

(BP)

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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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Southwestern Seminary search
committee selects Ken Hemphill By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
7/6/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Kenneth S. Hemphill, Southern Baptist church growth specialist and former Virginia pastor, is the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary search committee's nominee for president of the seminary, Baptist Press has learned.

Hemphill, 46, if elected by the seminary's 40-member board of trustees at a special called meeting in Fort Worth July 29, will succeed Russell Dilday, who was fired by the trustees March 9 as president of the world's largest seminary. Trustees said they wanted new leadership and were unhappy with Dilday's lack of support for the conservative resurgence. The firing caused considerable controversy across the Southern Baptist Convention.

Miles Seaborn Jr., chairman of the trustees' search committee, told Baptist Press the committee came to a "total and excited unanimity" about the nominee but declined to identify the selection prior to the mailing of letters to all the trustees. Seaborn is pastor of Birchman Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas, where the seminary is located.

Baptist Press learned Hemphill is the committee's unanimous choice following a search which included a number of well-known Southern Baptist leaders. He would become the seminary's seventh president.

Seaborn said following the July 29 meeting, the candidate, trustee board chairman Ralph W. Pully Jr. of Dallas and Seaborn will jointly release a statement and then hold a news conference with the new president.

Hemphill is currently director of the Southern Baptist Center for Church Growth, a cooperative venture by the SBC Home Mission Board and Baptist Sunday School Board. Prior to that new position, which he took in August 1992, Hemphill had been pastor of First Baptist Church in Norfolk, Va., 11 years.

"Ken is a solid, biblical conservative with a brilliant mind and endless ideas. He has built a phenomenal church and exudes enthusiasm for reaching people and growing churches," James T. Draper Jr. said at Hemphill's election to the church growth post. Draper, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, was considered to be a favorite for the seminary post until he publicly said he would not be a candidate.

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
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Hemphill also has been a minister at churches in Galax, Va.; Louisville and Battletown, Ky.; Winston-Salem, N.C., and Little Stukeley, England. He received a doctor of philosophy from Cambridge University in Cambridge, England, and a master of divinity and doctor of ministry from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky. He also has a bachelor of arts degree from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C.

Born in Morganton, N.C., Hemphill is married to the former Paula Moore. She is a former trustee of the SBC Foreign Mission Board. The couple has three daughters: Kristina, Rachael and Katherine.

Interestingly, Hemphill was not one of the six people which news media had reported were high on the search committee's list.

Others named in news reports were Richard Land, executive director of the SBC Christian Life Commission; Mark Coppenger, vice president for convention relations of the SBC Executive Committee; Ralph Smith, pastor of the Hyde Park Baptist Church in Austin, Texas; Timothy George, dean of the Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala.; Jerry Sutton, pastor of Two Rivers Baptist Church in Nashville; and Richard R. Melick Jr., president of Criswell College in Dallas.

Southwestern is the largest, with more than 4,000 students, of the six SBC seminaries. The 86-year-old seminary is located on a 200-acre campus in Fort Worth and has 102 elected faculty with a 1993-94 budget of more than \$22 million.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Sunday School Board.

EDITORS' NOTE: The following story and sidebar SUB OUT the (BP) stories dated 7/5/94 titled "Iranian church leader slain; two other leaders missing" and "Acti n urged to condemn murder, kidnapping of Iranian Christians."

Two Christian leaders
found murdered in Iran

Baptist Press
7/6/94

TEHRAN, Iran (BP)--Two of Iran's Christian leaders have been murdered in a continuing campaign by Islamic militants to exterminate Christianity in Iran.

Another Iranian Christian, a resident of the United States, has been reported missing.

The body of Mehdi Dibaj, an Assemblies of God minister, was found in a park in western Tehran, according to a July 5 statement from IRNA, Iran's official news agency. Police said they discovered Dibaj's body while seeking the killer of Tateos Michaelian, 62, pastor of a Tehran church and chairman of the Council of Protestant Ministers in Iran.

Dibaj and Michaelian became the second and third Christian leaders to be murdered this year in Iran. In January Haik Hovsepian-Mehr, superintendent of the Assemblies of God, also was murdered. He preceded Michaelian as chairman of the Council of Protestant Ministers in Iran.

Dibaj, 59, had not been seen since July 1, when he left a Christian conference in Tehran suburb to go to his daughter's home. He never arrived, according to Christian sources who monitor church matters in Iran from outside the country.

