

# (BP)

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

SBC Cooperative Program gifts:  
above budget, down for month

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

NASHVILLE (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for February were down from the previous year but the year-to-date totals are still above the budget requirement, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

February 1994 CP totals were \$10,425,108 compared to February 1993 of \$10,996,497, a decrease of \$571,388 or 5.20 percent. However, the fiscal year-to-date totals (for five months) were .49 percent above the similar period a year ago.

YTD figures for 1993-94 stand at \$59,047,066 compared to 1992-93 of \$58,760,504.

Chapman said he also was encouraged that the 1993-94 YTD figures are 2.52 percent above the program allocation budget requirement for five months: \$57,597,806. The \$1,449,259 overage is for the October 1993 through February 1994 budget period. The monthly budget requirement is \$11,519,561.

Designated gifts for the month fell slightly, \$35,103,734 compared to a year ago of \$35,369,335, .75 percent decrease. YTD totals for designated gifts: \$63,217,513 compared to the previous YTD of \$64,929,599, a 2.64 percent decrease.

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.

**Ron Chandler is SBC Stewardship  
Commission president nominee**

NASHVILLE (BP)--Ronald E. Chandler, director of stewardship for the California Southern Baptist Convention for nearly 20 years, is the nominee of the SBC Stewardship Commission search committee to succeed A.R. Fagan as president.

Chandler, if approved by the full board of commissioners at their annual meeting Mar. 24-25 in Nashville, will become president June 1. He will work alongside A.R. "Rudy" Fagan until Fagan's retirement on Sept. 30, according to commission officials.

The announcement of Chandler's nomination came from Robert L. Ross, chairman of the five-member search committee. Ross, president of the Baptist Foundation of Oklahoma in Oklahoma City, said the committee worked "long and diligently" and Chandler's selection was a unanimous decision.

Ross said the committee began work in October and decided to recommend Chandler in late February. Originally, the committee included Roy D. Moody Jr., chairman of the SBC Stewardship Commission, but Moody removed himself from the committee when his name was recommended. Moody is director of stewardship for the Kansas-Nebraska Convention of Southern Baptists.

Chandler, 61, will receive \$81,000 in salary, Ross told Baptist Press.

The search committee included: Samuel J. Hodges, Hillcrest Heights, Md.; J. Dore Langley, Martinville, La.; Levi Parrish, Burton, Mich.; C. Gene Parrott, Lakewood, Colo.; and Ross.

"The challenge of leading Southern Baptists in Biblical stewardship in mission support through the Cooperative Program has never been greater," Chandler said. "It's with a deep and definite call that I'm willing to accept this opportunity."

A native of Shreveport, La., Chandler has spent much of his ministry in California. Prior to 1974 he was director of missions for the Mid-Valley Southern Baptist Association in the Fresno area for five years. He was also pastor of First Southern Baptist Church in Lakeside from 1961-1969.

Chandler has been president of the SBC Stewardship Directors Association and written extensively in materials for the SBC Stewardship Commission. He has written numerous articles in varied SBC publications as well as stewardship Sunday school lessons for the Baptist Sunday School Board.

Chandler also was pastor of four churches in Texas in the 1950s prior to moving to California in 1961.

A graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas, Chandler also holds degrees from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas, and California State University in Fresno.

He and his wife, Joyce, have three adult children: Ronald E. Jr., Richard and Jenic. The Chandlers are members of Woodward Park Baptist Church in Fresno.

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(BP) photo available upon request from the California Southern Baptist newsmagazine.

**Southern Baptist workers  
lie low in West Bank, Gaza**

**By Marty Croll**

**Baptist Press  
3/1/94**

JERUSALEM (BP)--Southern Baptist workers in the West Bank and Gaza stayed out of sight as an eerie stillness settled into the normally bustling Israeli-occupied territories Palestinian Arabs claim as their own.

A round-the-clock curfew -- imposed hours after a Jewish settler's massacre of Muslims worshipping in a Hebron mosque Feb. 25 -- stilled angry Palestinians who took to the streets in protest.

