

**(BP)**

SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

**BAPTIST PRESS**  
News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

NATIONAL OFFICE

SBC Executive Committee  
901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203  
(615) 244-2355  
Herb Hollinger, Vice President  
Fax (615) 742-8919  
CompuServe ID# 70420,17

**BUREAUS**

ATLANTA *Martin King, Chief, 1350 Spring St., N.W., Atlanta, Ga. 30367, Telephone (404) 898-7522*  
DALLAS *Thomas J. Brannon, Chief, 333 N. Washington, Dallas, Texas 75246-1798, Telephone (214) 828-5232*  
NASHVILLE *127 Ninth Ave., N., Nashville, Tenn. 37234, Telephone (615) 251-2300*  
RICHMOND *Robert L. Stanley, Chief, 3806 Monument Ave., Richmond, Va., 23230, Telephone (804) 353-0151*  
WASHINGTON *Tom Strode, Chief, 400 North Capitol St., #594, Washington, D.C. 20001, Telephone (202) 638-3223*

July 20, 1993

93-117

WASHINGTON -- Both sides criticize policy on homosexuals in military.  
OREGON -- Japanese man turned to Christ in his business work in Oregon; photo.  
ATLANTA -- Lewis asks if Southern Baptists have lost their prophetic voice.  
NASHVILLE -- God can use church to respond to suicidal cries for help.  
NASHVILLE -- Tough questions, thankfulness followed son's troubled life.  
DALLAS -- Provision of building, supplies for clinic a miracle, says pastor.  
NASHVILLE -- Broadman & Holman exceeds projected sales at CBA.

Both sides criticize policy  
on homosexuals in military

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press  
7/20/93

WASHINGTON (BP)--Both proponents and opponents of the ban on homosexuals serving in the military expressed displeasure with President Bill Clinton's compromise policy announced July 19.

The new policy fell far short of the lifting of the ban promised by Clinton during the 1992 presidential campaign and espoused Jan. 29 when he announced a nearly six-month timetable for formulating an executive order putting his intentions into effect. His January announcement was met by strong protests from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, rank-and-file military members and much of the public.

"We felt the best policy was the one that was in place prior to Jan. 29," said Richard Land, executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission. "We feel that the changes proposed by President Clinton weaken that policy and, while they are not as disastrous as his original proposals, we still oppose his policy as counterproductive and detrimental.

"We would urge Congress to restore the previous policy."

Congress must act quickly to codify the ban, said Elaine Donnelly, president of the Center for Military Readiness, in a written statement.

"The question is not whether the president has betrayed the interests of homosexuals but whether he should be allowed to betray the interests of the military in order to pay off a political debt," Donnelly said.

Clinton was the first presidential candidate to seek homosexual support. He reportedly received about \$3.5 million from homosexuals for his campaign.

Though proponents of the ban were angry, the new policy did not please homosexual activists and others supporting an end to the ban.

"President Clinton's decision to accept the demands of the Joint Chiefs to require homosexuals serving in the U.S. military to hide is a shattering disappointment for millions of gay, lesbian and bisexual Americans," said Tim McFeeley, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund, in a written statement.

"We elected a leader and got a barometer," said McFeeley, who leads the country's largest homosexual political group. "Great presidents like Roosevelt, Truman and Kennedy alter political reality, rather than use it as a reason to avoid the challenge of change."

--more--

John Buchanan, senior vice president of People for the American Way and an ordained Southern Baptist minister, also criticized the president's failure to lift the ban.

"President Clinton has made a disappointing retreat from principle in taking this action," Buchanan said in a prepared statement. "The sad truth is that the political courage of January has withered in the heat of July."

The president anticipated the reaction. The new policy will displease especially "those who hold the most adamant positions on either side," Clinton said in making the announcement.

It is "not a perfect solution" nor is it "identical with some of my own goals," he admitted. It will put an "end to witch hunts" that cost millions of dollars, he said.

