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94-139

SWITZERLAND--Beauford T. Bear: teddy on a mission; photo.
FLORIDA--Funds allowed into Haiti for Baptist aid projects.
DALLAS--Texas Baptist pilots enlisted to seek, rescue Cuban refugees.
NEW MEXICO--BSSB staffer: Churches must respond to sexual misconduct of ministers.
TEXAS--Wales says Christians can make a difference in media.
TEXAS--Kids program receives first 'Covenant' grant.
TENNESSEE--BSSB to add consultant to Korean churches.
SOUTH CAROLINA--Anderson College president to take early retirement.
TENNESSEE--Thousands of students, missionaries expected to attend 'Mission 95.'
NORTH CAROLINA--2,500 collegian 'resources' receive evangelism training.
NORTH CAROLINA--Summer missions experience leaves college students changed.
NEW MEXICO--Request for a low-cost idea results in free training week.
NEW MEXICO--Church secretaries find stress, coping are as old as the Bible.

Beauford T. Bear:
teddy on a mission

By Mike Creswell

Baptist Press
8/19/94

INTERLAKEN, Switzerland (BP)--Can a teddy bear help with foreign missions? Sure he can. Just ask Carmen Sanchez about Beauford T. Bear's trip to Europe.

Beauford is a brown teddy bear who sports a scarf with an American flag design. In his backpack is a "passport" with stamps from Russia, Germany and Switzerland. Beside it is a daily diary of his European adventures.

Sanchez photographed the bear in many locations during the recent trip. She hopes the photos and diary eventually will become a book about a traveling teddy bear. At the very least, it will be a pleasant way for her third-grade students back in Fort Worth, Texas, to learn about Europe.

She teaches at Greenbriar Elementary School in Fort Worth. Her husband, Daniel Sanchez, teaches at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in the city.

Beauford was a hit with Europeans, helping provide an instant conversation opener -- even in potentially unfriendly situations.

Scowling guards at the Kremlin in Moscow, for example, at first said Beauford would have to be checked at the entrance like a handbag. But they wound up posing for photos, and Beauford was allowed to take the Kremlin tour.

In Sochi, Russia, Sanchez and her husband helped lead a workshop on the MasterLife discipleship program coordinated by Southern Baptist missionary Bill Wagner, the region's evangelism and church growth consultant for the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board. MasterLife is being introduced to Baptists across Russia and Eastern Europe.

About 100 Baptists from Russia, Moldova and other areas took part in the workshop. Again, Beauford was a big hit.

At Interlaken, Switzerland, Daniel Sanchez led conferences on church growth and the Bible at the summer assembly of the European Baptist Convention, a fellowship of English-speaking Baptist churches across Europe with close ties to the Southern Baptist Convention.

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Beauford faithfully attended the conferences. But during one free afternoon, he went "fishing" in a goldfish pond at a Methodist senior citizens' home. When resident Erida Portner saw the teddy bear, she broke into a smile -- and quickly fetched her own bear to "get acquainted."

"It was like that with Beauford the whole trip," said Sanchez. "He just helped break the ice instantly."

See? Teddy bears can help with missions!

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(BP) photo (vertical) mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outline available on SBCNet News Room.

Funds allowed into Haiti
for Baptist aid projects

By Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press
8/19/94

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (BP)--The U.S. Treasury Department has exempted two Southern Baptist aid projects in Haiti from a U.S. government freeze on banking transactions with the island nation.

The ruling affects an agricultural program near Hinche and a water well project in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital. Both receive funds from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in Richmond, Va.

"This means we'll be able to get money into the country for the support of anyone who works directly" with the projects as well as operating expenses, said Southern Baptist missionary Mark Rutledge.

The agricultural program, directed by Rutledge, from Murfreesboro, Tenn., and his wife, Peggy, from Glendale, Calif., employs about 25 Haitians. Before the Rutledges reluctantly left Haiti June 20, they paid the workers their wages through July. Haitians have continued to operate the agricultural program in the missionaries' absence. The water well project was put on hold last year because of operation difficulties caused by an economic embargo against Haiti.

Since leaving Haiti, the Rutledges have been staying temporarily in the Hollywood, Fla., area. They've been working to secure the Treasury Department exemption and to find places of service for Foreign Mission Board personnel who evacuated Haiti. Besides the Rutledges, two mission board workers left the island nation in June before a U.S. ban on commercial flights to and from Haiti took effect June 25.

