



**BAPTIST PRESS**  
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**NATIONAL OFFICE**  
SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Alvin C. Shackelford, Director  
Dan Martin, News Editor  
Marv Knox, Feature Editor

**BUREAUS**

**ATLANTA** Jim Newton, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 873-4041  
**DALLAS** Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 511 N. Akard, Dallas, Texas 75201, Telephone (214) 720-0550  
**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, 3908 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

August 7, 1987

87-120

Baptist Volunteers  
Rebuilding Saragosa

By Ken Camp

SARAGOSA, Texas (BP)--Texas Baptist volunteers have erected the first new house at Saragosa, the western Texas town destroyed by a tornado May 22, and plans are being made to rebuild the entire community Aug. 24-Sept. 11.

Included in the rebuilding plan is an around-the-clock building effort by volunteers on Labor Day weekend, Sept. 4-7.

Up to 450 Texas Baptist volunteers will take part in the building project, in which as many as 60 homes are expected to be rebuilt. Among the laborers will be 75 to 100 retired couples who work regularly with Olen Miles and the Texas Baptist Men Retiree Builders.

A group from Woodway First Baptist Church, Robinson First Baptist Church and First Baptist Church, all of Waco, erected the first house at Saragosa July 29-Aug. 2. They were assisted by two Varones Bautistas, or Hispanic Baptist Men, from Dallas. Their labor provided a two-bedroom home for Sophia Gomez, a 60-year-old widow who is bringing up two children.

The home was prefabricated on the parking lot at Woodway and raised on-site by the volunteers. Most of the materials used in building the house were donated by Waco-area merchants, and other materials were purchased by churches in Waco Baptist Association.

Two Texas Baptist couples from Second Baptist Church in Lake Jackson are working on a one-bedroom Red Cross model home that is expected to be completed by Aug. 15. A group of Mennonite families from Kansas are erecting a three-bedroom home that also is being built with Red Cross funds.

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Virginia Baptist Board  
Releases Escrowed Funds

Baptist Press  
8/7/87

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Virginia Baptist General Board has released funds which had been placed in an escrow account to support the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, in the event its budget was deleted or reduced by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Board Treasurer Nathaniel W. Kellum said the action taken by the SBC at its annual meeting last June which continues funding for the Washington-based religious liberty agency, "satisfies the conditions of the motion" passed last year by the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Messengers to the general association at its meeting last November in Richmond agreed to a motion to set aside \$75,000 from the SBC portion of Phase I of the BGAV budget in an escrow account for the Baptist Joint Committee.

For several years, some Southern Baptists have criticized the BJCPA claiming its positions on tuition tax credits and religious activities in public schools are at odds with majority opinion in the SBC.

A motion at the SBC meeting in 1986 to sever ties with the BJC and the subsequent naming of a special study committee to examine the relationship between the two led the BGAV to approve a contingency plan to support the embattled agency.

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"In the event that the 1987-88 SBC Cooperative Program budget omits or reduces funding for the Baptist Joint Committee, the treasurer shall send the \$75,000 directly to the Baptist Joint Committee," the motion said.

"If the Baptist Joint Committee is fully funded, then the treasurer shall send the \$75,000 to the Cooperative Program," it added.

In June, the special study committee recommended, and the SBC messengers approved, a plan that continues full funding and makes some changes in the BJCPA's structure.

Kellum, who had been placing \$6,250 in the escrow account each month since December, said about \$36,500 was released to the SBC Executive Committee at the end of June.

He said some Virginia churches had asked that their contributions to the Cooperative Program not be added to the escrow account.

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Baptist Profs Vow  
To Defend Rights

By Diane Winston

Baptist Press  
8/7/87

DALLAS (BP)--Fearful of a conservative attack, moderates who teach at Southern Baptist seminaries have joined a secular organization pledged to defend academic freedom and job security.

More than two dozen professors at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary have formed a chapter of the American Association of University Professors at their Wake Forest, N.C., campus. Individual professors at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., also have joined the national organization, which seeks to promote higher education and protect the profession's standards, ideals and welfare.

