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91-161

**SSB trustees approve  
senior executive team**

By Linda Lawson

NASHVILLE (BP)--A restructured senior executive team for the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board that includes three executive vice presidents working closely with President James T. Draper Jr. was approved by trustees in an Oct. 24-25 called meeting.

Trustees then elected three men to fill the executive vice presidential slots.

T. Michael Arrington, 46, executive assistant to the chief executive officer for Texas Utility Electric Company of Fort Worth, Texas, will become executive vice president for operations. Arrington, who will oversee program and product development, marketing and sales, is expected to begin his duties about Dec. 1.

E.V. King, 48, vice president for business and finance at the board since 1984, was elected executive vice president for finance and administration, effective immediately.

O. Eugene Mims, 41, pastor of First Baptist Church of Cleveland, Tenn., was elected executive vice president for planning, research and denominational relations. Until his Oct. 25 resignation as a trustee, Mims served as vice chairman of trustees and chairman of the trustee executive committee. He will assume his new position in early November.

In another action, trustees elected Charles A. Wilson, 48, a trustee and former chief executive officer of Precision Sheeting Service of Camden, N.J., to a new position as assistant vice president for business, reporting to King, effective about Nov. 1.

Draper, who was inaugurated Aug. 20 as the eighth president of the board, said he recommended a leadership team to allow "input from throughout the organization" before formulating directions and to keep lower management structures and personnel in place pending study of any needed changes. Also, he said a team approach will enable the board to deal effectively with the necessary tension between ministry and business and enable him to be involved appropriately in management of the board.

Establishing a senior leadership team while leaving other executives in place until any needed changes are identified "is the least disruptive process and enables us to move on with stability and confidence," said Draper.

He declined to set a timetable for additional changes. "This team approach will enable us to take as much time as we need."

Draper described the tension between ministry and business as necessary. The church programs and publishing board, which receives no funds from the SBC Cooperative Program, carries out 17 convention-assigned programs of work through sales of its products and services. The board's 1991-92 operating budget is \$205.3 million.

As former pastors, Draper characterized himself and Mims as primarily ministry oriented. As a utility company executive and an active layman, he said Arrington brings a "business perspective but a strong commitment to ministry." And as vice president for business and finance, Draper said King's primary focus is "business oriented and he knows the work of the board.

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"These three are the best three men in the Southern Baptist Convention for these positions," said Draper. "I believe we have in this structure the opportunity to gather together men of integrity to move with the wonderful staff we have here at the Sunday School Board to accomplish great things."

"I don't need 'yes' men," Draper said in advocating a consensus style of leadership. "I need men who will argue with me and disagree with me. But when we walk out of a room, we walk out together."

While Draper said his initial intention was to establish a structure with one chief operating officer handling day-to-day management of the board, Draper said he became uncomfortable with that option.

"I wanted to be more involved," he said.

During a question-and-answer session with trustees, Draper said he sees the task of the board as helping "churches to grow through the distribution of materials that help us teach the word of God."

He called on trustees "to challenge everything I suggest and make sure I'm making good decisions."

Dan Collins, chairman of the trustee general administration committee and an attorney from Taylors, S.C., said: "I think the board needs to support its president but ask the tough questions. Let's don't be a rubber stamp."

Before a scheduled report from psychologist Bill Montgomery about results of testing of the four candidates for new positions, trustees considered a motion to go into executive session before deciding to keep the meeting open and not hear Montgomery's report.

Opposing the motion for executive session, Collins said: "We've only had one executive session in memory (a question-and-answer session with Draper prior to his election July 18). We don't want to set a precedent."

Bob Tenery, a trustee from Mocksville, N.C., called for a trustee policy in considering personnel matters. "I think all personnel matters ought to be done in executive sessions."

Prior to election, candidates for new positions made personal statements and fielded questions.

Arrington said: "I may be a businessman, a layman, but I really feel a responsibility to the ministry. We've got to be sure the ministry is strong and be sure we have a strong financial base to build on."

