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News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

**NATIONAL OFFICE**

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

**BUREAUS**

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

July 12, 1994

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SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL  
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES  
Historical Commission, SBC  
Nashville, Tennessee

Southeastern to open  
3 extension centers

By Chele Caughron

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

WAKE FOREST, N.C. (BP)--Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary will offer classes this fall at three new extension centers, seminary officials announced today.

"The purpose of these centers is to provide fully accredited, quality theological studies in an off-campus setting for individuals who have been called by God into Christian service but are unable to come to our main campus in Wake Forest to prepare for that calling," said Paige Patterson, president of Southeastern, based in Wake Forest, N.C.

The centers will be located at churches in the Augusta, Ga., Charlotte, N.C., and Norfolk, Va., areas. A task force of Southeastern administrators and faculty chose the three sites, said L. Russ Bush, Southeastern vice president for academic affairs.

"For several years, I have had a dream of having a seminary satellite school in the Augusta area because of the need that is here," said Bill Harrell, pastor of Abilene Baptist Church and a former Southeastern student. "Our church is delighted to be used by the Lord in order to allow men to become better pastors and staff members in their local churches."

Southeastern eventually plans to have a five-center extension program, Bush said.

"This is a critical day of intense spiritual warfare," Patterson said. "At stake in the struggle are the eternal destinies of millions. We are responsible to share with them the gospel of our Lord. Every preparation we can make for this task is absolutely critical. That is why Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary is making this opportunity available."

A five-year academic schedule has been designed for five extension centers. Each center will offer most of the master of divinity requirements. Students still will be required to take some credit hours at Southeastern's main campus.

Classes begin Aug. 22 and will meet only on Mondays.

The center locations are Abilene Baptist Church, 3917 Washington Road, Martinez, Ga., (706) 869-1774; Hickory Grove Baptist Church, 6050 Hickory Grove Road, Charlotte, N.C., (704) 531-4000; and First Baptist Church of Norfolk, Va., (804) 461-3226.

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Southwestern will host a dinner at each center to provide information about the study programs to be offered. The dinners will be held Aug. 11 in Norfolk, Aug. 15 in Charlotte and Aug. 16 in Augusta. For further information, contact registrar Sheldon Alexander at (919) 556-3101, ext. 215, or 1-800-2 TIM 3:17.

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Southwestern search committee  
confirms Hemphill nomination

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Kenneth S. Hemphill is the nominee of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary's presidential search committee to lead the Southern Baptist seminary, committee chairman Miles Seaborn confirmed in an announcement July 12.

The committee will recommend Hemphill's election as the seminary's seventh president at a called meeting of the 40-member board of trustees, now scheduled July 28 at Southwestern's main campus in Fort Worth, Texas.

Hemphill, 46, director of the Southern Baptist Center for Church Growth in Atlanta, was a pastor more than 25 years before assuming his present position two years ago. The center is a cooperative venture between the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board and the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.

If elected, Hemphill will succeed Russell H. Dilday Jr., who was fired March 9 by seminary trustees. Dilday had been Southwestern's president nearly 16 years.

"A peacemaker at heart, Dr. Hemphill understands the mandate of the Southern Baptist Convention concerning the conservative resurgence and is personally committed to that mandate and to leading Southwestern Seminary in fulfilling the direction of the convention," said Seaborn, pastor of Birchman Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

He said the search committee of 11 trustees and two advisory members representing faculty and students voted unanimously and enthusiastically to offer the position to Hemphill.

"We are challenged and edified by his emphasis that will be on evangelism, prayer and missions in every classroom, with every student and with every faculty member," Seaborn said. "We believe seminary life will blossom under his strong, courageous, dynamic, Spirit-filled leadership."

Seaborn said Hemphill and his wife, Paula, have expressed their openness to and interest in interaction between them and the families of students, faculty and staff, if elected.

The committee interviewed five other candidates from a list of more than 30 recommendations.

