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August 11, 1993

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ST. LOUIS -- Flood cleanup serious business to Missouri Baptist students.
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Cleanup volunteers needed,
but must take precautions

By Jim Burton

Baptist Press
8/11/93

ST. LOUIS (BP)--As many as 50 percent of the homes underwater in the flood-ravaged Midwest may be condemned, according to emergency management officials. As the muddy Mississippi and Missouri river floodwater recedes, water damage to homes is more extensive than originally estimated.

This will reduce the number of volunteers needed for cleanup, said Jim Furgerson, Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission national disaster relief director. That's not to underestimate the amount of work still to be done, he added.

Originally, emergency management officials estimated 23,000 houses would need to be "mudded out."

"Mudding out" a house includes shoveling or sweeping all the mud from the floors or walls. Carpet is pulled up and thrown away as is most furniture with cloth. Water saturated drywall and insulation are removed. The remaining exposed areas inside the home are sanitized. Typically, it takes a five-member team one day to mud out a house.

"This operation will be nasty because of the sanitation problems," Furgerson said.

Flooded farm lots, chemical plants and sanitation facilities have made the water filthy, he said, particularly along the Mississippi River.

Midwest flood recovery volunteers need to have current tetanus, typhoid and hepatitis A vaccines.

Most people have had tetanus as a child, said Debbie Wylie, a public health nurse with Memphis-Shelby County Public Health Department in Tennessee. Adults would usually receive a booster every 10 years. However, for volunteers working in flood relief, if it has been more than five years since their last booster, they should have another, she said.

Typhoid is spread through contaminated food and water. "The vaccination is either two shots taken four weeks apart, or four capsules taken every other day for a week," Wylie said. The capsules have to remain refrigerated before being taken. "The capsules offer more protection, between 75 to 80 percent protection."

Hepatitis A also is spread through contaminated food and water. The vaccination offers good protection for three months, Wylie said.

Some local health officials have recommended cleanup volunteers rinse their bodies with a solution of one teaspoon of Clorox to a gallon of water after showering, then rinsing off the solution, Furgerson said.

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In Ste. Genevieve and Cape Girardeau, Mo., cleanup is not expected to begin there for another two weeks.

"These towns are about two weeks behind St. Louis," said Cameron Byler, Tennessee Brotherhood director of the receding water in southern Missouri. He is the on-site coordinator for the Tennessee mobile kitchen in Cape Girardeau.

Ste. Genevieve is a town with many historic buildings. Recovery is expected to take longer there as officials determine the best way to save and restore the buildings, said Choice Watson, on-site coordinator for the South Carolina mobile kitchen, which is working there.

Southern Baptists who want to volunteer must call their state Brotherhood director. Each state Brotherhood office is communicating with state Brotherhood directors in Missouri and Illinois to determine assignments and lodging.

"Lodging is one of our biggest problems," Furgerson said. "The volunteers must have a place to rest and shower. Hotel space is scarce."

The first phase of the Southern Baptist Brotherhood response was mass feeding. The American Red Cross estimates more than 1.3 million meals have been served, of which Southern Baptists have prepared more than 700,000. Furgerson estimates the total Southern Baptist meal count will eventually exceed 1 million meals.

As of Aug. 10, Southern Baptists had contributed an estimated 6,024 volunteer work days in the Midwest, including Iowa where all Southern Baptist feeding and water purification operations have ceased.

In other disaster responses, the Hawaii Baptist Brotherhood was taken off alert status by the America Red Cross for response to Guam, which was struck by an earthquake. Hawaii Baptists were prepared to respond with kitchens and water purification equipment used during the recovery of Hurricane Iniki last fall on Kauai, said Veryl Henderson, Hawaii Baptist missions director.

Tom Vasser, the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's Richmond-based associate director for Spanish-speaking South America, reports the Caracas, Venezuela Southern Baptist mission and the Venezuelan Baptist Convention have met and are now formulating response plans to mudslides caused by Tropical Storm Brett. The FMB already has released \$5,000 for food needs. A formal request for volunteers has not been received. John Cheyne, who directs FMB's human needs department, is awaiting an evaluation from the field.

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**Flood cleanup serious business
to Missouri Baptist students** By Laurie A. Lattimore

**Baptist Press
8/11/93**

ST. LOUIS (BP)--It won't be the usual sort of annual State Student Convention weekend sponsored by the Missouri Baptist Convention. About 500-plus college students will help "mud-out" and repair the thousands of homes ruined by the Mississippi and Missouri rivers.

Shirley Williams, director of the student ministries department for the Missouri Baptist Convention, announced Aug. 9 the decision to change the Sept. 24-26 student program and change the location from Windermere to St. Louis.

"Our theme for this year was 'Towels and Basins' and the opportunity has come to really apply that," Williams said.

