the summer Olympics, according to Vicki McEntire, staff assistant in charge of housing for Summer Games Ministries, the organization coordinating Baptist outreach during the games.

SGM is organizing a bed and breakfast plan which will offer Olympic spectators lodging in area Baptists' homes at a fraction of the going commercial rates.

While commercial firms are renting private bedrooms for \$70 to \$110 per night, SGM will charge \$20 per adult and \$15 per child for a room and breakfast in a private home.

McEntire said houses may also be available for rent, though each would be priced individually.

"We're aiming for 100 homes and hope we'll have more," she said. Housing will be scattered throughout a 200-mile area encompassing the 23 Olympic sites.

In 1981, only 250,000 hotel beds were available in southern California. Lodging chains have frantically been building new motels for the expected 800,000 to one million spectators.

Most available motel rooms have been booked months in advance, however. An average hotel stay will cost the Olympic visitor \$160 a day for a double room.

Many spectators will turn to commercial agents to find a private bedroom to rent, McEntire noted. While most are legitimate firms, many have already been found to be fraudulent.

SGM has set June 1 as the deadline for housing applications. A small, nonrefundable deposit will be required. Housing will be available July 25-August 15 (three days before and after the games).

--more--

McEntire said SGM will be sensitive to special requests from both hosts and guests such as smoking or nonsmoking accommodations, children, pets, special needs for the handicapped and other personal preferences.

While most homes available through SGM will probably be rented by Baptists, McEntire said the program is open to all. In addition to SGM, area Lutherans and United Methodists are offering low-cost housing as part of an overall ministry to Olympic visitors.

SGM is jointly sponsored by the local Southern Baptist churches, the Southern Baptist General Convention of California and the Home Mission Board.

Persons interested in Olympic housing can contact SGM at 445 West King Blvd., Los Angeles, Calif. 90037; (213) 749-7043.

--30--

Olympic Volunteer
Applications Due

Baptist Press
1/17/84

LOS ANGELES (BP)--Southern Baptist groups interested in ministry opportunities during the summer Olympics July 28-August 12 should apply to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board by Feb. 1, according to Kevin Collins, staff assistant for Summer Games Ministries, the organization coordinating Baptists' Olympic outreach.

SGM will host a volunteer group directors' orientation here February 12-14. Group leaders will be responsible for their transportation to and from Los Angeles; SGM will provide housing, meals and local transportation, Collins noted.

SGM will assign college and church youth groups to activities throughout the 200-mile area encompassing Olympics events. College groups will primarily engage in personal witnessing at the 23 event sites while younger volunteers will assist local churches with beach witnessing, surveys, campground services, backyard Bible clubs and vacation Bible schools.

SGM is a joint venture of 300 local Southern Baptist churches, the Southern Baptist General Convention of California and the Home Mission Board.

For applications, write to Esther Burroughs, Home Mission Board, 1350 Spring St. NW, Atlanta, Ga. 30367; (404) 873-4041.

--30--

Satan Wants 'Debates,'
Jackson Warns Baptists

By Orville Scott

Baptist Press
1/17/84

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--The critical issue facing Southern Baptists is not inerrancy but loss of purpose, said Richard Jackson at the annual Texas Evangelism Conference in Fort Worth, Jan. 10.

"Our purpose is to win souls for Jesus," declared the fiery pastor of North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Ariz., which has led Southern Baptists in baptisms for three years in a row.

Jackson was the closing speaker at a Tuesday night service when many of the 12,000 people present made a commitment to pray for spiritual awakening in the state and country.

The Arizona pastor said Satan would be delighted to get Southern Baptists onto inconsequentials like debating the signs of the times and their purpose.

"Our purpose is to be evangelists," he said. "To be ready for Christ's return, we must be responsible in our witness.... How tragic it is that we have raised up a group of people not ready to give a testimony for Jesus Christ."

--more--

The North Phoenix church leads in baptisms because 800 members turned out for visitation the night before he came to the Evangelism Conference.

The pastor must lead in the effort, he warned. "As long as you, the pastor, won't be committed to go on visitation night, you won't have much soul-winning visitation." Jackson also rebuked pastors and evangelists who "want to do all your soul winning from the pulpit."

