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92-27

**Parks, FMB trustees face  
tenure discussion in March**

By Robert O'Brien

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--R. Keith Parks and Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board trustees will face a moment of truth about their future relationships March 19-20 behind closed doors in a Dallas-Fort Worth airport area hotel.

That's where the mission board president and trustees will hold a spiritual retreat to try to resolve the cloudy question of Parks' tenure -- as well as questions Parks and some trustees have asked about willingness for mutual cooperation.

Parks himself brought the issue to a head in his address at the closing session of the trustees' Feb. 10-12 meeting in Richmond, Va.

Missionaries, board staff and Southern Baptists deserve an answer to the tenure question, he told trustees. He urged them to resolve it "or move as quickly as possible to change leadership."

Parks asked the trustees to respond to his request the same day to "lay to rest many anxieties" or, at most, no later than their next regular meeting April 6-8 in Clemson, S.C.

During the ensuing discussion, some trustees agreed they must act immediately to assure Southern Baptists of their support for Parks and missions. Others argued for a delay so Parks, who had expressed strong disagreement with some trustee actions, could address his own willingness to work cooperatively with them. They decided on the spiritual retreat for dialogue and prayer with Parks and staff members of his choosing.

"I am simply asking if I have the option of exerting positive leadership and trying to fulfill the vision I believe God gave me until 1995," Parks said. He referred to his request last August that he serve through the Foreign Mission Board's sesquicentennial in 1995. The time would enable him to lay the groundwork for his 10-point vision for global evangelization now under study by a trustee subcommittee.

"If not, I then urge the board to move as quickly as possible to change leadership," he said. "If so, then I pledge myself to work as harmoniously as possible in applying those seven principles you approved and maintaining momentum in reaching a lost world."

He referred to an agreement voted by trustees Feb. 10 that included affirmation of a statement of seven basic missions principles authored by Parks and willingness of trustees "to be led by our president."

That agreement, which some had called "miraculous" in the increasingly tense relationship between Parks and trustees, turned out to be just the first step in the direction of reconciliation.

"Even as I hear your public affirmation of me, I continue to get other messages that are contradictory," Parks told trustees, referring to actions and undercurrents he felt were taking place behind the scenes.

Trustee chairman Bill Hancock said later "the spirit of the (Feb. 10-12) meeting was to affirm Dr. Parks and his seven principles for doing missions. Dr. Parks' tenure or retirement was not on any agenda."

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Hancock expressed hope Parks, trustees and staff members can come out of the retreat with a consensus on how to handle disagreements and build future relationships. "It's a time to come together and crystallize our commitments," added Hancock, who said he would prefer not to comment further until after the retreat.

Although Parks expressed disagreement with trustees on certain matters, he said he affirmed them and their efforts as well as their decision to support the seven basic principles.

Some trustees have felt Parks has not returned the affirmation they have given him. He replied that one of his weaknesses is "not to offer praise as much as I should" because he never wants to be considered "insincere or manipulative." He especially credited Hancock for his "tireless effort" and for enduring "criticism and misunderstanding" as the board has faced controversy in recent months.

But Parks also told trustees frankly why he disagreed with some of their actions and philosophies.

Uncertainty over his tenure and lack of trust has undercut his leadership with missionaries and staff, Parks said. It has contributed "to an erosion of sound management that is reaching critical proportions" and to a diminishing of his leadership in a time of spiritual opportunities worldwide, he added.

That atmosphere also has led to violations of the trustee manual adopted in 1987, Parks stated. He said the manual says trustees "must studiously avoid unauthorized subgroups or cliques in trying to exercise undue influence over the body, ... that the president is to be the point of information flow between trustees and staff in both directions, ... and that the president is ultimately accountable ... ."

Due to lack of trust, he said, "a number of trustees now go directly to staff and missionaries" and get involved in administrative matters.

