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May 21, 1991

91-77

**Baptists feed Kurds in
Iran amid uncertainties**

By Art Toalston

NI-FMB

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Southern Baptist feeding operations for Kurdish refugees in Iran have gotten off to an uncertain start.

Twelve Southern Baptist volunteers in Iran have been permitted to set up only two of four outdoor kitchens flown in May 15 and 16 to feed Kurdish refugees in the Kordestan province along Iran's border with Iraq.

Another 12 Southern Baptist volunteers scheduled to leave the United States for Iran May 19 were asked to delay their travel and wait on standby status.

"(It's) a slow start," acknowledged Sam Yeghnazar, pastor of the Iranian Christian Fellowship in London and coordinator for Southern Baptists and Christians in Iran in an effort to feed some 100,000 Kurdish refugees a day. "These are things that one would expect."

Yeghnazar said he is waiting for Iranian relief officials to signal whether the volunteers will be deployed to Kurdish refugee camps where needs are more critical than in the camps where the Southern Baptist feeding operations were initially targeted.

"In the neighboring states, there are many more refugees," Yeghnazar said, "and we're asking (Iranian officials) to give us permission to go."

The two kitchens now functioning in Iran in Kurdish refugee camps were delayed in opening when province officials declared an initial supply of rice purchased in Iran was unsatisfactory. Arrangements had to be made for a replacement supply, Yeghnazar said.

Authorities in Tehran are "very cooperative," he said, but problems have cropped up at the local level.

At the initial sites, the number of refugees has fluctuated, he said. Just before the Southern Baptist teams arrived, the numbers were high, but then dropped when many of the refugees left to explore whether they could safely return to Iraq or find better conditions elsewhere.

Yeghnazar said local officials may be apprehensive about the Southern Baptist volunteers because of the decreased need in the nearby refugee camps as well as Iran's 12-year alienation from the United States stemming from the Ayatollah Khomeini's rise to power.

Six of the 12 Southern Baptist volunteers now in Iran were scheduled to leave the country May 22 as originally planned, Yeghnazar said. The other six were scheduled to leave May 26, also as planned. The latter team will train refugees to operate the outdoor kitchens provided by Southern Baptists. Each kitchen, valued at \$15,500, includes 10 portable stoves and a water purification system capable of processing 10,000 gallons a day.

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Local officials have not permitted a Southern Baptist writer, photographer and two-man video crew accompanying the relief teams to cover the feeding operation, Yeghnazar said. "I don't know why," he added, speculating they possibly hesitate to permit pictures of camps with dwindling numbers of refugees.

Yeghnazar said none of the Southern Baptist volunteers in Iran had been mistreated. "The difficulty is that ... we haven't been able to move as fast as we hoped," he said. The situation should become clearer in "another day or so. The picture changes so fast. I think things now are going to go towards the better."

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Evangelists hear Gage, Ayers,
Criswell in annual meeting

Baptist Press
5/21/91

N-CO

ATLANTA (BP)--The Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists will hear two vocational evangelists and a pastor at its 33rd annual meeting June 5 at Atlanta's Baptist Tabernacle.

The 1:30 p.m. meeting will feature Rick Gage, Atlanta evangelist, and Walter K. Ayers, evangelist from Garland, Texas. W.A. Criswell, pastor emeritus of First Baptist Church of Dallas, also will address the conference.

Theme for the conference is "Let's Have A Revival." Singers for the conference include Luke Garrett, Mobile, Ala., and Daisy McGrew, Atlanta. The trio, Greater Vision, also will bring special music. Mike Speck will lead the music program.

The conference will hold its annual banquet at 5 p.m. on Wednesday at the Omni Hotel Ballroom with Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark., as the speaker. Afterglows will be held Tuesday and Wednesday nights at 10:00.

Officers for the group are: Bailey Smith, president, Atlanta; Steve Hale, vice president, Evansville, Ind.; Ron Pledger, secretary/treasurer, Commerce, Ga.; Ronnie Floyd, pastor advisor, Springdale, Ark.; Perry Neal, parliamentarian, Montgomery, Ala.; Mike Speck, music director, Owasso, Okla.; and Pat Roper, assistant music director, Greenville, S.C.