A native Texan, Arrington holds a B.S. degree in electrical engineering from Texas A & M University in College Station. He is a member of First Baptist Church of Euless, Texas, where Draper was pastor.

Draper said he recommended Arrington, whom he has known for eight years, because his "abilities at getting people of differing opinions to move together are the most incredible I have observed."

Mims told trustees his life and ministry have been strongly influenced by the materials and programs of the board. "I didn't know a lot about the (Southern Baptist) convention, but the Sunday School Board kept touching our lives."

A native of Mississippi, Mims is a graduate of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Va. He holds the M.Div. and D.Min degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

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Wilson said he decided in June 1991 to leave his position as chief executive officer of the company he had helped to establish in 1980. While attending the Wednesday night session of the 1991 Southern Baptist Convention meeting in Atlanta, Wilson said he concluded "this company I'd had so much to do with starting and growing had stood between me and anything else God had called me to do.

"I joined the Navy to gain an education," said Wilson. "I have worked for money and status. I'm coming here out of love for the Lord Jesus Christ and the ministry of the Sunday School Board."

An Indiana native, Wilson is a graduate of Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, and holds th M.B.A. degree from Wharton Graduate School of the University of Pennsylvania. A certified public account, Wilson was a supply corps officer in the United States Navy for 16 years.

King said his goal as a member of the senior executive team will be "to have the courage and strength to be open, honest, straightforward and to build trusting relationships."

A native of Tennessee, King is a graduate of David Lipscomb College in Nashville and holds a master's degree in management and administration from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

In two other business matters, trustees authorized the sale for \$150,000 of the satellite uplink used for the Baptist Telecommunication Network prior to its discontinuation in October 1990 and authorized purchase of a piece of property at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

The next scheduled meeting of the 93-member trustee board is Feb. 3-5, 1992.

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

Nurse responds to Iraq need;  
'I'm safe where God wants me'

By Art Toalston

Baptist Press  
10/25/91

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A bullet blast through her door helps Donna Rye explain her desire to return to Iraq.

Rye, of Westville, Okla., is a Southern Baptist representative to Mexico who has worked as a nurse at a Baptist hospital in Guadalajara since 1984. Last May she ventured to northern Iraq for a month to work among Kurdish refugees.

She headed back to Iraq Oct. 24 for as long as she's needed -- perhaps two or three years. She will help fill a critical need for doctors and nurses to staff mobile clinics in villages where displaced Kurds are settling. The medical work is among key postwar ministries of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Persian Gulf Response Unit.

The threat of hostilities continues among Saddam Hussein's troops, Kurdish freedom fighters and U.S.-led forces seeking to keep peace in the region, Rye acknowledged in a telephone interview.

But she doesn't fear for her safety.

Back in Mexico after her first stint in Iraq, Rye was startled awake one night by a crashing noise. Someone had aimed a shot at her apartment door, and the bullet ripped into an inside wall.

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The bullet helped her realize safety doesn't depend on location. "I wasn't safe in Mexico, I'm not safe in the United States, I'm not safe in any place except in the hands of God," she explained. "It's not where we are, but who's protecting us."

Organizers of the medical clinics -- and of a Southern Baptist project to drill wells and repair village water systems -- haven't forgotten northern Iraq remains a potential war zone.

They remain in daily contact with Southern Baptist workers based in the city of Zakho, said Tim Brendle, who heads the Persian Gulf Response Unit. Several evacuation plans have been formulated, Brendle said, noting U.S.-led coalition forces in Turkey have daily flights to the region.

A shortage of doctors and nurses continues to hamper the medical work. Original plans called for continuous staffing by three volunteer physicians and four nurses, each committing three weeks or longer.

However, only one doctor and three nurses, including Rye, currently are on site. No additional volunteers have enlisted. Southern Baptist medical workers interested in volunteering to work in Iraq should contact the Foreign Mission Board's missionary health department, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230, telephone (804) 353-0151.