Michaelian was killed some time after he left home June 29, the sources said. Michaelian's son, Galo, and other relatives were summoned by Iranian authorities to identify the body July 2. They said Michaelian had been shot several times in the head.

Dibaj made international headlines last December when Iranian authorities announced he would be executed for the "crime" of abandoning Islam. But following an international outcry, including a protest by the U.S. State Department, he was released from prison Jan. 16.

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At that time government officials said his release was conditional, pending an ongoing investigation. H had spent 10 years in a prison in Sari, a city in northeastern Iran. During th tim in prison Dibaj was tortured and spent two years in solitary confinement in an unlighted, 9-square-foot cell.

Meanwhile, Iranian Christian leaders identified another missing believer as Hassan Shahjamali, an Iranian Muslim convert to Christianity and U.S. resident. Shahjamali went to an airport in the Iranian city of Shiraz to board a flight to Tehran July 1. But he never arrived in the Iranian capital.

Shahjamali traveled from the United States to Iran in May to visit his family, encourage Iranian Christians and share the gospel with interested Iranians. It was not immediately known whether Shahjamali is an American citizen; his wife is an American.

Iranian Christians said they assume Shahjamali is being detained by the Iranian government.

In a related development, two other church leaders in Ahwaz were being detained by police July 4, Christian sources said.

Michaelian spoke June 26 at the Assemblies of God church formerly led by Hovsepian-Mehr. Dibaj also was a member. In his message, Michaelian stressed that Iranian Christians should be neither perplexed nor afraid of martyrdom for their faith, but rather should prepare to face it.

Christian workers said Iranian authorities had threatened several times to kill Michaelian, senior pastor of St. John Armenian Evangelical (Presbyterian) Church in Tehran. He was a former executive secretary of the Presbyterian Synod of Iran and former general secretary of the Iranian Bible Society, which was closed by Iranian authorities in 1990.

An Armenian, he served in the Christian ministry for some four decades and held degrees in law and theology. He was known as a scholar of philosophy, psychology and Persian literature. Christians who knew him said he was probably the best-known Christian translator in Iran's history and had personally translated more than 60 Christian books into Farsi, or Persian, the language of Iran.

He is survived by his wife, Juliet, a son and two daughters. One of his daughters gave birth to a child July 3.

The murders, arrests and disappearances form a pattern of ongoing persecution of Christians in the predominantly Muslim nation of Iran. Hossein Soodmand, another Christian leader affiliated with the Assemblies of God, was hanged in December 1991.

Christians charge that government surveillance of Iranian believers, particularly of Muslim converts to Christ, has increased in recent weeks. But the latest violence only continues earlier anti-Christian actions, including the following:

-- Police have detained and tortured some Christians, and the government has closed half a dozen Christian churches since 1988.

-- Iranians must carry identity cards listing their religion, and non-Muslim shopkeepers must display signs showing their religious affiliation.

"These are extremely hard and trying days for the church in Iran," declared an Iranian Christian leader in Europe. "It faces a vicious and deceptive system that seems determined to eliminate its leaders and demoralize the church. However, we do not lose heart as we remember the promise of Jesus, 'I will build My church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'

"Should not Iranians have the freedom to hear the gospel, to accept it and to practice their faith? These are religious rights which the Islamic government of Iran is denying Iranians," the leader charged.

**Action urged to condemn murder,
kidnapping of Iranian Christians**

TEHRAN, Iran (BP)--Iranian Christian leaders have urged Christians around the world to condemn the murders of Mehdi Dibaj and Tateos Michaelian and the torture, detention, persecution and kidnapping of other Iranian Christians.

Dibaj and Michaelian, prominent Iranian Christians found murdered in Iran, are the latest martyrs in an ongoing campaign of violence against Christians in Iran by Islamic fundamentalists.

Michaelian was a Presbyterian pastor and chairman of the Council of Protestant Ministers in Iran. Dibaj, an Assemblies of God minister, gained international attention when he refused to renounce his faith last December and was sentenced to death, then released.

Hassan Shahjamali, an Iranian Muslim convert to Christianity, is a resident of the United States and married to an American. He was on a visit to Iran when he disappeared July 1. Christian leaders assume he is being detained by the Iranian government.

An Iranian Christian leader in Europe denounced the most recent rash of violence as "clearly a calculated and vicious plan to exterminate the Iranian church leadership. Something has to be done very urgently."