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Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists

June 5, 1991

Atlanta Baptist Tabernacle

LET'S HAVE A REVIVAL

Wednesday afternoon

2:00 Congregational Singing -- Mike Speck, music director, Atlanta
 2:05 Special Music -- Daisy McGrew, singer, Atlanta
 2:15 Message -- Rick Gage, evangelist, Atlanta
 2:50 Congregational Singing
 2:55 Recognition of Evangelists
 3:00 Special Music -- Luke Garrett, singer, Mobile, Ala.
 3:15 Message -- Walter K. Ayers, evangelist, Garland, Texas
 3:50 Offertory
 4:00 Special Music -- Greater Vision
 4:15 Message -- W.A. Criswell, pastor emeritus, First Baptist Church of Dallas
 4:55 Benediction

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Freddie Gage honored for
evangelistic ministry

N-CC

ATLANTA (BP)--Forty years of service in evangelism and ministry will be recognized at a special celebration for Southern Baptist evangelist Freddie Gage at the conclusion of the Southern Baptist Pastors' Conference June 3 in Atlanta.

The longtime evangelist and his wife, Barbara, will be honored at a reception in the Continental Ballroom of the Hyatt Regency International Tower from 9:30 to 11:30 p.m. Friends of the family, including four sons, Daniel, Rick, Rodney and Paul, will host the reception.

Morris H. Chapman, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, compared Gage to John Wesley, William Carey and David Brainerd.

"Freddie Gage has John Wesley's commission ... Just as William Carey labored in India for 40 years ministering to the unloved and the untouchables, Freddie Gage has sought out the troubled, the depressed and the enslaved. He has Carey's consistency. Just as David Brainerd poured out his health in reaching the Indians of America, literally years of Freddie's life have been spent along and on the road. He has Brainerd's compassion," said Chapman, pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas.

"Outside of Billy Graham, perhaps no other Southern Baptist has influenced so many to turn to Jesus, many of whom are now serving as missionaries, pastors and evangelists in our great denomination," said Chapman.

Bailey E. Smith, president of the Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists, said Gage and his wife are celebrating their 40th year of full-time vocational evangelism.

"Freddie Gage has been identified as the dean of Southern Baptist evangelists," said Smith, evangelist from Atlanta.

"Freddie Gage knows more about evangelism than any man I know," said Darrell Robinson, vice president of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Phil Lineberger of Richardson, Texas, pastor and president of the Texas Baptist Convention, said he was saved during a revival preached by Gage 35 years ago.

"We (he and his sister) were fortunate to be there to hear (Gage), a fire-breathing young evangelist," said Lineberger. "Only eternity will tell what (Gage's) ministry has meant to kids like us."

Gage has preached to more than 10 million people in more than 1,350 crusades with 10,000 churches. More than one million professions of faith have been recorded under his preaching.

The host committee for the reception include: Chapman, Smith, Stan Coffey, James T. Draper Jr., Tom Elliff, Paul Gage, Jack Graham, Kelly Green, O.S. Hawkins, Richard Lee, Nelson Price, Adrian Rogers, Ralph Smith, Charles Stanley, Jay Strack, Jerry Vines, Jim Wilson, Fred Wolfe and Edwin Young.

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Christian Life Commission
publishes public policy newsletter

N-CLC

Baptist Press
5/21/91

WASHINGTON (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has published its inaugural issue of a public policy newsletter designed to help Southern Baptists increase the effectiveness of their influence in the federal government.

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The first issue of Salt was mailed on May 15. The newsletter, which is scheduled to be published four times in its first year, originates in the CLC's recently expanded Washington office.

Salt addresses the public policy aspects of the moral, social, ethical and religious liberty concerns assigned to the CLC. The first issue deals with topics as a Supreme Court case on prayer at public school graduations and government funding of sacrilegious and sexually explicit art. There also is a summary of legislation being considered or to be considered in Congress that includes the Religious Freedom Restoration Act as well as bills on sports gambling and parental notification for abortions on minors.

"Salt will help Southern Baptists stay informed on how moral, public policy and church-state issues are being dealt with in our nation's capital," said Richard D. Land, executive director of the CLC. "Ultimately, the goal of this publication will be accomplished only if it moves people of faith to action."

Light, the CLC's 16-page magazine, will continue to be produced quarterly. Persons who receive Light also will receive Salt.

The names Salt and Light are derived from the CLC's theme on its logo, "You are the salt of the earth; you are the light of the world," taken from Matthew 5:13-14.

Salt was approved as a new publication by the SBC Executive Committee in February.

The newsletter may be received by sending requests to Christian Life Commission, P.O. Box 25266, Nashville, TN 37202-5266.

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WMU national office
to close June 3

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5/21/91

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--The national office of Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union will be closed Monday, June 3, to allow all employees to attend the WMU annual meeting at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

The building will reopen on Tuesday, June 4.

Incoming calls to WMU's general phone number, (205) 991-8100, will be answered by an answering machine. Any messages which are left on Monday will be delivered to the appropriate staff members on the following day.

