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FMB selects interim chief;
10 candidates top search list

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
8/21/92

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board voted unanimously Aug. 19 for Don Kammerdiener to serve as the board's interim president after President R. Keith Parks retires Oct. 30.

Kammerdiener, 56, a 30-year veteran of Southern Baptist foreign missions, also will continue to serve as executive vice president, a post he has held since Jan. 1, 1990.

In other action, trustees heard a report from the committee searching for a successor to Parks, voted to support an effort by trustee chairman John Jackson to dialogue with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, approved 36 missionary candidates and elected Michael Stroope, 40, of Dallas, area director for Cooperative Services International. He will direct field personnel and administration for the Southern Baptist aid organization from a base in London, where he has worked since 1990 as its western region coordinator.

Trustees and staff also confronted difficulties and differing opinions on how to move more quickly to implement ministries both in Eastern Europe and through the board's ambitious "Green Alert" program in the countries of the former Soviet Union.

They also heard Bill Gothard, head of the Institute of Basic Life Principles, and Jack Johnson, president of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission, tell about efforts they have begun in the former Soviet Union.

Trustees voted unanimously to ask staff, who already had met with Radio and Television Commission staff members, to discuss ways to team up in evangelistic efforts in the former Soviet Union.

A 15-person committee searching for a successor to Parks may present a candidate for trustee approval in three to six months, according to Joel Gregory of Dallas, chairman of the search committee.

In a separate action, trustees decided unanimously they must elect the new president by at least a 75 percent majority.

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Gregory said the committee, which has held five meetings and a telephone conference, has winnowed names of more than 60 candidates into three levels or tiers -- with six names in the top tier for primary consideration and four names in the second tier for secondary consideration.

"That doesn't mean we will limit future consideration only to those names," Gregory said. "Nominations may still be submitted for consideration at future meetings." The next two committee sessions are set for Aug. 28-29 and Sept. 25-26.

Gregory, seeking to dispel rumors the committee entered the process with a preconceived opinion about Parks' successor, said the committee has deliberated with an open mind, taken each candidate seriously, relied extensively on prayer and Scripture and approached the task without "any inclination other than to find the mind of the Lord."

The Foreign Mission Board dialogue with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, tentatively set for Oct. 15, grew out of a July 27 dialogue between leaders of the FMB and the Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union.

At that time, FMB trustee chairman Jackson agreed to initiate a dialogue with the Fellowship, an organization of Southern Baptist churches formed in protest to the Southern Baptist Convention's current leadership and direction.

WMU leaders asked Jackson to explain to CBF the FMB's position on appointing people as missionaries who have been involved with the Fellowship. Jackson said the dialogue with CBF would seek "to alleviate misconceptions on the appointment process" and discuss other matters of concern.

"Last night (Aug. 18) the board appointed an Oklahoma couple from a church in sympathy with the CBF," Jackson told the trustees. "That shows we appoint qualified people, not churches."

Jackson referred to Stephen and Pamela DeVoss, appointed the previous evening for work in east Asia. DeVoss had been minister of youth at First Baptist Church in Norman, Okla., since 1983. The church channels support through the CBF but still gives the large majority of its money through the Southern Baptist Cooperative Program, according to pastor Lavonn Brown, a member of the CBF's coordinating council.

The trustee chairman also announced he and other board representatives will take part in another dialogue Sept. 11-12 in Hamburg, Germany, with leaders of the European Baptist Federation. They will seek to strengthen relationships strained in the aftermath of the trustees' decision to defund the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and the consequent early retirement of the board's two top administrators for Europe.

In light of these events some trustees asked questions in committee meetings and at the board's plenary session about whether some missionaries and administrators could fairly interpret the views of trustees and where their loyalties lie. Some wondered if missionaries might be holding up the flow of personnel in Europe because of sympathies with the CBF, which says it is the process of building its own missions force, mainly in Europe.

But Jackson said most trustees aren't worried as much about CBF connections and missionary loyalty as they are in being able to move more quickly in conjunction with staff and missionaries "to seize vital opportunities in the former Soviet Union and to use volunteers more effectively there and in Europe."

Trustees have expressed concern the board is not moving fast enough to get new missionaries and volunteers into Europe and in the Green Alert effort in the former Soviet Union. They have felt the pressure of many churches and organizations which want to move quickly into action.

Board administrators have struggled with how to channel the flood of interest in volunteerism without allowing it to overwhelm career missionaries, interfere with placement of qualified career personnel or impede mission strategy. At the next meeting of the board's strategy committee trustees plan to devote most, if not all, their time to study how to incorporate greater numbers of volunteers.

Meanwhile, Sam James, the new vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, has been developing a plan to incorporate more volunteers into the board's long-range strategy and philosophy of sending career missionaries. He said he will present it at the board's October meeting.