Another leader appealed to Christians worldwide:

"Urge Iranian authorities to discontinue the arrest, imprisonment, interrogation and torture of Muslim converts. Urge that the government allow believers to attend church, that closed churches be reopened and that the Iranian Bible Society and the Garden of Evangelism be reopened."

Ironically, the latest anti-Christian violence coincided with a July 4 announcement by Nestle, Inc., that it will build a \$30 million factory to make powdered milk and baby food near Tehran. Pepsico and Coca-Cola also have begun investing in Iran by granting franchises to local bottlers.

Iranian Christian leaders urged Christians and other concerned people to contact the three corporate offices as well as U.S. and Iranian government officials to register their concerns.

Addresses for Iranian officials:

His Excellency Kamal Kharrazi, Ambassador, Permanent Representative to the United Nations, United Nations, New York, NY; fax (212) 867-7086.

Interests Section of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Embassy of Pakistan, 2209 Wisconsin Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20007; telephone: (202) 965-4990; fax: (202) 965-1073.

His Excellency Hojjatoleslam, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, The Presidency, Palestine Avenue, Azerbaijan Intersection, Tehran, Islamic Republic of Iran, telephone: (011) 98-21-6161; telegrams: President Rafsanjani, Tehran, Iran, Telexes: 214231 MITI IR or 213113 PRIM IR

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**Baptist-aided Rwandan family
finally headed to United States** **By Craig Bird**

**Baptist Press
7/6/94**

NAIROBI, Kenya (BP)--It took them a few terrifying days to escape the death squads in Rwanda.

It took three tedious months to escape assignment to a refugee camp.

But on July 19, Jean-Marie Vianny Higiroy and his family finally will head to the United States. The former Rwandan government official has been offered a one-semester position in the communications faculty at the University of New Hampshire.

In April Higiroy, his wife and two children were included among American citizens being evacuated from Kigali, Rwanda, to Nairobi, Kenya, because his American-born daughter had a U.S. passport.

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But with a horrified world focusing on the genocide the Hutus were inflicting on the Tutsis in Rwanda, few seemed willing to accept that some Hutus -- like Higiroy -- also were in danger if they belonged to opposition political parties.

In Kenya the family was shuttled back and forth between the United Nations High Commission for Refugees and the Jesuit Refugee Center in a frustrating battle to be accepted into the United States' refugee program.

However, American Embassy officials in Nairobi took up their case and Baptist Press publicized their plight after the Rwandan family was befriended by Southern Baptist missionaries they met on the evacuation flight.

"We are very grateful for the many people who have helped us, especially the American Embassy staff in Rwanda and Kenya, and the Southern Baptists who housed us and fed us our first few days in the country, after we arrived with nothing except the clothes on our back, and who then let the world know of our plight," Higiroy said.

He also thanked "our many friends in America who encouraged the decision makers to consider our case."

Those friends include the Baptist World Alliance, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs and American Baptists -- all of whom reportedly joined the effort to gain U.S. sanctuary for the family.

Higiroy, who has a doctorate from the University of Texas in Austin and a master's degree from Syracuse (N.Y.) University, directed the Rwandese Information Office. The public agency oversaw Radio Rwanda, Rwandese Television and the government print media. He also was a highly visible leader of the opposition Republican Democratic Movement.

But the April 6 plane crash that killed Rwandan President Juvenal Habyarimana set off an apparently prearranged slaughter of ethnic Tutsis and the systematic murder of Hutus opposed to the radical Hutu party Habyarimana had led.

The family, with Higiroy carrying their gardener's identity card and wearing old clothes, fled minutes before army troops swept into their Kigali home. Two days of hiding in a friend's house ended with a dramatic rescue by a U.S. Embassy staff member.

Because her husband, Higiroy, was so recognizable, Laetitia Umusindarwejo waited on the street, hiding behind cars when death squads drove by until the embassy car turned onto the street. Then she boldly showed herself -- and the University of Texas sweatshirt she was wearing. When the driver stopped, Higiroy and the two children dashed from the house into the car with her.

A tense exodus in an American convoy led through numerous army checkpoints, into Burundi and finally by U.S. Air Force transport to Nairobi.

Now they are headed for New England, "grateful to God for being spared," but grieving over the continuing hemorrhage of Rwanda.