Central elements of the new policy are:

- Recruits will not be asked to reveal their sexual preference.
- Service members will be discharged for "homosexual conduct," not "sexual orientation."
- Homosexual conduct is "a homosexual act, a statement by the service member that demonstrates a propensity or intent to engage in homosexual acts, or a homosexual marriage or attempted marriage."
- Commanders will not order investigations solely to determine whether a person is homosexual but will do so "when there is credible information that a basis for discharge or disciplinary action exists."
- Investigations will be done evenhandedly for alleged conduct on-base or off-base, heterosexual or homosexual.
- A member of one of the services who says he is homosexual has a chance to prove he does not participate in homosexual acts and does not have a "propensity or intent to do so."

The new policy is right, the president said, "because it provides greater protection to those who happen to be homosexual and want to serve their country honorably in uniform, obeying all the military rules against sexual misconduct. It is the best way to proceed because it provides a sensible balance between the rights of the individual and the needs of our military to remain the world's No. 1 fighting force.

"As president of all the American people, I am pledged to protect and promote individual rights," Clinton said. "As commander-in-chief, I am pledged to protect and advance our security. In this policy, I believe we have come close to meeting both objectives."

The policy is an improvement but it "doesn't go far enough," said Rep. Barney Frank, D.-Mass., an avowed homosexual.

Homosexuals did gain some changes they asked for, Frank told reporters, including what appears to be a zone of privacy for members of the military and a rephrasing of the language previously describing homosexuality as incompatible with military service.

Several observers on both sides predicted the new policy would produce a flurry of lawsuits.

"What we have here is an ACLU lawyer's dream and a military commander's nightmare," Donnelly said.

The U.S. Marine Corps' top chaplain, Navy Captain Larry Ellis, a Southern Baptist, had publicly supported the ban before the announcement but was unavailable for comment after the president's announcement of the new policy.

Three weeks before Clinton's announcement, seven religious bodies asked him to stand by his principles and not to maintain the ban. They were the National Council of Churches, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, Disciples of Christ, Union of American Hebrew Congregations and Interfaith IMPACT for Justice and Peace.

The NCC and UCC were contacted by Baptist Press but no spokesperson for either group was available for comment.

Japanese man turned to Christ  
in his business work in Oregon      By James Watters

PORTLAND, Ore. (BP)--What was intended as only a business trip designed to improve the technology of a chain saw made in Japan for the Northwest market became a Christian encounter for Masaomi Takeuchi. His life has not been the same since.

Born in Matsusaka Shi ("City of Pine Hills"), Japan, in 1957, Takeuchi graduated in 1981 with a degree in engineering from the Tokyo University of Agriculture and Technology. Becoming a Christian -- or a Christian minister -- was not a part of his plan for the future.

"I had been working for about eight years as a design engineer for a machinery manufacturer when my company sent me to the Northwest where our chain saws were being widely used," Takeuchi recounts. "Though my company had enough confidence in my English ability to send me on this assignment, I quickly found I needed help to survive in the highly competitive professional tool market in the Pacific Northwest.

"I met a Japanese couple, Katsu and Misuzu Shima, who not only could help me with my toughest assignments but insisted on taking me to church with them on Sundays. I felt very strange to be in the Christian worship service of Portland's Japanese International Baptist Church, where people of several ethnic origins were joyously worshipping God in the Japanese language. I had never had such an experience in my life -- not even in Japan."

Through the testimony of the Japanese congregation in Portland, where Hiroaki Yokoi is pastor, Takeuchi came to understand having a good engineering career with a solid Japanese company could not provide the best life can offer.

"I came to understand myself to be a poor, lonely sinner," Takeuchi says. "I gave my heart to Jesus."

Until his company called Takeuchi back to Japan, his new life was the happy experience of learning a daily walk with Jesus. He even began to experience the rich possibilities of serving Christ in ordinary but useful ways. Before departing for Japan he inquired about the requirements for becoming a Christian minister.

"Pastor Yokoi told me from his own personal experience that living a Christian life as a businessman in Japan was very difficult. But he said having once 'put your hand to the plough' as a Christian, you are not to look back. I could understand that teaching well enough, and promised to attend the church in Tokyo recommended by the pastor."

However, after returning to Japan, Takeuchi fell back into his old ways. For a short while he found the misery of being separated from Christians and church activities to which he had become accustomed in Portland.

"I became a backslider!" he frankly says.