James told trustees he will select several mission workers as a team for coordinating volunteers in Eastern Europe. Led by a career missionary, they will plan projects with churches and help volunteers when they come.

The board has been severely criticized when would-be volunteers were unable to find a tie with Southern Baptist work in newly open, formerly communist countries. Some volunteers have accused the board of losing out on opportunity or even blocking their own efforts to reach the region for Jesus Christ, James said. Many have channeled their energy through agencies unrelated to Southern Baptists.

Gothard and Johnson both came to the board meeting at the invitation of trustee chairman Jackson who said he invited them to expose trustees to other effective missions approaches.

The purpose of Gothard speaking to trustees was not to develop a co-partnership with his ministry but to expose trustees to his principle of ministering as a servant through government channels, Jackson said.

Gothard, an evangelical family life specialist, told trustees in a special session about opportunities to lead seminars and teach biblical principles in Russian schools.

More than 3,000 parents, students and teachers attended weekend seminars in the first 19 schools that participated in the program, he said. Gothard expects more than a third of a million people will participate in the program when the fifth group of students starts teaching in 2,013 Russian schools.

Gothard has agreed to send families to live in Russian orphanages "to train them (the orphans) in the ways of God."

He also noted he has developed opportunities, at the request of city officials, to work in several major cities in the United States rehabilitating juvenile delinquents through use of discipline and biblical principles."

Radio and Television Commission President Johnson said his agency can offer missionaries and Russian Baptists almost immediate access to millions of TV viewers around the Russian city of St. Petersburg and in other areas harder to reach. He said his agency is working through commercial television in the region to air family-centered programs two hours a week, with plans to expand.

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CBF leader lists 6 questions
he will pose to FMB leaders

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
8/21/92

ATLANTA (BP)--Cecil Sherman has listed six questions he intends to pose in an Oct. 15 dialogue with Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board leaders.

Sherman, coordinator of the Atlanta-based Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Southern Baptist moderates, said in a column in the Aug. 20 issue of the moderates' Baptists Today periodical that "I suppose it would be appropriate for me to go public with my questions."

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Atop Sherman's list of questions is: "Why did (FMB President) Keith Parks resign if there have been no substantive changes at the FMB?" as trustees contend.

John Jackson, FMB trustee chairman, told Baptist Press he is willing to answer any questions related to the board. But he noted he will not be attending the dialogue alone in behalf of the board and it would be inappropriate for him to respond as an individual to Sherman's questions prior to the October meeting.

Jackson said he will be joined at the meeting by Don Kammerdiener, FMB executive vice president, named by trustees to become interim president Oct. 1 of the Richmond-based agency; Harlan Spurgeon, board vice president for mission personnel; trustee Phyllis Randall, who chairs the trustee mission personnel committee; and trustee Pat Bullock, vice chairman of the same committee.

Jackson said the group has the expertise to answer any questions that will arise during the meeting with CBF representatives.

Sherman's other questions are:

-- "Why did Isam Ballenger (former vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa) and Keith Parker (former Europe area director) resign if there have been no real changes at the FMB?"

-- "Why do European Baptists view the present FMB with real suspicion unless they fear the exporting of our 'controversy?' Are Europeans just suspicious by nature, or do they have some reasons for their attitudes?"

-- "What does it mean that Paul Pressler (Texas judge and former SBC Executive Committee member) is now a member of the FMB? Does that sound like there is no theological agenda to come forth from Richmond?"

-- "Why do more than 60 missionaries write to CBF to ask appointment? They want to quit the FMB and serve through us. Are these missionaries confused about the FMB? Or have they found some real changes coming out of Richmond?"

-- "Why can the WMU (Woman's Missionary Union) not serve Baptist missionaries whether they serve through CBF or FMB? Do these missionaries take on some ugly appearance once they come to us?"

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Robert O'Brien contributed to this story.

FMB plans way to open door wider
for volunteers in Eastern Europe

By Marty Croll

Baptist Press
8/21/92

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board plans to open the door wider for short-term volunteers in Eastern Europe and will look for ways volunteers can play a more significant role elsewhere.

At the board trustees' Aug. 17-19 meeting, regional vice president Sam James said he will form a team of mission workers to coordinate volunteers in Eastern Europe. The workers, led by a career missionary, will plan projects with churches in the region and help volunteers when they come.

"This is a major step," James said. "I don't think we have done this kind of thing in any other area of the world. Never before have we had such an opportunity to utilize the tremendous potential of volunteers to strengthen our career missionary programs."