Journeyman Todd Lowe, from Central, S.C., and International Service Corps volunteer Ed Brentham, from Belton, Texas, left Haiti June 15. Since July 27 they and Brentham's wife, Mary, who left Haiti earlier for medical reasons, have been helping develop an agricultural project at Barbados Baptist College.

They expected to return to the Miami area Aug. 19. From there they plan to go to the Dominican Republic Sept. 3 to work among Haitians living in that Spanish-speaking nation, which shares the island of Hispaniola with Haiti.

Meanwhile, Southern Baptist missionaries Jim and Grace Ziler arrived with their two children Aug. 17 in the Dominican Republic, where they will conduct evangelistic surveys among Haitians living in the Puerto Plata area. They will work with a Haitian Baptist mission congregation affiliated with the Dominican National Baptist Convention.

The Zilers, from Avilla and New Haven, Mo., respectively, were to have moved to Haiti in July to work with the Baptist water well project. They earlier were missionaries in Brazil, where Ziler was an agriculturist. For the past year they have been studying French to prepare for the new assignment in Haiti, where French and French Creole are the main languages.

"Pray that the Lord would open up doors for us to be able to minister there in the Dominican Republic, that we'd be able to use the language skills he's helped us to develop while we're waiting to get into Haiti," said Ziler shortly before leaving the United States.

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The Rutledges still are investigating where they are most needed until they can return to Haiti. They're also assessing possibilities for future short-term volunteer projects in Haiti.

Missionary Flights International, a mission aviation service based in West Palm Beach, Fla., is offering flights into Haiti for selected missionaries who want to return. Southern Baptist teacher Dawn Goodwin flew to Haiti Aug. 16 aboard an MFI flight, Mrs. Rutledge said. Goodwin, from Jefferson City, Tenn., returned to her assignment at a Christian school in Port-au-Prince. She earlier worked in Haiti as a volunteer with the Foreign Mission Board.

Rutledge is checking into an MFI flight to Haiti to handle some business and assess the situation. But the Rutledges, who have lived in Haiti for 10 years, would rather return for the long haul.

The couple recently learned more than 100 Haitians accepted Christ as Savior during the annual meeting of the Baptist Convention of Haiti in July. The spiritual decisions resulted from evangelistic home visitation by Haitian Baptists attending the meeting.

"In light of what we were seeing right before we left, I think this is just continuing the trend: right now Haitians are really responsive" to the gospel, said Mrs. Rutledge. "This is another reason we'd like to get back."

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Texas Baptist pilots enlisted
to seek, rescue Cuban refugees

By Ken Camp

Baptist Press
8/19/94

DALLAS (BP)--The Aviation Fellowship of the Texas Baptist Men missions organization has been asked to fly search and rescue missions in September to save the lives of Cuban refugees trying to row across the Straits of Florida.

The assignment comes at a time when the flow of refugees could be on an upward spiral in a political test of wills between Cuba's Fidel Castro and the U.S. government.

Pilots with light, twin-engine aircraft are needed to conduct low-altitude flights from Key West, Fla., Sept. 23-30, according to Thomas Van Hare, chairman of Freedom Flight International.

The last week in September typically is a peak period for refugees to try crossing the 90 miles from Cuba to freedom in the United States, Van Hare said.

"During that week, every night at least three families try to escape Cuba on board tiny, makeshift rafts constructed of tire inner tubes, bits of wood and rope," he said.

"Three out of four who attempt the journey simply disappear, victims of the sharks, the ocean waves and exposure to the harsh rays of the sun."

Freedom Flight International, a volunteer organization of private pilots, was featured in the May-June issue of the Home Mission Board's MissionsUSA magazine, along with the Cuban Refugee Transit House and Key West's White Street Baptist Church, co-sponsors of the September search and rescue mission.

In an Aug. 15 memo to personnel at the Home Mission Board, Van Hare reported that on one recent four-hour mission, a pilot discovered 10 rafts, and the United States Coast Guard recovered 93 refugees.

One of the groups spotted was a family of four, including an 8-year-old boy on a small wooden raft. Before the family could be rescued the raft broke into pieces and sank.