Ralph W. Pulley Jr., trustee chairman and an attorney in Dallas, said, "We believe the recommendation of Hemphill is a mandate from God and rejoice over the almost miraculous way in which the search committee's unanimity evolved over the past four months. We think he is uniquely qualified academically, spiritually and experientially to lead our seminary into the 21st century."

Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee, noted, "Ken Hemphill is extremely well equipped for the position. He is a pastor at heart and a scholar in mind. I have admired his leadership in evangelism and church growth, which are central to the tradition of Southwestern."

R. Wayne Jones, associate executive pastor of First Baptist Church in Franklin, Tenn., who worked under Hemphill as minister of education at First Church in Norfolk, Va., noted, "Ken's just a dynamic communicator, one of the best, very focused on reaching people for Christ. He is a very positive model for the type of student the seminaries need to produce who will reach people for Christ in the 21st century. He will bring changes (to SWBTS) but also a stability to the process of theological education."

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Hemphill holds a baccalaureate degree from Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, N.C.; the master of divinity and doctor of ministry degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.; and the doctor of philosophy degree from Cambridge University in Cambridge, England.

He has served churches as pastor in Battletown, Ky.; Little Stukeley, England; and Galax and Norfolk, Va. First Baptist Church of Norfolk experienced membership growth from less than 1,000 members to almost 7,000 members during his recent 11-year ministry there.

A prolific writer, Hemphill recently had his sixth book, "The Antioch Effect," released by Broadman & Holman Publishers, Nashville, Tenn. In it, he describes eight characteristics of highly effective churches. "The spiritual condition of the church must be a greater priority than any change in method or the development of any marketing strategy," he wrote in the book.

Other books by Hemphill are "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Discovering Your True Self Through Spiritual Gifts," "The Official Rule Book for the New Church Game," "The Bonsai Theory of Church Growth," "Spiritual Gifts: Empowering the New Testament Church," "Growing an Evangelistic Sunday School" and "Life Answers: Making Sense of Your World."

Hemphill, in a news release from the seminary, said he believes the greatest calling for a person is to be the pastor of a local church. The opportunity to be involved in the training of thousands of young ministers at Southwestern is a challenge he said he never dreamed would be his. He said, "I am passionate about the church."

Born in Morgantown, N.C., he is the son of a longtime Baptist pastor. Mrs. Hemphill is a former member of the board of trustees of the SBC Foreign Mission Board.

The Hemphills have three daughters: Kristina, Rachel and Katherine.

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Ten Commandments distribution  
launched after court rulings

By James Dotson

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)--Many in Cobb County, Ga., were concerned when a copy of the Ten Commandments was ordered removed from the county courthouse in January and again in June when the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of the ruling. But Roswell Street Church in Marietta was prompted to take action.

The church has initiated the printing and distribution of 50,000 copies of a high-quality reproduction of the Ten Commandments suitable for framing. Other Cobb County churches also are distributing the document, which is being financed by area businessmen.

Nelson Price, pastor of Roswell Street, said a survey done by the church determined some startling facts. Of 15 Christian bookstores surveyed, only one had a copy of the commandments suitable for framing. Of 15 Christian schools, only one had a copy on display. Of 20 churches contacted, none had such a display.

Price said the church hopes the mass distribution in Cobb County will "stimulate an effort to memorize the commandments," thus having a positive effect on the county's moral climate.

"With the removal of one copy, we've been stimulated to do what we should have been doing all along, and that is to comply with the Scripture that says teach these to the children," Price said.

The art work, by Cobb County calligrapher John Stuart McKenzie, uses the five symbolic colors of the Old Testament tabernacle, Price said.

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**Homosexual issue continues  
in proposed Olympic site**

MARIETTA, Ga. (BP)--A 10-month battle over a Cobb County Commission resolution upholding the traditional family unit as preferable to homosexual lifestyles apparently shows no sign of diminishing. Commissioners of the suburban Atlanta county, by a 3-2 vote, refused in late June to adopt another resolution aimed at easing tensions in the metropolitan Atlanta county.

