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Home Mission Board Introduces
Two New Evangelism Methods

By Sherri Brown

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Two new evangelism training methods were introduced at the annual home missions conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center this summer.

Advanced Continuing Witness Training and Building Witnessing Relationships both were introduced to Southern Baptist pastors and evangelism leaders from across the United States.

The material was developed because "if we do not strengthen the methods we have, we're going to lose the world," explained Ron Barker, associate director of personal evangelism at the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

"The gospel must never change, but our methods must change to meet the needs of today's people. We've got to go to them in the marketplace," Barker said during the opening session of the evangelism training meeting.

"There are masses of people who don't come to church. We can take our faith to them one-on-one. It's important to develop the best possible methods of relating to lost people," said Robert Hamblin, Home Mission Board evangelism vice president.

"When we first started Continuing Witness Training, only 12.9 percent of our churches had an ongoing evangelism training program. Today that figure is 22 percent. But we still have almost 80 percent of our churches with no ongoing evangelism training. We've got a long way to go," said Barker.

The Continuing Witness Training material is for use with the seminars of the same name, in use since 1981. Since that time leaders from 4,000 churches have been trained to lead the seminar. Continuing Witness Training also is taught at four of the six Southern Baptist seminaries.

The Building Witnessing Relationships material is an evangelism method that categorizes different acceptance levels for sharing Christian faith. It also teaches how to build a relationship for sharing a belief in Christ within the community and the marketplace.

Both Advanced Continuing Witness training and Building Witnessing Relationships training will be available in the fall of 1988.

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Colorado Church Named
Resort Church Of Year

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GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Vail Baptist Church in Vail, Colo., was named Southern Baptist resort church of the year during the annual home missions conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center. Home missionary Steve Hoekstra is pastor.

Southern Baptist Home Mission Board Resort Ministries Director Bill Lee cited the church for its complete, far-reaching, resort ministry. The church conducts ski-slope worship services, daycamp programs, crisis ministries, backpacking trips and youth ministries.

Hoekstra has been a resort missionary in Vail since 1981. Before his missionary appointment he was pastor in New Castle and Meeker, Colo.

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'Home Life' Editor Retires
After 35 Years At SSB

By Terri Lackey

NASHVILLE (BP)--Reuben Herring owes much of his 41-year career in journalism to his family and Ida Bell Williams, a high school teacher who encouraged him to write.

"I was always interested in writing," said the senior editor of Home Life magazine whose father and grandfather before him were journalists. "When I was in high school, my English teacher encouraged me to write, and that just sort of clinched it."

The "senior" was added to Herring's title when he received the career professional award at the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, where he edits the monthly family magazine in his family ministry department office. However, Herring retired July 31 after 35 years at the Sunday School Board.

Herring spent much of his childhood around the Tifton (Ga.) Daily Gazette. "I grew up in the newspaper office where my father was the editor and his father was the founder," he recalled. "I began working there as a young teenager. I started delivering papers and sweeping, and when I got into high school I did a little reporting, mainly high school sports."

After college graduation and six weeks after he got married, Herring was drafted into the army and spent three years in World War II, where he experienced front-line fighting. He came back a "shaken man" to get acquainted with a two-year-old son.

"It was pretty overwhelming to realize that now I had responsibility for myself, my wife and my son. And right then, I was unemployed," he said.

But it wasn't long before the tables turned and, in 1946, Herring was offered a job with the Dothan (Ala.) Eagle as sports editor.

He hadn't even applied. But he stayed with the paper seven years.

In the meantime, the former Methodist had joined his wife's Baptist faith and was baptized at First Baptist Church of Dothan, where he became publicity director.

"It was while I was in that church that Joe Burton, first editor of Home Life, came down there and conducted one of his Christian home revivals," Herring said. "Because I was publicity director, I naturally handled the publicity for the revivals."

"Some months after Burton came back to Nashville, his associate editor resigned. Burton called me to see if I wanted to come to Nashville," he recalled.

Herring's move from secular to religious journalism never was an issue: "I had already felt the desire to get into a church-related vocation, although not leaving journalism. For example, I had written the editor of the state Baptist paper in Alabama to see if they had an opening."

Herring enjoys telling the story about when, in 1953, Burton came to his house in Alabama to discuss employment, his wife, Dot, now secretary/receptionist at the Southern Baptist Stewardship Commission, was "very pregnant."