"This would be serious in any organization," he said. "But it is disastrous in the Foreign Mission Board, given the scope, geographic spread, cultural diversity, missionary personalities and involvement of national leaders. This administrative staff cannot function properly under those circumstances."

Parks also expressed strong disagreement with what he said appears to be a shift in the board's basic approach to missions. Such a shift, he said, "has occurred when this board is expecting theological conformity from those who receive Southern Baptist money. I am as concerned about correct biblical belief as anyone is, but to use money to produce it is not the Biblical nor Baptist way.

"Our relationship with other Baptist bodies can never be an attempt to just extend our own American churches or convention nor an effort to dictate beliefs and practice," he continued, noting the New Testament shows "that even Christ himself never coerced or forced anyone."

The aim of such a relationship, he said, is "to teach, preach, nurture, interpret, influence and persuade toward the soundest Bible theology possible" but to allow overseas Christians to have "the same freedom and access to God that we do."

The board's "indigenous principle" -- one of the seven basic operating principles trustees affirmed Feb. 10 -- means that "we seek to remove our American Southern Baptist culture, present the simple gospel and watch the Holy Spirit develop churches and conventions that are 'at home' in their country," he said.

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Parks said he is "concerned by pressure on the part of some trustees in staff selection, as well as in missionary appointment." He took exception to "any effort to exclude a large segment of Southern Baptists." He also disputed what he called "serious misperceptions" on the part of some that there is a lack of Bible belief and evangelistic emphasis among staff and missionaries.

"Southern Baptist missions from its beginning always has been and is now based on the Bible and focused on Jesus Christ. ... The missionaries, staff and international Baptist partners believe, live and preach God's word as much as any of their critics. ... Evangelism that results in churches has always been our hallmark," Parks said, noting that "God has blessed our missionaries and their co-workers with probably the greatest decade in evangelism we have ever had."

He pointed to increases in overseas churches from about 11,000 in 1980 to 28,000 in 1991, church membership from 1.5 million to nearly 3 million and annual baptisms from 96,000 to 233,000.

The overseas ratio of baptisms to church members exceeds Southern Baptist totals at home, he said, with one baptism for every 12.8 members in overseas churches and one for every 28 in Europe. Southern Baptists at home baptize one for every 38 members, he said.

Speculation before the February meeting centered on reports that trustees would take steps to hasten Parks' departure as president. He will be 65 in October. The reports resulted in many expressions of concern and calls for prayer among Southern Baptists.

Trustees did not discuss his tenure either in a two-hour closed session of the chairman's council or a one-hour open session of the full board on Feb. 10. And they did not take action on his request for clarification of his tenure in the trustee strategy committee on Feb. 11.

Given the anger many trustees expressed before the meeting, some said the four-point agreement adopted Feb. 10 was a miraculous result of prayer. Many had come in upset that Parks allowed two senior staff members, Isam Ballenger and Keith Parker, to hold a press conference at the board Jan. 7 to announce early retirement in disagreement with trustee actions and policies.

"We came to this meeting with more prayer focused on us than any meeting we have ever had," Parks said. "Many prayed for miracles. Some feel they have experienced those miracles and others have not. No one has sought nor wanted one more than I."

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Mission volunteer dies  
after battling malaria

By Donald D. Martin

Baptist Press  
2/13/92

CLEARWATER, Fla. (BP)--Jan Jendrynski-Rosser, a 22-year-old Southern Baptist mission volunteer, died Feb. 12 in Clearwater, Fla., after battling malaria she contracted in Mali.

Jendrynski-Rosser contracted falciparum malaria while teaching English at the Baptist Community Center in Bamako, Mali. After returning in late December to her parents' home in Clearwater, she collapsed from the fatiguing effects of the sickness Jan. 30. She was unaware she had malaria when she completed her three-month volunteer assignment in the west African country.