Jerry Carmichael, campus minister for University of Missouri at Columbia and chairman of the student convention committee, said he is looking forward to putting into practice the weekend theme of meeting real needs.

"It is just real exciting to be able to help in a significant way the people in need," Carmichael said.

Few details have been decided for the new weekend itinerary, Williams said, but MBC's Don Anders will take over that Saturday to put the students to work around the St. Louis metro area.

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Anders, an associate in the convention's missions department and flood cleanup coordinator for Baptist volunteers, said the students will be dispatched in teams around St. Louis through Baptist coordination centers. Anders said the students will be doing basic "mud-out" operations.

Williams noted Esther Burroughs of the Home Mission Board still will be the keynote speaker for the weekend and Ted Burden, from First Baptist Church in O'Fallon, Mo., will still lead the music.

As various state Baptist disaster relief units continued cooking meals in the state, Brian Dietz, mass care officer for Red Cross and job director for the flood in the entire Midwest, was complimentary and said he was thankful for the work of Southern Baptists in various communities suffering from the flood.

"I feel more a part of the Baptist effort and they feel more a part of ours," said Dietz, pointing out Red Cross and Baptist relief coordinators have mapped out strategies together to respond to community needs following the flood. "This is a unique disaster. Most disasters are over and done with, but each day this one gets worse. (Red Cross) couldn't have done it by ourselves."

Choice Watson, on-site coordinator for the South Carolina Baptist relief unit in Ste. Genevieve, said the crew was called out for sandbagging the week of Aug. 2 when the river threatened to overrun the town. Watson said a skeleton crew stayed to cook the night before "crest day" while the rest helped residents fight the river.

"Our folks cooked from 8 to 5 and were tired and ready to quit for the day," Watson said. "That's when the call came from City Hall that they needed sandbaggers. We sandbagged 'til 11:30 that night, but we don't mind. That's why we're here."

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Baptist relief units
still cooking, helping

Baptist Press
8/11/93

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)--The following update is provided, city by city, of the work of Baptist relief units in the flooded Midwest, coordinated by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission and the Red Cross.

-- Quincy, Ill.: Paul Anderson, Kentucky Baptists' on-site coordinator, said they have 103 job requests for home cleanups. Work has spread to the town of Hull, south of Quincy, which has generated 93 of the requests. Much of the work has been pumping water out of basements. They are working with Henry Hall, the local director of missions, to secure lodging and showers for additional volunteers. The feeding unit is still working out of First Southern Baptist Church, Quincy. Kentucky had 45 volunteers on-site Aug. 10. Total meals to date is 25,284.

-- Hannibal, Mo.: LeRoy Shannon, Oklahoma Baptists' on-site coordinator, reported heavy rains Aug. 10 in Hannibal. Meals are being distributed by the Red Cross as far as 80 miles away. Oklahoma replaced the North Carolina Baptist team here Aug. 1. No meal count was available.

-- Hardin, Ill.: Richard Brunson, North Carolina Baptists' on-site coordinator, reported their unit is preparing about 1,500 meals a day for Hardin, Michael, Campsville, Moser and Hamburg. Cleanup is expected to begin the weekend of Aug. 13. He reported there are enough volunteers at this time. There is no central place to house or feed cleanup volunteers in Hardin. Total meal count to date: 3,600 in Hannibal (N.C.'s first location) and 14,000 in Hardin.

-- Alton, Ill.: Joe Shelton, Illinois Baptist unit coordinator, said the feeding unit's total meal count to date is 159,186. No cleanup work has begun there with the Brotherhood volunteers.

-- St. Louis: Trish DeVault, Missouri Baptists' on-site coordinator, said volunteers are still preparing hot meals on the Missouri Brotherhood unit, with an estimated meal count to date of 432,000. Twenty volunteers from Pensacola, Fla., working with the Missouri team, began mud out-work in St. Charles Aug. 9.

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-- Ste. Genevieve, Mo.: Choice Watson, South Carolina Baptists' on-site coordinator, reported rain Aug. 10 in Ste. Genevieve. Flood levels are down about 26 inches. Meal count to date is about 12,653. Before the river crested, volunteers spent numerous hours sandbagging. Massive cleanup is not expected to begin here for at least two weeks. Because of the number of historic buildings in the town, recovery is expected to take longer. About 115 South Carolina volunteers have worked thus far on the unit.

-- Cape Girardeau, Mo.: Cameron Byler, Tennessee Baptists' on-site coordinator, said the meal count to date is 44,695. No cleanup has begun. Water is still high, with Byler estimating the area being two weeks behind St. Louis. About 350 homes are underwater in Cape Girardeau. No additional need for volunteers at this time.