"When my wife was serving supper, we had to leave immediately for the hospital, where she was delivered of twins. My colleagues say she really got me the job," he quipped.

Herring now has five children. One of the twins died of crib death when he was nine months old, a tragedy Herring believes has added a dimension to his experience as editor of a family life magazine.

Herring has, in a sense, come full circle at the board, beginning as associate editor of Home Life and leaving as its senior editor. In his 35 years at the board, he also has held several positions in the church training department, supervising a children's editorial unit, editing adult curriculum and equipping center modules. He also served a short stint in the church administration department, editing pastoral ministries products.

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"I feel a great deal of satisfaction as I think about how in its first 40 years Home Life has circulated 350 million copies, that I've had a part in developing the deacon family ministry plan, equipping centers on family life and other topics, and have edited and supervised children's and leaders' materials," he said. "It feels good to know that in my 35 years at the board I've been allowed to have a part in contributing to Christian marriages and Christian family life."

His list of contributions to the board does not stop with his full-time positions. He has written nine books, including the novel, "Fire in the Canebrake," a story of religion on the American frontiers of Kentucky and Tennessee during the 1800s.

And he plans to continue writing for the board. This self-described "typewriter-man" has focused his sights toward modern technology and is highly considering the purchase of a personal computer.

For a man who started out with a portable typewriter, an apple crate and earplugs, Herring has come a long way.

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

Christ Becomes Chief
For Heir Of Crazy Horse

By Scott Collins

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FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--If Jack Cochise had lived 100 years ago, he might have been chief of the Apache Indian nation rather than a student at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He is the great-great-grandson of both Apache Chief Cochise and Sioux Chief Crazy Horse.

But this Cochise finds his most important relationship not to tribal chiefs but to a spiritual chief, Jesus Christ.

Cochise was "brought up with the old ways" on the Mescalero, N.M., Indian reservation, he said. The tribe was poor, and Cochise remembers living in tents, hauling water from a nearby creek and eating army rations to survive.

As an 11-year-old, Cochise ran away from Albuquerque (N.M.) Indian School. He became a drug user and was convicted on felony charges, sending him to a boys school in Ogden, Utah.

His alcoholic father was married three times by Cochise's 13th birthday. By 19, Cochise had attempted suicide six times. "I was a pretty angry individual," he said.

At the boys school, Cochise heard the gospel for the first time from a Pentecostal preacher. But Cochise refused to accept Christ.

"I was an Indian and just saw that as a white man's religion," he said.

Even though Cochise was paroled from the boy's school at 18, the reformatory had not reformed him. He began selling drugs and by 22 was earning "quite a bit of money" as a pusher. He also was a heroin addict and a drinker.

"I had gained a pretty bad reputation by age 22 from people on the reservation," Cochise said. "I think I was just trying to cover all the hurt and pain of my childhood."

Awaking from the stupor of an all-night party, Cochise finally realized he had "hit rock bottom in my life," he said. "I didn't care if someone hurt me or if I hurt them."

Sitting alone in his living room, Cochise reviewed his life: "The dope, the alcohol, nothing seemed to cover the pain. There was only one thing left to try. That was to become a white man and accept his religion."

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Cochise remembered some Bible verses the Pentecostal preacher had told him. "Through those verses I became a Christian," he said. "I remember saying, 'If there is a God and you said your Son died on the cross for my sins, then I believe.'"

"That was the first time in years I had cried," Cochise said. "I could feel the cleansing power of the Holy Spirit. My whole life has changed since then."

But Cochise's Indian friends thought he had become a white man. Many cursed him and one tried to shoot him.

With the help of Southern Baptist home missionary Virginia North, Cochise began to study the Bible and grow in his new-found faith. She helped him "bridge the cultural gap" and encouraged him to attend college.

Cochise did not want to go back to the reservation as a missionary, he said, explaining, "I was kind of ashamed of being an Indian."

But God showed him the needs of Indians and the cultural problems in reaching them. "It really came home to me I needed to go back to my people and be a missionary among them," he said.

That calling brought Cochise to Southwestern Seminary, where he is studying Christian social ministries. Cochise said the needs of Indians are many because they are "the forgotten minority."

Problems on the reservation include poverty, "prison camp conditions" and resurgence of traditional Indian witchcraft and medicine-man practices, he said.