"There does come a time in the kinds of problems we're facing now when a person has to pay attention to individual rights and privileges," said Temp Sparkman, a Southern Baptist professor who was accused of teaching heresy last year.

Sparkman, who teaches at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Mo., was acquitted of "un-Baptist" teaching by seminary trustees who ordered him to revise his latest book.

"We'd like to do our work unhindered," he said, "but we're learning that's not the case and won't be the case for a number of years."

Sparkman said there had been no move to start an American Association of University Professors chapter on his campus.

The appearance of the association chapters underlies the new realities of Southern Baptist life. This summer, conservatives in the 14.6-million-member denomination culminated a nine-year struggle to control the convention's 20 agencies and institutions. And with their hold virtually secure, conservatives are setting about their primary goal -- to clean up the seminaries, particularly Southern and Southeastern.

The schools' faculties and administrators say they are faithful to Baptist principles. But moderates see several ominous trends, including the convention's adoption of a report recommending that the trustees of its six seminaries "determine the theological position of seminary administrators and faculty members."

The president of the Southeastern American Association of University Professors chapter, Richard Hester, declined to comment on the group's formation or purpose. But W. Randall Lolley, the seminary's president, said he did not consider the chapter, whose members include more than two-thirds of the faculty, to be adversarial.

"I'm sure there is some element of feeling it gives them a wider court of appeals in some of these matters that are controversial now," Lolley said. "They think it's important."

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The association's members say the group cannot offer any guarantees if jobs are threatened. But in the past, it has helped professors with legal and financial assistance and has censured schools that unfairly dismiss professors.

"This will allow a group of professors some platform to communicate," said Kenneth Chafin, a professor at Southern Seminary. "It doesn't give us any political power."

But Chafin's boss, Roy L. Honeycutt, called AAUP membership "a needless action."

"In my judgment, belonging to AAUP will not do anything pro or con regarding their security," said Honeycutt, president of Southern Seminary. "In our system, due process is followed throughout."

Russell Dilday, president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, said the issue raised by the association's membership was broader than whether schools followed due process.

"This is a tragic testimony of the mood of suspicion and distrust that pervades our denomination," Dilday said. "People are searching for assurance, protection and guidance -- and it seems to be getting worse, not better."

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(Diane Winston is religion editor for the Dallas Times Herald.)

Texas Attorney General Mattox  
Clarifies Bible Chair Ruling

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
8/7/87

DALLAS (BP)--Texas Attorney General Jim Mattox underscored the potential constitutionality of Bible chairs at state universities in an Aug. 5 letter to the associate general counsel of the University of Texas system.

The letter emphasizes the value of the study of religion at state colleges and universities, and it stresses that state institutions of higher education may grant elective credit for religion courses tied to religious organizations as long as those courses are structured "within constitutional guidelines."

UT system officials had announced July 22 that UT campuses in Austin, Arlington and El Paso would drop any official connection with Bible courses taught by instructors paid or selected by religious groups, including Baptist Student Unions. University system spokesmen said transfer credits would be limited to religious studies courses offered by accredited institutions.

Subsequently, Texas Tech University at Lubbock announced Aug. 5 that it is also dropping Bible courses offered through religious organizations.

According to a UT spokesman, the university's decision stemmed from a legal opinion Mattox issued last May in which he said state universities may grant credit for religious courses offered by religious organizations only if the courses are secular in nature, do not advance or inhibit religion and are offered in a manner that avoids excessive entanglement between government and religion.

William Hilgers, attorney for Friends of the Biblical Tradition, a group that supports the continuation of Bible chair programs, gave guarded praise to the letter from Mattox.

"At least it is a step in the right direction. It is not as emphatic as I would like, but it is helpful," said Hilgers. "The university construed too narrowly the attorney general's original opinion. I believe this can be a useful corrective measure."

Hilgers said he has asked to speak before the University of Texas board of regents Aug. 13, but the board has not responded to his request.