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EDITORS' NOTE: This is the second article in "The Spirit of Southern Baptists, 1845-1995" series. The Historical Commission, SBC, will release one article each month from June 1994 to May 1995. The commission will supply a logo for the series to state Baptist newspaper editors. A longer version of this article is available in the Newsroom of the Library of SBCNet under EVENTS.SBC.

5 pivotal events that shaped
Southern Baptists' history

By Lynn Clayton

Baptist Press
7/6/94

NASHVILLE (BP)--Choosing five events that most significantly impacted the Southern Baptist Convention is like trying to pick the five people who had the greatest effect upon one's own life. Such choices can be made, but they are arbitrary and such lists unfortunately exclude multitudes of significant others.

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These pivotal events are listed as the most significant because of their long-term, ongoing, generally undiminished impact upon conv ntion life.

-- 1845: Establishing the Foreign Mission Board.

The formation of the Southern Baptist Convention and the organization of the Foreign Mission Board are inextricably bound together.

When the newly established Foreign Mission Board met in organizational meetings in Augusta, Ga., on May 12 and in Richmond, Va., on June 30 of 1845, it was forming the heart of Southern Baptists' cooperative life as no other event could.

Southern Baptists' commitment to foreign missions has been the major motivating force in all the convention has done. Presently the Foreign Mission Board is the largest non-Catholic missionary-sending agency in the world.

-- 1882: Revitalization of the Home Mission Board.

While foreign missions had the heart of Southern Baptists from the beginning, what was called domestic missions struggled early to gain a secure place.

From the very beginning, many Southern Baptists questioned the need for domestic or home missions.

Finally by 1882 the generally held opinion was that something had to be done about the board.

The convention that year took three significant actions. First, they moved the office of home missions from Marion, Ala., to Atlanta. Second, they elected new officers. Third, they elected Isaac Taylor Tichenor as corresponding secretary.

The revitalized organization made an amazing recovery.

The Home Mission Board has grown in effectiveness and influence. Its work has been significant in moving the Southern Baptist Convention from a regional religious body to a denomination present in all 50 states and United States protectorates and commonwealths.

-- 1891: Establishment of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

When the Southern Baptist Convention established the Baptist Sunday School Board in 1891, it established an organization and a ministry that would not only provide goods and services for Southern Baptist churches, but a center of unity and identity as well.

Prior to 1891, other Baptist publishing societies, including the American Baptist Publication Society of Northern Baptists, met Southern Baptists' publication needs.

James Marion Frost, then pastor of Leigh Street Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., began pushing for the organization of a publishing house. At the 1891 Southern Baptist Convention, a motion was passed that a Sunday School Board be established and charged with the convention's Sunday school series and the Sunday school interests in the convention territory, but it was not to engage in other publication work. The board first met in Nashville on May 2, 1891.

Every area of church life is now touched and influenced by the Sunday School Board through its materials, training, conference centers, music publishing and financial strength.

-- 1925: Establishment of the Cooperative Program.

The Southern Baptist Convention's organizational chart in the 1800s and early 1900s was unique among Baptists in that it had one convention with various boards operating the ministries of the convention. But support of the boards' programs still came in a societal fashion; churches supported each board separately. Competition for funds was, therefore, always sharp and funds uncertain.

In 1919, a five-year program was launched to raise \$75 million for all missionary, educational and benevolent work in the state and Southern Baptist conventions.

After the \$75 million campaign, a Conservation Commission was established to conserv the accomplishments of the campaign. This was succeeded by the Future Program Commission that in 1925 recommended to the Southern Baptist Convention that "from the adoption of this report by the Convention our co-operative work be known as the 'Cooperative Program of Southern Baptists.'"

The plan is a masterpiece of denominational support. It provides a unified budget and a unified giving plan.

-- 1963: Adoption of the Baptist Faith and Message.

In 1963, the Southern Baptist Convention was in the midst of a theological controversy. Ralph H. Elliott of Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary had written "The Message of Genesis" (1961) which was "passionately criticized" because of its interpretation of the events of the first book of the Bible.

In response to this controversy, a committee composed of the presidents of the various state conventions and headed by Southern Baptist Convention President Herschel H. Hobbs was selected to prepare a statement of Baptist faith and message.

The committee formulated The 1963 Baptist Faith and Message which was approved by messengers to that year's Southern Baptist Convention.

