



BAPTIST PRESS

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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, 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

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88-174

Nevada Baptist Convention
celebrates 10th anniversary

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (BP)--Nevada Baptists celebrated their 10th anniversary as a state convention with a record turnout for their annual meeting Oct. 24-25 in Las Vegas.

The event attracted 190 messengers and 151 visitors.

Terry Arnold, pastor of First Baptist Church of Carson City, was re-elected convention president. Other officers are Bob Norvell, pastor of College Park Baptist Church in Las Vegas, first vice president, and Mike Rochelle, pastor of West Oakey Baptist Church in Las Vegas, second vice president.

Messengers to the meeting adopted a record 1988-89 budget of \$1,400,560, up 7.1 percent from the 1987-88 budget. Nevada Baptist churches are expected to contribute \$400,000 of the budget, with most of the balance coming from the Southern Baptist Home Mission and Sunday School boards.

Nevadans will support Southern Baptist missions and ministry causes worldwide by channeling 24 percent of their receipts, or \$96,000, to the national convention's Cooperative Program unified budget.

The 1988-89 budget reflects an increase of more than \$1 million from the first Nevada Baptist Convention budget 10 years ago. Nevada gifts to world missions through the Cooperative Program have increased from 10 percent in 1979 to the 24 percent allocated in the new budget. The entire budget 10 years ago was less than the \$400,00 expected to be raised by Nevadans in 1988-89.

The convention officially celebrated its anniversary Oct. 25 with a recognition of convention staff and with reflections on the 10 years of growth by Executive Director Ernest B. Myers. The convention also recognized Myers' service as Nevada's only executive director with a presentation of a plaque praising his ministry.

Messengers adopted a new state convention long-range strategic planning document for 1990-95, "Vision 95: Bold Mission Nevada." The document calls for 53 new church-type missions by 1995, in addition to the 25 new works related to the 1989 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Las Vegas.

In a resolution adopted unanimously, messengers called for the annual Bible preaching conference to be named the J. Walker Campbell Bible Preaching Conference. Campbell, who died of a heart attack in July, was Nevada Baptists' director of Bible teaching ministries.

The 11th annual meeting of the Nevada Baptist Convention will be held at Fallon Community Center Oct. 24-25, 1989.

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Students lose high court appeal
on ads for religious meetings

By Stan Hasteley

Baptist Press
11/2/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--Two former public high school students have failed in an effort to have the nation's highest court review their school district's decision disallowing advertising of student religious gatherings on school property.

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In an order released Oct. 31, the U.S. Supreme Court announced it will not review the complaint of Alexander Perumal and Frederick Read, who as students at high schools in Mission Viejo and El Toro, Calif., were denied permission during the 1984-85 school year to hand out flyers announcing noon-day meetings of an evangelical student group. Read also had rejected his request to place an ad for the group, New Life, in his school yearbook.

The high court order stated that three justices, one short of the four needed, voted to schedule the case for oral argument and formal decision. The three -- Justices William J. Brennan Jr., Thurgood Marshall and Harry A. Blackmun -- are considered the most liberal members of the court. But the other six members of the court apparently were unconvinced that Perumal and Read had a case worthy of the high court's review.

Papers filed with the court by the students' attorneys at the Christian Legal Society emphasized that the meetings themselves were not at issue in the case. Principals at both high schools had granted permission for New Life meetings, held during the lunch hour on the school lawn or outside steps. The flyers the students sought to distribute contained a brief religious message, a Bible quotation and an invitation to attend the meetings. They were written and produced by the students, not school personnel.

Officials at both schools denied permission to distribute the flyers, claiming the restriction was a "lawful school regulation" of free speech. They also cited the First Amendment ban on an establishment of religion as another reason for the denial.

Perumal and Read next asked the Saddleback Valley School District -- a large public school unit in Southern California serving the cities of Mission Viejo and El Toro, as well as smaller nearby communities -- to hear an appeal of the principals' decisions. But the school board refused to allow them to appear. The students then sued the board and the superintendent of schools.

Following a state superior court's denial of all relief, including money damages, a California court of appeal affirmed on a 2-1 vote. The California Supreme Court refused to review the case last April.