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When contacted concerning the plans of the Baptist General Convention of Texas to offer its traditional Bible course offerings through Baptist Student Unions, Jerry Dawson, director of the Christian Education Coordinating Board, responded optimistically.

"While accepting the fact that some of our Bible programs have been curtailed, I feel confident that an alternative program for credit courses on the state campuses of the UT system and Texas Tech will be in place by the fall semester," Dawson said.

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Ministry Tops List  
Of Burrelli's Talents

By Breena Kent Paine

Baptist Press  
8/7/87

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--He is a Samurai, a spy, a private detective, a stunt actor, a pilot, a writer, a hair stylist, a magician and now a student at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Frank Burrelli's life could be an adventure film. His father was a magician, so Burrelli, 54, learned the trade as a child, and as a teenager, he used his talent to make a living. In the Air Force, he carried his magic with him everywhere he was stationed, performing in officers' clubs and night clubs. Now that he is a Christian, however, he uses his talent to present the gospel.

But his search for meaning in life took first him around the world. He became an Air Force pilot in 1950, and throughout his military career has been stationed in Japan, Greenland, Korea, Vietnam, Alaska, Taiwan and Guam.

When he was fire chief of the Tokyo International Airport from 1955 to 1959, Burrelli took martial arts lessons and made personal friends with the Japanese prime minister's secretary of agriculture. The friend in high places named him an "honorary Japanese policeman" so he could attend the Tokyo Metropolitan Police Academy and take more lessons in the martial arts.

"Three years later, in a contest, I beat my own instructor and won a championship, and when I did that, I was knighted by the emperor as a Samurai," said Burrelli.

But that was not the end of his adventures. During a nine-year break from the military, Burrelli attended hairstyling classes at Charles of the Ritz of New York, where he worked for awhile, then moved to Boston, where he and his brother opened the city's largest beauty shop, and Burrelli won competitions against internationally renowned hairdressers.

He entered the Air Force once more in 1971 as an air traffic controller. While stationed in Florida, he obtained a private investigator's license and worked with surveillance and missing persons. "It's not like you see it on TV," said Burrelli, "so I soon got bored."

During his military career, he also was assistant fire chief at Hickam Air Force Base in Honolulu. In his spare time, he was a stunt driver for "Hawaii Five-0."

"I put sticks of dynamite under the hood, blew up cars, smashed them into other cars, smashed them into walls, drove down hills," said Burrelli. During his stay in Hawaii, he also gave movie stars tours of the islands on chartered flights in a commercial plane.

In 1977, Burrelli was in Alaska on a remote assignment with the Air Force. It was there that he accepted Christ. "We were at the closest point of the United States to Russia, on an 8,500-foot mountain, with radar equipment, watching the Russians 20 miles away," he said.

There on that remote mountaintop, Burrelli, a Catholic, read two books by Hal Lindsey -- "The Late Great Planet Earth" and "There's a New World Coming."

"I got hold of a Bible, read Revelation, understood it and accepted the Lord," he said.

It was not until several years later, however, that Burrelli, who had left the Air Force and was a pilot for U.S. Air, felt God calling him into the ministry. "I thought he had called me to be a priest, so I got accepted by St. Joseph Seminary in Baltimore," he said.

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At the time, Burrelli was writing a book on the life of Jesus. He quit his job at the airlines four months before seminary classes began to do more research for his book. After reading the gospel through 50 times, however, Burrelli realized St. Joseph was not the place for him, and decided to go to Florida to "look elsewhere" for God's calling.

In Florida, not really sure of what he was looking for or where to go to find it, Burrelli came across a list of churches and pastors in Ocala, where he was staying the night, and randomly picked a pastor's name similar to his. He was baptized at Highland Baptist Church in Ocala, Fla., by a pastor with the last name of Burrell, Palm Sunday, 1982.

A year later, First Baptist Church in Naples, Fla., ordained Burrelli to the gospel ministry, and he became a vocational evangelist. The magician now uses his talent to evangelize.