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Volunteers' appetite for personal evangelism in the former Soviet Union has overwhelmed mission workers, James said. Thousands have visited for preaching and evangelism tours since communism crashed. Volunteers have come so thick and fast, reports missionary George Lozuk in Moscow, that he's been able to do little else than plan and coordinate their visits.

The board has been severely criticized when would-be volunteers are unable to find a tie with Southern Baptist work in newly open, formerly communist countries. Some volunteers have accused the board of losing out to opportunity or even blocking their own efforts to reach the region for Jesus Christ, James said. Many have channeled their energy through agencies unrelated to Southern Baptists.

This "almost unheard-of expression" of interest by volunteers in the region will result in "a whole new type of missionary endeavor," said trustee Leroy "Skip" Smith, chairman of the regional committee for Europe, North Africa and the Middle East.

"We've heard a lot this week about paradigms and the changing of our outlook," he told trustees in their general session. "Europe is going to be one of the spearheads in the changing of paradigms as we look at the use of our volunteers in missions there."

One of the earliest mentions during the meeting of the word "paradigm" -- a pattern or model of thinking and action -- came from visiting speaker Bill Gothard. He leads the family-oriented Institute in Basic Life Principles (formerly Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts) seminars around the nation.

Gothard likened the Foreign Mission Board to a Swiss watch -- well-known and highly respected. But he told how Swiss watchmakers lost their ability to serve the marketplace when they were unable to envision the potential in new watchmaking methods. Parameters within which they had found past success limited their thinking for the future, he said.

Board administrators have struggled with how to channel the overwhelming interest in volunteerism without allowing it to impede mission strategy. At their next meeting trustees in the strategy committee plan to devote most of their agenda to studying how to incorporate greater numbers of volunteers into board strategy.

"It appears that in the future the number of volunteers will be much greater," said board chairman John Jackson. "I believe we must learn how to mesh with the volunteers God is leading to do short-term missions."

"It's not as though our missionaries are holding back," observed Don Kammerdiener, executive vice president for the board. But volunteers overseas need a system in which to operate. At issue is how much of the Foreign Mission Board's missionary program should function as that system.

Many trustees say opportunities for evangelism are being missed while career missionaries are being assigned and prepared for the field.

"They're not seeing things moving as fast as they'd like to see," Jackson said. "We might be living in a day when we may have to do missions differently than we have been."

In Europe, the new volunteer coordinator will plan strategically on the field to ensure volunteer efforts will be followed up and results will benefit long-range needs of missionaries and Baptists in the region, James said.

James will be looking for someone who has worked extensively in volunteer evangelism projects and recognizes the power of the volunteer movement, yet respects long-term mission strategies and is committed to them, he said.

Board administrators reminded trustees many requests for volunteers and missionaries have gone unfilled in the former Soviet Union -- especially openings in Muslim areas or outside major cities like St. Petersburg and Moscow. They asked trustees to encourage Southern Baptists to answer God's call to less popular, more difficult places of service.

Channel-sharing deal offers Baptists
'electronic Mars Hill,' officials say By Ken Camp

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Channel sharing by the American Christian Television System and the Vision Interfaith Satellite Network can provide Southern Baptists an "electronic Mars Hill" for proclaiming the gospel in the open marketplace of ideas, network executives told ACTS affiliates in a 90-minute Aug. 20 teleconference.

Last month, Southern Baptists' ACTS network finalized agreements with VISN to share a common channel reaching up to 21 million households. According to the agreement, the two networks will maintain their own identities and separate program times on the shared channel to be launched Oct. 1.

Initially, several key ACTS affiliates expressed serious concern about their evangelical Christian programs appearing on the same channel as programs promoting faiths they consider cultic, such as the Mormons. VISN was begun in 1988 by the National Interfaith Cable Coalition, Inc., a 28-member consortium representing 54 faiths including Roman Catholic, Jewish and Eastern Orthodox groups.

However, of the dozen affiliates who asked questions during the teleconference, most queries dealt with "nuts and bolts" issues such as local preemption of network programming, user fees and satellite signals. Few questions directly concerned the specific theological content of programs on VISN.

After the teleconference, Richard McCartney, executive vice president of the Radio and Television Commission, told Baptist Press he was not aware of any affiliates to date who have dropped out of ACTS due to the agreement with VISN but acknowledged it still is a possibility.

Fielding questions from affiliates were McCartney, Jack Johnson, president of the Radio and Television Commission, and Mike Wright, vice president for network operations with ACTS. They were joined by Bill Airy, president of Vision Group Inc., the marketing and support services arm of the VISN network, a subsidiary of the Denver-based TCI cable system.

Expansion and expenses were the key reasons for entering the channel-sharing agreement, officials told the affiliates.

ACTS, which went on the air in 1984, currently broadcasts 24 hours a day to some 8.2 million households primarily in the South and Southwest. VISN currently reaches an estimated 12.8 million households through 712 cable systems, mostly in the North and West.