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In Gaza, Southern Baptist representative Paul Lawrence of Leeds, Ala., stayed inside with his wife, Harriet, and two children. They're joined by Glenn Glover of Birmingham, Ala., a Southern Baptist International Service Corps worker unable to speak Arabic who otherwise would be shut in alone. As soon as they knew about the massacre, the Lawrences stocked up on groceries in anticipation of a curfew, he said.

Other representatives who live there were traveling outside Gaza.

Gaza and the West Bank were parts of Arab nations until Israel captured them in 1967 during the Six Day War. Since then, Jewish Israelis have settled there also. Some Jewish believers use biblical references to lay claim to the territories.

"About noon the curfew took effect, and it got absolutely quiet," said Southern Baptist representative Bev Hicks, who lives in the West Bank and works alongside her husband, Ray, to strengthen churches of Arab Christian believers. The Hickses are from Cincinnati.

Before the curfew, Mrs. Hicks heard shots and then exploding tear gas canisters. Neighbors told her afterwards what happened: an Arab had picked up a stone to throw at a bus of Jewish settlers, and a settler raised a window and shot him dead on the spot. The incident occurred in front of her next-door neighbor's house.

"I kept hearing shooting, and I heard a lot of louder popping sounds," she said. "It was on the news, and people saw our house on the TV. I've had more calls than I've had since we've been here from people to see if I'm OK."

Ray Hicks had traveled to Cyprus the night before the massacre to attend a planning meeting with other leaders of Southern Baptist work in the Middle East. Their meeting was to last through the first week of March.

Contacted in Cyprus, he called the massacre "a senseless, awful, tragic, brutal and sick event."

The Hickses' three children, Micah, 8; Melakee, 11; and Sommer, 16, attend school in Jerusalem. The day of the massacre, Mrs. Hicks drove them to school, not realizing what had occurred in Hebron.

"The kids got home about 2 o'clock, and we stayed away from the windows," she said. "We listened to the army jeeps go back and forth saying it was a curfew, and we all slept together on the floor in one room."

Israel announced Feb. 27 it would crack down on Jewish extremists, who have vowed to drive Palestinians out of the Occupied Territories. The mosque murderer was identified as a Baruch Goldstein, 38-year-old American-born physician and father of four who lived in a Jewish settlement near Hebron. He belonged to a militant Jewish party known as Kach.

Spraying automatic rifle fire across a mosque full of Muslims at prayer, he killed 39 and wounded about 200 more before he was killed by survivors.

"It's just made everybody really angry. People are angry at the person who did it, and they're angry at people who are allowed to have guns," Mrs. Hicks said. In the Occupied Territories, Jewish settlers are allowed to own guns, but not Palestinians.

The incident is a potentially damaging piece of grit in the machinery of a delicate peace process between Palestinian and Israeli leaders. They had been making headway in peace talks aimed at handing over self-rule to Palestinians in certain areas while ensuring the protection and property rights of Jewish settlers.

"It's going to take a long time to heal this," said Lawrence. "It could make people see they've got to work through a peace agreement quickly, or (Palestinians) might say you can't trust the Israelis, and then it would drive them further from a peace accord."

Tom Hocutt, who leads Southern Baptist representatives working in Israel, said he hopes whatever God might have been doing in the midst of the peace process won't be thwarted by anger and hate.

Such an act -- and similar attacks by Palestinians against Jews -- shows people are trying to base their relationship with God wholly on what they think he wants them to do and not on his love and mercy, said Hocutt, also from Birmingham.

"I really have a sense that God might use this to bring about more openness to the gospel," he added. "There might be Jews who say, 'Hey, if this is religion, then we don't really have anything.'"

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**Croatia's fastest growing church,  
but no pastor wants to trade places**

**Baptist Press  
3/1/94**

**By Michael Clingenpeel**

KARLOVAC, Croatia (BP)--Ladislav Ruzieka is pastor of Croatia's fastest growing Baptist church. But not many pastors would trade places with him.

His church building is 400 yards from a "no man's land" that separates Croatian and Serbian troops in a land wracked by civil war.

