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SBC Cooperative Program gifts
up for month, lag for year

Baptist Press
8/3/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for July surpassed last year by 1.05 percent but in spite of the increase the year's total remained 1.54 percent behind the previous year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

All gifts to the SBC -- Cooperative Program and designated -- remained slightly below last year at the 10-month mark of the SBC fiscal year: \$237,478,143 in 1992-93 compared to \$240,351,807 in 1991-92, a 1.20 percent decrease.

Cooperative Program gifts for July were up by \$118,861 over a year ago: \$11,491,306 compared to \$11,372,445. Designated gifts for the month were down slightly, .08 percent, at \$4,986,461 compared to \$4,990,613 in 1992.

Year-to-date Cooperative Program totals show 1992-93 behind the previous year by \$1,796,956: \$114,835,034 compared to \$116,631,990, or a 1.54 percent decrease.

For the SBC budget, \$11,683,366 is required each month to reach the year's total of \$116,833,662. The 1992-93 CP receipts are 1.71 percent below the budgeted figure for the year-to-date.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

**SBC Historical Commission revises
pamphlet that had CBF reference By Art Toalston**

NASHVILLE (BP)--The Southern Baptist Historical Commission has deleted a statement in one of its pamphlets, at the request of the SBC Executive Committee, mentioning the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

The deletion was authorized by the Historical Commission's administrative committee in response to a recommendation adopted by the Executive Committee June 14.

The Executive Committee asked the Historical Commission to "cease to distribute" the pamphlet until the commission "deletes any reference" to the CBF, an organization not affiliated with the SBC founded by Baptist moderates opposed to the conservative direction of the SBC.

At issue was a sentence in a Historical Commission pamphlet, "Who Are Southern Baptists?" The pamphlet is one of eight released in January in a new "Understanding Southern Baptists" series.

The Historical Commission's seven-member administrative committee acted in behalf of the agency's trustees, who do not meet until next April. The commission's 30 trustees were informed of the action in a June 29 letter.

A new sentence in the pamphlet now reads, "Churches also support Southern Baptist causes through special offerings, designated gifts and other channels."

The deleted sentence read: "Some churches also give money for missions, education and other causes through such channels as the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship."

According to Lynn E. May Jr., the commission's executive director-treasurer, the administrative committee took three actions:

- Agreed to comply with the Executive Committee request.
- Authorized the agency's staff to print 40,000 copies of the revised pamphlet at a cost of approximately \$1,800.

- Decided to study the issues involved in the matter and prepare a response to the Executive Committee by its September meeting in Nashville. May said Aug. 2 the committee is still in the process of preparing that response. The committee is chaired by Slayden Yarbrough, a religion professor at Oklahoma Baptist University.

"We have taken the action of the Executive Committee seriously; we have acted on it responsibly," May said.

May also noted: "We feel that this pamphlet, along with the others in this series, can be very useful in helping a congregation understand who Southern Baptists are." The eight-pamphlet series also can inform new church members and non-Baptists attending services at an SBC church about the convention's heritage, May said.

May said the Historical Commission ceased distribution of the pamphlet in question June 17.

At the Executive Committee meeting June 14, May stated the commission, in mentioning CBF in the pamphlet, had no intention of damaging the SBC Cooperative Program channel of support for national and international missions and ministries, or of promoting the CBF. Executive Committee member Guy Sanders of Florida, however, said during the meeting "a dangerous misconception could come of this ... the lines could become very blurred."

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**BSSB vice president
to become consultant**

**Baptist Press
8/3/93**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Citing proposals for changes in the role of chief financial officer of the Baptist Sunday School Board, E.V. King, vice president for finance and administration, said he has resigned his position, effective immediately.

King, 50, who joined the board in 1984, will serve as a consultant to BSSB President James T. Draper Jr. through December 1994.