ACTS will be seen in about 1,000 new communities beginning Oct. 1, Johnson noted, including New York, much of the greater Los Angeles area, Chicago and Salt Lake City.

"Overnight on Oct. 1, we will double the number of places our signal can be received," McCartney said. The shared channel immediately will make ACTS-VISN the second largest religious network. Only the Catholic Mother Angelica's Eternal Word Television Network can claim access to more households, some 27 million.

ACTS-VISN is expected to seize the No. 1 spot quickly, with an anticipated potential audience of 30 million households by the end of 1993, Johnson predicted.

The channel-sharing arrangement also provided a financial boon to both networks, the executives noted. Specifically, the agreement allows ACTS during the coming year to avoid a \$3.7 million expenditure that would have come from moving to a new satellite.

Under the agreement, ACTS will transmit via a satellite currently used by VISN. ACTS will pay no user fee for the satellite, but the network will be responsible for getting its programs to Denver for transmission by VISN.

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Johnson pointed out the previously anticipated \$3.7 million satellite cost would have come from an expected \$5.5 million budget.

"You couldn't make that kind of house payment out of your household budget," he told affiliates. "We couldn't either."

Heading off questions regarding program content by other faiths on VISN, Johnson in his opening remarks stressed appearing on the same channel as another program does not constitute an endorsement of it.

"We do documentaries for ABC and NBC but that does not imply carte blanche approval of all they do," he said.

McCartney emphasized the missions opportunity presented by having evangelistic programs appearing in a common forum along with telecasts representing other faith perspectives.

"I believe the gospel preached by evangelical Christians, and by Baptists in particular, is able to stand up in the open marketplace of ideas," he said.

Airy said affiliates would be provided with a VISN program guide that includes a complete list of National Interfaith Cable Coalition members. He pointed out all members are from the Judeo-Christian tradition, though he noted the term is so broadly defined as to include Mormons, Christian Scientists and Unitarian-Universalists.

However, Airy said he could not recall any programs produced by the Unitarians appearing on VISN, and Christian Science programs have been primarily news-oriented along the lines of their Christian Science Monitor newspaper.

Airy drew upon the biblical account of the Apostle Paul preaching to the philosophers at Mars Hill in Athens, surrounded by altars to many deities but proclaiming the truth of the one true God.

"This could be a new Mars Hill experience" for the proclamation of the gospel in the open marketplace of ideas, Airy said, "a modernized, electronic Mars Hill."

Two items were non-negotiable in discussions leading to the channel-sharing agreement, McCartney said: ACTS would retain its own identity and organization and local affiliates would retain the ability to preempt network programming to air locally produced programs.

"We have protected you even at the expense of some things we would have liked for ourselves," Johnson said. "The network has lost time. You have lost none."

Programming times for ACTS on "VISN-ACTS, The Faith and Values Channel" will be 10 a.m.-1 p.m., 5-6 p.m., 10 p.m.-midnight and 4-6 a.m., Eastern Standard Time.

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VISN-ACTS logo available upon request from the RTVC.

Home missionary complains
of ACTS network link to VISN

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
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ATLANTA (BP)--A Southern Baptist home missionary is "extremely upset" by the ACTS network decision to share a channel with VISN, but his opinion does not represent the Home Mission Board, the agency's executive vice president said.

Bill Gordon, HMB interfaith witness department eastern U.S. area director, issued his four-paragraph statement through SBCNet, a computer network sponsored by the Sunday School Board. About 150 outlets access SBCNet each week.

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Bob Banks, HMB executive vice president, said Gordon's letter expresses his personal opinion, not a Home Mission Board statement.

Gordon's complaints concern cult groups having access to programming on the same channel as ACTS. VISN includes programming from a variety of religions, including Christian Science, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) and Unitarian-Universalists, according to Gordon's letter.

Under the agreement, VISN will present 16 hours of programming each day while ACTS will present eight hours. Southern Baptists' Radio and Television Commission approved the shared channel July 28, with the programming to take effect Oct. 1.

Gordon also expressed concern about not being able to teach about false doctrines through the ACTS network. The agreement with VISN prohibits maligning of other faiths as well as on-air solicitation of donations and proselyting.

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Inner-city marches
combat gang activity

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press
8/21/92

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--At 5 p.m. Friday the only traffic jam in Albuquerque's inner city is at a liquor store drive-through window. But within an hour, pedestrian traffic will be shoulder to shoulder on the main thoroughfare.

The human bottleneck, initiated by home missionary Ken Goode, is protesting gang violence that has wrecked the neighborhood.

