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Editors Pass Resolution
On Open Board Meetings

By Marv Knox

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Editors of Southern Baptist state convention newsjournals have passed a resolution which brands as "absolutely unacceptable" closed sessions of Southern Baptist Convention board meetings.

The Southern Baptist Press Association, comprised of editors of 37 state periodicals, unanimously passed the resolution during its late-September meeting, said Lynn P. Clayton, president of the organization and editor in Louisiana.

The resolution stresses the association's members "view with deep concern the practice of a board, commission or committee having meetings, for the purpose of discussing or conducting business, that are closed to any Southern Baptists."

It continues by urging "Baptist agencies at every level to review their bylaws to make certain that 'executive sessions' and closed business discussions are absolutely unacceptable except when sensitive personnel matters are concerned." It requests "assurances be given to Southern Baptists that full and accurate reports be issued of all actions taken in their behalf by every board, commission and committee related to" the SBC.

The editors' action was prompted by recent closed board meetings at SBC agencies and institutions, Clayton said. He specifically cited closed meetings at the Home Mission Board in Atlanta; Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

The resolution, drafted by Clayton and Richard T. McCartney of Oklahoma, lists four reasons for open meetings:

- "Southern Baptists believe that a democratic polity is the form of government nearest to the New Testament model;
- "Democracy functions best when people have free access to facts concerning (SBC) agencies and institutions and can make informed decisions;
- "Baptists consistently have affirmed their belief in the axiom, 'Trust the Lord and tell the people;' and
- "A free flow of information is possible when Baptist business is conducted in full view of all Southern Baptists."

"We felt like this action was important at this time, because it is increasingly important that Baptists make intelligent decisions and be fully informed," Clayton said.

Copies of the resolution have been sent to chief executives and trustee chairmen of all SBC agencies and institutions.

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Seal To Head
Louisiana WNU

By Oscar Hoffmeyer Jr.

Baptist Press
10/1/86

ALEXANDRIA, La. (BP)—Nelda Seal of Bogalusa, La., has been elected director of the Louisiana Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, succeeding Kathryn Carpenter who will retire Oct. 31 after 43 years in the office.

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Seal was elected by the Louisiana Baptist Convention Executive Board. She will assume office Nov. 1.

She is "an experienced and dedicated leader in the Louisiana WMU and has a long history of effective involvement with her local church, First Baptist Church of Bogalusa," said Don Mabry Louisiana missions director.

The new leader is a self-employed speech pathologist in Bogalusa. She was elected vice president of the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union in 1985 and is a member of the organization's finance committee this year.

Seal is the widow of Lavelle Seal. She is mother of two sons, Timothy and Ryan, both students.

In Louisiana Seal, 53, has held numerous leadership positions, including being president of Louisiana Baptist WMU, member of the LBC Church Site Corporation, member of the LBC Committee on Convention Arrangements and director of the Washington Baptist Association WMU.

Seal is a graduate of Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

She has been administrative assistant/executive secretary at the Baptist food bank in Fairbanks, Alaska, and a Southern Baptist home missions volunteer and education director for Calvary Baptist Church in Fairbanks. She has held several education positions in Louisiana public schools.

Seal will be the fourth person to lead WMU in Louisiana. In addition to Carpenter, others have been Georgia Barnette and Hannah Reynolds.

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Presidents Defer Plans
For Rigdon Retirement

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10/1/86

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Raymond Rigdon's plans for "life after the seminaries" will have to wait.

He has been employed by all of the Southern Baptist seminaries since 1969, when he became director of the Seminary Extension Department. In 1982 the department was merged into the new Seminary External Education Division and Rigdon was named executive director of the division.

Earlier this year Rigdon informed the seminary presidents of his intention to retire next spring. He and his wife began making plans for travel and new vocational challenges.

When the presidents met in Nashville, Tenn., in late September, however, they unanimously urged Rigdon to extend his leadership for at least another year. After two days of consideration, he agreed to their request.