The most recent statement, drafted by Commission Chairman Bill Byrne, was described as an attempt to "redefine, clarify and amend" an Aug. 10, 1993, resolution.

Although the original resolution was most criticized for language stating homosexual lifestyles "are incompatible with the standards to which this community subscribes," Byrne's resolution noted the primary intent of that action "was to oppose the concept of the Domestic Partnership Ordinance being proposed and ultimately adopted by the City of Atlanta." That ordinance would have extended benefits to unmarried partners of Atlanta city employees, whether homosexual or heterosexual.

The incident has become a standoff that has drawn worldwide attention, particularly because of continued pressure to have Olympic volleyball events planned for Cobb County in 1996 played elsewhere.

Olympic diver Greg Louganis, who recently declared his homosexuality, has added his efforts for the change of venue.

Community religious leaders also have been polarized. In June, a group of 37 religious leaders signed a document opposing the resolution. Within weeks, a group of 271 leaders -- including many Southern Baptists -- signed a statement of support for commissioners and the resolution.

Byrne's resolution declared victory for backers of last year's action, noting the Domestic Partnership Ordinance ultimately was overturned by the courts and that the document created "meaningful discussion" on such related issues as teenage pregnancy and violent youth crime.

In a clause aimed at answering concerns of the homosexual community, however, the new resolution also included a statement that the board is "committed to the principle that Human Rights is basic to the American people and that protection of these rights is the responsibility of all levels of government."

Byrne and Commissioner Bill Cooper -- the lone opposing voice to last year's resolution -- were the only commissioners supporting the new resolution.

Gordon Wysong, author of the original resolution, did not cite any specific problems with Byrne's resolution but said he did not feel it was necessary.

"I felt my original vote was right," he said. "I had 11 months to reconsider it, I still felt it was right and I stood by my earlier action," he said.

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**Sergei & Sunday school teacher  
get medical care, Baptist love**

**By Toby Druin**

**Baptist Press  
7/12/94**

ALLEN, Texas (BP)--After two months in the United States, Sergei Mandrenko went home to Brest, Belarus, in the former Soviet Union, July 6. And thanks to the love, care, concern and skill of Baptists in Allen and other Texas communities, he took a new outlook with him -- literally.

Sergei, who will be 14 this month, was born with subluxated lenses in both eyes. In lay terms, that means the lens in each eye was dislocated to one side, denying him sight in his left eye and very limited vision -- 20/400 -- in the other.

Now, after surgery to remove the defective lenses and with new glasses, his vision has improved to 20/50 and will get better, said Jeffery Wood, the optometrist in Allen and member of Baptist First Church there who coordinated Sergei's treatment.

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The Belarus youth now is better equipped to prepare for a life of ministry. A Christian and member of a Baptist church in Brest, he has felt God's call to preach and become a pastor.

Sergei's call to preach and his medical need were made known to the members of the Allen church early this year by evangelist Michael Gott, who makes frequent trips to Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union and had met Sergei.

The Allen church adopted Sergei as the focus of a stewardship campaign and members gave more than \$6,000 to help get him to the United States for treatment.

He was accompanied by his Sunday school teacher, Ludmilla "Luda" Snitko. Now 49, Snitko was won to Christ at 14 and baptized under a bridge in the middle of the night to avoid arrest.

She has long worked with children, now regularly providing foster care for eight to 10 children from disadvantaged homes, and began a Bible study and led a Vacation Bible School in Sergei's village on the outskirts of Brest. She began a congregation, got a pastor to come to lead it and Sergei ultimately was won to Christ there.

It was discovered after they arrived in Allen that Snitko also had serious kidney problems and high blood pressure that could have resulted in her death. They were also treated while she was in the community.