The Baptist Neighborhood Center which Goode directs used to be a regular victim of gang destruction as its walls were easels for graffiti.

One morning three years ago Goode found a person reading the graffiti that covered the building. For an hour they talked, with the stranger explaining the gangs' symbols and history.

Goode in turn explained his work at the center and that money he spent to clean up the graffiti took funding from programs to help people in the community. The center has had almost no graffiti problems since then.

"That changed my attitude about gangs. We tend to think they're just a bunch of bums, but he treated me with real respect," Goode said.

In a sense, Goode also has respect for the gangs.

"They offer acceptance and security and an economy. Those three things are deficient in the neighborhoods where gangs are active. Some of the families around here are so bad, it's almost a step up to be in a gang," said Goode who is on the Albuquerque gang task force as well as a Home Mission Board youth gang task force.

Yet Goode has no respect for the gangs' methods. Youth earn acceptance through criminal or dangerous deeds. Security is provided through violence. The economy is based on drugs.

Goode's approach is to provide alternatives. "We're trying to create an environment that does not put these kids at risk for gang involvement."

This summer his tactics included neighborhood marches. In June a group began meeting every Friday at 6 p.m. The 60 people include church members, representatives of neighborhood associations, members of a youth drug intervention group, a local elementary school principal and uniformed police officers.

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The marchers carry banners with slogans like "Your hope is our concern" and "When you've tried everything else, try Jesus." They chant in unison, "We're taking back our neighborhood" and "Say no to dope and yes to hope."

Typically they walk to a known crack house. They stop outside, sing a chorus or two and witness to people on the street.

"I don't know that the march itself has had that much impact but it has said that a lot of people in this neighborhood are sick of it (the violence)," Goode said. "It's made it a lot quieter summer than usual."

Goode said he is convinced communities of all sizes across the nation are affected by gang activity. Albuquerque has had local gangs for years, Goode said, but national gangs have begun organizing the local gangs and creating a network.

Churches which are active in their communities can be instrumental in gang intervention, Goode said. He said churches are "missing the ball" if they are not available to children in their community.

Only 10 percent of people who say they are involved in gangs are really hard-core members. They could be dangerous and should be dealt with by law enforcement officers or others with special training, Goode said. Perhaps another 20 percent are in training to be hard-core members.

Those gang members should not keep churches from ministering to the vast majority of gang-related youth whom Goode described as "wanna bes." They talk like gang members for status but Goode said they are easily approachable.

Christians have all the resources they need to minister to gang members, Goode said, because they have the compassion that comes from their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Effective ministry in areas controlled by gangs will include after-school, evening and weekend programs to keep children busy. The program at the Baptist Neighborhood Center is called "Amigos." It offers crafts, arts, recreation and educational assistance six days a week.

Gang prevention ministry also will include programs that lead to job opportunities, Goode said.

"Gangs are a product of an environment that has no other outlet. The kids are school dropouts, and realistically their job opportunities are zilch."

The Home Mission Board youth gang task force is developing materials to help churches and associations minister in gang-controlled communities. The material should be available early next year.

"We've got to be more intentional about alternatives to gangs," said Ann Putnam of the HMB church and community ministries department who is coordinating the task force. "We have to help children gain self-esteem and acceptance and a place to belong."

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

Project Brotherhood's CIS efforts
continue; Moscow food packing ends By Jim Burton

Baptist Press
8/21/92

MOSCOW (BP)--The volunteer phase of the massive Project Brotherhood food repackaging and distribution effort led by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission ended in mid-August after five months.

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Eighty-four volunteers from 15 states repackaged an estimated 360 metric tons of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) bulk food into about 35,000 family packs for distribution in the Moscow area. In addition, Project Brotherhood volunteers distributed 110-pound bags of food to Russian hospitals, orphanages and pensioners homes.

"We did a world of good because we were able to get out into some of the areas where the churches were," said Sammy Platt of Columbus, Miss., who was an on-site coordinator for two months. "We were able to get into a lot of places where there were refugees ... and saw firsthand what was happening with the depreciation of the ruble."

The fall of communism in 1991 has left the former Soviet Union in disarray as it scrambles to constitute as a free-market economy. While Platt and other Project Brotherhood volunteers saw plenty of food in the Russian market, they learned most Russians can't pay the inflated prices.

"We are pleased with the Moscow part of Project Brotherhood," said James D. Williams, president of the Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn. "Southern Baptist missions volunteers once again showed their love for missions by sacrificing their time and money to work in very difficult conditions."

Ranging in age from 13-73, Project Brotherhood volunteers stepped forward from all areas of the United States including New England, Michigan, Montana and most of the southern states.