Christian Legal Society attorney Michael J. Woodruff asked the nation's high court to look on the dispute as an unconstitutional infringement of free speech. He urged the court to accept the California dispute to resolve "growing confusion" in lower courts "as to the proper scope of students' rights to engage in non-school sponsored expression, including religious expression and association."

Woodruff's brief asking for high court review repeatedly cited a 1969 case in which Des Moines, Iowa, high school students won the right to wear arm bands in protest of United States participation in the Vietnam war. In that case, Woodruff argued, the court "recognize(d) students' rights to personal expression on school grounds, where it is not sponsored by the school."

Attorneys for the school board countered by arguing that the California principals' decisions not to permit distribution of the flyers "were based upon the conclusion that neither (student) organization had any relationship to the school's curriculum."

The dispute, they added, "does not involve individual expression or questions of censorship on the basis of subject matter ... the issue is whether a public school district devoted to primary and secondary education has the right to limit the use of its facilities during the compulsory attendance day to student organizations and clubs which are related to the school district's educational program." (88-340, Perumal v. Saddleback Valley School District)

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Phone line to answer
foreign missions rumors

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
11/2/88

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board is opening a special telephone line to counter "misinformation and rumors" about its work.

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FMB AnswerLine -- (804) 254-9403 -- will be manned by mission board administrators weekdays from Nov. 14 to Dec. 16, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. EST.

"We are trying to provide a straightforward response to any questions or concerns Southern Baptists have," explained FMB President R. Keith Parks. Ongoing tensions in the Southern Baptist Convention have eroded "the level of trust in and credibility of some of our missions efforts," he said.

Because of budget constraints, a regular long-distance call will be needed for FMB AnswerLine.

One example of rumors circulating among Southern Baptists is that the Foreign Mission Board's current budget shortfall will require 1,000 missionaries to return home next year, board officials noted. Another rumor is that the board plans to abandon medical mission work and other human needs ministries, they said.

Both rumors are false, said Bob Desbien, assistant vice president for public relations.

The mission board's 1989 budget adopted by its trustees falls below the 1988 budget, and missionaries have pared their operating budgets by 12 percent. But no overseas personnel cuts are in the works, Desbien said.

Concern over human needs ministries arose following erroneous news reporting about the board's 10-year plan to have 70 percent of its personnel devoting more than half of their time to evangelism and church planting, he added.

Addressing trustees in October, Parks also targeted rumors that "extreme ultraconservatives" intend to purge missionaries and staff and drastically alter the board's direction.

"I have said privately, publicly and in print that this is not true," Parks said. Rumors alleging missionaries are uncommitted to evangelism and sound biblical doctrine are equally unfounded, he said.

FMB AnswerLine will not replace the board's toll-free PrayerLine, which relays global prayer concerns seven days per week, 24 hours per day.

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Congress OKs bills on lottery advertising, Indian gambling

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press
11/2/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--Two gambling-related bills were among a landslide of legislation Congress approved before adjourning in late October.

Members passed legislation to allow private gambling enterprises run by non-profit organizations to use broadcast and mail advertising.

Federal law had allowed only government-run gambling operations, such as state lotteries, to advertise on radio and television and through the mail.

The Lottery Advertising Clarification Act requires that advertised activities -- such as private lotteries and church-sponsored bingo games -- be legal in the state in which they are conducted. In addition, the measure -- which will not go into effect until 18 months after being signed by the president -- allows states to enact their own restrictions against such advertising.

The legislation does not lift a federal ban on interstate advertising of casino gambling or prohibitions on the mailing of lottery tickets, money or other paraphernalia related to lotteries.

Congress also passed legislation to regulate gambling on Indian lands.

The measure divides gaming activities into three classes and prescribes a particular form of regulation for each class.

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Under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act, class I gaming includes social or traditional Indian games played in connection with tribal ceremonies or celebrations. This class is to be regulated exclusively by tribal governments.

Class II gaming includes bingo, lotto and poker games played in conformance with state laws regarding pot sizes, bet limits and hours of operation. It is to be regulated by tribes with oversight by a five-member national Indian gaming commission.

Class III gaming includes casino gambling and parimutuel betting, as well as all other forms of gaming not identified in classes I and II. This class is to be conducted under a system in which tribes and states negotiate the terms of regulation.

