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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 200 Maryland Ave., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20002, Telephone (202) 544-4228

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Panel urged to alter  
definition of hunger

By Kathy Palen

N-BJC

WASHINGTON (BP)--Hunger no longer should be defined simply in terms of malnutrition, a hunger researcher told a U.S. House of Representatives panel.

During the year's first congressional hearing on domestic hunger, researcher Sheldon Margen urged members of the House Select Committee on Hunger to redefine hunger, shifting the focus from malnutrition to "food security."

Food security, he said, is a "condition in which all people have access at all times to nutritionally adequate food from normal food channels."

Normal channels include stores, gardens, growers and restaurants, explained Margen, professor of public health nutrition at the School of Public Health at the University of California at Berkeley. Abnormal channels include scavenging in trash bins and depending on soup kitchens or food pantries, he added.

"Throughout the years of my work, I and others have been plagued by the difficulty of conveying to policy makers the magnitude and serious consequences of hunger in our society," Margen said. "As a result, many of us feel that hunger is poorly understood and that the United States is not making the necessary policy decisions to reduce the problem."

"Traditionally, hunger researchers and policy makers have chosen to focus on malnutrition as the major problem and indicator of hunger in the United States. However, hunger and malnutrition are not the same, and using this restricted definition is unlikely to help us solve hunger problems effectively."

The food security definition offers several advantages, Margen said. By identifying the larger group of people who have hunger problems, rather than just the portion who develop clinical malnutrition or who "feel hungry," he said, investigators can measure more accurately the extent of the problem and the groups most affected.

The definition also identifies food access through abnormal -- or emergency -- channels as an indicator of hunger problems, providing a fairly easily measured indicator and a straight forward policy goal of reducing dependency on emergency food use, he testified.

In arguing against relying on malnutrition as a definition, Margen pointed out that hunger does not always lead to clinical malnutrition. When it does, it usually means the person has been suffering from hunger problems for a long period of time, he added.

In addition, he explained, malnutrition is only one effect of hunger problems, which he said have numerous other health and social consequences.

"People who have trouble obtaining adequate food are often forced into a number of behaviors such as dependency on emergency food sources, heavy debt to buy food, theft of food or money, sending children to other homes to eat, switching to inadequate diets and skipping meals," he told the panel. "Other effects include poor school performance, family disintegration, violence and psychological breakdown -- effects that may be far more damaging in our society than those related to malnutrition."

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"Therefore, simply equating hunger with malnutrition means that only those with clinical symptoms are considered to have hunger problems. From a policy standpoint, this means we will not detect most of those suffering from hunger, and those we do detect will have already had hunger problems for an extended period of time."

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Baptist students take gospel  
to beach for spring break

By Mark Wingfield

F-HMB

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CLEARWATER BEACH, Fla. (BP)--The gospel flowed as freely as the suntan oil on three of Florida's beaches during spring break this year.

Through "Beach Reach '89," 320 Christian students from 18 colleges introduced the Christian gospel into a setting previously notorious only for sunburns, beer and sex. About 1 million college and high school students spent their spring breaks on Florida beaches.

The second annual Beach Reach, sponsored by the Florida Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, included ministries at Clearwater Beach, Fort Lauderdale and Daytona Beach.

During the peak week of March 20-24, 127 students ministered on the Gulf coast at Clearwater Beach, while another 64 worked on the Atlantic coast at Daytona Beach. The group at Clearwater that week, representing five schools, was the largest single team during the month-long effort.

At Clearwater, Beach Reach participants led 93 people to profess faith in Jesus Christ and made about 1,200 one-on-one witnessing contacts, said Sarah Driggers, a US-2 missionary who directed the Clearwater ministry.

Overall, at least 138 professions of faith were recorded at the three beaches during Beach Reach, said Tammy Davis, director of special mission ministries for the Florida convention.

Davis, who has ministered around Florida beaches since 1980, said she has seen the number of unchurched students growing each year. "They're getting harder and harder to reach," she said.

"We've got a whole generation of youth in America who are growing up without the church, without knowledge of Jesus Christ. The church has got to take a stand in the marketplace and provide an opportunity for them to hear the gospel, some for the very first time."

Christian students at Clearwater met the challenge with enthusiasm. "We've been praying like maniacs about it," said Kirby Atkins, a Union University student from San Jose, Calif.

Schools participating at Clearwater were Union, Jackson, Tenn.; Oklahoma Baptist University, Shawnee; Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia, Ark.; Ohio State University, Columbus; and the University of Southern Florida, Tampa.

Beach Reach participants used a simple survey as a means of starting conversations with people on the beach. The survey asked questions such as "What in your opinion is the basic problem of humanity?" and "If you could know and experience God personally would you be interested?" The questions led into a gospel presentation.