"I feel a little like a child in May looking forward to summer vacation, only to be told that classes had been extended until Thanksgiving," Rigdon told division employees the following day. "But I agreed to stay on with the understanding that we would be free to press forward with plans and projects on the drawing board for the division."

The seminary presidents cited several factors in asking Rigdon to continue. "This is a strategic time for theological education in our convention," said Milton Ferguson, president of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo. "A task force is looking at ministry education needs in the Northeast. Joint off-campus programs on a master's level are still a relatively new venture for the division. Thousands of persons are getting their first taste of serious theological studies through seminary extension.

"We feel we need someone with Raymond Rigdon's experience and solid leadership skills heading up the Seminary External Education Division in these days," added Ferguson, current chairman of the seminary presidents, who comprise the governing board for the division.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Seminary External Education Division

'Part-timer' Kirksey
'Retires' Once Again

By Lonnie Wilkey

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—It took 11 years and more than 250,000 miles, all by automobile, but Howard G. Kirksey finally finished his "part-time" job with the Southern Baptist Education Commission.

Kirksey, who joined the commission in 1975 as a placement consultant after retiring as vice president for academic affairs at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, retired for the "second" time Sept. 30.

The 76-year-old educator had no idea his temporary job would become so permanent. "I was just hired for the 1975 fall semester," he recalls.

Kirksey, a native of Perryville, Tenn., and a graduate of Union University in Jackson, Tenn., and George Peabody College of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., relates Ben C. Fisher, then executive director of the Education Commission, told him a full-time person would be employed by January of 1976. According to Kirksey, however, one thing led to another and he was asked to continue his "temporary" assignment.

He thought he would finally end his duties in 1978 when Arthur L. Walker Jr. became executive director of the commission. But despite giving Walker his blessing to "find someone else," the new agency head asked Kirksey to continue as placement consultant.

And it was with some regret when both Walker and Kirksey realized the "second" retirement was nearing.

"Dr. Kirksey brought stability and more than 50 years of educational experience to the post of placement consultant. His knowledge of graduate schools across the nation and his friendship with various educators have been key ingredients to the success of our placement service," Walker says.

Under the guidance of Kirksey the Education Commission has placed more than 400 faculty members and administrators in Southern Baptist colleges and schools.

Kirksey's travels led him to 266 campuses, some more than once, during the 11 years he spent trying to find qualified applicants who would be interested in serving Baptist educational institutions.

In addition to Kirksey's career as an educator, he has been active in denominational life. He is a former trustee at Belmont College in Nashville, Union University and the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board. He also has been vice president of the Tennessee Baptist Convention and served on the convention's executive board.

His second retirement again will not slow Kirksey down. He already does volunteer work for Middle Tennessee State, where he served 30 years in various capacities.

He is active with the Rotary Club and both he and his wife, Elizabeth, are active members of First Baptist Church of Murfreesboro.

An educator and denominational leader with many accomplishments, Kirksey says he can accept his "second" retirement because he has led "a full life."

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Southern Baptist Chaplains
Endorsed By Home Mission Board

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10/1/86

ATLANTA (BP)—The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board endorsed 46 chaplains and their spouses at a recent church service in Lithonia, Ga.

The board does not appoint chaplains, but it does endorse them to a particular place of service. The charge to the chaplains was given by Ron Long, pastor of Glenwood Hills Baptist Church, where the service was held.