But after a couple of weeks the guilt and spiritual loneliness were too heavy to bear. "During lunchtime at the company, and at night while at the company dormitory, I would play tapes of Japanese worship hymns and think again of my experiences in Portland at the Japanese International Baptist Church. The only answer was to dig out the address of the Akatsuka Baptist Church which Yokoi Sensei had given me. I needed to be with Christians again."

Eight months later Takeuchi felt God's leading to resign from his company -- a most serious step for a Japanese man with a promising career. He made application to attend a Japanese seminary but his engineering background had not equipped him to enroll as a regular theological student in the Japanese system.

Remembering Pastor Yokoi had completed his seminary training in Portland, Takeuchi boarded a flight for the United States, armed only with a tourist visa and prayer God would provide an answer. "I prayed, asking God to help me find a place that would help me train for the ministry to which I felt God was calling. My vision was that God wanted me to help Japanese-speaking people -- in Japan or elsewhere -- to find the Christian way."

--more--

Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary initially turned him down because his English proficiency scores were not high enough to qualify for graduate classroom studies. He applied for English training at Portland State University and at a local Bible college, hoping to quickly gain a mastery of spoken English which would allow him to train for the Christian ministry.

"I was so surprised when Golden Gate had been persuaded to accept me for a trial semester as a provisional student. I knew that God was making a special arrangement for me," he says.

Wm. K. Peters, then director of Golden Gate's Portland campus, had requested the main campus officials give Takeuchi a one-semester try. The academic dean ruled for the exception, requiring the Northwest campus to provide sufficient tutoring until English proficiency was achieved. In September 1989, Takeuchi became a full-time student at the Northwest campus.

"God has led me to serve him, and has shown me step by step what must be done. At the beginning of my pilgrimage, I only had a limited vision of what possible service I could do as a Christian minister. At that time it was not possible for me to think of myself ever becoming a pastor."

But God has called. In May, Takeuchi received his master of divinity degree from Golden Gate; in June, he was ordained to the ministry by the Japanese International Baptist Church of Portland. On July 4, he became the pastor of the Tacoma Japanese International Baptist mission congregation, which he has assisted pastor Yokoi in launching during the past two years.

--30--

(BP) photo available upon request from the Northwest Baptist Witness newsjournal.

Lewis asks if Southern Baptists  
have lost their prophetic voice

By Martin King

Baptist Press  
7/20/93

ATLANTA (BP)--Southern Baptist pastors must speak as God's prophets on social and moral issues of the day, according to Larry Lewis, Home Mission Board president.

"In a day when society tells us an unborn baby isn't a person, when we see moral decadence expressed in nearly every manner imaginable and when it takes 44 Southern Baptists to win one person to the Lord, we don't seem to be speaking forcefully to those types of issues," Lewis told directors of the HMB during their July meeting.

Lewis also praised the selection of Jerry Rankin as the new Foreign Mission Board president during his address and said efforts to personalize missions giving could be an "administrative nightmare."

Concerning moral issues, Lewis asked whether pastors have lost their prophetic voice while people are hurting from moral decadence. "Lost people are doing what you would expect lost people to do. We as people of God are not.

"Maybe our conscience is seared. Maybe our concern has waned. Maybe we have resolved in our heart that there really is nothing we can do, so we accept it," Lewis said. "But we're here to be champions of righteousness and holiness in our world, and I don't think we see the world as we should."

The missions leader said he thanks God for the bold positions taken by the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission and its president, Richard Land. "But one agency cannot adequately affect our nation. Local churches and pastors must be God's instruments of righteousness in their communities."

He shared with board members when he was a boy in Missouri a local bowling alley applied for a license to sell liquor. "My pastor wasn't going to let it happen. We crowded into the council chamber, sat in the window sills and filled the building ... and we didn't let it happen."

Lewis said he has a renewed vision of the impact one individual can have, citing such examples as Noah, Abraham, Paul, Martin Luther, Jonathan Edwards and Billy Graham.

--more--

"We must see the potential of what God can do, what God wants to do, what God will do if we will just say, 'God, let me be that one person you can count on.'"