-- Excelsior Springs, Mo., in the Kansas City area: Dale Meehan, on-site coordinator and Caldwell, Ray and Clinton Baptist associational Brotherhood director, is leading Pisgah Baptist Church's mass care kitchen. The church gymnasium is being used for food and donated goods storage; food is being cooked in a church kitchen. The total meal count to date is 4,449. The church is not coordinating cleanup at this time. He reports other churches in the association are doing some cleanup. There is a need for volunteers but they must be self-sufficient. Meehan recommends people coming in RVs. Hotel space is scarce.

Contributions for disaster relief may be sent to the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104; phone 901-272-2461.

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**Mississippi College alleges
Nobles embezzled \$3 million**

By Tim Nicholas

**Baptist Press
8/11/93**

CLINTON, Miss. (BP)--The resignation of Mississippi College President Lewis Nobles over financial disagreements with trustees has escalated into allegations that Nobles embezzled as much as \$3 million from the college.

Nobles, 67, resigned Aug. 3, nine months before retirement from 25 years as president of the 4,200-student college, which is affiliated with the Mississippi Baptist Convention. On Aug. 7, Nobles petitioned for a temporary restraining order to obtain from his office personal possessions, personal records and financial records, including \$27,844 in cash.

After college officials refused to allow Nobles to obtain the documents, they were granted a modified order allowing Nobles to retain possession of the cash but keeping the records in the hands of the college's accountants, KPMG Peat Marwick. The court also froze all of Nobles' assets, including bank accounts, securities, brokerage accounts and real estate.

On Aug. 10, the court gave college officials approval to inspect mail arriving at Nobles' two post office boxes.

The college, in a suit in Hinds County's Chancery Court in Jackson, alleges "Nobles secretly intercepted contributions from various donors to Mississippi College. Those contributions were deposited by Nobles into various accounts maintained by Nobles for Nobles' personal use and benefit. The books of Mississippi College do not reflect the receipt of these contributions."

The court suit is only a civil action. No criminal charges have been filed.

The college alleges Nobles, over a period of 15 years, used forged bank statements and checks to cover his dealings.

Although the accounting is continuing, college officials estimate the amount of contributions intercepted by Nobles known to date is approximately \$3 million.

"In order to conceal his fraud and embezzlement, Nobles maintained a labyrinth of bank and securities accounts under various names with numerous banks and brokerage firms in Jackson and throughout the United States," said the college in the court document.

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Nobles, contacted by the Baptist Record, made a statement: "What has been put forth thus far is only allegations, and only one side of the controversy has been presented. In our jurisprudence system, a man is innocent until proven guilty.

"I'm not trying to be antagonistic, but just to be patient until the full story is out."

Nobles maintained to the trustees the monies were spent for proper college purposes.

The college's trustees are scheduled to meet Aug. 12.

College officials began detecting possible problems in the college's finances when contacting potential donors who reported they had already given to Nobles.

Annual donations to the college total about \$1.5 million and, according to college attorney Alan W. Perry, all donations made through the college's business office are accounted for.

The college's acting president, Rory Lee, said, "Our constituents should be assured that the college is in exceptionally sound condition, both financially and academically."

Nobles' daughter, Sandra Nash, is Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union president.

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EDITORS' NOTE: The following story can be used in tandem with the (BP) story titled "Hospitals' independence vote protested by S.C. Baptist exec" dated 8/10/93, or portions of it may be incorporated into the 8/10 story, perhaps after the fifth paragraph.

Hospitals' trustee chairman
defends board's independence

Baptist Press
8/11/93

COLUMBIA, S.C. (BP)--South Carolina Baptist Hospitals Inc. was forced to alter its relationship with the South Carolina Baptist Convention because of a changed health care environment, the hospitals' trustee chairman said after the trustees' Aug. 9 action.

"The truth is Baptist Hospital cannot survive as a leading provider in the health care environment of the future unless significant changes are made in the way we make policy, establish alliances and conduct business," said trustee chairman Lester P. Branham Jr., pastor of First Baptist Church in Lake City.

The trustee board voted Aug. 9 to revise itself into a self-perpetuating board, rather than one appointed by the Baptist convention. South Carolina Baptist Hospitals Inc. operates facilities in Columbia and Easley.

"We are faced with a health care environment today that requires great flexibility," Branham said. "It is essential that we be able to forge innovative linkages with physicians and other providers and have the authority to create subsidiary corporations, both profit and not-for-profit in order to do business in today's marketplace.

"The reality is that the constitution and charter of the South Carolina Baptist Convention impose unrealistic time frames for making policy changes, often two years," Branham continued. "Such delays have never been helpful but were manageable when hospitals were solo providers of care serving only inpatients and outpatients on single sites.

"In the new environment, however, when health care must be delivered by new comprehensive health delivery systems, delay can be disastrous," Branham said.

He argued that the hospitals need a board that more accurately reflects its core constituencies -- physicians, area business leaders and officials of subsidiary corporations.