Adequate staffing for the water development project, meanwhile, is in place, Brendle said. To date more than 40 Southern Baptists, including physicians and nurses, have worked among the Kurds in northern Iraq.

Rye said her first stint in Iraq was an extraordinary experience. She prayed and worked alongside other Southern Baptist volunteers and Christians from several other countries. She calls it "a time of spiritual history when God opened a door that had been closed for so long to Christians" to work in the predominantly Muslim country.

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(BP) Photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press

CLC produces special mailing  
on alcohol labeling issue

By Louis Moore

Baptist Press  
10/25/91

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission has produced a special four-page publication which urges support for congressional legislation on labeling of alcoholic beverage advertisements.

The CLC has mailed copies of the publication to every church in the convention. The publication contains a sample bulletin insert and a request that churches duplicate it for distribution to members.

The CLC mailing also provides a sample letter for Southern Baptists to use to write their local members of Congress about the issue.

"The Sensible Advertising and Family Education Act (H.R. 1443) and The Alcoholic Beverage Advertisement Act of 1991 (S. 664) are companion bills which address the problem of misleading alcohol advertising in our society," said James A. Smith, the CLC's Director of Government Relations, in the publication. "The purpose of these bills is to require advertisers to prominently display health and safety warning messages in print and broadcast advertisement of alcohol products."

The bills were introduced into Congress this year by Rep. Joseph Kennedy, D-Mass., and Sens. Strom Thurmond, R-S.C., and Al Gore, D-Tenn.

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The bills require warning messages in radio, television and printed ads for alcoholic beverages. They also authorize the Federal Trade Commission to write regulations to implement the legislation and monitor compliance with the law.

The messages warn that consumption of alcohol	may cause birth
defects, impairs ability to drive a car or operate machinery,	can be hazardous
if used in conjunction with legal as well as illegal drugs,	may become
addictive, and	cannot be purchased by anyone under the age of
21.	

"Can there be any doubt that the \$2 billion per year which is spent by the alcohol industry to promote its drug is directly related to the more than 100,000 Americans who die every year from alcohol-related incidents and diseases?" said Richard D. Land, the CLC's executive director. "The CLC believes these bills provide Southern Baptists with a unique opportunity to carry out Christ's command to be 'salt' and 'light' on a matter of serious importance to the health and well-being of our society."

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Bengali pastor continues  
efforts of William Carey

By Susan Todd Doyle

Baptist Press  
10/25/91

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--If William Carey were alive, he would no doubt be excited about the work Simon Sircar and his colleagues are doing in Bangladesh. Especially when he learned Sircar is the great-great-grandson of a man he converted to Christianity almost 200 years ago.

Carey is the man many people attribute as being the founder of the "modern missions movement." He went to India in October 1792 as one of the first missionaries sent out by the Baptist Missionary Society in England.

Today, Sircar is sharing the gospel message with his own people with enthusiasm similar to that displayed by Carey 200 years ago.

Sircar, vice president of the Bangladesh Baptist Fellowship and principal of the College of Christian Theology in Dhaka, visited Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union Oct. 23 while in the United States for a short visit. He told WMU officials of the work he and others are doing.

In 1974, Sircar and others were burdened to do something to help spread the gospel message throughout their country. "We were told, 'This is the best time because your nation is now a new nation.' We set a goal to plant 200 churches in Bangladesh between 1980 and 1990," he said.

Unlike Carey, who waited seven years before one person converted to Christianity, Sircar and his colleagues saw results from their efforts within the first two years. Between 1980 and 1990, 226 churches were planted. Each church had at least 16 members. Sircar personally has started nine churches in the Dhaka area, which have in turn started 20 other churches.

Most of the church planting done by the Bangladesh Baptist Fellowship has been accomplished through a strategy Sircar calls "Bible Reading Groups."

"We went into villages to the village leader's house and asked if there was someone who could read at a certain reading level," he said. In many villages, it was difficult to find anyone who could read.