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"I have had an opportunity to review a study of the board's corporate overhead structure and senior management positions," King said Aug. 2. "After discussing it with Dr. Draper, particularly the changing role of the chief financial officer, I think it is best for me to look for other opportunities and let the board bring in new leadership in this area."

Draper said he currently is reviewing proposals for reducing corporate overhead costs in several areas, including finance and administration.

"E.V. and I have agreed this change is in the best interest of the Baptist Sunday School Board," Draper said. "I am deeply grateful for the many contributions and excellent leadership he has provided."

A native of Tennessee, King served as executive director of the Tennessee Housing Development Corporation for 10 years before becoming BSSB vice president for business and finance. He became vice president for finance and administration in 1991. He holds a B.A. degree from David Lipscomb University in Nashville and a master of science degree from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

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Actions demonstrate God's love
in ministry to flood victims

By Shari Schubert

Baptist Press
8/3/93

ST. LOUIS (BP)--When natural disaster strikes, one usually doesn't have to listen very long before hearing a variety of comments alluding to God's role in the calamity. Some are made in jest; others are absolutely serious.

"Maybe God's trying to tell us something," remarks an armchair observer as scenes of raging water flash across the television screen.

Another suggests perhaps the havoc-wreaking rampage of the muddy Mississippi is God's judgment on river boat gambling.

Elsewhere, a homeless flood victim turns to her pastor/counselor and asks, "Why would God let this happen to me?"

The response of Christians to a crisis such as this summer's flooding in the Midwest often reveals much about how Christians understand the nature and character of God.

"What scares me," said Thom Meigs, professor of pastoral care and psychology of religion at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, "is that so often we reflect a judgmental God, one who is against us rather than for us."

Instead of focusing on God's judgment in a negative way, he said, Christians need to focus on the love and care of a God who grieves with people when they are hurting.

That often can be expressed better in actions than in words, said specialists in the areas of disaster ministry and pastoral care.

What really is needed in a time of crisis is more people like the four men in Mark 2 who lowered a paralytic through the roof of a house to see Jesus, said Doug Dickens, associate professor of pastoral ministry at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

"Sometimes God takes on a face in the crisis and it is our face," he said.

He and others emphasized that ministry to disaster victims needs to focus first on meeting immediate, practical needs providing food, clothing, a place to shower and a place to sleep; helping them get in touch with friends or family; connecting them with community resources; being there to listen.

"As you establish yourself in that way, you'll have all kinds of opportunities to share your faith," said Paul Hamilton, a hospital chaplain and coordinator of emotional needs ministry for South Carolina Baptists' disaster relief program.

That sharing might come in simply doing a Christlike act or offering a word of encouragement. It might mean giving a gospel tract with a meal.

Ministry to flood victims needs to be a long-term commitment, continuing through the weeks and months after the initial crisis, when "things look like they're back to normal, but they're not," Dickens said. Dealing with anger is a major challenge.

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Pastors and relief workers sometimes have difficulty accepting and responding to victims' anger, especially if they encounter people who are still angry weeks after the disaster is past, Dickens explained.

But when lives have been disrupted by disaster, anger may represent an effort to regain control, Dickens noted. An outburst of anger also may be a way of testing the person who is trying to minister to find out whether that person really cares.

God can deal with people's anger, even when they are angry at him, said Hamilton. He said disaster victims need to be encouraged to express their anger in appropriate ways that will not hurt themselves or others.

Scripture can be helpful in that process, he pointed out. Reading passages of lament, such as Psalms 55, can help victims express their feelings and remind them that those feelings have been shared by others.

Hamilton also encourages disaster victims to talk to others about their feelings and to pray or perhaps even write a letter to God, telling him what they're angry about. Yelling at a tree or hitting a punching bag also can help to release anger, he said.

Dickens cautioned caregivers against becoming defensive or arrogant when confronted with anger. Instead, he suggested, acknowledge the person's feelings with a response such as, "It really must be frustrating to feel like you're not in control of what's happening to you."

It is not helpful to offer judgmental statements such as, "You've just got to believe harder, or trust God more," Dickens said.