According to the hospitals' president, Charles Beaman, the convention has budgeted \$800,000 to \$850,000 a year for the hospitals, or .02 percent of annual receipts of \$320 million.

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However, Branham said, the board's action was not intended as a separation from the Baptist convention.

"If anything, we believe our expressed desire to expand the hospital's ministry is a reaffirmation of the importance the hospital places upon its relationship with the convention," Branham said.

"It is (the hospitals') intention not only to strengthen its relationship with the convention, but to significantly broaden the pastoral ministries we provide. We have already begun planning for the creation of additional pastoral counseling centers and the expansion of clinical pastoral education. It is also our intention to establish a series of regional institutes on parenting, grief resolution and conflict management and to create a series of statewide workshops on special ministries. There are many other programs under discussion as well."

Branham said he and Beaman, at the direction of the board, "have conveyed that message through face-to-face meetings with top convention officials."

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**Jericho's flags: stark reminder
of peoples unreached by gospel**

By Brian Smith

Baptist Press
8/11/93

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--The pipe organ filled the auditorium with majestic sounds as the flags of every nation formed a processional down the aisles.

The regal display of colors, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe and all 50 U.S. states, spread across the stage in a celebration of the places of home and foreign missions.

But as the last whisper of a rich chord dissipated among the rafters and quiet fell, another parade commanded the audience's attention:

In solemn procession, the silence broken only by the rustling of flags and the carpet-softened footsteps of their bearers, 36 solid-gray symbols of unreached people groups made their way to center stage. In stark contrast to the multicolored array surrounding them, the rectangles of somber gray reminded the gathering of the work yet to be done among the millions of people who have never heard of Christ.

The parade of flags highlighted the Sunday worship service at Jericho, a Southern Baptist missions festival, held July 31-Aug. 6 at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center and earlier in the summer at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Conference Center.

Jericho, in its fifth year, is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, Foreign Mission Board, Sunday School Board, Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

The week-long festival allowed participants to taste, touch, feel and experience missions. Activities included everything from multimedia worship services, Bible studies, prayer groups and contact with missionaries to building furniture for a church in Mexico.

"I'm really excited to be a part of this," said Leo Bruce, Southern Baptist worker in Asia and first-time Jericho participant. "Sometimes the individual church member has no idea what we as Southern Baptists have and what we're doing. This really helps our people to see the whole picture."

In a large blue-and-white striped tent set up in the parking lot, volunteers built and stained pews, tables and a pulpit for a church in Juarez, Mexico. Under the same tent, wooden toy trucks and tractors were made for the children of the church.

"We even had a man volunteer to go to Mexico at his own expense and do the installation," one of the construction coordinators said.

Opportunities abounded to meet home and foreign missionaries. Carol Henson gave peso coins to children. Ted Mall told of his ministry to the United Nations community in New York. David and Laura Moench wore Scottish kilts and offered tea and biscuits, while John and Mary Lou Lawrence had a basket of spiced toasted wheat kernels from Ethiopia they refilled many times.

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"Ethiopians eat it with mor red pepper, but we didn't want to hurt anyone," Mrs. Lawrence said with a laugh.

Daily conferences titled "A day in the life of a missionary" offered people a chance to hear about day-to-day details of mission work.

"You don't meet anybody without a need," said Rick Bardin, medical missionary to Nigeria. His days are filled with treating malaria, tuberculosis and rabies as well as wounds from machetes, guns and car accidents. When he returns home after seeing anywhere from 20 to 100 patients, his children greet him with his favorite question of the day:

"Daddy, will you take us to the river?"

Other conferences taught participants about responding to cults, how to develop an intercessory prayer ministry, ministry with internationals in the United States, military ministry, using creative arts and Christian response to AIDS.

"God is doing so much more than we can see," said Barbara Swinney of Cross Plains, Texas.

Other features included missionary prayer-and-share times; a question-and-answer session with Southern Baptist agency leaders; "Air Jericho," a simulated world mission game; and "Missions Jeopardy," an activity with exhibits for people to test their missions knowledge. At one large table, volunteers rolled bandages for a hospital in Nigeria.

"Shout It Out" was the theme for Jericho 1993. Relating to the Old Testament story of the walls of Jericho, it pointed out ways God uses his people to tear down walls -- "walls such as culture, age or race that separate people from each other," said Marshall Walker of the Sunday School Board.

As the flags hung from the edge of the balcony, each day's creative worship service explored a different interpretation of the theme: "God's at work," "God's Still at Work," "By All Means," "To Urban Areas," "To Hurting Humanity," "To Every Person," "It's Up to Me."

"We have great responsibility," said Jerry Rankin, new Foreign Mission Board president. "Who will say, 'I will go and turn one of those gray flags into a glorious bath of color for the glory of Jesus Christ.'?"

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