In extending congratulations to Rankin and to the FMB presidential search committee, Lewis said he is "impressed with (Rankin's) dedication and commitment and (I) feel he is God's man for this place at this hour."

Lewis also expressed some concern over the potential impact of efforts to "personalize gifts to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering. If a large number of churches choose to specify their offering, it could be an administrative nightmare."

SBC messengers in Houston passed a recommendation from the SBC Executive Committee which calls for the Home and Foreign Mission boards to develop a plan through which churches may support special missions offerings by funding specific projects identified by the two boards.

According to Lewis, "It is my hope, my prayer, Southern Baptists will see the wisdom of undesignated gifts so that they might rejoice at being a part of all the missions work we do and not just a small segment."

Lewis also announced groundbreaking ceremonies for the mission agency's new building will be Oct. 11. The HMB has sold its present facilities in midtown Atlanta and purchased 34 acres north of the city. The new building is expected to be completed in the spring of 1995. An open house is planned during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Atlanta that year.

--30--

God can use church to respond  
to suicidal cries for help

By Bill Blackburn

Baptist Press  
7/20/93

Most suicides are preventable. There are those exceptional instances when a person is so committed to taking his or her own life that even skilled professionals will find it difficult to prevent death by suicide. But these are the exceptions rather than the rule.

The majority of people who are suicidal are ambivalent about life. A part of them wants to live. A part of them wants to stop living. They are "sitting on the fence" with life on one side and death on the other.

Because of this ambivalence, God can use us to help prevent a suicide by a family member, neighbor or co-worker. We cannot and should not try to take the place of trained professionals in this dangerous arena, but we can be on front line of defense to perceive suicidal thoughts and behavior, determine the level of intent and get the person to professional help.

What does the Bible say about suicides? There are seven suicides reported in the Bible. Six are in the Old Testament (Judges 9:50-55; Judges 16:23-31; 1 Samuel 31:1-10; 1 Chronicles 10:1-6; 2 Samuel 17:23; and Kings 16:8-20). Only one death by suicide, the suicide of Judas, is in the New Testament (Matthew 27:5). There are, however, many places in Scripture where suicidal thoughts are expressed, including some by heroes of the faith. The Bible does not hide the reality that some have "cursed the day they were born" and some have darkness as their only companion (Psalm 88:19, TEV).

Although the Bible reports the seven suicides with little comment or condemnation, the clear teaching of Scripture is that suicide is wrong. Life is a gift from God and is to be used responsibly and redemptively.

But in the face of the growing number of suicides each year, is there anything the untrained layperson can do to prevent a suicide? Yes, there certainly is because parents, teachers, Sunday school workers, coaches, friends and co-workers are on the front line of defense in the battle against suicide. If you are aware of them, you can be the first to pick up on the signs of suicide and then respond appropriately. But what are those signs?

--more--

The signs that point to potential suicide can be divided into four broad categories. The first is the stress category. When someone is under significant stress, the possibility of suicide should not be ruled out. Obviously all people under stress do not become suicidal, but almost all people who take their lives do so following a time of significant stress. Two distinctions need to be made here. One, it is important to understand how the person views stress. To you it may seem minimal, but what you deem minimal may seem monumental to the other person. The second distinction regarding stress relates to the coping ability of the person. Someone may handle stress well for a long time and then be overwhelmed by it. When the coping ability begins to wither, the chance for suicide or suicidal thoughts increases significantly.

Stress is such a broadly used word that some specifics should be mentioned. All of the following could be seen as stresses that might push a person in the direction of suicide: loss of a job; pressure and tension at home; a developmental crisis at a significant time of change like middle-age or retirement; loss of a relationship through death, divorce, imprisonment or moving; the pressure of success; and finally, mental illness, especially depression.

The second major category of signs of suicide is personal history. Has there been a previous attempt at suicide? If so, the risk of suicide is greater because, although only 10 percent of all people who attempt suicide eventually take their own lives, 45 percent of all who complete suicide have previously contemplated it. Another clue would be the death during the person's childhood or adolescence of a person to whom he or she was especially close. This death would be even more significant if it were by suicide. Two other personal history signs would be a history of depression and/or a history of being abused as a child.