And, "Don't try to defend God," he advised. "I don't have to answer, 'Why did God do that?'"

Dickens urged caregivers to "recognize that you're not going to do and say everything right, but that you can learn with these people."

If the right words won't come, don't be afraid to sit in silence, he said. As a rule of thumb, "Don't talk more than the person you're trying to help is talking."

"Watch your promises," Meigs warned. It is easy to tell a person experiencing crisis, "We'll be with you all the way through this," but it is much harder to follow through on that promise.

Counselors need to be alert for hidden messages, Dickens noted. Statements such as "I don't feel like I can go on" or "I don't think life's worth living" could be warnings that a person is suicidal and needs professional help.

Dickens stressed the importance of expressing confidence in victims' ability to cope with the disaster and get on with their lives. He cautioned caregivers against assuming a "messiah" role, taking over victims' lives and encouraging helplessness.

Coping with this summer's flood crisis will be a new experience for many ministers. Even if they are well-prepared, as far as understanding the concepts of crisis ministry, most have never actually had to deal with it, Meigs pointed out. Some will find it overwhelming, he predicted.

Disaster can take a heavy toll on caregivers, including ministers, who may become stressed by the demands of the situation. Hamilton cited a study done of a 52-church area in his state devastated by Hurricane Hugo in 1989. Within a year of the hurricane, those 52 churches reported 48 pastor or staff changes.

Pastors and relief workers need to guard against getting so absorbed in the demands of others that they fail to take care of themselves, Hamilton said.

Floods, storms and other disasters are a part of the natural order of things, and when they occur, it is important to remember that God can bring good out of calamity, pastoral care specialists emphasized.

"Vulnerability sometimes invites us to come closer to God, to realize that he is for us, not against us," Meigs said.

Loss experienced in a natural disaster can evoke thoughts and feelings such as respect for the power of God, gratitude for what wasn't lost or determination to be a better steward, Dickens added.

The incarnation of Jesus offers hope in such times, he continued. "The God who became flesh in a very cruel world is still involved in this one."

**Harlan Spurgeon joins
CBF missions staff**

ATLANTA (BP)--Harlan E. Spurgeon has been elected associate missions coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

Spurgeon took early retirement as vice president of the office of mission personnel at the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board in April, citing philosophical differences with trustee leaders.

Spurgeon, 62, was elected unanimously to the CBF position July 28 by the moderate Baptist organization's global missions ministry group. His responsibilities began Aug. 1.

Former FMB President R. Keith Parks is CBF global missions coordinator.

Spurgeon will coordinate CBF's missionary appointment process, direct the CBF's missions program among internationals in the United States and develop a program of urban evangelism and ministry.

Spurgeon, and his wife, Joann, were missionaries to Taiwan from 1957 to 1972. He became an FMB vice president in 1983.

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**Southern Baptist student ministry
changing but healthy, leader says** By Chip Alford

Baptist Press
8/3/93

NASHVILLE (BP)--Amid economic pressures and the challenge of meeting changing needs of today's college students, Southern Baptist student ministry is changing.

Budget cuts and financial belt-tightening have forced some state conventions to make staff cutbacks in their Baptist Student Union program. Some BSUs are relying more on volunteer leaders. Some are exploring different organizational models.

Earlier this year, the executive board of the California Southern Baptist Convention voted to cease funding BSU ministries on local campuses, opting instead to equip local churches and associations to carry out the work. The move was met with protest in the state and caused some concern for student leaders in other areas who wondered if their state conventions might follow suit.

That hasn't happened, though, and even the California convention has modified its stance somewhat. The state has hired two contract workers to coordinate student work in the state, one who will focus on campus ministries and another who will serve as a church start consultant for churches and/or missions in or near a college campus. In addition, the former state student director, Dale Robinson, will focus on strategies to reach young adults ages 18-24 through local church ministries.