"The survey makes it easy to witness," said Jennifer Massey, a Ouachita student from Greenville, Texas.

On the first day, Massey strolled along Pier 60 toward the ocean and encountered a college-age girl walking alone. "Would you like to take our survey?" Massey asked.

While seagulls flew overhead and a cool breeze blew off the water, Massey completed the 15 questions of the survey with ease. Then, based on the responses to key questions, she turned the conversation to share about how she had found meaning for her own life.

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Massey unfolded a small white tract printed especially for the spring break crowd and explained three simple diagrams of man's separation from God. By the time Massey completed the tract, her companion said she would like to trust the Jesus she had just heard about.

Without drawing attention to themselves as crowds of spring break revelers continued passing by, the two women prayed.

That marked Massey's third convert for the day. "I didn't come just to sit on the beach," she explained. "I came to witness."

Massey and other students combed the beach several hours each day. At certain times they held a tug-of-war on the beach to attract attention or drew a crowd with the help of Christian mime Doug Berky.

As people gathered to watch Berky perform or to participate in the tug-of-war, surveyors made their way through the crowd, striking up conversations and presenting the gospel.

No other beach activities were planned for the 50,000 vacationing students at Clearwater. They roamed up and down the beach and sidewalks for hours. Most seemed glad to stop and visit with anyone who approached them.

A small percentage, however, did ridicule the Christian witness. But neither sunburned feet, heckling or outright rejection deterred the surveyors.

"This is an encounter with reality for many of our students," said Ian Cosh, Baptist Student Union director at Ouachita. "They may leave with a few bruises, but training is sometimes painful.

"It has toughened some of them up. When they go back home, they will grab more of their opportunities to witness because they won't seem so intimidating."

Whether despondent from rejection or elated from a conversion, every student met with an enthusiastic affirmation from Driggers, who directs resort ministries for Suncoast Baptist Association.

Driggers stood at the lunch line each day hugging students, asking how their day was going and giving advice for confronting various situations. She constantly reminded the group to wear sunscreen and to remember that the witness, not the results, was what mattered.

Throughout the day and in a nightly "share time," the students also encouraged each other and rejoiced together. On the beach, they eagerly introduced each convert to other members of the group for affirmation.

Although not every student saw immediate results from their witness, all had the chance to share their faith daily. Many had their first experience of leading a person to faith in Christ.

"God has given me a boldness I never knew before," said Scott Reynolds, a Union University student from South Lyon, Mich. He expressed his enthusiasm in the language of a beach packed with college students, "I'm pumped!"

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

Northwest agency  
chooses Childs

N-60  
(NW)

Baptist Press  
3/28/89

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP)--W.L. (Bo) Childs Jr., vice president for administration of the Baptist Foundation of Alabama, has been elected executive director of the Northwest Baptist Foundation in Portland, Ore.

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Childs, 47, will begin his tenure with the foundation April 16. He will work with Southern Baptist churches in Washington, Oregon and Idaho. He will assist Baptists in creating trust accounts designed to help Christian causes throughout the world and will administer about \$5 million in managed accounts.

Before joining the Alabama foundation, Childs was pastor of Parkway Baptist Church in Auburn, Ala. Previously, the Mobile, Ala., native was head cashier at the Alabama Dry Dock and Shipbuilding Co.

Childs is a graduate of Auburn University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

He and his wife, Elizabeth, have two daughters and a son.

Childs' two predecessors in the Northwest job also were from Alabama. Warren C. Trussell Jr., a former Alabama minister, held the post from 1985 to 1988, before returning to be president of the Alabama foundation. John Ferree held the job from 1981 to 1985.

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Supreme Court rejects  
dispute over chaplains

N- BJC

Baptist Press  
3/28/89

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Supreme Court has refused to review a dispute over whether public hospitals may employ chaplains.

In a one-line order, the justices rejected the appeal of three Iowa residents who claimed the employment of chaplains by publicly supported hospitals violates the First Amendment's religion clauses.

The high court's action leaves standing a decision by the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals that upholds the constitutional right of public hospitals to employ chaplains.

The appeals court rejected a challenge that the hiring of a chaplain by Broadlawns Medical Center -- a county public hospital in Polk County, Iowa -- constituted an establishment of religion. Rather, the court found the hospital's action had the secular purpose of enhancing "its wholistic treatment approach to patient care."

In addition, the 8th Circuit held the hiring of a chaplain was a permissible accommodation of hospital patients' free exercise of religion rights.