Beginning in mid-April, five volunteers a week traveled to Moscow to work in a cold, dark vegetable warehouse rented by Project Brotherhood officials. By scooping rice, flour and lintels from 110-pound bags into four-pound bags, they produced smaller, more manageable packages for families.

Brother's Brother Foundation, a Pittsburgh humanitarian relief organization, allotted 570 metric tons of the USDA surplus food to Project Brotherhood through the Russian Orthodox Church. Russian Baptists who worked alongside Project Brotherhood volunteers will repackage and distribute the remaining tonnage.

The USDA bulk food represented just one phase of Project Brotherhood's humanitarian food relief to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). In addition, Project Brotherhood officials have collected 36-pound food boxes from churches and individuals. These are being shipped in containers along with medical and dental equipment and pharmaceuticals.

"We will ship food boxes through next spring," said Douglas Beggs, Brotherhood Commission program services vice president and Project Brotherhood coordinator. "The shortage of affordable food in the former Soviet Union won't go away anytime soon."

Project Brotherhood's reach stretches beyond Moscow to other areas of this vast country including far east Russia and the predominantly Muslim republics of central Asia. In November, the Brotherhood Commission will sponsor a pastor and lay leadership conference in central Asia.

"One of the greatest area of church needs we discovered in the CIS is leadership training," said Jim Furgerson, Project Brotherhood coordinator for central Asia and far east Russia. He led a project assessment team to the CIS last March.

"Most of their pastors don't have the benefit of formal theological training," Furgerson said, "so Russian Baptist leaders have asked us to lead week-long, intensive training sessions."

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The Brotherhood Commission's work in Moscow began at the request of the Baptist World Alliance following President George Bush's plea last January to nonprofit organizations to take the lead in humanitarian relief in the CIS. The Brotherhood Commission's CIS involvement continues in partnership with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board of Richmond, Va., which has approved the projects in central Asia and far east Russia.

People interested in participating in Project Brotherhood as volunteers should contact their state Brotherhood office. Donations for the distribution of food and medicine in the CIS can be made to Project Brotherhood, c/o Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104. For information about continued distribution of food boxes, write the Brotherhood Commission or your state Brotherhood director.

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Project Brotherhood yields
3 church buildings in Russia

By Steve Barber

Baptist Press
8/21/92

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Project Brotherhood is extending beyond the just-concluded food distribution project by Southern Baptist volunteers in Moscow.

One example is a group of three church buildings under construction or planned in far east Russia, funded by the First Baptist Church of Memphis.

H.J. Weathersby, a deacon at First Baptist and an accountant for a Memphis cotton trading firm, joined a team from the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission staff on a fact-finding trip to Russia last March. The team brought back some 50 project proposals, which were given to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board for processing. Of these, 43 have been approved and are in various stages of development.

"We found that one of the greatest needs among churches in the Commonwealth of Independent States were buildings of their own. So many churches were meeting in homes," Weathersby said. "We decided to try to raise funds at our church to help fulfill some of these projects." They did more than try. On one Sunday last May, the church got commitments for more than \$10,000, enough to build three "starter" church buildings in the vicinity of Khabarovsk and Vladivostok.

Photographs of foundation work on the first church, a 1,500-square-foot unit 30 miles from Vladivostok in Nahoidka, arrived last week at the Brotherhood Commission's Memphis offices.

"It's just a one-room building to start but the important thing is that it gives them a place of their own and visibility in the community," Weathersby said. "This will enable them to get on their feet and grow."

The church construction projects will be joined by other activity planned in far east Russia and central Asia as Project Brotherhood continues.

"What should be made clear is that only one phase of Project Brotherhood, the food distribution in Moscow, has been concluded," Brotherhood Commission President James D. Williams said. "The shipment of food boxes directly from the U.S., scores of medical assistance projects, training for Russian Baptist leaders and other related activities are still ahead in the months to come."

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World Changers tackle repairs
for needy, touching their lives

By Susan Watt & Lisa Griffin

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--Nine bustling teen-agers, paint brushes and hammers in hand, anxiously waited to greet Alice Ann Ward, 61, at her home on Virginia's Eastern Shore. Paying \$225 each and traveling from four different states, the teens were eager to improve Ward's large, white plantation home of 30 years.

The youth expected Ward's home, with its sagging ceilings and squeaky porch steps, to be changed. They didn't expect the change in Ward.

Initially described as quiet and stern, Ward was overwhelmed to have nine teens descend on her usually quiet home. She was unsure of their work. But a few days later, she would wink, crack jokes and sit down to eat with the youth.

Ward was only one of the many elderly, disabled or low-income individuals whose lives were touched this summer during World Changers Work Projects in 11 states and, for the first time, at an international site in Mexico.