"What looked like a volcanic eruption at the time is really not a calamity at all. It's just a different way of doing things," Charles Johnson, director of the Baptist Sunday School Board's national student ministry, said in a recent interview with Facts and Trends, a monthly news and information publication produced by the BSSB's communications department.

Johnson, who will begin his 12th year as director of NSM in September, said change is inevitable and necessary for a healthy student ministry program in the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We are functioning in a changing landscape. Many state conventions are experiencing a dollar squeeze and people are starting to ask harder questions. They want to know what they are getting for their money, so there is a need for greater accountability.

"But I don't see this as a disheartening element. It can be a positive thing. It just makes it more important than ever before that we make sure people know about our successes," he said.

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Those successes include increases last year in the number of student conversions and baptisms; student summer missionaries; black, ethnic and international students involved in BSU; students preparing for church vocations; and churches, Sunday schools and missions started with help from students. All of these increases were achieved despite a decrease in the total number of campus ministries and full-time campus ministers.

"We have a strong, healthy student ministry program because it is a balanced program," Johnson said, referring to the "two-pronged" approach to student ministry his department has promoted since the mid-1980s. That approach includes a presence on campuses through BSU and outreach and ministry to students by local churches.

"This isn't something new. It's been happening all along," Johnson said. "In fact, even BSU is a ministry of local churches, whether they are pooling their efforts through an association or state convention. What we have tried to do is focus more attention on church ministry to students, to lift it up."

Those efforts, however, do not signal a decreased emphasis on BSU, Johnson said, adding campus ministries are "vital to the denomination" because they are "calling out the called."

"BSU is churning out between 60,000 and 70,000 trained leaders each year and between 60-65 percent of current enrollees in Southern Baptist seminaries are former BSU members," he said. "These are the future leaders in our denomination."

"We have a strong heritage in BSU and I believe it will remain strong, but we need the local church, too. It's a partnership."

NSM currently has two consultants -- Scott Allen and David Benjamin -- assigned to church ministry to students. Johnson said they are promoting a new emphasis calling for "three hours" of student ministry in local churches.

"There are three things, three hours of ministry every church that has college students needs to have," Johnson explained.

"First, they must have a student-sensitive worship service. That doesn't mean the pastor should 'preach' only to students or that students should take up the offering or serve as ushers. It means the pastor should use examples and illustrations of interest to students in his sermon. For example, if he is preaching on honesty, he could bring in an illustration that shows the importance of honesty in academics.

"The second thing churches need is a Sunday school program intentionally designed for college students. That is crucial.

"But we also believe churches need something else, a 'third hour' of student ministry that involves discipleship, missions and ministry involvement. That doesn't have to happen on Sunday night. It could be on any day and at any time during the week."

Another ministry option, Johnson said, is to offer special courses that address the specific needs or problems of college students. One avenue currently being explored by several churches and BSUs is the Life Support courses available from the Board. These courses address topics such as self-esteem and problems resulting from addictions or being raised in a dysfunctional family. NSM already has brought in a group of student ministers from across the country for training in how to use the materials and the courses are being introduced at this summer's student conferences at the Glorieta and Ridgecrest Baptist conference centers.

"Many of our leaders on our campuses and in our local churches are entrepreneurial in approach. We want to give them room to operate and provide them with organizational options and products that meet their needs," Johnson said.

"What we need to avoid is fragmentation. We want to address specific needs and current issues, but our challenge is to make sure our basic message of evangelism, discipleship, missions and ministry involvement doesn't get lost in the shuffle."

While there is "enormous diversity" and "rapid change" in Southern Baptist student work, Johnson said two things have remained constant -- God's unconditional love for students and "commitment across the Southern Baptist student ministry family to our mission of introducing students and faculty to Christ, nurturing them in the Christian faith and involving them in the life and mission of the church."

**Editor of The Student
knows influence of BSU**

By Chip Alford

NASHVILLE (BP)--Gina Howard earned only one degree in college, but she had a double major -- English and BSU.