Many church members and medical personnel pooled their time and talents to make it happen. Pastor Dick Senter of First Baptist and Wood made the contacts to arrange it. Norm Glowicz, a member of the church and a pilot for American Airlines, arranged for transportation from Frankfurt, Germany, to Dallas and return. Doctors David Stager, assisted by Brad Jost, performed the surgery on Sergei. George Hurt and Mike Kellum assisted Snitko. Baylor University Medical Center provided the facilities.

Three dentists in the church contributed their talents, and many church members provided meals, housing, transportation and additional money.

Senter praised Boone Powell Jr., president of Baylor University Medical Center and the medical center for their help.

"Boone Powell Jr. has been absolutely wonderful to us," Senter said. "As a Texas Baptist, I am very proud of our hospital system and their response."

Senter said the effort has taught his church only God could have brought it all together. "We feel we have joined God in what he is doing," he said.

Through an interpreter, Snitko said what has happened to her and Sergei has come "only by the mercy of God."

"The fact we are here means that God is able to do miracles," she said. "We have met a lot of people who have served us. I try to find words to thank them, but can't find them. Only God can thank them. The Holy Spirit in our and their hearts can do it."

She said she did not understand the words of the sermons she heard while in Allen, "but I feel the Holy Spirit in my heart and cry every sermon. Our God loves us."

Sergei, who has grown up in a dysfunctional family, said he had experienced little love as child but had experienced it while in Allen. "The people here care about me," he said.

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\$100,000 gift memorializes  
Southwestern's 4th president

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--J. Howard Williams, former president of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, was honored by a \$100,000 gift to the seminary on July 3, what would have been his 100th birthday. The donor was Williams' youngest son, Kelly D. Williams of La Porte, Texas. He is the fourth-born of Williams' five children.

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The gift will be named th J. Howard Williams Village Endowment Fund. Earnings will be used for landscaping improv ments and maintenance in the J. Howard Williams Memorial Student Village at Southwestern.

"This is a tremendously significant gift at a significant time in our history," John Seelig, public relations consultant, said. In receiving the gift for Southwestern, Seelig indicated "this keeps the total amount of financial gifts to the seminary for the first six months of 1994 well above those received for the same period in 1993."

"We are very pleased to receive this gift," Jay Chance, vice president for institutional advancement, said. "The Williams family, through the years, has been a significant part of the great legacy of this school."

Williams left the role of executive secretary of the Baptist General Convention of Texas to become Southwestern's fourth president, serving from 1953 until his death in 1958. Robert Baker, in his history of the seminary, "Tell the Generations Following," calls Williams' tenure the "Five Golden Years" of Southwestern.

In Williams' inaugural address on Nov. 24, 1953, he stated his vision for the seminary, part of which was an affordable housing complex for students. The result of this dream is the apartment village bearing his name.

Although Williams didn't live to see the student housing project finished, he was able to visualize the appearance of the complex as it neared completion in 1958. In 1959, the seminary trustees honored him by naming the complex the J. Howard Williams Memorial Student Village.

Other parts of Williams' vision were an expanded faculty to meet the needs of the constantly increasing enrollment and the Golden Jubilee Expansion Campaign, which sought to raise \$10 million for endowment and the construction of much needed buildings. Williams envisioned more teaching space, a student union center, a gymnasium and a child care center.

"There are 900 wives of ministerial students now unable to attend classes and prepare themselves to work side by side with their husbands because they have no place to leave their children," Williams said in his inaugural address.

Under his leadership, the B.H. Carroll Memorial Building was expanded. A new theology wing and a new library wing were occupied in summer 1956. The theology wing provided classrooms, a visual-aids center, preaching and communication labs and faculty offices. The library wing offered study and reading rooms, study carrels and expanded space for stacks and special collections.

Williams' wife, Floy Kelly Williams Ferguson, died in September 1991. She was a 1984 recipient of Southwestern's Distinguished Alumnus Award. In 1982, she was honored with the B.H. Carroll Founders Award along with her second husband, the late Ted Ferguson, longtime Southwestern friend and benefactor.