"I watched the whole war from this window," the animated young pastor says, turning to the window behind his desk in a tiny second-floor office. "Twenty-five grenades landed within 100 meters of this building," he adds, describing the three-month siege of Karlovac by Serbian troops in October 1991. The exterior walls of the church still wear the scars of shrapnel from mortar shells bursting in the church's front yard.

For 90 days shells rained down on Karlovac, a Croatian city of 50,000 people bordering Bosnia. Many people fled, leaving crops and livestock in the rolling farmland surrounding the city. Those who stayed endured a winter without electricity, water, phones, and sometimes food.

But Ruzieka, his wife Melanie, and their 5-year-old daughter refused to leave. At stake, he believes, was their credibility as believers and his as a pastor. "If I had left I could never have come back," says Ruzieka. "We just trusted that God would take care of us. The church must continue to go forward regardless of politics."

Despite the danger and hardships, the church continued to worship, but not without difficulty. "People would not come," says the pastor. "There was no plumbing, the front line was next to the church and there were no lights at night."

But now the risks seem to have been worth it. The local police and Croatian army, who earlier wondered if the Ruziekas were Serbian, gained confidence in his leadership. A soldier and his family visited his church during the war and became Christians. And Ruzieka's ministry has a credibility among the people it would not have known otherwise.

The young couple, both of whom are from other cities in Croatia, moved to Karlovac six years ago where Ladislav had been called to serve two tiny, struggling churches, one 3 kilometers outside Karlovac, the other in Duga Resa, a nearby village. The churches had only 19 members, none of whom were natives of the Karlovac area. For 20 years no one had made a profession of faith, according to Ruzieka.

Progress was slow, but gradually the people began to trust the new pastor's leadership. Services were held at Duga Resa on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings, at Karlovac on Sunday and Thursday evenings. Four years ago Ruzieka invited a local reporter to cover an "open house" at the Duga Resa church. Her husband attended with her, and later returned with his friends. Soon he accepted Christ and was baptized, the "first fruit" of Ruzieka's ministry, and a revival began that has not stopped.

Now the churches have 100 members, and there is no room to seat all who want to attend services in the 50-seat sanctuaries at the two sites. Last year 20 adult converts were baptized. Four more await baptism now.

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Bill Steele, Southern Baptist foreign missionary in neighboring Slovenia, affirms the genuineness of the commitments. "When you decide to be a Christian in this culture it is a serious commitment. It determines your profession and future. It excludes you from so many parts of society. It is a life-changing thing."

Much of Ruzieka's ministry involves distributing humanitarian aid to victims of the war. Supply trucks loaded at Bratko Horvat's warehouse about two hours north regularly bring provisions which fill the second floor of the three-story house that serves as the Karlovac church. Almost 2,000 people are fed each month through this ministry. "It is very difficult," says Ruzieka, "because people line up outside the building from early morning until night. But because of this we have been able to tell many about Jesus."

In addition to his benevolent ministry, the energetic pastor has a seven-minute radio broadcast twice a day during which he offers an evangelistic message. Almost anywhere he goes in the city people recognize him by his voice. Each month his churches distribute 400 devotional guides to listeners of these broadcasts.

The war is not over near Karlovac. Three months ago Serbian gunners shelled the city for several days from positions a half mile away. The pastor's automobile was damaged by mortar fire and one church member's home was destroyed when it was struck by four grenades. The guns are silent now, but the armies have not moved. Two doors from the Karlovac church a tank sits silently in front of a house, sandbagged to protect it from flying shrapnel, a reminder that the war is never far away.

But that does not smother Ladislav Ruzieka's vision for reaching his community with the gospel. The church has purchased a plot of land near the center of Karlovac where one day, he says, they will build a new church building. It will have a 350-seat sanctuary, a bookstore and apartments to house refugees from the war.

"Now we are waiting for the day when the war ends. In the future there will be a great result from what we've done there during the war."

There already is.

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Virginia seeds of hope  
offer promise to Croatia

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

PUSCINE, Croatia (BP)--"Hope," says Carmen Horvat, is what Virginia Baptists provided people in the war-torn country of Croatia last spring. The hope came in the form of seeds.