"Our BSU met in this little house; it was sort of my home away from home. I was always there," Howard said, reflecting on her experiences at the Baptist Student Union at the University of Montevallo (Ala.) in the late 1970s.

Howard's involvement in BSU included serving as worship chairman and member of the traveling drama and singing group. Her campus minister, Bob Ford, challenged her to grow in her faith, helped her discover gifts and abilities she didn't even know she had and continues to serve as a mentor today.

"We had a unique group. Well over 30 of us ended up going on to seminary after graduation. BSU was one of the strongest influences of my life," she said.

Howard, formerly editor of Dimension and products at Woman's Missionary Union, will now try to encourage today's college students to take advantage of the opportunities for Christian growth provided by BSU and local church ministries to students. She recently joined the staff of the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's national student ministry as editor of The Student magazine.

"The potential of the magazine for reaching students is incredible," Howard said, adding the magazine already has a strong foundation to build on. "We're going to be working on a new focus, a fresh perspective. The magazine needs to be more user-friendly and need-oriented. We also want to make it more eye-catching by giving more attention to color and graphics."

While The Student will continue to include the weekly Collegiate Bible Study and articles related to the student ministry emphases of missions, evangelism and discipleship, Howard said she also hopes to offer more articles that address problems and issues unique to students.

"For most students, going away to college is their first chance to experience real independence. They begin to make more of their own decisions. They also start to question what they believe and why they believe it. It's really a time of searching.

"Often, we gloss over serious questions asked by college students. Our responses are often paternalistic. We give them cliché answers instead of taking the time to talk with them honestly and openly. If we can give them some honest guidance through the magazine, then we will have accomplished something important," she said.

In addition to her English degree from Montevallo, Howard also earned a master of arts degree in Christian education from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. Before joining the staff of WMU, she served as executive director of ACTS of Montgomery, Ala.; interim director of church development for the Montgomery (Ala.) Baptist Association; public relations director for the Long Run Baptist Association in Louisville; and editorial assistant for Review and Expositor, the quarterly professional journal published by the faculty of Southern Seminary.

Her interest and involvement in student work goes beyond her college BSU years. She is married to David Howard, formerly campus minister at the University of Alabama in Birmingham. He also has served as campus minister for the UAB Medical School and three junior colleges in northwest Alabama and as ecumenical campus minister for Spalding College, a Catholic school in Louisville, Ky., and Birmingham Southern, a Methodist college in Birmingham. He is currently exploring career options in the Nashville area.

"I've had a lot of interaction with college students over the years," Howard said. "David has served on several different types of campuses, so we've had some variety. We know there are several different ways to minister to students."

Howard said she already has heard from several student ministers offering congratulations on her new position at the Sunday School Board.

"They've been very gracious," she said, adding their support is crucial to the success of the magazine.

"In most cases, they are the ones who are ordering the magazines for their BSUs or churches. If they don't find it helpful, informativ and attractive, it may not ever get in the hands of students. ... I'm excited about the challenge of putting out a magazine that meets both the expectations of students and student ministers."

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

Best evangelism involves
'keeping hooks in the water'

By Mark Wingfield

Baptist Press
8/3/93

MOUNT WASHINGTON, Ky. (BP)--Many churches aren't reaching people because "they're not keeping hooks in the water," said Richard Harris of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board during a mass evangelism conference in Kentucky.

Harris, HMB director of mass evangelism, was among conference speakers who called for effective evangelism in churches involving as many members as possible in careful planning of relevant events.

The conference, at First Baptist Church of Mount Washington, Ky., July 23-24, was co-sponsored by the Kentucky Baptist Convention and the HMB to train pastors and other church leaders.

Revival meetings still can be a relevant means of evangelism in churches, Harris said, though there is no substitute for the "day by day" witnessing of lay people equipped to share their faith in the marketplace.

"I've been preaching 22 years, and the best revivals I've had have been in the last three years," Harris said. "Boring, non-interesting, dull meetings are what don't work today."