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Bill contains child porn,
alcohol-labeling measures

By Kathy Palen

Baptist Press
11/2/88

WASHINGTON (BP)--Congress' last-minute passage of an omnibus drug bill has resulted in the enactment of several unrelated measures, including child pornography and alcohol-labeling legislation.

At the core of the drug bill is the provision of \$500 million in federal funds this fiscal year for increasing drug enforcement efforts, stiffening criminal and civil penalties for drug sellers and users, and expanding drug education, treatment and rehabilitation programs.

But the measure also gave Congress an opportunity to act on other pieces of legislation by attaching them to the drug bill.

A child pornography amendment, sponsored by Sen. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., bans the buying and selling of children for use in child pornography. It also stiffens penalties against people convicted of selling or possessing with intent to sell child pornography and other obscene materials.

In addition, the measure requires producers of sexually explicit material to document the ages of people appearing in the material. It also prohibits the use of computers to distribute or advertise child pornography.

The amendment also contains anti-obscenity provisions allowing the federal government to prosecute regular traffickers in obscene materials and to confiscate the profits gained from and property directly used in committing an obscenity offense.

Thurmond also sponsored an amendment that requires warning labels on alcoholic-beverage containers.

The measure makes illegal the manufacture, import, bottle for sale or distribution in the United States of any alcoholic beverage unless its container bears a label stating: "Government Warning: (1) According to the Surgeon General, women should not drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy because of the risk of birth defects. (2) Consumption of alcoholic beverages impairs your ability to drive a car or operate machinery and may cause health problems."

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Lewis urges new missionaries
to keep God 1st in life

By Joe Westbury

Baptist Press
11/2/88

ATLANTA (BP)--Keep God first, Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis told 97 newly commissioned missionaries.

Lewis gave the charge during the board's fall commissioning service Oct. 30 at Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Ga.

"The Scriptures command us not to worry over what to wear or what to eat. If we put God first place in our life, he will provide our every need," he said. "We can't claim that promise if we don't observe the principle of seeking first the kingdom of God."

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Lewis listed four principles that missionaries -- and Christians as a whole -- should use to guide them in living.

"First, give God the first part of every day. Start the day with the confidence that God is alive and able to handle anything that comes your way," he said.

Missionaries also ought to give God the first day of every week, he said, noting that in spite of changing social customs, Christians are still charged to keep the Sabbath holy.

Missionaries also must give God the first fruits of their substance, he added: "The tithe is the Lord's and is holy to him. Somehow I'm always a better steward of the 90 percent I have left over than the 100 percent of which I haven't set aside a portion for God."

Finally, Christians should keep God first in their lives to prevent other demands from taking priority, he said.

During the commissioning service, native Ohioan Dan Bryant expressed gratitude to Southern Baptists for allowing him to return to his home state as a missionary. He and his wife, Jan, are church starters in Wadsworth.

"Ohio has 11 million residents today, but 7 million of them do not know Christ as Savior. Pray for our ministry there so we can share God's love with those unchurched individuals," he said.

Anne Burgess, who now is a language missionary with her husband, Claude, in Talladega, Ala., shared her testimony and call to missions. Although she and her husband were reluctant to leave Memphis, Tenn., where he was pastor and minister to the deaf, God opened up new doors of opportunity to expand their ministry as home missionaries, she said.

Today their ministry includes three Sunday worship services for blind, deaf and multi-handicapped people in the city.

Nearly half of the appointees will be church starters. The others will work in Christian social ministries centers, church and community ministries, black-church relations, evangelism, language missions, metropolitan missions, new-church growth and rural-urban missions.

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FMB communications office
realigns jobs, personnel

Baptist Press
11/2/88

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has realigned jobs and personnel in its communications and public relations office to communicate missions information to Southern Baptists more effectively, Vice President Alan W. Compton announced.

Compton, who was elected to lead the office in April, named Irma Duke, 37, a native of Henry County, Va., as assistant vice president for communications operations, responsible for coordinating procedural and budgetary matters in the office, in addition to a number of other responsibilities. Most recently she was director of the board's print department. She came to the board in 1976.

Bob Desbien, 39, has been named assistant vice president for public relations. He will be responsible for coordinating public relations among board staff members, between the board and other denominational agencies, and with Southern Baptists and the general public. Desbien, from Topeka, Kan., came to the board in 1982.