The formulation of the Baptist Faith and Message, and the constant reference to it in Southern Baptist life since, demonstrates its undeniable significance.

-- Conclusion:

Many other events are perhaps as significant as the ones just enumerated. One was formation of the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1917.

Also, a recent significant event is what has been called the "takeover" or the "SBC Controversy" or the "conservative resurgence." The fact that it does not have a broadly accepted name reflects that it is still developing a defined place in history. Most observers say that the continuing development of this controversy and its consequences will be one of the most significant in the convention's history.

The Southern Baptist Convention has always been a grass-roots, dynamic body. Determining what is lastingly significant can only be done from the perspective of years. But, the events just listed have already proven themselves pivotal.

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To receive free guidelines and to purchase resources to help celebrate the SBC's 150th anniversary, write the Historical Commission, SBC, at 901 Commerce St., Suite 400, Nashville, TN 37203-3630, or call toll-free 1-800-966-BAPT.

Jewish rioters attack Baptist property, almost injure teen

By Robert O'Brien

Baptist Press
7/6/94

JERUSALEM (BP)--A 16-year-old Southern Baptist narrowly escaped injury July 3 during a demonstration by rampaging Jewish settlers protesting the return of Palestine Liberation Organization Chairman Yasser Arafat to Gaza.

A rock crashed through a bedroom window, with shattering glass barely missing Sommer Hicks, daughter of Southern Baptist representatives Ray and Beverly Hicks of Cincinnati.

"The hand of God must have protected me," she said. "The rock and glass seemed to veer away and just missed."

Sommer's father, associate to the area director for Southern Baptist work in the region, was traveling. But the teen-ager, her mother Beverly, sister Melakee, age 11, and brother Micah, 8, were at home when the hour-long riot erupted. Three children of Church of the Nazarene workers Lindell and Kay Browning of Anderson, Ind., were visiting the Hicks children.

The militant Jewish settlers, swarming down Nablus Road in a predominantly Arab section of East Jerusalem, also inflicted about \$1,000 damage on Jerusalem House, a facility owned by the Baptist Convention in Israel. The convention is the organization of Southern Baptist workers in Israel.

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Jerusalem House is a combination student center and home for the Hicks family, who live on the first floor. Twelve students affiliated with another Christian organization live upstairs.

Shouting and chanting awoke the house's residents about 1:30 a.m. July 3.

"At first I thought it was a PLO march," Mrs. Hicks said. "But then, as I watched from the window, I saw they had on yarmulkes (skullcaps often worn by Jewish men) or wore the black hats and coats of religious Jews. They pushed and battered on the gate for about a half-hour. I can't imagine what they might have done if they'd broken it down."

The gate held but was severely battered. Besides breaking the window, the rioters ripped an intercom, a common security device in the area, out of the cement wall around the house and stole it. They also threw rocks through upstairs windows, where the Christian students live, but the windows were open and no damage was done.

Helicopters swooped overhead, shining spotlights into the area, and about 100 Israeli soldiers followed what Mrs. Hicks estimated to be about 2,000 rioters. But they made no move to stop them.

"The children were trembling, and we felt a lot of fear and also a lot of anger that nothing was done to stop them," Mrs. Hicks said.

Telephone calls to the police also got no response, she said. News reports said Jewish authorities allowed militant settlers to vent their emotions by burning tires and blocking roads. But the violence apparently turned more severe in Arab-occupied sections.

Southern Baptist representatives in Israel have lodged a complaint about the incident with Israeli government officials, reported Tom Hocutt, administrator of the Baptist Convention in Israel. It requests reimbursement for damages and assurances of police protection in the future.

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Baptist nurses reminded
of ministry potential

By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press
7/6/94

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP)--Jesus Christ and his power are an essential part of dealing with patients, men and women attending the Second North American Conference for Nurses were reminded.

Verna Carson, associate professor of nursing at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, addressed the almost 600 nursing professionals gathered here for the June 25-29 meeting at Samford University.

"Jesus doesn't call the prepared, but he prepares those he calls, and he will prepare you to minister to others in nursing through his power," Carson said.

"The Lord has anointed us (as nurses). We don't do this on our own. Jesus has given us what we need to do the work we need to do to minister to the sick, the lonely, brokenhearted, low-spirited and unlovable."

Carson reminded the nurses of the importance of keeping their eyes on Jesus.