Once she was hospitalized in Clearwater, Jendrynski-Rosser's kidneys repeatedly failed and she needed a respirator to breath. Although she later showed signs of improvement and treatment cured the malaria infection, she could not withstand another kidney failure, which was the final cause of death.

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Falciparum malaria is the most dangerous strain of the disease. Malaria is rare in the United States but health officials place it in the top category of the world's major causes of death. Each year more than 1 million people die from the disease spread by mosquitoes, according to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's health department.

"We've lost a daughter, but this is still a time of celebration," explained David Rosser, her adoptive father. "Obviously there's pain and grieving, but that's for the living. This is a celebration because that young lady had a love for Jesus that didn't stop. There was joy in her walk with Christ. She was not a somber Christian, she was fun and spontaneous in her love for Jesus. And that didn't end with her death."

Recently Jendrynski-Rosser changed her last name from Jendrynski to her adoptive parents' name. David and Pat Rosser of Clearwater adopted her when she was 15. Jendrynski-Rosser's father died when she was 3; her mother died when she was 13.

Before joining the Rosser family, she had moved in and out of several foster homes, a home for runaways and a juvenile detention center. Yet her life changed when she met the Rossers, she explained in her written testimony.

The Rossers "took me to church and told me about Jesus," the young woman wrote. "At first I resisted all that they said, but I watched their lives. They were so full of love and peace I knew that I wanted what they had."

She went on to receive the bachelor of arts degree from Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., in 1991. A musician, she played guitar and wrote music.

The loss of their daughter was a shock, Rosser admitted. But if he could turn the clock back, he said he would let her go overseas again. "I would tell her yes. Go. She was guided by the Lord and anybody who interfered would be wrong and would carry that shame. There's no shame in what has happened; there's only shame in dying without knowing our Lord."

Funeral services were planned for Feb. 14 at her home church, Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater.

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

Literacy missions growing,  
more volunteers needed

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
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ATLANTA (BP)--About 12 percent of Southern Baptist churches are involved in literacy missions, but more volunteers are needed to meet the demand, state workers said recently.

According to a survey by the Home Mission Board, 4,758 of the convention's 38,221 churches offer at least one of three literacy programs: conversational English, adult reading and writing or children's tutoring.

"We are seeing across the country an increased interest in this and I believe it is going to continue to do nothing but grow," said Kendale Moore, Home Mission Board literacy missions director.

Moore said he hopes 15 to 20 percent of SBC churches will be involved in literacy missions by 1987. "One of any of the three forms of literacy ministries could be taking place in any church in our convention," he said.

Statewide coordinators of literacy missions who met recently in Atlanta said they constantly need more volunteers for literacy ministry work.

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"My need is much greater than even I have been able to convince churches and associations," said June Tate, a literacy coordinator in California. "There's not a church in California that could not have this ministry."

Coordinator Billie Sue Fields of Illinois said some prospective volunteers are hesitant to commit a lot of time for training and volunteer work.

"It's not just an hour a week," she said. "This is a time-consuming ministry."

Volunteers train for 16 hours before working with students, Moore said.

The rewards, however, are also great, said coordinator Charlene Bingham of Ohio. At least 26 people accepted Christ last year in just two of her state's 25 literacy ministries, she said. In a state where less than 1 percent of its residents are Southern Baptist, literacy missions "is the best tool we have in Ohio now for reaching the lost people," she said.

Ohio law requires refugees getting government assistance be enrolled in literacy or general education diploma training, she said.

"Most of them who come are not Christian," Bingham said. "As we pray with them and use the Bible in teaching English and build a relationship with the people, we've seen many of them come to know Christ."

Southern Baptists' first literacy projects in the late 1950s began as efforts to help church members study the Bible, said Mildred Blankenship, a coordinator in Alabama who headed Home Mission Board literacy missions almost 28 years.

"So many of the mountain preachers had trouble teaching the Bible because so many people couldn't read," she said.

The program has evolved into an outreach tool for both immigrants and undereducated Americans, Moore said.