Ken Lawson, 46, has been selected as assistant vice president for communications strategy. He will research key audiences for missions information and help coordinate ways to reach them. Lawson, from Paris, Ky., joined the board staff in 1970 and most recently was research and production consultant in the communications office.

Succeeding Duke as print department director is Anita Bowden, 36, of Richmond, Va., the board's news editor since 1980. The department produces brochures, pamphlets and most other print materials available from the board.

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Erich Bridges, 30, of Atlanta, a staff writer since 1981, succeeds Bowden as news editor in the news and information services department. He will edit news and feature articles written for Baptist Press, the denomination's news service, Baptist state newspapers and other periodicals.

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'Sing a new song,'
senior adults urged

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press
11/2/88

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Senior adults who have positive attitudes about themselves are healthier and better able to deal with problems such as ill health, inadequate finances or failing memories, the retired director of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's personnel department said.

"Many of us need to sing a new song about ourselves as it relates to our attitudes," Leonard Wedel, 79, told about 1,000 senior adults attending a Chautauqua conference at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center in late October.

Many older people have a self-defeating attitude about themselves, Wedel said: "They may say, 'I've only got a high school education'; 'I can't cook'; or 'I can't remember names.' I say, 'Use your high school education'; Don't broadcast that you can't cook'; and 'Yes, you can remember names if you'll just discipline yourself.'"

Senior adults who cannot take compliments about themselves or who find flaws in all things "may need to sing a new song," he added.

A good attitude is important "because it affects how you look, what you say and what you do," he said. "It affects how successful you are in achieving life's goals. Just because you are 65 doesn't mean you can't have life goals."

Wedel offered suggestions for people who would like to change their attitudes for the better: "Be positive in conversation. Be habitually punctual. And be cheerful -- no one likes a sour puss.

"A positive attitude makes everyday living better and makes problems easier to handle."

Many senior adults have circumstances which could affect their attitudes adversely "if you let them," he said.

Difficult living conditions, ill health, worsened financial situations, children, neighbors or immobility could all serve to sour attitudes, Wedel said: "There are three ways to relate to our circumstances. You can fuss, feud and mope about them and let the hostility eat you up.

"You can be apathetic and listless about your present circumstances and give up on life's opportunities. Or, finally, you can have creative acceptance of your circumstances, accept them in a healthy way and learn to be content."

Wedel, a motivational speaker, said the message of Christianity is positive, and "as Christians our message should be positive."

Senior adult Chautauquas are sponsored by the senior adult section of the board's family ministry department. Thirteen Chautauquas are being held this year -- six at Ridgecrest; four at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center; two at Green Lake, Wis.; and one in connection with a cruise to the Bahamas.

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Senior adults organize
'natural need' to help

By Terri Lackey

Baptist Press
11/2/88

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Visiting the elderly in nursing homes, taking meals to the homebound or taking cassette tapes of sermons and Sunday school lessons to shut-ins are important ministries for senior adults anxious to serve others, said Horace Kerr, manager of the senior adult section in the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

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"Volunteerism" is not a word that frightens older adults, a fact that is evidenced by the vast and various ministries taken on by senior adults who make up an important segment of Southern Baptists involved in missions, Kerr said.

"Senior adults are involved in doing things for other people naturally," Kerr said. "They see a need, and they know how to respond out of experience and a long life of giving and receiving help. They have always been sensitive to the needs of others."

While senior adults have traditionally offered help when needed, Kerr said, he is now seeing "a growing phenomenon" of organized volunteer programs among senior adults in Southern Baptist churches.

For example, senior adults are among members at Eastside Baptist Church of Marietta, Ga., who help find jobs for people in the community who come to their church asking for assistance with food, clothing or money.

Through Eastside's innovative job bank, "people without food who were sleeping on the street" get the long-term help of employment rather than just the instant gratification of a hand-out, said Peggy Lindsey, a volunteer worker for the job bank. Lindsey and several others from Eastside attended a senior adult Chautauqua at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center Oct. 24-28.

Eastside's job bank began in September 1987 as a part of the church's caring ministry, which involves a wide range of benevolent helps to the underprivileged in the community, she said.