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NOBTS graduates told
to 'keep your vows'

By Breena Kent Paine

Baptist Press
5/21/91

NEW ORLEANS (BP)--"Keep your vows," Landrum P. Leavell II urged graduates during May 17 commencement exercises at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

Addressing 188 candidates for graduation, the seminary president said, "The priority you give to your vows is evidence of the integrity you have."

First, ministers show their integrity by keeping their marriage vows. "A vow made ought to be a vow kept until death," said Leavell, a native of Ripley, Tenn., and former pastor of First Baptist Church of Wichita Falls, Texas. "There is a lack of integrity when one can renounce totally a commitment to a human being as if it had never been made."

Second, ministers should adhere to their monetary vows of tithing. "God has called you to be a leader and if you don't have enough faith to trust God with your material possessions and be a storehouse tither," Leavell said, "you don't have enough integrity to make it in the ministry."

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Third, graduates should remember their commitment to ministry, that "vow you made to God to follow his direction and serve him," Leavell said.

Those graduating should not consider themselves at the conclusion of their training, or at the beginning of an interim period in their ministry, Leavell said. "If you are possessed with Christian integrity, settle down. Stop looking. You've found it. ... Make only long-term plans that focus on the ministry to which you have been called."

"We're experiencing a malaise moving through our society, and the ministry is not immune to it," he continued. "If you don't experience this malaise -- a gut feeling that all is not well -- then you must be an ostrich with your head in the sand."

"There are evidences of a lack of integrity," Leavell explained. "Sometimes a preacher or staff member will say God is leading him or her to do a particular thing. After a short time, however, he goes on to greener pastures."

"God doesn't lead you to lie. If you make a commitment, then live that commitment," he charged. "If you do (lie), accept the blame yourself and don't blame God."

"The real secret to ministry," Leavell concluded, "is to keep your vows. ... The work of the kingdom of God is (marching) onward today because of those who have made vows to God and are keeping them."

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Like Coke, churches should have different flavors, Warren says

By Mark Wingfield

F-NMB

Baptist Press
5/21/91

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Southern Baptists should learn a lesson from The Coca-Cola Co., Rick Warren said.

Warren, pastor of Saddleback Valley Community Church in Mission Viejo, Calif., spoke during the first School of Evangelism and Church Growth sponsored by the Home Mission Board at Glorieta Baptist Conference Center.

In the same way The Coca-Cola Co. has used different products to penetrate different markets, Southern Baptists should start different types of churches to take the gospel to different types of people, he explained.

"The world is full of choices," Warren noted. "There used to be just one kind of Coke, but now there are 12. There's Classic Coke, New Coke, Diet Coke, Cherry Coke, Caffeine-free Coke ..."

"We usually offer just two choices -- take it or leave it."

Warren compared traditional churches to Classic Coke. "They're doing it the way we've always done it, and it's working."

But other churches are like New Coke, he said, and are able to reach people who don't like the classic, or traditional, church format.

"If we're serious about winning America, we've got to have 12 brands of Coke," Warren said. He was referring to the methods a church uses and not suggesting the church should change its beliefs about the gospel.

Developing new church styles means other pastors should not strive to duplicate what he has done at the Saddleback Church, he cautioned, explaining methods that work vary by location and context.

Warren encouraged pastors to find their own niche. "We don't need more people like me. The world needs more people like you."

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Despite different styles, pastoral leadership is the one common factor in all growing churches, he said. "God uses the person who has a dream. A church will never be larger than its vision. If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it."

Warren told pastors they can delegate many responsibilities in the church, but not faith. "You cannot delegate faith in God. Your No. 1 task as a leader is to dream dreams."

Pastoral success is not measured by the total number of people reached but by how effective the church is in its community, Warren stated. "Forget the total number of people in your church. Look at percentages.

"Many of you are more successful than these superchurch pastors because of the percentage of your community you are reaching."

Warren urged pastors to risk failure for the sake of the gospel.

"Failure is not not reaching your goal. Failure is not setting a goal.

"Don't be afraid to go out on a limb. That's where the fruit is. You haven't really believed God until you've attempted something bigger than your flesh can accomplish.

"Most churches are just good excuses for atheists. I want my church to be an embarrassment to the devil."

Although pastors face many circumstances beyond their control, "the one thing you have control over is how much you will believe God," Warren said.

He urged pastors not to despair when their vision of God's plan appears fuzzy. Seeing God's vision is like watching a Polaroid photograph develop, he explained: "The longer it goes the clearer it gets."