When almost 500 Virginia Baptist churches collected and mailed 70,000 packets of garden seeds in time for spring planting, they created opportunities for sharing the gospel as well as an abundant harvest of vegetables.

"It was written up in the local newspaper that we have never had such a variety in vegetables and fruits in the central marketplace. So the seed had a tremendous advertisement for Baptists in this area. Many people outside the church received seeds, so it gave us evangelistic possibilities," added Bratoljub Horvat.

"Now," said Horvat, "many people are asking -- will there be more seeds this year? When will the seeds come?"

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Croatian Baptist couple  
fills void during war time      By Michael Clingenpeel

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

PUSCINE, Croatia (BP)--It is noon at Bratoljub Horvat's electronics warehouse, but no one has time for lunch. Two men load wood onto a trailer hitched to a farm tractor. Another is hoisting canned food into a truck.

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Four women, different ages, rummage through a 12-foot high stack of clothing piled in a corner. An employee seated at a computer console types, oblivious to workers who march continuously by his workstation.

Horvat, cellular phone in hand, bundled in a heavy parka in the unheated building, waves directions and barks orders amid the swirling activity. When the phone rings, he answers as he walks.

It is a typical day at Horvat Electronika, a major distribution point for humanitarian aid in Croatia, a land ripped by war.

Three years ago Horvat ran a successful business selling and repairing phones, fax machines and other electronics equipment.

Then war came to Croatia. Fighting erupted in June 1991 after Croatia and Slovenia declared their independence following the breakup of the Communist-run Republic of Yugoslavia the year before.

"Eighty tanks rolled right in front of here," said Horvat, pointing out the front widow of his home in Puscine, Croatia, just south of the Hungarian border. Since that day in 1991 Horvat's business has declined by 90 percent. Croatians have little money for electronic goods these days.

But Horvat, a lay leader in the Baptist church in Puscine, has found another business -- helping people in his beleaguered country.

"When the war started we felt the situation. We prayed and the refugees began to come," recalled Horvat. For five months 13 refugees lived in apartments in the basement of the Horvats' house. Thousands of refugees soon started pouring out of Bosnia, adding to the 1,400 refugees from their area of Croatia.

Then, said Horvat, "God opened the door for many friends to help." Horvat and his wife, Carmen, called friends in Germany and informed them about the needs. Shipments of aid began flowing from Germany and as far away as Holland. Baptists registered to distribute humanitarian relief, and Horvat became a major distributor of relief for "My Neighbor," the largest of three Baptist groups in Croatia.

All day long the trucks roll down the dirt road to Horvat Electronika. Some are full of supplies -- bedding, school desks, canned food, produce, clothing. Others are empty, ready to be loaded and driven nearer the front lines where people wage a battle for survival against the ravages of war and winter.

"It's God's job to fill this place," said Horvat, "and my job to empty it. The storage house is never empty. However much we hand out is what comes back."

But the work is not easy. Though there is no fighting near Puscine, other places in Croatia are constantly threatened by a war that seems to have no end. Horvat's personal business has declined drastically. Locally there is opposition from Catholic priests, who do not like the popularity of the Baptists.

Then there is fatigue. "It's a lot of work," said Carmen, "and sometimes I need help. We need a vacation very bad." Daily she prepares meals for their four young children, relief workers and refugees who come into their home. "But the work is well worth it," she quickly added.

What business Horvat has left he uses as an opportunity to share the gospel. Horvat encloses in each repair a card explaining the "My Neighbor" relief effort. It also bears an evangelistic message from the Gospel of Luke and an advertisement for two books, Jesus: My Destiny and Billy Graham's Peace with God. Last year Horvat received over 7,000 responses to the offers for information.

The war has dragged into its third year, and Horvat said he has learned patience. "You have to listen to everybody and say little," he laughs. But he has learned something else. "When you look for something for other people, God opens a door. When you look only for yourself, there is nothing."

The trucks, the people, keep coming and going. Horvat keeps moving. There are trucks to empty and fill, people to feed and clothe. The war waits for no one.