Citing Texas Baptists' goal to baptize a record 85,000 people in 1984, Jackson reminded that if every church, and if every church staff member won one person a month, the total would exceed 200,000, and if every Texas Baptist won one person to Christ during the year, the total would exceed two million.

Landrum Leavell, president of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, chastized Christian leaders who are living for "the first and the fifteenth."

God's calling to the ministry is for 24 hours a day, he said, explaining, "I am up to my ears with preachers who don't want to work. The Baptist church that pays you has a right to expect from you some vestige of a work schedule.

"If Jesus is alive in you," he told the conferees, "he is an all-consuming fire and will ignite others around you."

Under the theme of "Christ Lifted Up," speakers called on Baptists to get back to the basic of Jesus' purpose for their lives and to pray for spiritual awakening.

There was an ethnic missions atmosphere in the conference and pre-conference meetings. More than 1,000 attended the Hispanic Evangelism Conference on Monday at the North Fort Worth church. The Korean Evangelism Conference drew more than 600 including 27 Korean pastors, and many of the 100 Texas Baptist black churches were represented at the black ministers/wives banquet.

W. Winfred Moore, president of the 2.3-million member Baptist General Convention of Texas, issued a stirring call for spiritual unity and harmony and seeking spiritual awakening.

Moore said there is a deeper love among Texas Baptists today than ever before. He urged putting aside all quarrels and jealousies of days past.

"I believe with all my heart that when we give ourselves to evangelism, missions will grow.... When we win people to Jesus, people just give.

"The outside world is skeptical about what we do, said Moore, "but I'm troubled more about what we are doing to ourselves.

"The church has never been as divided as some of us think and many outsiders hope. Many of our disagreements have been totally on the surface, and that is not all bad. It doesn't mean that we have to do everything the same way.

"You and I have a task to bear witness through self-denial and service. Religion that costs nothing is worth nothing at all."

--30--

HMB Consultant Aims To Start
Black Churches From Scratch

By Patti Stephenson

Baptist Press
1/17/84

ATLANTA (BP)--A man who admits he once experienced "culture shock" as the associate pastor of a black church has now tackled the task of teaching Southern Baptists how to start more black churches from scratch.

Willie McPhearson, the new consultant for the Home Mission Board's black church relations department, thinks God has uniquely prepared him for the job.

--more--

"I grew up in a black church in Mississippi and accepted Christ at age nine," McPhearson recalled. "But it wasn't until 19 years later that I understood--in a white Southern Baptist church--what being a Christian means."

In 1968, he and his wife joined First Baptist Church in Carlsbad, Calif., where she had accepted Christ. They were the church's first black members. "The thing that boggled my mind was these people were all from the Deep South, but they genuinely expressed love to us," McPhearson marveled.

He remembers well the day he was ordained as the church's first black deacon. "Another deacon told me, 'One day, I can see you working in the Southern Baptist Convention to bridge the gap between blacks and whites.'"

For the next seven years, McPhearson steeped himself in Southern Baptists' *modi operandi*, earning degrees from California Baptist College in Riverside and Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif.

It was when he returned to a black church as associate pastor that he experienced "some initial culture shock." After two years, he returned to Southern Baptist life as pastor of the all-white congregation of First Baptist Church in St. Helena, Calif.

In 1979, McPhearson became a black church consultant for Los Angeles. A year later, he took the job of director of black church ministries for California. "I've learned to relate to any mixture," he smiled.

McPhearson hopes to provide a new approach to starting Southern Baptist churches in predominantly black communities. "From interpreting the 1980 census, the Home Mission Board has pinpointed large areas of people who are unreached and aren't attending any church," he said. "Many of those areas are black communities."

Until now, the "primary way new black churches have started is from church splits," he observed. "We've not seen a lot of black churches created from scratch, with all the built-in programs and structures of other new SBC churches."

From his experience in California, McPhearson is convinced there's great potential for new black church growth. "One of our black pastors in Sacramento got excited about Bold Mission Thrust and within three months, his church sponsored three new missions," he related. "And they're all growing."