Third, there are behavior signs. When attentive to the potential of suicide, we must listen to the language of behavior. What does the sudden interest in burial plans, wills and life insurance mean? Is it only prudent planning or is it a sign of something else. What do sudden changes in behavior and mood mean? Obtaining a means of suicide such as a gun or pills may be a sign of suicidal thoughts. A suicide note should never be laughed off as just a whim or bad joke. Watch for signs of withdrawal and isolation.

Fourth, there are verbal clues. Verbal clues include such statements as the following: "I'm not the man I used to be," "My family would be better off without me," "Whatever happens to me I don't want you to feel guilty," "Here take this \_\_\_\_\_ (valued possession). I won't be needing it anymore," "I just want to tell you good-bye and let you know you mean a lot to me," "Do you think a person who commits suicide will go to hell?"

Not all people who die by suicide give such verbal clues, but many do. It is a myth that if a person talks about it they won't do it.

Obviously on any one day you may see a number of clues among several people. The important thing is to look for a cluster of clues. When you have noted several signs that make you suspicious, what do you do? You may talk with a mutual friend of the person or one of his/her family members.

This would have to be someone whose judgment you trust. If your suspicions are confirmed or even if they are denied by the other person, and you still feel there is the possibility of suicide, then your next step may be to talk directly with the person.

You may begin by explaining some of the things you have noted, expressing concern and asking if you are correct that the person has been depressed or particularly disturbed. Listen carefully to the response. Do not be afraid to ask, "Have you become so concerned/sad/depressed that you have considered harming yourself?" Mentioning this possibility will not plant the idea and may give the person a needed chance to talk.

If the person has thought about suicide, has determined a plan to take his/her life and has the available means to carry out the plan, then the situation is a crisis requiring immediate and careful attention. Try to stay with the person and keep them talking without getting into an argument about suicide. Seek to find out who the best family member or friend would be to talk with the person. Begin to develop a plan of action whereby you will get the person to professional help. Although you can pick up on the signs of suicide and do some assessment of the danger, when there is a suicide crisis, professional help is needed.

This professional help may come from a psychologist, a psychiatrist, a family physician, a clinical social worker, a pastoral counselor or hospital chaplain. There may be a suicide prevention center in your community. Your minister can aid you in finding the right kind of help.

If the danger of suicide is immediate, an attempt is in progress or other lives are at risk, law enforcement authorities should be called.

All of this sounds rather frightening, and we can hope we would never have to deal with such a crisis. But the fact is, we may.

What can churches do to prevent suicide? In speaking to ministers and to church groups, I have often been asked, "What can the church do to help prevent suicide?" My first response is, "Be the church." Simplistic though it may sound at first, some of the most powerful suicide prevention will be done by the church just doing what it ought to do as the church.

From the New Testament Book of Acts, we know the church is to preach the good news of Jesus (kerygma), teach and equip the believers (didache) and be a fellowshiping community (koinonia). We fail to realize sometimes the power in good worship services, strong Bible teaching and training and the gathering together of brothers and sisters in Christ.

Second, preach and teach the sanctity of life. Any practice that treats life as if it were cheap and easily expendable must be challenged. Tough and complicated though they are, abortion, suicide, euthanasia, capital punishment, the level of violence now accepted in American society and the issues of war and peace must be tackled by the church and the pulpit.

Third, inform the church workers about the motivations of suicidal people, the signs of suicide and sources of help. Again, this is based on the understanding the front line of defense against suicide is those people who are regularly coming in contact with people who may be suicidal.

Fourth, seek a variety of ways to equip the congregation in caregiving. I am convinced that although this is not everyone's spiritual gift, all people can be trained in the basics of care giving.

Fifth, get the salt out of the shaker. We as Christians are to be the salt of the world. But we need to get out there to be that salt. Encourage your church either to work with existing ministries in the community or to begin some ministries to hurting people. I am delighted that every week our church members are working through community and Christian agencies to help the poor, battered women, the dying, the illiterate, those in jails and prisons and the mentally ill. Each act of caring puts another roadblock in someone's path of despair that might have led to suicide.