"If you don't keep your eyes on the Lord Jesus, you're going to be in trouble," she said. "One of the things that will suffer will be your ability to carry out his work -- the ability to minister to others. If you become despairful, how can you offer hope to someone else?"

Jesus also will give opportunities for nurses to witness in powerful ways, she said, but cautioned them to do witness gently and at the leading of the Holy Spirit.

"Speak from your heart in love," she said. Telling people what they should do -- such as go to church or embrace Jesus -- is not speaking in love.

Instead, Carson encouraged the nurses to take an "I" approach -- "'Let me tell you what Jesus has done for me.' 'Jesus gives me peace.' 'Jesus makes me feel loved.' 'Jesus lets me know that I am never alone.' 'You can have that.'"

"That's a gentle but powerful witness," she said. "Tell people what Jesus has done for you. That's how we minister in his name in nursing."

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Nurses attending the meeting represented 47 states and six foreign countries. The network of 12 Christian nursing organizations which sponsored the meeting included the Baptist Nursing Fellowship.

The BNF, sponsored by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, is an organization which provides nurses with Christian professional fellowship, promotes continuing professional education for its members and missionary nurses and encourages nursing service evolving from a personal commitment to Jesus Christ.

More than 50 BNF members met prior to the five-day conference. In business, the members added to their previously elected slate of officers Maggi Payne of Hattisburg, Miss., as resource development chairperson.

BNF leaders began a dialogue with the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance about offering workshops for nurses during the next BWA Congress meeting, scheduled for August 1995 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

While in Birmingham, the nurses hosted a vitamin shower for a hospital in Senegal. They contributed more than 600 bottles of prenatal and children's vitamins which will be shared with Southern Baptist foreign missionaries working with the hospital.

BNF members annually invite newly appointed home and foreign missionaries who have assignments in nursing to attend their meetings. This year, Sandy Hammett, missionary to Hong Kong, and Karen Nichols, missionary to Yemen, were guests of the organization.

The next BNF annual meeting will be Feb. 23-26 in Nashville.

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**Kids Bible materials aim
at meeting current needs**

By Terri Lackey

**Baptist Press
7/6/94**

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Gone are the days when parents could send kids outside to ride their bicycles, climb trees or gaze at the clouds. Children need Nintendo, high tech computers or at least television to satisfy their entertainment needs, a preschool/children's consultant said.

What that means for the church, according to David Morrow, is a choice between more sophisticated discipleship programming for children or empty classes.

"It was a different life when we were kids," said Morrow of the Baptist Sunday School Board's discipleship and family development division. "I work with a class of first- through fifth-grade boys in my church, and half of them couldn't fold paper airplanes when I asked them to.

"But if you brought Nintendo in the classroom, those boys would scald me on it. I'm not saying the differences are wrong. We just have to learn how to reach entirely different kids these days."

Morrow taught a workshop introducing TeamKID, a new children's discipleship program to participants attending Discipleship and Family Development Week at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, July 2-8.

Children nowadays are facing shifting family patterns, heavy media influences, changing technology, an increased amount of peer pressure and concerns about their well-being and safety, Morrow said.

"During years 1979 through 1991, an equal number of children were killed by guns as were the number of men killed in the Vietnam War -- 50,000," he said. "And the average child has 2.6 parents rather than the average parent having 2.6 children."

Morrow said a survey revealed churches are looking for a different way to reach the children. They want something that will attract the children and excite them. They want curriculum that calls for fewer teachers and less time to prepare. But churches also want children involved in Bible skill development, he said.

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Parents want church to offer som thing their children want to do, Morr w said. They want them to be able to apply what they are learning, and they want them t learn Bible skill developm nt.

In the same survey conducted by a task force studying children's discipleship curriculum, Morrow said children want activities to be interesting and fun. But they also want them to be meaningful. And they would like to be active while they learn, he added.

Morrow said TeamKID (Kids in Discipleship), a 36-week course for first-through sixth-graders, meets for nine months throughout the school year and can meet almost all of the needs expressed in the survey.

"It is designed to be an after-school program, but some people are using it on Saturday mornings or during summer emphasis," he said. "The weekly program can last from one, one and a half, to two hours, depending on what you want. It provides minimum time for leaders to prepare and maximum benefit for the children."

Morrow said ideally no more than 40 children should make up a club, and about one "coach" per seven children should be enlisted.