Several churches and missions have been established due to literacy missions, coordinators said.

Oklahoma Baptists started seven churches and missions last year out of literacy missions, said state coordinator Fran deCordova.

Church-sponsored literacy programs differ from community programs by involving the Bible and looking for students' spiritual needs, coordinators said.

"Our main purpose is to either lead them to Christ or help them grow as a Christian," said Maureen Frost of Texas. "We do not apologize for our Christianity. It is there every time."

Although the need for volunteers always exceeds the demand, Moore said the task is not an impossible one. "Southern Baptists were not called to teach everybody who needs to learn to read and write," he said. "What we are called to do is meet the need of the students who God has prepared for us."

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Five Baptist universities top \$100 million  
in endowment in latest national report

Baptist Press  
2/13/92

WASHINGTON (BP)--Five Southern Baptist-related universities -- Samford in Alabama, Mercer in Georgia, Wake Forest in North Carolina, Baylor in Texas and Richmond in Virginia -- have topped the \$100 million level of endowment holdings, placing them in rare company among the nation's 3,500 accredited colleges and universities.

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Wake Forest tallied \$336 million to rank 38th in the nation in 1991. Richmond, at \$297 million, was 48th, Baylor, with \$264 million, was 56th. Samford, with \$111 million, was 112th; Mercer, at \$102 million, was 123rd.

The statistics are part of a study by the National Association of College and University Business Officers, appearing in the Feb. 12 issue of Chronicle of Higher Education, a Washington-based journal.

Samford University showed one of the largest percentage jumps in a single year, with its endowment more than doubling since the 1990 listing. The five Baptist-related universities now hold more endowment than many nationally known schools including UCLA, Michigan State, Marquette, William and Mary, Davidson, Sweet Briar and Fordham. Their individual endowment also exceeds that of the flagship state universities of Georgia, Kentucky, Arizona, Illinois, Wisconsin, Colorado, Louisiana and South Carolina.

"Endowment resources are one index of financial stability and quality," said Thomas E. Corts, Samford president. "Everyone knows that it costs to be good. Endowment helps us keep tuition affordable without sacrificing educational quality. Even restricted endowment funds, such as those that underwrite scholarships and professorships, make possible margin of difference. We are very pleased to be in the company of the nation's better-endowed universities," Corts said.

While not topping the \$100 million mark, five other SBC schools appeared in NACUBO's overall list of 395 endowments of \$2 million or more: Furman University, South Carolina, \$87.8 million, 137th; Stetson University, Florida, \$28.2 million, 280th; Georgetown College, Kentucky, \$16.1 million, 338th; Ouachita University, Arkansas, \$16 million, 341st; and Mars Hill College, North Carolina, \$6.5 million, 381st.

The top five endowments in America, according to the NACUBO report, are Harvard, \$4.7 billion; University of Texas System, \$3.4 billion; Princeton, \$2.6 billion; Yale, \$2.5 billion; and Stanford, \$2 billion. Among Southern region schools, Emory and Rice universities led the list, each listing slightly more than \$1 billion in endowment.

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Michael Clingenpeel elected  
editor of Religious Herald

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RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Virginia Baptist pastor Michael J. Clingenpeel has been elected editor of the Religious Herald, newsjournal of the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

Trustees of the Herald unanimously elected Clingenpeel Feb. 10 at a meeting of the board in Richmond. He is to assume the position around May 1.

Clingenpeel, 41, succeeds Julian H. Pentecost, who will retire April 30 after 22 years as editor of the 164-year-old Baptist journal.

Since 1983, Clingenpeel has been pastor of Franklin Baptist Church in southeastern Virginia. He is current first vice chairman of the Religious Herald trustee board and has been a trustee since 1986 and a member of the board's executive committee since 1988.