Despite those difficulties, Cochise believes he has the answer for American Indians. It is the same solution he found for his personal problems -- Jesus Christ.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary

Baptists, Habitat Provide
Homes In Boston Community

By Clay Renick

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BOSTON (BP)--They called it a miracle on Blue Hill Avenue. Volunteers from 17 states helped build 11 homes for low-income residents in Dorchester, an inner-city section of Boston.

"This community will never forget it," said William Celester, deputy police superintendent. "I know I won't."

Sponsored by Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation, the project was part of Habitat for Humanity's "houseraising week," an effort to build 300 homes worldwide.

Habitat for Humanity is an interdenominational ministry that provides affordable housing for the poor. It supports more than 200 projects around the globe.

Fund raising for the Boston project started last April with a \$30,000 gift from the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. Associated General Contractors of Massachusetts delivered \$145,000 in equipment, materials and labor. Cash donations at the time of construction totaled \$150,000. Equity loans through Boston's Habitat affiliate, Christians for Urban Justice, supplied the remaining \$100,000.

Southern Baptist volunteers from as far as Irving, Texas, joined more than 500 people to work around the clock in an attempt to finish the homes in one week.

Janis Townsend, a member of Irving's Valley Ranch Baptist Church, which constituted last month and meets in a daycare center, said church members wanted to "be involved in something that would help the people of Boston in a tangible way."

According to a survey by the Greater Boston Real Estate Board, monthly rent for a two bedroom apartment in the city averages \$978. In Dorchester, a similar apartment rents for \$573, but apartments are unavailable.

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The 1985 census showed an increase of 8,000 new dwellings in the city from 1980 to 1985, with a corresponding increase of 16,000 families.

"Housing is the No. 1 social need in Boston," said Larry Martin, director of missions for the Greater Boston Baptist Association. "Shelters for the homeless are setting aside beds for people who have full-time jobs."

Several years ago, the Antioch congregation secured a \$30,000 loan from the Home Mission Board and moved into a building on Blue Hill Avenue. It also received first option to buy the vacant lot behind its property. Pastor Walter Stevenson said he would like to build houses out there -- someday.

"I told him it was impossible," recalled Emma Carter, 70, a member of the church. "He was just a dreamer. He got a big idea and couldn't do anything about it." She paused a moment. "I tell him when something ain't right and it can't be done."

Last January, Stevenson approached Frank Lennon, director of Christians for Urban Justice. A former instructor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology and non-profit builder, Lennon said he had raised one or two houses at the same time, but never 11 in one week.

The city government owned the land and sold it to the church for \$1. The city also waived \$150,000 in back taxes on the three-quarter-acre lot.

"We're sending a message across America," Mayor Raymond Flynn said at a news conference. "This could be duplicated in every neighborhood in Boston."

More than 400 people applied for the new homes. The Antioch church set up a selection board. To qualify, they had to make from \$11,000 to \$17,000 a year and already live in substandard housing. If chosen, they would put in 300 hours of "sweat equity" on the job and purchase one of the units for \$35,000 with a non-interest 20-year mortgage.

The same townhouse units would be worth \$135,000 on the open market, said Michael Price, director of operations for Christians for Urban Justice. A former medical school professor with a doctorate in anatomy from Harvard, Price wanted to do something about the housing problem in Boston. He claimed 40 percent of the city's population earns less than \$17,000 a year, the low-income dividing line in the area.

For Rebecca Mogess, 24, the opportunity came at the right time. Originally from Ethiopia, she works as an accountant for a local bank and realized her \$16,000 annual salary could not pay the \$70,000 price on her apartment when the owner put it on the market as a condominium. She applied for Habitat housing the day the applications were due and recently learned she was one of the recipients.

"What we have to do now is help others," she said. "I want to help people like us get a chance."

"No one has done this in Boston before," said Joe Day, a retired supervisor for Gilbane Construction Company in Boston.

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Milton Leach Receives
Language Missions Award

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GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Milton Leach Jr., has received the catalytic missionary of the year award from the language missions division of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He accepted the award at the annual home missions conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Leach is a catalytic missionary in Ft. Lauderdale and West Palm Beach, Fla. He also has been a Home Mission Board consultant on refugees.

Leach received the award for his spiritual dedication, his personal relationships and his faithful loyalty to the board, said Oscar Romo, HMB language missions director.

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