Rubye McCormic, a member of College Street Baptist Church of Walhalla, S.C., joins senior adults and other members of her church in baking cakes and other food for choir members to take to prisoners at a state penitentiary about 60 miles from her hometown.

Members of the College Street Church choir go once a month to the correctional facility to sing and deliver letters to prisoners, McCormic said.

While she does not go to the prison, McCormic said, she enjoys baking cakes for the choir's trips there. Also, many senior adults of the church minister to the prisoners by writing them letters.

McCormic also is involved in the church's ministry of taking meals to the homebound. College Street also sends a van out to round up underprivileged senior adults in the community, church members or not, and feed them a noontime meal Monday through Friday, she said.

College Street is one of the most active churches she has ever joined, she said, noting her involvement in its various ministries makes her feel "good inside."

"It's fun to see people less fortunate than you get a blessing out of life," she said.

Mildred Cate, a member of Red Bank Baptist Church in Chattanooga, Tenn., enjoys taking cassette tapes of the upcoming week's Sunday school lesson and the previous week's sermon to homebound senior adults.

"One of our senior adults, John Watts, makes a tape of the Sunday morning service and next week's Sunday school lesson, and about five or six of us deliver them," Cate said. About 35 homebound members receive the tapes.

"They think it's just great. You just don't know how much they appreciate those tapes," she said.

Almost 1,000 senior adults from 15 states registered for the Chautauqua sponsored by the family ministry department.

Way the cookie crumbles
aids Lottie, Annie offerings

By Craig Bird

LIMURU, Kenya (BP)--It was a dark day for missions -- dark as in chocolate.

One package of Oreo cookies sold for \$115 during an impromptu auction at the recent annual meeting of Southern Baptist missionaries in Kenya. Three other packages brought around \$40 each, a bottle of chocolate syrup went for \$25 and a single cookie for \$3.

The proceeds were just a tiny dash of sweetener added to more than \$16,000 the missionaries contributed during the meeting to Southern Baptist missions. Sixty percent of the money was earmarked for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering to help fund evangelistic outreach in 113 countries. The rest will go to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for mission work in the United States.

Two cultures -- American and Kenyan -- joined unexpectedly to spark the auction when a visiting group from Second Ponce de Leon Baptist Church in Atlanta brought along the treats. The group came to Kenya to lead worship services, youth meetings and a Vacation Bible School during the mission meeting.

The love affair between Americans and chocolate is only enhanced when the Americans live 8,000 miles from the source of the junk food of their dreams. And Kenyan churches regularly hold auctions, where members' tithes and offerings of produce or livestock are converted into cash on the spot. The money then goes to church work.

So when four unopened packages of cookies and several bottles of chocolate syrup were left over following the mission banquet, someone suggested they be auctioned, "for the benefit of Lottie Moon, of course." After a lone cookie sold for 50 Kenya shillings, or about \$3, things got serious in a hurry.

David Morse, a missionary journeyman from Georgetown, Texas, wound up paying 2,100 Kenya shillings for 60 cookies -- almost \$6 per ounce.

As the bidding spiraled, participants emphasized the money had to be "above and beyond" the bidder's regular Lottie Moon or Annie Armstrong offering.

"Giving to missions always feels good," one missionary observed. "But it doesn't always taste this good."

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Social ministry births church
on New York's Lower East Side

By Joe Westbury

Baptist Press
11/2/88

NEW YORK (BP)--Fifteen years of ministry have given birth to a Southern Baptist church in the New York City neighborhood where bloody scenes from "Godfather II" were filmed.

Graffiti Center, officially known as East 7th Baptist Ministry, held its first morning Sunday school and worship service in mid-October. Since 1973, the mission center has struggled to minister in a Lower East Side neighborhood where drug pushers deal openly.

The first worship service attracted 26 people. That's a good turnout for the neighborhood, said Taylor Field, pastor and ministry director.

Field is a 34-year-old Christian social ministry missionary appointed by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. He and his wife, Susan, have worked at Graffiti for two years.

Graffiti occupies a tiny storefront no larger than a two-car garage. But ministry has bulged from its walls for the past 15 years through a food and clothing closet, vocational training program, weekday tutoring and Bible club for youth, and adult Bible studies.