**'My Neighbor' offers help  
to former Yugoslavs**

PUSCINE, Croatia (BP)--"My Neighbor" is a Christian humanitarian organization offering material assistance in former Yugoslavia. It provides a variety of assistance including food, clothing, seeds, medical supplies, toiletries, and agricultural projects.

Bratoljub Horvat at Puscine, Croatia is one of several suppliers who are part of the "My Neighbor" organization. They ship supplies to over 15 locations in Croatia, most of which are Baptist churches. They also help in six Bosnian towns.

The supplies come from many sources, including the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, the Baptist World Alliance and the Baptist General Association of Virginia. Southern Baptists have sent over \$1 million in aid to this region, much of it through "My Neighbor."

In 1993 Baptist churches across Virginia mailed 70,000 packets of garden seeds to Horvat, who distributed them. Virginia Baptists also sent two cattle experts to develop a cattle breeding project to assist families on small farms. Five volunteers from Virginia Baptist churches served in Croatia last year.

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**Romo: population trends  
require more ethnic work**

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

ALBUQUERQUE N.M. (BP)--America's growing ethnic diversity requires greater diligence by Christians to reach people of other races in the 21st century, said the Home Mission Board's director of language church extension.

"People are continually coming to America who are culturally and linguistically distinct," said Oscar Romo at the board's annual language missions leadership conference. "Many of them have no knowledge of what the Bible or the church is."

Virtually all Americans are immigrants or the descendants of immigrants, Romo noted. "For over a century the new arrivals were from Europe. Today, the new arrivals are from Third World countries, mostly Latin America and Asia," he said. "Given the high birth rates of these new Americans, the minority by the mid-21st century will be the Anglos."

Southern Baptists have had a language missions program in America since the 1950s. Today, Southern Baptist churches worship in about 100 languages in America each week. The denomination has more than 6,580 language or ethnic congregations.

Romo warned, however, that "cultural myopia" could lead to a regimented, western-dominated evangelism strategy that does not translate the gospel into a group's cultural context.

"Will Southern Baptists share the gospel contextually and effectively or will they use a rule of thumb that hinders their ability to minister among ethnics?" he asked. "Each one of you will determine whether or not America's new face will be cold and cruel or warm, reflecting the love of God."

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**Black communities called  
ready for 'explosive' growth**

By David Winfrey

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (BP)--Southern Baptists can experience explosive growth in America's cities if they confront racism and accept a large constituency of African Americans in the denomination, said the Home Mission Board's director of black church extension.

"The fields in the African-American communities are white unto harvest -- or should I say black," said Willie McPherson.

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"We must reap this harvest at all costs while we have time lest the opportunity slip away and souls be lost to eternal separation from God," he said, speaking to Southern Baptist church starting leaders during the board's church extension leadership conference.

Telling the group "a soul is a terrible thing to waste," McPherson said Southern Baptists must be willing to minister in the cities to reach African-Americans.

McPherson quoted census and other government figures showing 85 percent of African-Americans live in urban areas, and more than half can be found in 17 metropolitan cities.

"These 17 metropolitan areas hold the potential for a growth explosion in the Southern Baptist Convention between now and the turn of the century," he said.

The number of new African-American Southern Baptist churches grew from 79 in 1991 to 117 in 1992 and 274 last year.

To reach African-Americans, Southern Baptists must also appoint African Americans to more positions of leadership in the denomination, McPherson said.

"Although there are several positions to be filled, at present there are only three state directors of black church extension who are African-American," he said, listing California, New York and Alabama.

Concerning racism, McPherson reminded the audience that Jesus met with the woman at the well while going through Samaria, a city considered unclean by the Jews.

"What Jesus was saying to this woman, and is saying to us today, was that the gospel is for everybody; not to be preached any differently for blacks or Anglos or Hispanics or American Indians or anyone else," he said.

"Let's go through Samaria, and stop saying, 'Not so, Lord' and reap the harvest that he has placed before us and watch the convention explode."

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Lewis urges seminarians  
to consider U.S. missions

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Missions is more a matter of vision than geography, stressed Southern Baptist Home Mission Board President Larry Lewis.