"Once a week, the people gather at the leader's house to hear the Bible read aloud. Just by hearing the word of God, people come to the saving grace of the word," he said.

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After the Bible reading, Sircar said evangelists visit in the homes in the village.

"It takes only 50 cents to get Bible Reading Group materials to a village," he said. "It's not possible to send an evangelist to the 68,000 villages of Bangladesh, but we can send the word of God."

Sircar is continuing efforts begun by Carey 200 years ago. Carey's dream was for the people of India to have Bibles in their own language and dialect. He spent his years in India mastering 45 languages. He is directly responsible for translating all or portions of Scripture into 40 languages and dialects. The Bible used by most Bengali-speaking people is the Carey translation.

"Carey's Bible has a special beauty like the King James Version," Sircar said. "You read it and feel like you are reading the word of God."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by WMU

EDITORS' NOTE: Following is part one of a three-part series on literacy missions.

Volunteers combat illiteracy  
among American adults

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
10/25/91

ATLANTA (BP)--One out of every five American adults cannot do what you are doing right now. They cannot read.

They cannot read the newspaper, follow the directions on a cake mix or understand the instructions on an aspirin bottle.

They cannot study the Bible, fill out a form for church membership or read words in a hymnal.

"One-fifth of all the adults in these United States cannot read John 3:16," laments Gayle Leininger, home missionary who specializes in literacy missions.

Leininger uses a conservative estimate of illiterate Americans. Some educators claim as many as one in three American adults are functionally illiterate.

Whatever the statistic, it is hard to believe, Leininger says, because "if you read, you probably don't mingle with or relate to people who don't."

At 17, Dion was one of the statistics. A counselor discovered Dion could not read when he was assigned laundry duty at a juvenile detention center in Orange County, Calif. Dion did not deliver the laundry to the right room because he could not read the tag on the laundry cart.

Southern Baptist literacy missions volunteer June Tate began working with Dion at least once a week. When they began, he could only write two names. In four months he had learned enough to write Tate a letter.

Written in pencil on wide-ruled notebook paper, the letter begins, "If you would have not come in to help me learn how to read, I would have never learned how to read or write a letter... Thanks for the birthday card and cake."

Dion defies the common misconception people who cannot read are older people who dropped out of school to work on the family farm. Leininger says most of America's illiterate people are under 40.

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For example, J.W. Franks attended a Sunday school class until he was in his mid 30s. When class members were each asked to read a portion of Scripture, he dropped out of the class.

Yet Franks, who works at a mattress factory, wanted to learn to read his Bible. Leininger says surveys taken by secular companies show reading Scripture is the No. 1 reason illiterate Americans want to learn to read. Southern Baptist volunteers are taught to use Scripture as texts in literacy lessons.

A call to Floyd Baptist Association in Rome, Ga., put Franks in touch with literacy volunteer Kathy Oswald. They met at the associational office twice a week for two years, and Franks learned to read on the fifth grade level.

"He was afraid I would get frustrated and quit. But I understand it just takes time," Oswald says.

Oswald's commitment reveals the secret to Southern Baptists' literacy missions. Last year 4,000 people like Oswald and Tate attended 16-hour workshops to become literacy volunteers. They acknowledge the overwhelming statistics about illiteracy, but they also realize people can learn to read, it just takes time.

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

EDITORS' NOTE: Following is part two of a three-part series on literacy missions.

Castle depicts literacy  
missions success story

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
10/25/91

ATLANTA (BP)--Cinderella's castle at Disney World is a literacy missions success story.

In the late 1960s, Cuban immigrant Calixto Romay was given the task of constructing the castle's towers and turrets. Romay was a skilled carpenter, but he did not know enough English to communicate effectively with his co-workers.

As the Disney World opening neared, it seemed the castle would not be finished on time. Eventually Romay went to an English class at First Baptist Church of Orlando, Fla., to learn "carpentry English."

A church volunteer took the challenge because her husband's hobby was carpentry. She used pictures from his book collection to teach Romay the English words for hammer, router, jigsaw and other carpentry tools.