Clingenpeel was pastor of Packard Road Baptist Church in Ann Arbor, Mich., from 1979-83 and Bear Creek Baptist Church in Scipio, Ind., 1975-79. He also has been youth pastor at North Roanoke (Va.) Baptist Church and minister to new members at Walnut Street Baptist Church in Louisville, Ky.

A graduate of the University of Richmond, he holds master's and doctorate degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville and has done additional study in sociology at the University of Kentucky, Lexington.

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He has returned to Southern Seminary on two occasions as visiting professor of church and community.

Although born in Ocala, Fla., he has lived in Virginia most of his life. He was reared in Roanoke, where he was ordained by Grandin Court Baptist Church.

His wife, the former Vivian Stephenson, is the daughter of former BGAV executive director Richard M. Stephenson of Falls Church, Va. Also graduate of the University of Richmond, she holds a law degree from the University of Louisville Law School.

Clingenpeel has been active in Virginia Baptist life, serving as the BGAV's first vice president in 1988 and chairing the Task Force on the Denominational Crisis named by BGAV President Neal Jones to examine the impact in Virginia of Southern Baptists' decade-long theological and political conflict. He subsequently served as a member of the BGAV's Committee on the Denominational Crisis.

He also chaired the General Board's Divinity School/Seminary Feasibility Study Committee, which examined the possibility of establishing a Baptist theological institution in the state.

While in Michigan he was a Southern Baptist Sunday School Board trustee and a member of the state Baptist convention's executive board.

The Clingenpeels have an 8-year-old son, Timothy James.

"Never has the ministry of the Religious Herald been so vital ...," Clingenpeel told trustees following his election. "To champion the lofty principles of freedom and cooperative missions we must do everything within our power to maintain the freedom of the Religious Herald's editorial posture."

Calling the new editor "the right choice," Herald trustee chairman Chester Brown of Hampton, Va., said, "He knows who we (Virginia Baptists) are and how we do things. His skills as a scholar, pastor and preacher are widely known."

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HMB president urges Baptists  
to be messengers of peace

By Sarah Zimmerman

Baptist Press  
2/13/92

ATLANTA (BP)--While Foreign Mission Board issues have been the focus of debate in recent months, the Home Mission Board president urged Southern Baptists to be messengers of peace.

"Let's pray daily for our sister agency and those leaders," Larry Lewis said as he addressed the February executive committee of Home Mission Board trustees.

Lewis said his prayer concern is not only for the Foreign Mission Board staff and trustees, but for the denomination. "Any serious problem at the Foreign Mission Board or the Home Mission Board or any other agency affects us all," Lewis said.

"I just make an appeal that we be messengers of peace and that we try to do the best we can with whatever influence we have to bring healing and reconciliation to our denomination.

"There's a need for all of us to act in Christian charity and in a Christ-like spirit and seek to bring healing to our family."

Lewis added there is no need to forfeit anything or to compromise.

"I am happy that the agencies of our convention and our convention itself are committed solidly to our conservative, evangelical, historic tradition. I for one wouldn't want it any other way."

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Gathering place offers chance  
to experience Bible at work

By Frank Wm. White

NASHVILLE (BP)--A journey through the Bible in art and an additional 18 displays will highlight the Bible in the Celebration Gathering Place for participants in the National Convocation on the Bible in Nashville April 21-23.

The display of original teaching picture artwork will provide a panorama of Bible history, according to Doris Adams, art display coordinator.

The National Convocation on the Bible, sponsored by the Sunday school division of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board, will be an opportunity to celebrate the message of the Bible as the foundation for the work of Southern Baptists in evangelism, Sunday school and missions, according to convocation planners.

"We've asked exhibitors to have things people can do rather than just look at. It all will relate to the Bible and how it is used in the exhibitors' work," said Jerri Herring, gathering place coordinator.

The art display will feature about 64 pieces of art in a chronological portrayal of Bible history, Adams said.

Other exhibitors will include the American Bible Society, Wycliffe Bible Translators as well as several Sunday School Board components and other Southern Baptist agencies.