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Eight-year strategy planned
to evangelize ethnic America

By Sarah Zimmerman

N-HMB

Baptist Press
5/21/81

MIAMI (BP)--Beginning with Hispanics in 1992, Southern Baptists will concentrate evangelistic efforts on a specific language group each year through 1999.

Strategy for "Language Thrust A.D. 2000" was explained during a conference for catalytic home missionaries in Miami. The eight-year thrust is a joint venture of the Home Mission Board's language church extension division and evangelism section.

Ethnic leaders will help develop strategy for their groups, said Oscar Romo, HMB language church extension director. For example, he said Hispanics are considering crusades in the fall of 1992, but other groups may take different approaches to their evangelistic thrust.

Romo said he expects the strategy to produce new churches, additional ministries and church growth.

"We're excited about this, and we believe it's an overdue process," said Ken Carter, associate vice president in the HMB evangelism section. "By focusing on one group a year, we will have a consistent plan."

The thrust is designed to train people for evangelism leadership and develop materials specifically for language groups that can be used in future years, Carter said..

Focus groups for each year are: Hispanic, 1992; Caribbean and deaf, 1993; Filipino, Korean and Pacific Islander, 1994; Indochinese, Middle Eastern and Sub-Sahara, 1995; Asian Indian, Chinese and Japanese, 1996; American Indian, 1997; Eastern European, 1998; and Western European, 1999.

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Language Scripture
distribution planned

By Sarah Zimmerman

N-NMB

MIAMI (BP)--During two months next year, Southern Baptists will be asked to deliver Scriptures in languages other than English to every ethnic person in their communities.

A recent study shows people from at least one ethnic group reside in every Southern Baptist association in the United States, said Tom Wright, director of the Home Mission Board's language church development department.

The Scripture distribution is set for September and October of 1992, but Wright said churches should begin planning for the project now. Participating churches need to include money to buy the language Scriptures in their 1992 budgets and begin identifying ethnic groups in their neighborhoods, he said. A guide for interested churches is scheduled to be available from the Home Mission Board customer service center by July 1991.

The Evangelistic Language Scripture Distribution plan was announced during a conference for catalytic home missionaries in Miami.

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Indigenous leaders called
essential to ethnic church growth

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
5/21/91

F-NMB

MIAMI (BP)--Sharing Christ with North America's growing ethnic population is a task Anglo Christians will not be able to accomplish alone. It requires recruiting and training leaders from the ethnic groups, two home missionaries claim.

"Our mission work is not done in any place until we train indigenous leaders," said Gerald Wortman, missionary with Cree Indians in Prince Albert, Canada. "I can win one, but they can win the masses."

"If all I ever do in the Kingdom of God is help two or three Cree Indians come to understand what it really means to believe in Jesus Christ and what it means to follow him, all of my work is worthwhile."

James DeGuire, missionary among Hispanics in Albany, Ga., agreed.

"We're not going to reach the multitudes without leaders from among the people," DeGuire said. "We may love the people and they may love us, but it's not the same."

DeGuire told fellow missionaries attending a catalytic missionary conference in Miami they should not be intimidated by the success of ethnic leaders they have trained. "Should Andrew have felt bad because Peter had such a great ministry?" he asked.

Yet DeGuire said several obstacles face ethnic leaders seeking further training. Many of them cannot afford to attend school full time, and uprooting their families to attend school is often impractical, he said, noting the level of English skills required by some schools prohibits many ethnic leaders from attending.

"We must develop the means to train leaders where they are," DeGuire said.

Two training approaches offered by Southern Baptists are Ethnic Leadership Development centers and Schools of Prophets.

Currently, about 1,300 students study at more than 90 Ethnic Leadership Development centers across the country, said Jose Hernandez, director of the Home Mission Board's language resource correlation department.

At leadership development centers, students can earn a certificate in Christian ministries by completing a 24-hour program. Courses usually are taught by local pastors in the students' native language.

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The School of Prophets is designed to be a 10-hour continuing education course, but can be tailor-made for each situation, said Tom Wright, director of HMB language church development. The schools have been sponsored by churches, associations and state conventions.

The United States includes 500 ethnic groups communicating in 636 languages and dialects, said Oscar Romo, director of HMB language church extension.

Ethnic church leaders "should be culturally and linguistically compatible with the group they serve," Romo said. "The equipping of these leaders should include the best theological training, without leading them to negate their unique cultural and linguistic ability."

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Brotherhood breakfast to honor Smith;
Powell of Joint Chiefs may speak

By Steve Barber

N-60
(BHOOD)

Baptist Press
5/21/91

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission will dedicate its annual Brotherhood Breakfast at the Southern Baptist Convention to James H. Smith, agency president since 1979, who plans to retire June 30.

Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, has received an invitation to serve as featured speaker for the event, scheduled for Atlanta's Omni Hotel on Wednesday, June 5, but has yet to confirm his plans.

Starting time for the event is 6:30 a.m.

The breakfast also will honor this year's winner of the High School Baptist Young Men's National Missions Speak Out Award. Warren Kinghorn, a 10th-grade student from Edwards Road Baptist Church in Greenville, S.C., will deliver his winning speech.

In addition, 16 honorees will receive the International Legion of Royal Ambassador Leaders Award of Merit, created in 1989 to recognize the contributions of professional and lay leaders to the Brotherhood Commission's program for boys in grades 1-9.

Honorees in full-time Christian service are Robert T. "Bob" Banks, Atlanta; Frank Black, Memphis, Tenn.; and Samson Olaniyan, Ibadan, Nigeria, West Africa.

Laypersons to be honored include Ozro "Ozzie" Berryhill, North Little Rock, Ark.; Larry Blanchard, Lindale, Texas; Jim Burchette, Raleigh, N.C.; W.B. "Bill" Carson, Miami; Carson E. "Nick" Deskins, Kingsport, Tenn.; Jerry Kelly, Mooresville, N.C.; Clyde Kemp, Ardmore, Okla.; Wayne Robinson, Montgomery, Ala.; and Richard Woods, Springfield, Mo.

Posthumous awards will honor Ralph Faires, Calvin Day Fields, Stan Riehn, and Juliette Mather.

Also at the breakfast, a group of 15 High School Baptist Young Men will be recognized as recipients of the Missions Challenge National Award, the highest level of achievement in the Brotherhood Commission's program for young men in grades 10-12.

Tickets for the breakfast are \$13 per person and will be available at the SBC Missions Day Camp registration booth and the Brotherhood Commission display in the convention exhibit area.

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High School Baptist Young Men
name National Speak Out winner

By Steve Barber

N-60
(BHOOD)

Baptist Press
5/21/91

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Warren Kinghorn of Greenville, S.C., has been selected winner of the 1991 Jerry Clower National High School Baptist Young Men Missions Speak Out. The annual competition is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

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Kinghorn, a sophomore at Wade Hampton High School in Greenville, won the award in competition with finalists who represented nine SBC state conventions.

The award is named for Christian comedian Jerry Clower, a longtime supporter of the Brotherhood Commission's missions education programs for men and boys in Southern Baptist churches.

Kinghorn's original speech, entitled "Encountering God Through Bible Study," was videotaped and sent to Memphis for judging at the Brotherhood Commission.

As the national winner, Kinghorn will receive an expense-paid trip to the Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Atlanta, where he will deliver his winning speech during the annual Brotherhood Breakfast on Wednesday, June 5.

He also will receive a college scholarship award, presented by the Brotherhood Commission's board of trustees.

Kinghorn is an active member of Edwards Road Baptist Church in Greenville and its High School Baptist Young Men's unit. He is the son of Andy and Betsy Kinghorn.

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Brotherhood concludes
three-year training cycle

By Steve Barber

Baptist Press
5/21/91

LINDEN, Tenn. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission ended an experimental, three-year cycle of training conferences May 19 with the conclusion of the National Brotherhood Certification event at Camp Linden Baptist Assembly.

The three-day gathering attracted more than 200 Southern Baptists involved in church and associational Brotherhood work across the United States.

In all, more than 700 Brotherhood leaders have been trained for service since the cycle began.

"We offered training at Royal Ambassador University for RA leaders in 1989 and at Baptist Men's University for those involved in men's work last year," said James H. Smith, Brotherhood Commission president. "This cycle has been so rewarding for the trainees and so informative for the staff that we've already decided to start it again next year."

Royal Ambassador University is scheduled for May 28-31, 1992, on the campus of Rhodes College in Memphis.

The agency has not confirmed its plans for 1993 and beyond, but the addition of more comprehensive training in language and ethnic work is being considered.

Participants in this year's event chose training in one of four distinct areas of service, including Associational Brotherhood, for all associational Brotherhood workers and missions staff; Disaster Relief, for those seeking the SBC Disaster Relief certification; and Adventure Recreation, for training in teaching cooperation and communication using indoor and outdoor events.

Those who selected the Adult Brotherhood Campcraft track slogged through a rain-soaked weekend in "the great outdoors" on their way to certification.

"I was thinking we might have to send the Disaster Relief folks out to feed the campers," said a member of the event staff. "I don't know how they got a fire started out there, but somehow they really came through in style."

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