About half of the in-patients at Broadlawns Medical Center are restricted to the facility's psychiatric ward. The appeals court held such restrictions "constitute a state-imposed burden on the patients' religious practices that the state may appropriately adjust for." (88-1286, Carter v. Broadlawns Medical Center)

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Stetson law students  
win national title

N- CO (Fla)

Baptist Press  
3/28/89

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (BP)--A two-student team from the Stetson University College of Law won the 1989 National Mock Trial Competition, sponsored by the American Bar Association March 18 in Dallas.

Carol McMurrinary of Jacksonville, Fla., and Charles Samarkos of Tarpon Springs, Fla., comprised the winning team for Stetson, a Baptist school. They were coached by Frederick L. Schaub, an assistant state attorney from Clearwater, Fla., and adjunct professor at the law school, and Professor of Law William R. Eleazer.

Stetson defeated a team from another Baptist institution, Samford University's Cumberland Law School of Birmingham, Ala.

Stetson earlier had placed second in its region, behind Cumberland. The top two teams in each of the 11 regions advanced to the national competition in Dallas.

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LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Students who commute aren't new to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, in Louisville, Ky. But students who commute more than 1,000 miles each week are.

For Tom Daku of Kissimmee, Fla. and E. Wayne Shelley of North Myrtle Beach, S.C., commuting means flying round-trip to Louisville each week.

"I feel like we're using modern technology for the Lord's service," said Daku. "The hardship for me would have been moving to Louisville."

For both students, the decision to commute was better than moving their families.

"I knew I had to go, and I knew I had to go to Southern," said Shelley. He estimated his two years of commuting has cost him \$6,500. "It's been a better deal" than moving, he noted.

Shelley and Daku buy 14 tickets each semester. "I paid for three semesters flying and my fourth semester is free," added Shelley. His "free" semester was purchased with frequent-flyer points accumulated over the semesters.

"There are a lot of people like Wayne and me who are being led to seminary, but the cost and thought of moving family is scary," said Daku. "We're only in school 28 weeks of the year."

Daku and Shelley insisted commuting is financially better than uprooting their families for two or three years. Each came to the decision to commute after weighing the pros and cons. They started seminary in the fall of 1987 but began considering seminary several years before.

"It was a long process," said Daku. "I had seen an article in The Tie (seminary alumni magazine) about a guy who commuted from Atlanta."

He and his wife sat down and "put a pencil" to the idea of commuting. Daku figured he would only make a fraction of what his condominium-cleaning business was earning in Florida if he found part-time work in Louisville as a student.

Besides trying to find work for both him and his wife, Martha, Daku was concerned about the expense of moving his four daughters and not being able to find housing in Louisville. They had no guarantees.

The cost of round-trip tickets from Orlando, Fla., to Louisville was from \$120 to \$170 each week. He estimated his commuting costs him \$4,000 a year. "We just did what seemed to be the best option," he said. "The cost of moving my family here would have been astronomical."

"I knew God was telling me to commute," Shelley said, recalling how neither he nor his wife, Betty, wanted to move. Their home already was bought, so moving would have meant selling or boarding it up for two years. Commuting would allow him to continue his involvement in his home church, Lakeside Baptist.

"You don't have to mess up your on-going ministry at home," said Shelley. "I know I'm doing exactly what God wants me to do. We're doing the same thing all the other commuters do. We just do it with a greater distance."

Both students attest the separation from family four days each week isn't too bad. In fact, both agree the time spent with family is probably better than if they lived on campus.

"We probably spend more time with our families this way," said Shelley. They fly out of Louisville each Friday after classes, focus on their families over the weekend and fly back to Louisville on Monday.

"The key is not having classes on Monday," said Daku. They noted their lifestyle enables them to focus their attention on the matters at hand. When they are at seminary, they concentrate on school. When they're home, they concentrate on family.

"Why mess things up for two or three years?" asks Daku. "I'm doing God's will without sacrificing the other members of my family."

Daku has been able to take his family on several trips, all due to frequent-flyer points. He took his 17-year-old daughter to Puerto Rico for a week; his 14-year-old to the Bahamas; the whole family skiing in Utah; his wife to London; and is planning a trip to Paris this summer.

Shelley has met his wife for the weekend in several places across the country. He said it makes things more exciting. The couple also took a trip to London and have a rendezvous in Boston on the calendar.

Both students are firmly convinced this is the only way for them to go to seminary. And they feel the experience has opened many doors for them. "Wherever the Lord wants to send us, we now have no problem," said Daku. "The world's open."

Shelley said he anticipates a "nontraditional" ministry and is in the Christian education program. He will graduate in May. Daku is considering doctoral studies and probably will continue to commute.

Both are convinced flying is the only way to go.

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Mary Royals Driskill is a staff writer for the Western Recorder, Kentucky Baptists' newsjournal.