Field believes Sunday school and morning worship are natural extensions of this ministry. "Graffiti's purpose is to bring people into the fellowship of Christ and to equip them in fair living, clear thinking and true devotion," he said.

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Field and his volunteers minister to about 300 people, many of them homeless men and women who live on the street outside the center's doors.

"Whenever you perform Christian social ministry, you need a worshipping community as a center of that ministry," Field said. "You can't just be doing good deeds in the name of Christ. You need the time for a worship service to tie the ministry together.

"Otherwise, if you never share your faith on a one-on-one basis, you're just giving away your emptiness."

However, Graffiti has linked Christian social ministry and evangelism effectively, said Linda Williams, who has been attending Bible studies at the center for six years.

"Evangelism in this neighborhood is not limited to just preaching. Many people are first introduced to Graffiti by a meal or a warm coat," she said. "After they begin to trust us, they become more receptive to attending Bible study."

Graffiti's success partially hinges on the hundreds of volunteers and summer missionaries who regularly are channeled through the Home Mission Board. The volunteers instill faith in community residents by helping them overcome a chronic lack of vocational skills, get clothing or deal with eviction from rundown apartments.

Some of the people helped by the ministry later become volunteers themselves. Keith Moon received help and now tutors boys with their homework on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. He also helps with the Wednesday and Sunday evening Bible studies.

"Graffiti helped me overcome personal obstacles in my life and has been a big aid to my spiritual growth," he said. "Whether I needed something from the food pantry or just needed someone to talk to, Graffiti has always been there when I needed it."

Moon is thankful to have had a small role in changing the lives of nine teen-agers and two children who have become Christians through the ministry since January.

However, good results make sustained ministry in the neighborhood difficult, Field said.

"One of our strongest ministries is getting people to find new respect for themselves, gain new vocational skills and then move out of the community," he explained. "We have a few oldtimers, but we're basically facing a constant turnover."

"We don't gauge our ministry here by years, but by generations. We're now ministering to children of the people Graffiti originally began helping in 1973.

"Our vision is to empower these people with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Our goal is to see Jesus as a real presence in this neighborhood."

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

Women's group supports
student wives' education

By Breena Kent Paine

Baptist Press
11/2/88

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--A group of Christian women in New Orleans have banded together to provide scholarships for student wives to attend classes at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

"I personally feel when a minister is called to a church by God, his wife should have received a calling of the Lord also," said Jinks Mahnker, president of the Women's Auxiliary to New Orleans Seminary.

Ministers' wives can be better "helpmates" for their husbands with the advantage of seminary training, Mahnker said.

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"All the wife sees are her children and her kitchen, and she doesn't have the same outlook on life as her husband," she explained. Seminary training could provide a wife with more understanding of her husband's studies and what is expected of him as a minister, as well as practical training in religious education and personal evangelism, she said.

Lesa Bray, a scholarship recipient from Malden, Mo., did not have a college degree when she felt God calling her to attend New Orleans Seminary. As she prayed, she asked God why seminary rather than college. His answer, she said, was that God was calling their family into foreign missions, and a college degree would not be as beneficial on the mission field as a seminary degree.

The next question she asked was how her family could finance her seminary education, with her husband also in seminary. God's answer was the Women's Auxiliary scholarship.

"Not only did he lead me here, but he also gave me the financial support to do what he called me to do," she said. "Seminary has given me a better understanding of my husband's work; it has given me more discipline in my personal life with the Lord; and it has brought me closer to God.

"I don't look at the scholarship as just financial. I look at the women behind it. It is their ministry. They are allowing God to use them through what they have done for me."

Not only do these women support her financially, Bray said, but she knows they pray for her and care about her.

The Women's Auxiliary was formed about 25 years ago to provide scholarships for student wives to attend seminary with their husbands. More than 125 women donate money each year through their Women's Auxiliary dues to provide scholarships.

"I think (a minister's wife) needs to have the same love (as her husband) of the Lord and his church in order to be a good pastor's wife," said Mahnker. "And she needs to have a compassionate heart. ... She'll be much more helpful to her husband if she knows some of the hardships he has gone through to get his education."

A seminary education can also help her to be a better teacher in the church, she said: "No one can have too much education. The more education, the more (she) will be able to deal with people in every walk of life."