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The military chaplains and their spouses are George and Sherry Beardon, Fort Sill, Okla.; Mark and Suzy Browne, Fort Bragg, N.C.; Ronald and Margie Durbin, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo.; Stephen and Phyllis Epperson, Pensacola, Fla.; William and Linda Fox, Fort Campbell, Ky.; Fannalou Guggisberg, Scott Air Force Base, Ill.; John and Jackie Hash, Fort Benning, Ga.; Russell and Delores Jewett, Langley Air Force Base, Va.; Paul and Demoris McNabb, Glenview, Ill.; James and Elizabeth Pipkin, Virginia Beach, Va.; Truman and Linda Thompson, Fort Knox, Ky.; and Robert and Barbara Wineberg, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Chaplains and their spouses serving in institutional settings are Niles and Anna Behrens, Marion, Ill.; Robert and Suzanne Bell, Miami, Fla.; David and Jeanne Canady, McCain, N.C.; Richard and Linda Kenyon, Tiptonville, Tenn.; Emmett and Jan Solomon, Huntsville, Texas; and William and Dottie Stricklin, Pine Bluff, Ark.

Hospital chaplains and their spouses are Richard and Susan Callaway, Memphis, Tenn.; Jean Carter, Birmingham, Ala.; Vern and Hope Farnum, Champaign, Ill.; Mark and Pam Grace, Dallas, Texas; Timothy and Leslie Kendrick, Louisville, Ky.; Will Kinnaird, Shreveport, La.; and Laurie Reed, Austin, Texas.

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Hardin-Simmons Receives
Record \$2 Million Gift

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10/1/86

ABILENE, Texas (BP)—Hardin-Simmons University has received \$2,051,000 the largest cash gift in its history.

Jesse C. Fletcher of the Abilene, Texas, school, announced the gift from the estate of the late Edward Leon "Jack" Frost and his widow, Adele, a San Antonio philanthropist and patroness of the arts.

Frost, a geologist, independent oil producer and cattleman, died Feb. 21, 1970. He was a student at Simmons College, now Hardin-Simmons, in 1919 and was a member of the school's board of development at the time of his death.

The gift came to Hardin-Simmons "because of Mr. Frost's love for Hardin-Simmons University" and had the support of his widow, who died earlier this year in San Antonio, Fletcher said.

"This gift is especially significant in these crucial economic times. A total of \$1.8 million has been placed in our endowment fund to further strengthen the financial base of HSU," said Fletcher.

A portion of the cash gift, \$251,000, will be added to earlier gifts of \$750,000 from the Frosts which helped to fund the Jack and Adele Frost Center for the Visual Arts.

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Artificial Heart Requires
Balancing Interest: DeVries

By Susan Shaw

Baptist Press
10/1/86

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)—Weighing interests is a key issue in ethical questions concerning the artificial heart, surgeon William DeVries told participants in Southern Baptist Theological Seminary's student ethics forum Sept. 24.

DeVries, who attained world-wide recognition by performing artificial heart implantations on Barney Clark, Bill Schroeder and Murray Haydon, asserted that while the patient is the center of artificial heart decisions, other interests must be examined.

"What are the family's interests?" he asked students at the Louisville, Ky., school. "What are the doctors' interests? What are the hospital's interests? What are Jarvick's (the creator of the Jarvick artificial heart) interests?"

DeVries admitted society must honestly confront questions of interest. "Is this for me or for him?" he reflected. "Is the interest (of the hospital) the same as the patient's?"

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The Louisville surgeon said a primary ethical issue is the distinction between experimentation and therapy. Experimentation, he explained, is concerned with gathering data, while therapy is concerned with trying to help the individual patient. The line of distinction, he added, will never be totally clear.

According to DeVries, three particularly important ethical issues surface with the artificial heart: informed consent, termination of life and society's needs and costs versus benefits and risks.

DeVries pointed out that when Barney Clark, the first person to live after an artificial heart implant, regained consciousness after surgery, the doctors had to be prepared to make the decision to turn off the heart if Clark's pain were unbearable.

While DeVries acknowledges society will have to answer some hard questions about the ethics of the artificial heart, he also pointed out the high risk for heart disease, which kills 1,000 persons a day.

"We want to know if the heart works," he said, "but we also want quality of life for the patient."

He recalled Bill Schroeder's words on Christmas day, two weeks after his first stroke-- "Thank you for giving me this day."

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