In all, more than 2,300 youth and leaders from 21 states representing 151 churches participated in the projects. World Changers is a coeducational missions project for youth sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

Upon arrival at World Changers, youth are divided into work crews and assigned to work sites. Crews, which were given names such as "Toe Nails" and "Square Jaws," averaged nine to 11 teens and two adults who supervised construction. Evenings are devoted to worship services, youth group meetings, recreation, skits and talent shows.

Under the supervision of crew chief Harry Burton, teens rebuilt Ward's front porch steps, painted the side steps, re-roofed the bathroom and pump house and scraped and painted 18 windows. A leaky, 12-by-8-foot bathroom took more than four days to repair. The water-damaged ceiling sagged eight inches.

As Ward's home improved during the week, relationships between Ward and crew members also improved. The crew was able to share with her their purpose for working with World Changers. Ward admitted doubts of her salvation. On Friday, one crew member helped Ward to understand Christianity. That afternoon she became a Christian.

"All of the kids are nice. I fell in love with them," Ward said with tears in her eyes. "I think it's wonderful and more churches should do this."

Eighteen homes were repaired and renovated on the Eastern Shore Aug. 1-8. Two weeks earlier, more than 260 youth and leaders met in Louisville, Ky., to paint, clean, replace roofs, build porches, make minor repairs and do light construction on 22 homes.

Connie Lawson's home of 16 years was in violation of Louisville's minimum city housing code. Through the city's Rehab Incentive Program, Lawson qualified to receive a \$2,000 grant to make the much-needed repairs. However, with the high cost of material and labor, it wasn't enough.

That's where World Changers came in. Providing free labor, World Changers participants helped Lawson and 21 other Louisville residents bring their homes into compliance with the housing code.

"These kids are just great," Lawson said. "I know I wouldn't have been able to get it all done without them."

Though some of the results of World Changers labor are not as visible as a fresh coat of paint or a new porch, most of the participants feel they are making a difference in the lives of those they help.

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"We're doing something that will last," said Meghan Mulcahey, 16, from North Hill Baptist Church in Minot, N.D. "I'm realizing I can make a difference."

"World Changers ... made me realize every little thing you do means a lot to someone else. They have so little and we take so much for granted," said Jennifer Clary, 15, from Winter Park Baptist Church in Wilmington, N.C.

Andy Morris, World Changers director at the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission, said the projects instill an attitude of giving in youth.

"They spend the entire week thinking of nothing else but others. We hope this selflessness will catch on and they will take it home with them," Morris said.

"My goal for our youth group in coming to World Changers is to go to the end so they have to trust in the Lord," said Michael Linton, youth minister at Logan Elm Baptist Church in Circleville, Ohio. "You can't be comfortable here."

In addition to Virginia and Kentucky, World Changers Work Projects were held in Memphis, Tenn.; Laredo, Texas; Weslaco, Texas; Savannah, Ga.; Beaufort, S.C.; Briceville, Tenn.; Campbell County, Tenn.; Canton, N.C.; and Ciudad Victoria, Mexico. A junior high pilot project was held in Birmingham, Ala.

"The results of World Changers this summer were tremendous," Morris added. "We can't begin to know the number of youth, adults, residents and communities that were touched because of their involvement in World Changers. It's phenomenal."

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Watt is assistant editor of World Changers materials at the Brotherhood Commission; Griffin was a communication specialist on the World Changers summer staff. (BP) photo available upon request from the Brotherhood Commission.

Ray, Jester Summers die
hours apart in Texas

By Toby Druin

Baptist Press
8/21/92

SAN ANGELO, Texas (BP)--Ray Summers, one of Southern Baptists' most widely known theologians and educators, and his wife, Jester, also a writer of children's literature, died hours apart in San Angelo Aug. 19.

Summers, 82, died in a San Angelo hospital about midnight. Mrs. Summers, 81, died a few hours later in a San Angelo nursing home. They had been married 58 years. Funeral services were held Aug. 22 at First Baptist Church in Waco, Texas.

The Summerses had moved to the Baptist Memorials Geriatric Center in San Angelo several years ago and had been in declining health.

Summers was the author of eight books and co-author of six others and wrote many articles for religious journals. His scholarship touched on issues of the second coming and Christian living. His 1951 book, "Worthy is the Lamb: An Interpretation of Revelation," gave the amillennial view of future events a new airing among Southern Baptists.

Mrs. Summers authored seven books, including a children's biography of pioneer China missionary Lottie Moon. An innovator in activity-based Bible teaching in Sunday school, she was director of the children's departments of Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky., and First Baptist in Waco.

A native of Allen, Summers was a 1933 graduate of Baylor University and earned master's and doctorate degrees in theology from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. He served several churches as a pastor and he and his wife were considering appointment as missionaries when he was invited to join the faculty at Southwestern in 1938. He was professor of New Testament studies and Greek for 21 years, 1938-59, during which he also was dean of the school of theology, 1949-53.