One of the keys to new church starts is "finding as many churches as possible to be sponsors and models," he said. Another factor is educating black church leaders how the denomination works and teaching white churches how to work with their black counterparts.

Strategy is also affected by education and income levels in different areas, McPhearson explained. "In the suburbs, you find better-educated, middle-class blacks who may already be familiar with Southern Baptists" and who respond to traditional approaches. In the inner-city, where more blacks are out of work or on fixed incomes, ministry may begin with "finding the resources the people need to stay alive," he noted.

A byproduct of starting new black churches will be greater participation by blacks at all levels of the SBC, McPhearson predicts. He hopes such proximity will "ease fears and erase stereotypes" which might prevent cooperation.

Though McPhearson fears race relations today are "regressing in some ways," he sees involving more blacks in the SBC as crucial if Bold Mission Thrust is to succeed. "God didn't promise things would move fast," he acknowledged, "but I think we're bridging the gap."

--30--

Massive 'Living Water' Project
Begins In Parched North Brazil

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press
1/17/84

ITAPORANGA, Brazil (BP)--Five years of drought have turned much of northeastern Brazil into a desert, but Baptists hope to convert a small piece of it into an oasis.

--more--

Brazilian Baptists and Southern Baptist missionaries plan to spend up to \$3.1 million over the next five years to bring water, and the gospel, to a part of Paraiba state, one of the poorest regions in South America.

Called the Paraiba Baptist "Living Water" Project, it promises to be the most ambitious relief effort attempted by Baptists and missionaries in northeast Brazil. The state government has pledged full support and cooperation.

"Living Water" calls for irrigation, aid to small farmers and industries, improved water systems, better health care, evangelistic community social centers, new churches and home visitation. Some 100,000 people live in the seven-county area, which has one Baptist church and two mission points.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board released an initial \$81,000 in December for land purchase, technical studies and a project headquarters and community center building in Itaporanga, the largest town in the area.

The region typifies much of the northeast. Small farms and towns hug the banks of the Pianco River, but the river is virtually dry. People depend on often-contaminated water holes and government water trucks for survival. Infant mortality is high, education and health care sporadic or nonexistent.

With so little water for agriculture--the only significant economic activity--neither the farmers nor the townspeople have any hope of a better life.

The drought, called the worst of the century, has affected at least 22 million Brazilians in nine states covering 540,000 square miles. Officials predict it could last another two years. The threat of starvation has driven hordes of rural people into towns and cities that aren't much better off, creating slums and causing food riots.

The federal government spends millions on dam construction, convoys of water tank trucks and Depression-style "work fronts" that employ some three million people. But government predictions say that in some rural areas as many as half of all children born in 1983 will die of malnutrition and disease before their first birthday.

The Foreign Mission Board has spent \$2.4 million on scores of relief programs in north Brazil over the last three years, with about \$1.5 million going for drought-related projects.

"Our main approach has been massive water projects," said John Cheyne, FMB senior consultant for human needs ministries. "We've been trying to deal with irrigation and clean water. In many cases the government is working in programs of dam building and we're working in connection with the government programs to provide access for clean water in towns as well as irrigation projects."

The Paraiba project follows that pattern. The state government has built a number of dams in the general region and plans three more. The governor has promised Baptists technical advice and assistance. In turn, Baptists will:

--Irrigate up to 2,500 acres of land with open canals, pipes or river channels. Each farmer benefited will dig his own well and drainage ditches and repay (in crops) half of the cost of irrigating his land. Farmers in another 5,000-acre area may also get water and assistance as the project develops.

--Form farmer and producer associations for cooperation.

--Establish demonstration farms where farmers can observe methods to improve production.

--Build or improve water distribution and sewage treatment systems in several towns.

--Underwrite small industries which use farm products or raw materials of the area.

--Improve medical services through medical equipment and volunteers from the United States. Brazilian Baptists will send a missionary doctor.

--more--

--Build community social centers, to be operated by Brazilian home missionaries, where people can learn skills, crafts, personal hygiene, nutrition, and pre- and postnatal care.