The reality is that in spite of our efforts and the efforts of others to prevent them, some suicides do occur. When they do, we as the body of Christ need to respond with support and love. It is too easy to blame or judge following a suicide attempt. What is needed instead is loving presence that does not need to know all the details nor have an answer to why. Following a suicide or attempt, the family members and friends need someone with whom they can express their grief, their guilt, their confession and their anger.

Suicide and attempted suicides are almost always cries for help. As Christians we can respond to those cries for help. We can look for the signs of suicide, pray with and for the person and seek the professional help that may be needed. And, when suicides occur, we can stand with the grieving to share the love that is ours because God in Christ stands with us. (BP)

Blackburn is pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Kerrville, Texas, and author of the book, "What You Should Know About Suicide." This article was printed initially in The Baptist Standard, Texas Baptists' newsjournal.

Tough questions, thankfulness  
followed son's troubled life

By Cecil Sims

Baptist Press  
7/20/93

It has been nearly 12 years since we received the phone call, "Cecil, we found David dead this morning. He took his own life with a handgun."

Only those who have received this message can know its impact. It was not an unexpected message. We had known for many years that his spells of deep depression could lead to such tragedy. We had sought spiritual, emotional and medical help for many years, but to no avail.

From his entrance into puberty, until the time of his death at age 27, he knew little peace or joy. Mentally brilliant, but socially not well-adjusted because of his obsessive and compulsive nature, he could not receive love or develop normal relationships. After 13 years of mental and emotional misery, he sought peace in death.

Recently, in a meeting with our convention staff, we were sharing burdens. One of the senior staff members looked to me and said, "Sims, you and Jeannine have suffered one of the most difficult of life's tragedies ... . How have you been able to handle it so well ... without it nearly destroying you? Would you mind sharing how you have handled it?"

I replied, "I'm not sure we have handled it all that well." But we have managed not to permit it to destroy us. Satan was not going to have that victory. We went through all the pain of self-examination and faced the normal questions: What did we do wrong? What else could we have done? Why did not God answer our prayers? -- questions to which there were no satisfying answers.

In the midst of the years of family turmoil caused by David's emotional state, we had reached some conclusions. We had four children, and we could not permit the hurts of one to destroy the normalcy of the other three. We had a calling which could not be vacated, neither our calling as a parent or pastor; so we must remember, God has not lost control or forgotten us.

Some prayers were answered wonderfully, but David had no victory or relief. Why, we will not know this side of glory, but God was still God and we knew he would not put more on us that we could bear, even if the load was petty heavy at times.

Another fact gave us some help. God loved our David more than we did, and our David was more God's than ours. God had only given him to us to raise, and we were doing the best we knew how.

At times (when he was violent) we were tempted to reach very self-deprecating conclusions. Finally, I told my wife, one of two things is true, either we are a miserable failure and have produced a very abnormal child (and some of the mental health community were willing to place this responsibility on us) or God gave David to us so he could have the best possible chance to become normal.

We offered love, security, openness, patience, moral training and loyalty; the best moments he had were fleeting moments of family relationships. We chose to believe that we were faithful stewards of the parenting opportunity and in the midst of the years of heartache and final heartbreak, God was teaching us to trust, not question; to persevere, not despair; and to realize he was carrying us, not having forsaken us.

Since David's death 12 years ago, we have chosen to thank God for David, not resent him for not healing our son. We know David is no longer suffering. While the manner of his death was heartbreaking and tragic, his eternal destiny is more important than the manner of his death.

--more--

It is better to look forward to a "whole David" than to weep over the loss of a tormented son. Seldom is there an hour when I don't think about David, but peace comes because he is with his Lord whom he loved. (BP)

--30--

Cecil Sims is executive director-treasurer of the Northwest Baptist Convention. This article initially appeared The Baptist Standard, Texas Baptists' newsjournal.

Provision of building, supplies  
for clinic a miracle, says pastor      By Ken Camp

Baptist Press  
7/20/93

DALLAS (BP)--Later this year, when a small-town Ohio church sets up a free health care clinic for the needy in a million-dollar building bought for \$1 and fills it with donated equipment secured by the Texas Baptist Men missions organization, it will be the culmination of a miracle, according to the church's pastor.