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He moved to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., as director of graduate studies, 1960-64, before returning to Baylor to head the department of religion and institute a doctor of philosophy degree program in religion. He retired in 1980.

Mrs. Summers, the former Jester Hilger, was also a Baylor graduate and earned a master of theology degree at Southwestern.

Baylor University President Herbert H. Reynolds said, "Professor Ray Summers and his dear wife, Jester, were two of God's finest servants. Dr. Summers was possessed of a deep devotion to God and a keen intellect, coupled with a winsome demeanor and an engaging Christian witness through his teaching, writing, speaking and daily living. All members of the Baylor family will sorely miss this wonderful gentleman and his beloved companion."

Survivors include a son, David, of Boston; two daughters, Mary Lois Sanders of Somerset, N.J., and Sarah Nell Summers of Temple; and Summers' four brothers and three sisters.

Memorial gifts can be made to the Christian Education Center Fund and the Ministerial Students Scholarship Fund, Attn. External Affairs, P.O. Box 97026, Baylor University, TX 76978-7026.

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Scott Collins contributed to this report. (BP) photos available upon request from Baylor University's public relations office.

Saying 'no' opens doors
to Spain, youth outreach

By Chip Alford

Baptist Press
8/21/92

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--For Moses Caesar, turning down youth ministry positions offered by churches last December was a difficult decision.

"I just didn't feel right about taking a church staff position," the 26-year-old Wichita Falls, Texas, resident and native of India explained. "I wanted to be available for God to use me in a different way and he has honored that decision by giving me the kind of spring and summer I have had."

The "kind of spring and summer" Caesar is talking about is a 40-day missions trip to Seville, Spain, and a 10-week stint as Centrifuge camp pastor at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

Caesar, a former youth minister who graduated from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in August 1991, was approved as camp pastor for Centrifuge in April. And while "killing time" before beginning 10 weeks of youth camps, he heard about mission needs in Spain through the Texas Partnership Missions program.

"They needed people to work as hosts and counselors at the World Expo '92 in Seville," he said. A native of Bangalore, India, who moved to the United States at age 7, Caesar said he has always had a global perspective on ministry and was eager to get involved.

His responsibilities at the Expo included serving as a host/counselor at the "Pavilion of Promise," a Christian pavilion sponsored by several evangelical groups. He and other Christian workers were on hand to pass out tracts and answer questions from the more than 150 people that passed through the pavilion's four theaters every 15 minutes.

"It was really a great experience. So much emphasis has been put on ministry at the Olympics in Barcelona, and that's great, but 22 million people are expected to walk through the gates at the World Expo in Seville before it closes in October. There is so much potential for ministry there."

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Though he was sent to Spain mainly as a host/counselor for the Expo pavilion, Caesar said he spent most of his time helping Southern Baptist missionaries in Seville turn an old motorcycle garage into a coffee house for student ministry.

"The coffee house is located just a block from a university so it's perfect for ministry to students," he explained. "The missionaries wanted to open it during the Expo, so we worked 15 hours a day for about 10 days scrubbing floors, painting walls, putting in new plumbing and just basically refurbishing the place.

"There's a stage for performances, a study area with computers, recreation equipment and they will also be able to serve coffee, soft drinks and light snacks. It already is being used as an organizational center for ministries going on at the Expo."

After returning to the United States in mid-May, Caesar had three days to rest, relax and "wash several loads of clothes" before heading off to New Mexico for Centrifuge. There he faced a six-day-a-week schedule that included delivering five messages per week to more than 500 youth, not to mention leading daily Bible studies and discussion times and doing some one-on-one counseling.

Self-described as a non-traditional camp pastor, even by Centrifuge standards, Caesar begins each week by telling the youth: "I see myself more as a teacher than a preacher. I see myself as delivering messages not sermons. If this gets boring, I want you to do something for me, just raise your hand. I promise I'll try to do something about it."

The youth seem to relate well to him, some showering him with compliments like, "Mo knows messages" and "Mo Rocks."

That isn't to say Caesar doesn't take his job seriously.

"I see myself as God's messenger to these kids. I hope God will speak to them through me, but they are really being ministered to by their church leaders. We've seen gobs of kids accept Christ during their own church group devotion times here. That really excites me because that is where it needs to start."

Even so, Caesar had no plans to take a church staff position after completing his duties at Centrifuge in mid-August.

"I really have an apostolic approach to ministry; I want to work with more than one church," he said. "I really have no idea how that will work out but I'm open to whatever God wants me to do. God has shown me this summer that if you are willing to follow him and take risks, he will reward you."

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