--Bring Baptist pastors into the area, start preaching points and mission congregations, build churches, hold Vacation Bible Schools and evangelistic meetings and visit every home. The goal is to present Jesus Christ to every person in the Pianco River Valley.

Project planners want to involve both Brazilian Baptist volunteers and Southern Baptist volunteers from the United States. The Foreign Mission Board will likely seek a state convention willing to contribute both manpower and money.

The comprehensive, holistic approach of this project and others is "enabling us to reach certain sections of the population we couldn't have reached otherwise," according to Thurmon Bryant, FMB director for Eastern South America. "It calls attention in the cities and towns where we work to the fact that Baptists stand for Christ in a very positive and helpful way."

--30--

Answer To Prayer Opens
Unexpected Door To Ministry

By Mark Kelly

Baptist Press
1/17/84

FARGO, Ark. (BP)--Gary Reid's conversion six years ago in a West Memphis, Ark., motel room--accomplished by reading a Gideon Bible--dramatically changed the young hair stylist's "fast and loose" lifestyle, filled with singles' bars and racetracks.

He married, became involved in a Southern Baptist church and began giving testimonies at Gideon programs around the state. But five years later, something was still missing.

"I was about to bust in here," Reid said quietly, his hand over his heart. "I was hurting so bad inside, wanting a place to serve. I began to pray God would give me a place to teach the Bible."

One day he picked up a young, black hitch-hiker headed home for Fargo, a small community just a few miles from Reid's home in Cotton Plant.

"I witnessed to him, gave him a Bible and let him out. I never expected to see him again," Reid recalled. "But he called me two weeks later and asked me to start a Bible study in his home. I was afraid to go by myself, at first. I was afraid I wouldn't be accepted. So I took a black friend with me."

When Reid arrived at the young man's home, he found 21 people waiting. He shared his conversion experience and talked about starting a Bible study.

The group began to grow right away. Soon the house was too crowded. A local congregation--Union Church (so called because it is a cooperative effort of several groups sharing one pastor and one building) made their building available.

One year after it began, Gary Reid's Bible study ministers to at least 60 persons, many of them members of one of several large families. Reid leads Bible study and discussion for the adults and youth after a period of singing and testifying. His wife, Crystal, works with children in a Big A Club session.

What Reid has done breaks the rules for starting such projects, said Dean Pruett, director of Christian Social Ministries for the Arkansas Baptist State Convention.

Reid has had very little contact with blacks before this experience. "But Gary is able to cross that barrier simply by the grace of God," Pruett said. "He has a real compassion for the people he is working with, for doing what he is doing."

Reid, a member of First Church, Cotton Plant, acknowledged he has encountered opposition from people in the community, which Pruett estimates as 70 percent black.

--more--

"I believe the Lord will work in spite of that, though," Reid asserted. "Deep-seated prejudices often keep people from relating to each other. But Christ came from heaven, a sinless being, and accepted us even though we are sinners. And we want to stand back and not accept people because of their color."

Reid finds it impossible to stand back, however. One extended family in Fargo consisted of 23 persons, most of them children, he said. There are three beds in the house and no dishes or plates. The children have no shoes.

When he hesitates to go back to Fargo, Reid said he simply asks himself, "Do you really love them?" The conviction in his heart answers the question.

Reid envisions adding literacy and agricultural training to help families in the Fargo community which are caught in a cycle of poverty. He and Pruett have consulted with the Arkansas Land and Farm Development Corporation, a non-profit, federally-funded project working to preserve black family farms and train people in the methods of co-op farming.

Pruett mentioned the possibility of an acre of land being provided for a trailer park to house families wanting to make a new start. Rounding up surplus trailers, along with the literacy and agricultural training, would be the first step toward helping such families.

"We need to minister to people, meet their spiritual needs and let God change their lives," said Reid. "But at the same time, they have other needs. We want to try and meet them. After all, if you can't read, you can't search the scriptures to learn God's will."

--30--

New Missionary to Share Life
Of Victory With Brazilians

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
1/17/84

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--As Ron Greenwich was growing up, it seemed his family was always the last to live in a house before it collapsed or burned.