"As I do magic now, I take a walk through the Bible and give images," said Burrelli. For instance, he tells the story of Peter in chains, locks himself into seemingly inescapable chains and escapes; or he makes a dove appear in his hands and talks about the Holy Spirit descending at the baptism of Jesus.

"Almost every performance, people come forward and accept the Lord," he said.

Now at New Orleans Seminary, Burrelli is seeking an associate of divinity degree. He feels the training will help him in his ministry of using the artwork of magic to bring people to Christ.

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Crawley's Pen Shaped  
Foreign Missions Work

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press  
8/7/87

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Winston Crawley is leaving a paper trail at the Foreign Mission Board.

His, however, isn't a trail of tedious, irksome memos. It's some of the most important writing in the recent history of Southern Baptist missionary work.

In one colleague's words, the longtime administrator has helped Baptists committed to missions examine "who we have been in the past, how we got there and what direction this would seem to point to in the future."

Crawley, a native of Newport, Tenn., is retiring Aug. 25. "We'll miss him," colleagues say in an uneasy, who-will-fill-his-shoes tone of voice.

During his 40-year career at the board, Crawley has seen others' shoes filled in more-than-adequate fashion. Using words not original with him, he smiles, "The cemeteries are full of indispensable people."

Not that Crawley plans to retire to one. He anticipates three years of teaching, beginning this fall with a year at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

And he is writing a book on the Bible and missions strategy. He has written two others in recent years, "Global Mission," explaining Southern Baptists' approach to foreign missions, and "Partners Across the Pacific," chronicling Baptist work in China.

"Global Mission" has become required reading in seminary missions classes and has won attention in other Christian circles. One Presbyterian thinker said the book, even with its Southern Baptist orientation, is "one of the most valuable introductions to missiology you can find."

One of the closing paragraphs typifies Crawley's outlook: "Churches do not exist to maintain themselves or to serve themselves, but as a great base for outreach to the world. What gives Baptist churches and conventions their highest significance is their global mission thrust."

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Crawley has written a column in the Foreign Mission Board's magazine, *The Commission*, since 1981, and it will continue at least through this year. He also is in the midst of a 10-part series on key chapters in Southern Baptist foreign missions history. Other articles have appeared in an array of publications.

Colleagues have accorded him such informal designations as a "walking encyclopedia," a "scholar-in-residence" and an "architect for missions."

Not one to bask in admiration, Crawley simply explains he has been with the board "long enough" to have "dealt with a lot of different things."

He has been the board's vice president for planning since 1980. Not only did he wield a creative pen, he also helped the board's various offices achieve an unprecedented degree of coordinated planning toward key missions goals.

Crawley directed the board's overseas division from 1968 to 1980, a period when the number of missionaries increased 32 percent, from 2,277 to 3,010, and the number of mission fields jumped 42 percent, from 67 countries to 95. Overseas churches, baptisms and overall membership more than doubled during his tenure.

He was the board's secretary for the Orient from 1954 to 1968, when that area's missionary force soared from 294 to 748. Work was initiated in five additional countries and the number of Baptists and churches in the Orient nearly quadrupled.

Crawley and his wife, Margaret, went to China as missionaries in 1947. After 14 months of language study in Beijing (Peking), they faced the trauma of moving elsewhere when communist forces rose to power. The couple relocated in the Philippines, where he did evangelistic work in the Chinese community there. He later taught at the Philippine Baptist Theological Seminary.

"My sense of call had been specifically to China. We were expecting to spend our lives there," he remembers. But as it became clear that China's doors were closing, Crawley realized he had equated God's call with a blueprint. But God's call is more like "a road I follow not knowing what turns will be ahead. God used that as a way of leading me down the road ... to sharing the gospel with the nations."

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

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CORRECTION: A missionary was given the wrong name in the 8/4/87 BP story titled "Peruvians Tune In To Seminary Singers' Witness." In the 8th, graf, the missionary's name is Sherra Armstrong, not Sarah Armstrong.

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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