"Man can't orchestrate something like this. We can't take any of the credit. It's all God," said Lonnie Riley, pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church in Carlisle, Ohio.

Several months ago, Riley was invited to a meeting of the local housing commission where he learned that medical care, educational opportunities and available housing were the three primary needs of the poor in Warren County, Ohio.

"The Lord began to lay it on my heart. Since we have about 25 health care professionals in our church, I thought maybe one day a month they could provide free medical examinations," he said.

Riley contacted the director of the housing authority, suggested the once-a-month free clinic and asked if there were any available facilities.

The director told Riley about a publicly owned building in nearby Franklin, Ohio, formerly used as a post office, that could be leased to the church for \$1 a year. After additional conversations with all of the commissioners on the housing authority board, the building was instead offered for sale to the church for \$1.

The facility -- valued at about \$1 million -- included built-in safes ideal for storing drugs, about a half-dozen offices and a large open area that could be used as a reception room.

With the location secured, Hillcrest publicly announced its plan to start the Meridzo (New Testament Greek for "care") Center to provide free medical and dental care for many of the estimated 800 homeless or transient families in Warren County.

As word spread, health care professionals from as far away as Columbus, Ohio -- a two-hour drive -- called to join their colleagues at Hillcrest in volunteering their services. And officials with the Warren County Transit Authority expressed their willingness to provide needy families transportation to the Meridzo Center.

But one challenge remained. The center needed medical and dental equipment.

Riley is not completely sure who suggested he contact Texas Baptist Men, but he called the Dallas office asking for help, even though he knew no one there and was only vaguely familiar with the organization. When TBM Executive Director Bob Dixon returned the phone call, Riley was amazed at the response.

"Just the week before, I had gotten a call from a doctor in Odessa (Texas). He had all the equipment and fixtures of a medical clinic that he wanted to donate," Dixon said.

Through the TBM Medical/Dental Fellowship, Dixon also was able to coordinate the acquisition of dental equipment in Tyler, Texas, and additional supplies in Georgia.

The owner of a trucking company offered to donate the use of an 18-wheel, tractor-trailer rig to transport the equipment to Ohio and to pay the driver.

"Anything, we can't use here, we will send to Russia where we're going on a mission trip this fall," Riley said.

"We've just followed the Lord one step at a time. - It's exciting to walk in God's plan and to see what he can do as he links up his people."

--30--

**Broadman & Holman exceeds  
projected sales at CBA**

NASHVILLE (BP)--"Secret Adventures," the major video project announced by Broadman & Holman Publishers July 12 at Christian Booksellers Association, led wholesale sales for B&H at the international convention in Atlanta and contributed to exceeding projected overall sales by 25 percent.

According to Larry Skaggs, sales director for B&H, more than 40,000 copies of the video series for children were sold in advance of the October release date.

Top sellers among books were "Romancing the Home" by Ed Young, Southern Baptist Convention president and pastor of Second Baptist Church of Houston; "Reconnecting" by Ronnie Floyd, pastor of First Baptist Church of Springdale, Ark.; "The Word of God with Power" by Jack Taylor, president of Dimensions Ministries of Fort Worth, Texas; the "Holman Bible Dictionary" and the "Holman Bible Handbook." Supplies continued to post healthy sales, including communion cups, postcards and offering envelopes.

Four authors -- Floyd, Don Dennis ("Breaking Crime's Vicious Cycle"), Laura Smith ("Opening Night") and Gaylyn Whalin (co-author of "The Door to Joy") -- signed autographs and met bookstore owners and managers in the B&H booth.

Daily devotionals for CBA were given by B&H authors Whalin, Floyd, Dennis and Michael Dudit ("Handbook of Contemporary Preaching").

The booth itself received recognition as second runner-up among comparably sized booths, based on appearance, product display and customer accessibility.

Kirk Freeman, marketing director for B&H, said he interprets the success of CBA sales as "an indication from the retail trade of positive support for changes in the Sunday School Board's publishing operation and for support of the board's expanding ministry. "

HOUSE MAIL



**BAPTIST PRESS**

901 Commerce #750  
Nashville, Tennessee 37203

HOUSE MAIL

So. Baptist Library & Archives  
901 Commerce  
Nashville, TN 37203