But Christian love he found at Arkansas Baptist Home for Children and in a missionary kid he married helped him overcome the alcoholic poverty which marked his early life.

Now he plans to share his victory. He and his wife, Alana, have been appointed Southern Baptist missionaries to Brazil, where he will continue a career in social work.

"Maybe if you don't feel loved and appreciated by someone it is hard to feel loved by God," the 35-year-old Tennessee native said. "Probably had I not met Alana I would have been like a number of people who lived at the children's home and went to college with me but dropped out."

Greenwich and his brother and sister were taken to the Arkansas children's home when he was 12 years old. Years later when he met Alana as a junior at Ouachita Baptist University, in Arkadelphia, Ark., his self-concept was still suffering and his motivation was low.

"I think the fact God led me to Alana or Alana to me has helped me grow," he said. Her love for him helped him see possibilities in himself.

When they met, she was a freshman and it was her first year away from Brazil where she grew up with her parents, missionaries Bill and Jerry Ichter of Pennsylvania and Kentucky.

Greenwich's character immediately appealed to Alana. "He had such a good sense of humor about things that happened," she recalls. "He was very easy to talk to, and he just took things so well."

On their second date, Greenwich opened up to her about his past, and this impressed Alana. "That more serious side of him showed he did have some objectives coming out of his background," she said.

--more--

He had lost his father to divorce at age three. Both his father and his mother's second husband were alcoholics. "We were just a poor family and it was quite traumatic for me," Greenwich said. "We were always the last ones to live in a house before it fell down or burned down, and wearing the same clothes all the time is embarrassing."

The family survived on the minimum wage Greenwich's mother brought home from whatever job she could find.

"I know it was a great sacrifice for my mother to take us to a children's home," he admits. "She told us we were going to live with a very nice old man who could give us new clothes and food. It didn't really dawn on me we would be staying there. I stayed six years."

At the home Greenwich committed his life to Christ, began reading the Bible, grew spiritually and eventually promised God he would help people through social work. With a children's home scholarship he attended Ouachita.

After graduating, Greenwich attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas, then married Alana and went to work as a social worker. One of his first jobs was for the children's home and then for the Christian Child Help Foundation in Houston, while attending the University of Houston for master's degree in social work. Just after that he felt the first stirrings of call to the mission field.

Alana did also. She prayed if God wanted them and their three children on the mission field would speak through her husband. About a year after her prayer the two missed church due to illness and wound up watching Dr. Charles Stanley of First Baptist Church, Atlanta, on television. His sermon was on Jonah and reaching lost people.

"We both just flew to the TV after it was over," Alana remembers. "Ronnie said to me, 'You know, I just get the feeling that we need to do something. I've been thinking about this for two years. I just know we have to act, to do something.'"

Just making that decision seemed to bring a greater joy to their lives, Greenwich recalls. The couple contacted both the Home and Foreign Mission Board but pursued contact with the Foreign Mission Board.

The Greenwiches will work in the city of Florianopolis, where he will direct the Multiminsty Center. The center, which offers a variety of practical class in such subjects as cooking, sewing, painting and gymnastics, reaches about 500 Brazilian families yearly.

--30--

(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

Holcomb Named Southwestern
Development Director

Baptist Press
1/17/84

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--James R. Holcomb has been named director of development at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

Holcomb has been director of Vision/85, the seminary's current capital needs and endowment fund raising project, since March 1981. The project to raise \$25 million by 1985 is 80 percent complete. He replaces W. Edwin Crawford, who retired Dec. 31, 1983.

In his new position, Holcomb will be immediately responsible for coordinating the seminary's fund raising programs in the public affairs division.

Earlier, Holcomb worked for the Southern Baptist Radio and Television commission for 22 years, the last six as vice president.

The Dallas native is a graduate of Wayland Baptist College and has studied at Southwestern.

--30--

(BP) photo available from Southwestern Seminary on request.



BAPTIST PRESS

*460 James Robertson Parkway
Nashville, Tennessee 37219*

CD
CD
LM

LYNN MAY RO
HISTORICAL COMMISSION
187 6TH AVE NO
NASHVILLE TN 37234