Persons in biblical character costumes will be in the gathering place area throughout the exhibit times and will be available to talk with participants, Herring said.

Writers will be available to autograph books at a location near the Baptist Book Store display, she said.

The board's Church Information System is planning to offer computer Bible games to allow participants to test their biblical skills, Herring said.

"The gathering place is a place to experience how the Bible is used in different works rather than just an exhibit area to walk through," Herring said. "Participants could spend several hours seeing it all."

Convocation sessions will feature Bible preaching by Joel Gregory, pastor of First Baptist Church of Dallas, and Ken Hemphill, pastor of First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va. Bible studies will be led by Bill Hendricks, professor of Christian theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. There will be a commissioning service for Southern Baptist home and foreign missionaries during the Wednesday evening session.

Celebration sessions include the premiere of a musical, "Break the Glory Free," and drama presentations. Music features will include soprano Henrietta Davis; The Centurymen, a group of Southern Baptist music ministers; the Fisk Jubilee Singers, a historic black choir from Fisk University in Nashville; and The Cathedral Quartet, a Southern gospel music group.

As many as 125 conferences, workshops and demonstration sessions will deal with biblical background, biblical studies, proclamation of the Bible, teaching the Bible and application of the Bible.

Registration for all events of the three-day convocation is \$60. A one-day registration for Wednesday or Thursday activities is available for \$20. A Thursday fellowship dinner will cost \$14 for persons not paying the three-day registration fee.

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Nominations for a Sunday school teacher "Wall of Fame," a listing of people with at least 25 years of teaching experience, will be accepted until March 1, according to Rick Edwards, Wall of Fame coordinator. Nominees should have demonstrated outstanding faithfulness to the ministry of their church, he said.

Convocation registration forms and additional information are available from the National Convocation on the Bible information desk at (615) 251-3997.

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FMB elects director for  
Spanish South America

By Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press  
2/13/92

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Bill Goff, a missionary to Venezuela for 20 years, was elected area director for mission work in Spanish South America Feb. 12 by trustees of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Goff, 52, is professor of Christian ethics, church history and missions at the Baptist Theological Seminary in Los Teques, Venezuela. Until recently he also was executive secretary of Venezuelan Baptists' board of missions and evangelism, the missionary-sending arm of the National Baptist Convention of Venezuela.

In his new role, Goff will direct the work of about 600 missionaries in Spanish-speaking South America, an area including Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Bolivia, Peru, Venezuela, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay. Beginning March 1, he will work in the board's home office in Richmond for a year before moving to an overseas base in his region.

Goff, from Wichita Falls, Texas, succeeds Bryan (Breezy) Brasington, who retired Dec. 31.

Goff and his wife, the former Emilee Griffith of Abilene, Texas, were appointed Southern Baptist missionaries to Venezuela in 1971. In addition to teaching, he directed Venezuelan Baptists' seminary extension program and remained active in church planting and evangelism. He has been director of Venezuelan Baptists' student work program and president of the convention's strategy planning committee.

Goff also has led marriage enrichment seminars in Venezuela and throughout Latin America. He wrote a book in Spanish on marriage and the family and has contributed to several other books on the subject. He is writing a church-planting manual to be used in training Venezuelan Baptist leaders.

Goff brings "wide experience" to his new position, said Betty Law, FMB vice president for the Americas. "Bill is recognized as a leader in strategy planning and evangelistic outreach. One of his strengths is working with missionaries, nationals and convention leadership to develop visions and goals for the work," she said. Because he has traveled extensively leading conferences in Latin America, he already knows many missionaries and Baptist leaders in the region, she added.

Before missionary appointment, Goff was pastor of churches in Eastland, Mineral Wells and Anson, Texas. A graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, he holds master of divinity and doctor of theology degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. During several missionary furloughs the Goffs have been missionaries-in-residence at Hardin-Simmons. They have two grown sons.

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