The Williams' had five children: Martha Genne (Mrs. Frank Sandford) of Arlington, Texas; Carolyn Lee (Mrs. Joseph Mason) of Marshall, Texas; J. Howard Jr. of Canyon Lake, Texas; Kelly Dan of La Porte, Texas; and Floy Kate (Mrs. Dean Woodruff) of Allen, Texas. There are currently 19 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren.

Friends and relatives may give to the J. Howard Williams Village Endowment Fund by sending gifts to Southwestern's Development Office. The mailing address is P.O. Box 22000, Fort Worth, TX 76122-0500.

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Despite 5 fires in 15 months,  
church regroups, rebuilds

By Linda Prescott

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

SILVER CITY, N.M. (BP)--The fourth and fifth fires to strike Indian Hills Baptist Church, June 13 and 16, have eliminated the physical remains of the Silver City, N.M., church.

The first fire, Easter Sunday 1993, caused smoke and fire damage to one room. It was later ruled to have been set by arsonists.

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A second fire on July 1, 1993, was determined to be electrical. The fire resulted in smoke damage to the entire building, with the nursery being gutted.

On June 2 of this year, still another fire damaged the entire building. Investigators determined it was set by arsonists in two or possibly three locations: the kitchen, a closet and the nursery. The pews, three pianos, the pulpit, the organ and some nursery equipment were thought to be salvageable.

The June 13 blaze was reported at 3:15 a.m. All that remained from the previous fires was destroyed with the exception of the pastor's library. An estimate of damages approaches \$750,000.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms has been called in to investigate.

Another fire destroyed all that was remaining in the early morning hours of Thursday, June 16. The contents of the pastor's study and all church records were destroyed.

Pastor Dan Grindstaff said "Experiencing God" groups are meeting in homes and deacons are meeting each Wednesday evening in prayer groups. A temporary office has been set up at the Sunwest Bank building.

When a police officer called Grindstaff at 5:30 a.m., Monday, June 13, the pastor said his first thought was, "Preacher, do you believe on Monday morning what you preach on Sunday morning?" The answer was, "Yes, I don't always feel it, but I do believe it -- Jesus has the final word." He said the church is stronger than ever, unified and looking to the future.

On June 19 the congregation met outdoors for Sunday school, a worship service and a picnic. Grindstaff said the youth were attending Centrifuge at New Mexico's Sivelis Camp and were expected to come home "all fired up (no pun intended)."

Beginning June 26, the church began meeting at their former Sixth Street location, where offices will be located until the building is rebuilt. Grindstaff said, at the request of several members of the community, a special fund has been established at Sunwest Bank in Silver City.

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Dad commends son's attitude  
in wake of bear's attack

By John Loudat

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

SILVER CITY, N.M. (BP)--"When it rains, it pours" is a statement a New Mexico pastor finds himself agreeing with: First the fires, now this.

"The fires" are the five fires Indian Hills Baptist Church in Silver City, N.M., has suffered in the past 15 months, which totally destroyed the facilities.

"Now this" is pastor Dan Grindstaff's 10-year-old son, Jesse, being bitten by a bear during a family camping trip in the Gila Wilderness in southwestern New Mexico July 5.

Actually, there was much more to it than simply being bitten by a bear -- which is bad enough. Young Jesse awoke around 1 a.m. being dragged in his sleeping bag by a grunting bear. He and his best friend, Donny Wofford, had been sleeping by the Grindstaffs' van at their campsite while his father and two brothers were asleep a few yards away.

Immediately upon the rude awakening, Jesse yelled to Donny, the son of one of the deacons of their church to get his dad.

Grindstaff grabbed his flashlight and quickly moved in the dark toward the voice of his son, who had been dragged "fast" 40 yards in "a matter of seconds." Dan did not see the bear but apparently frightened it off with his flashlight and dialogue with the quickly retreating voice of his son.

Jesse, the pastor said, didn't know he was injured until he and his father scanned him for wounds at the site the bear had deposited him. What they found was a terrible wound to his left arm, near the elbow.