"Missions isn't crossing the sea," said Lewis in an address at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. "It's seeing the cross. It's seeing God. It's seeing Jesus dying on the cross and seeing the cross of Jesus Christ as God's only provision for a lost world."

Lewis was one of the chapel speakers at the Louisville, Ky., seminary during Home Mission Week Feb. 22-25. In addition to special chapel services, about 20 home missionaries and HMB staff members visited with students concerning home missions opportunities. HMB personnel also spoke in more than 50 classes during the week.

In his address, Lewis emphasized the need to share the gospel in America with people from diverse language and cultural groups. "We believe ours is a gospel for all people regardless of race, ethnicity or language," said Lewis, noting the Home Mission Board serves more than 100 different language or ethnic groups.

"If there are people there, there needs to be a church ministering in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ," Lewis declared. He added the Home Mission Board has identified 21,000 locations where new churches are needed.

"I am encouraged by the events of Home Missions Week," said David F. D'Amico, Billy Graham professor of evangelism at Southern. "Our campus is more aware about the mission to America, and I think there are opportunities for both Southern Seminary and the Home Mission Board to dream new dreams together."

D'Amico, who chaired the committee directing the event, noted 35 students made commitments to home missions during the special emphasis. That response, he said, plus other factors are indicators of an increased interest in missions at Southern.

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The seminary's missions vitality is nurtured by efforts such as its van ministry to Michigan, its renewed commitment to train students in church planting and social ministries and the seminary's Korean studies program, according to D'Amico.

D'Amico said missions programs at Southern will be given further focus by the seminary's Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth. The new school will accept its first students this fall.

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Russell Rankin named Truett  
public relations director

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

WACO, Texas (BP)--Russell Rankin, newswriter for Baylor University's office of communications and marketing, has been named public relations director for the George W. Truett Theological Seminary.

According to Michael E. Bishop, Baylor vice president for communications and marketing, Rankin is a 1992 graduate of Baylor with a bachelor's degree in journalism and Asia studies.

Rankin is the son of Jerry and Bobbye Rankin of Richmond, Va. Jerry Rankin is the president of the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

Rankin and his wife, Angela, are members of Highland Baptist Church, Waco.

Baylor University has said the first classes of the new seminary will begin in August.

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Lord's Day Alliance  
elects 2 So. Baptists

Baptist Press  
3/1/94

ATLANTA (BP)--The 105-year-old Lord's Day Alliance of the United States elected two Southern Baptists to its slate of officers at its annual meeting in Atlanta Feb. 2-3.

Paul J. Craven Jr., former pastor of First Baptist churches in Charleston, S.C., and Winston-Salem, N.C., and currently with the development office at the College of Charleston, was elected president. E. Larry Eidson, a layman and member of Smoke Rise Baptist Church in Stone Mountain, Ga., was elected treasurer.

The board of managers, representing 22 major denominations, expressed continuing concern over the increasing secularization of Sunday. In a message to the board, Truett Gannon, pastor of Smoke Rise Baptist Church, urged the alliance to continue its emphasis on seeking "the maintenance of the Lord's Day as a day of rest, worship, Christian education and spiritual renewal."

Norman Adrian Wiggins, president of Campbell University in North Carolina, was awarded the James P. Wesley Award. The award is given each year to "an individual or group that had contributed significantly to the cause of keeping the Lord's Day holy, while respecting every person's personal choice in the matter of Sabbath observance in our pluralistic society." Wiggins has maintained a firm policy of no intercollegiate sports on Sunday for Campbell University teams.

The board paid its respect to the memories of long-time board members Norman Vincent Peale of New York, and William Holmes Borders of Atlanta.

Jack P. Lowndes, former editor of the Georgia Baptist Christian Index, is executive director of the organization.

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CORRECTION: In (BP) story titled "Boyles reigns Okla. church, then begins new congregation," dated 2/28/94, please change the headline to read "Boyles resigns Okla. church, then begins new congregation."

Thanks,  
Baptist Press

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**(BP)**

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