The problem is most churches aren't using revival meetings effectively, Harris said. Planning and the involvement of many members are two often-overlooked keys to success, he advised.

"You get what you plan for," Harris said. However, the best planning is not done by the pastor or staff alone, he added.

"Pastors have gotten so accustomed to doing revivals ... that the lay people never get ownership," he said. But the fewer people significantly involved in the event, the smaller the crowd.

In revivals and other church events, for every person given some role to play, another four or five people will be added in attendance, Harris said.

He advised using a series of committees to do the advance preparation and then focusing on a different special event each night of the meeting to maximize attendance.

"Give a lot of people a few things to do, not a few people a lot to do," Harris said.

Another way to involve people in the ongoing evangelism work of the church is by using trained counselors in every worship service, said Bill Jagers, director of the Kentucky Baptist Convention's evangelism office.

He cited the "Personal Commitment Guide" produced by the HMB and the "Decision Time" training materials produced by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board as helpful resources.

Jagers listed several reasons it is wise for a pastor to train lay people to help with decision counseling:

- Allows the pastor to handle more than one person coming forward during an invitation and keeps people from holding back because the pastor appears too busy.

- Ensures adequate time to make sure the person has made a decision and understood it.

An added benefit is lay people trained as worship counselors are "much more likely to share their faith with others in the marketplace" once they are comfortable talking to people at church, Jagers said.

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To make sure these counselors have someone to counsel, churches must be skillful "fishers of men," Harris said. "You've gotta find the fish. They're not coming to your doors."

He cited the telephone, direct mail and door-to-door surveys as effective ways to bring people into the church. Also, relationships built with Christians and appealing to special interests are important, he said.

But in the end, churches must present themselves in a desirable manner to attract the unchurched, Harris said.

"Many, and maybe most, of the churches I go to I wouldn't join," he confessed. "Would you join your church?"

"People say the gospel is irrelevant. No, we leaders are irrelevant."

Once people are attracted to church, they must be confronted with the gospel message, Harris and other speakers said.

Evangelistic preaching, to have vitality, must be done with courage and conviction, said Claude Thomas, pastor of First Baptist Church in Euless, Texas.

Relevant preaching "comes out of Scripture and relates to what is going on in our time," he said.

"People are on the edge of desperation and despair and are asking significant questions. Evangelistic preaching says we have an answer."

Further, evangelistic preaching must not just explain what's going on but also must give hope in the midst of that explanation, Thomas said. "People need more than an explanation; they need a solution."

The essence of evangelistic preaching is that Jesus Christ died to atone for sin, rose from the dead and now is seated at the right hand of God interceding on behalf of those who trust him, Thomas said. He explained regardless of the topic of his weekly sermons, he attempts to get this simple message through as one element.

Music also can be a powerful tool for evangelism if understood correctly, said Tom McEachin, HMB associate director of mass evangelism.

"Music has got to have a focus," he advised. "The priority ought to be on communicating the gospel."

This can be done with traditional music or contemporary music, McEachin said. However, the music must match the setting and what will attract people in the target group to the gospel. Further, the pastor and music leader must work in harmony to be effective in evangelism, he said.

And whatever music style is chosen, the music should be as well-rehearsed and polished as possible, McEachin suggested.

Finally, pastors must be willing to close the deal, Harris said. "Preaching is not enough if not put with a good evangelistic invitation," Harris said.

Jerry Passmore, evangelism director for the Florida Baptist Convention, offered a list of 25 tips for evangelistic invitations.

It is important to realize that extending an invitation is "more than just something to do," he said. "The destiny of souls hangs in the balance."

Further, everything done at church that day impacts the invitation, Passmore said. "The invitation begins when the first person makes contact with that person when they step on the church grounds."

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "Missionary Jim Johnsonius dies in Argenitna auto crash," dated 8/2/93, please change the second paragraph to read:

Johnsonius, 38, died of chest and head trauma ...

Thanks,
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