"It looked to me like I could put my fist in it. The hole went all the way to the bone," Grindstaff said.

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It took about an hour and a half to get to the hospital, Gila Regional Medical Center in Silver City -- an hour and a half, though, that turned out to be a high spiritual moment for father and son.

As the other boys gathered things up for the trip back to town, the pastor and his son were singing songs of joy to the Lord all the way to town. Jesse was cold and in shock, Grindstaff said. "It really hurt, but he had an unbelievable attitude. We were keenly aware of the presence of the Lord."

Some of the comments from Jesse during the trip in were, "I'm glad it wasn't Donny. I'm glad it wasn't my brothers. I'm glad I'm a Christian."

Jesse still has "a really good attitude," Grindstaff said July 8. "All the medical personnel are amazed at how brave he seems to be." As of three days after the attack, Jesse wasn't having any nightmares and can even joke about it.

Grindstaff said his son does want proof he can show his friends that he really was attacked by a bear. Jesse asked the emergency room doctor for a signed note to that effect. The physician assured the boy he would carry a note on his arm (in the form of a scar) for the rest of his life.

The wound, left open for the first three days, was finally stitched closed July 8. Other than the scar, doctors don't expect any restrictions or deformities.

The bear wasn't so fortunate. Shortly after the incident, New Mexico Game and Fish officers found and destroyed the young female. Her head was then sent to Albuquerque to be tested for rabies -- tests which came back negative.

Officials told the family that they were "85 to 90 percent sure" they got the right bear. The Grindstaffs have chosen to be safe rather than sorry. Jesse immediately received three rabies shots and has five more scheduled over the next month.

He was released from the hospital July 9.

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Air Force general elected  
to Fork Union presidency

Baptist Press  
7/12/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--Gen. John E. Jackson Jr., vice commander of the U.S. Air Force's Air Mobility Command, has been elected president of Fork Union Military Academy, a Baptist-affiliated preparatory school in Fork Union, Va.

Jackson's election was announced by the school's board of trustees June 30. He will assume his new position Aug. 1.

As commander of the Air Mobility Command, based at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois, Jackson has helped oversee the organization responsible for the bulk of the Air Force's strategic transportation assets and mission.

During his military career, the West Virginia native has held a variety of Air Force positions, including flying combat missions over Vietnam during the war in Southeast Asia.

Over the past decade he has commanded a flying training wing, served as inspector general and deputy chief of staff for plans at a major command, served as director of Air Force manpower and of Air Force personnel programs, commanded the Air Force Military Personnel Center and commanded Air Mobility Command's 15th Air Force.

Jackson holds a bachelor of science degree from Alderson-Broadus College in Philippi, W.Va., and a master of arts in business and personnel management from Central Michigan University in Mount Pleasant.

He and his wife, Barbara, have two children and two granddaughters. They currently attend Winstanley Baptist Church, a Southern Baptist congregation in Fairview Heights, Ill. During earlier military postings, he and his family twice have been members of Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, Va.

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Jackson has been a longtime supporter of the Jesus Film Project, a two-hour cinematic presentation of the life of Christ. The film, owned by the ministry organization Campus Crusade for Christ, is available in 292 languages and has been widely used in evangelistic efforts by missionary groups, including the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Jackson recently participated in a team which premiered the film in Mongolia and the former Soviet Union.

Fork Union, with more than 600 students in grades six through 12, is one of the largest military preparatory schools in the nation. Founded in 1898 by Virginia Baptist minister William E. Hatcher, it is one of three preparatory schools affiliated with the Baptist General Association of Virginia.

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NOTE TO EDITORS: Mrs. S.B. (Ruth) Middlebrook, mother-in-law of Presnall Wood, editor of the Baptist Standard died in Dallas July 11 following a lengthy illness. The funeral is at First Baptist Church of Vernon, Texas, 10 a.m. July 13.

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