Romay's new knowledge expedited the work, and the castle was completed early.

The success story does not stop there. Romay made a profession of faith in a mission the church started from its literacy program. He has retired from carpentry, but he continues to serve as a deacon and Sunday school director.

English as a second language or conversational English is the program Southern Baptists use to teach English to internationals. Gayle Leininger, home missionary who specializes in literacy missions, says at least 30 million people in the United States do not use English as their primary language.

First Baptist Church of Lubbock, Texas, is one of hundreds of churches across the nation which help internationals develop English language skills.

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"I got involved because I was looking for a ministry that was more than handing out something," says Llwyn Walker, director of the 19-year-old program which primarily ministers to spouses of international students at Texas Tech University.

One of the women in the Lubbock program was from China. She became pregnant and had a miscarriage, but miscarriage was not yet in her English vocabulary. She did not understand what happened until her teacher from the church's English program explained she had lost her baby.

Leininger says most students studying English as a second language are in culture shock and may be fearful of their new surroundings. Therefore a trusting relationship is a prerequisite for literacy missions.

In Montgomery, Ala., the Baptist association sponsors a conversational English program for 100 spouses of international military personnel at a nearby Air Force base.

"The officers are usually very fluent, but the spouses are sometimes not even able to say hello," says volunteer Ann Cushing.

In addition to teaching students how to communicate in English, Cushing says volunteers use every opportunity to witness. Holidays such as Christmas and Easter are prime times to explain the Christian faith.

Literacy programs are missions, Leininger says, because, "We teach not just our language, but our Lord."

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EDITORS' NOTE: Following is part three of a three-part series on literacy missions.

Southern Baptists incorporate  
literacy in missions strategy

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
10/25/91

ATLANTA (BP)--It was 1958, and literacy was not the social concern it is today.

Mildred Blankenship puts it more bluntly: "At that time, no one cared about illiteracy."

Blankenship cared because as a fifth grade school teacher she realized some of her students could not read. That discovery led her to spend nearly 29 years directing literacy missions for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and helping Southern Baptists incorporate literacy training in their missions strategy.

Today's literacy missions strategy revolves around trained volunteers working with students individually or in small groups. Literacy missions focuses on two groups: the 20 percent of American adults who are functionally illiterate and the 30 million people in the United States whose primary language is not English.

Volunteers are trained in 16-hour workshops available through some Baptist associations and most state conventions. Last year, 4,000 people were trained in the workshops.

Training for literacy volunteers is also available through libraries and other public agencies, but Blankenship recommends the Southern Baptist workshops because they help volunteers learn to share their faith as they teach.

For example, Blankenship, who retired from the Home Mission Board in 1989, teaches a class for international students at the University of Alabama Baptist Student Union.

"You begin your sessions with prayer, and you develop on-going, caring relationships with your students," Blankenship says. "You really just love them into the kingdom."

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The textbook Blankenship uses is based on the gospel of Mark. Printed by the Home Mission Board, it is designed especially for people whose second language is English.

Using the Bible as a textbook provides a natural setting for volunteers to share their faith, says Kendall Moore, associate director of the HMB church and community ministries department.

Another reason literacy training is an effective witnessing tool, Moore says, is because volunteers build relationships with people they would otherwise never meet.

Literacy missions is also a church starting tool, especially among internationals. Blankenship says at one time 17 percent of churches with a literacy ministry had started a mission as a result of literacy missions.

This church year, literacy missions is a Southern Baptist Convention emphasis. A 13-minute literacy missions video titled "That All May Read God's Word" is available from the Home Mission Board and state conventions.

Volunteers interested in attending a workshop should contact their state convention's church and community ministry department or the Home Mission Board at 1350 Spring Street NW, Atlanta, GA 30367-5601 or (404) 898-7438.

Volunteers are not required to be professional teachers or even college graduates. They must complete the training and feel God has called them to literacy missions. And, they have to be able to read.