Three years ago, two years before he began working at the Sunday School Board, Morrow said he was enlisted to serve on a task force that discussed children's discipleship. The most evident problem was the shrinking number of children attending discipleship classes.

"That means children weren't growing up learning Baptist polity, doctrine and ethics," he said.

"The task force came up with this club plan as a new way of reaching children," said Morrow, who noted it was very successful when field tested.

TeamKID is programmed in five segments -- Warm Up (get-involved activity); Workout (group study); Stretching (workbook time); The Tournament (games and activities); and Cool Down (refreshments and conclusion).

Some of the 36 weekly lessons offered in the TeamKID workbook include How to be a Friend; Rules are Needed -- for Better Living; You Can Learn to Make Wise Choices; Showing Respect at Home; Money Can't Buy Everything; I am Responsible; and We Need One Another.

TeamKID may be obtained by calling the Sunday School Board's toll-free number, 1-800-458-2772.

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Camp Crestridge for Girls
celebrates 40th anniversary

Baptist Press
7/6/94

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--Muddy walks, changing into skirts three times a day for meals and a camp director who could silence a room full of giggling girls without saying a word were remembered July 2 during the 40th anniversary celebration of Camp Crestridge for Girls at Ridgecrest, N.C.

More than 100 former campers and staffers from the camp's beginning in 1955 mingled with 155 girls attending the 1994 version of Crestridge and organized an alumni association.

Johnnie Armstrong, associate director during the camp's first summer, recalled Crestridge had no hot water or electricity. Because no dining hall had yet been constructed, campers "walked on muddy roads to the conference center (Ridgecrest). It rained every day. You couldn't wear shorts at the conference center so we changed clothes three times a day.

"We spent most of our time changing clothes!" said Armstrong, who spent the next 33 summers as associate director and then director of Crestridge.

She paid tribute to three men who were instrumental in starting Crestridge -- James L. Sullivan, president of the Baptist Sunday School Board, 1953-75; the late Willard Weeks, then manager of Ridgecrest which operates Crestridge; and George Pickering, then director of Camp Ridgecrest for Boys, started in 1926, four years after the establishment of the conference center.

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Four of the original 26 Crestridge staffers attended the reunion, including Beth Sullivan Taylor, daughter of James L. Sullivan. Taylor's daughter, Lydia Taylor Pierce, also attended Crestridge as camper and staffer.

The director of Crestridge for its first 24 years, Arvine Bell, was remembered as a leader and a disciplinarian who, holding a clipboard and standing with her feet precisely two and one-half feet apart, could cause silence to fall over any group of campers.

"When she led, we followed," said Jan Fulgham Silvius, an author and radio personality from Chattanooga, Tenn., who is president of the alumni association.

"And we always remembered who we were, where we were from and what we represented," said Silvius, reciting a statement often repeated to campers by Bell, who died earlier this year.

"She never hesitated to tell us she loved us, corporately and individually," Silvius said.

Noting that Crestridge campers have gone on to become missionaries, lawyers, teachers, doctors, musicians and a range of other professionals, Armstrong said "young people go from this camp with God's Word hidden in their hearts" to deal with life circumstances.

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Executive Committee staff adds
Walker as editorial associate

Baptist Press
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NASHVILLE (BP)--Jon Walker has joined the staff of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee in Nashville as editorial associate under Mark Coppenger, vice president for convention relations.

Walker, 36, will assist in the production of "SBC Life," successor to the Executive Committee periodical Baptist Program, and in other convention relations responsibilities. He fills a staff vacancy created with the retirement of longtime Executive Committee staff member Leonard Hill, who was managing editor of the Baptist Program.

Walker was named features editor at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., in March 1993 and subsequently was named news coordinator. He received a master of divinity degree from the school in June. Also while enrolled there, he was pastor of Vaughn (N.C.) Baptist Church from 1992-93.

His previous media work was as a free-lance producer/writer from 1987-93; AV/TV production manager for the Alachua County School Board in Gainesville, Fla., 1984-91; broadcast coordinator, Florida Farm Bureau, Gainesville, 1981-83; and announcer, WRUF, Gainesville, 1978-82.

He also is a former vice chairman of the Crisis Pregnancy Center in Gainesville and was a board member from 1985-91.

Walker earned a master of arts in education from the University of Florida at Gainesville in 1987 and a bachelor of science in broadcast journalism there in 1980.

His wife, Sherry, is a graphic designer.

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