"The child -- who was later picked up -- told the Coast Guard that his mother and father had strapped their two lifejackets to him so that he could stay afloat in the rough seas," Van Hare stated. "He survived but watched the rest of his family drown."

Prospective volunteer pilots would need to be able to fly at 500 feet above the water's surface, using LORAN or GPS navigation aids. Aircraft would fly latitude lines with a three-mile track spacing, covering 12,000 square miles in a mission of five and a half hours.

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Preferred aircraft types are from the PA-23 series and C-337 Skymasters, but other light twin-engine planes could be used. All aircraft must be suitable for international operations outside of the ADIZ with Mode C Transponder.

For more information, contact John LaNoue at the offices of Texas Baptist Men, (214) 828-5354.

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**BSSB staffer: Churches must respond
to sexual misconduct of ministers**

**Baptist Press
8/19/94**

By Charles Willis

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Southern Baptists can no longer ignore the moral or legal responsibilities they face when their ministers engage in sexual misconduct, a consultant in forced termination issues told participants in the Bible Preaching Leadership Conference, Aug. 13-19.

The autonomy of Southern Baptist churches has resulted in some situations in which ministers move from one community or state to another without their history of sexual misconduct being detected, said Norris Smith, a staff member of the Baptist Sunday School Board's pastor-staff leadership department during conferences at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center.

But morally and legally, congregations are at risk, Smith observed.

Preconditioning takes place before a minister becomes sexually immoral, Smith said. Typically, the pattern begins by ignoring pastoral boundaries with "a little extra touch or a little extra time in counseling." Symptoms may progress to include different meeting places, gifts and changes in language when dealing with a specific person.

The minister may feel freedom from accountability, with the victim being the only person who can address the problem. While Smith said he has heard from people who have been able to forgive the offender, he quoted one person who said he or she "cannot forgive a system that puts pedophiles back in business because they (churches) don't want to deal with it."

He said some ministers engage in sexual misconduct because they have done a poor job of managing their own stress, while others have had since childhood "an excess of emotion and a need for a lot of attention. He said some of these exemplify an over-active people-person or people-pleaser personality. Smith cautioned against placing all ministerial sexual misconduct into the same category, offering several classifications of offense as alternatives:

-- Slippage. Any person at any given moment can fall, Smith said. "One definition of sin is to slip."

-- Situation. The minister's nurturing needs of affirmation and affection go unmet by the spouse, or ministers fail to seek nurture from their spouse.

-- Seduction. The minister is actually, deliberately and purposefully abusing the power of trust and taking advantage of another.

-- Sickness. The problem has moved to a level of sexual addiction needing professional help.

-- Straying. The minister has moved from the norm and is perverted, engaging in child molestation, homosexual activity or frequenting prostitutes.

"Biblically, the only way we can describe these behaviors is sin," Smith said. "It is an offense to God, to their families and to the communities they have tried to reach."

While Smith said some congregations respond by "shooting the messenger," firing the involved minister or blaming the other party for having tainted the minister, redemptive responses can place the church in a more positive position.

He recommended several responses to help all parties involved, including establishing a crisis communications system in which the personnel committee, the church staff and deacons determine the response of the church to individuals and news media.

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"Help the church secretary know how to respond to callers," he urged. "She can be legally liable for what she says."

Other responses include calling in an interim counselor to help the staff, deacons and congregation heal, establish termination details as appropriate, establish a core group to relate to the minister's family, secure legal counsel, respond to the minister's victim appropriately and provide restoration opportunities.

Churches considering restoration may ask, "Can anything be salvaged?" Smith said. Some possible actions in restoring the minister could include a leave of absence, monitoring counseling progress, asking for a clean bill of health from the counselor before duties are resumed and agreeing upon boundaries and accountability.

Criteria for restoration, Smith continued, include awareness by the minister of his own guilt, confession to some person as well as to God, accountability in confrontation that results in repentance and, if possible, tangible effort at restoring the victim's damaged reputation or career.

Among responses friends can offer a minister who has been sexually immoral, he suggested going to the friend, but not judgmentally.

"It could happen to you," he said. "You may be welcomed or you may be rejected or you may be told the situation is under control. But it can never be said you were not there for your friend."

He suggested responding to the needs of the minister's spouse and children, being alert to emotional tailspin responses, such as depression or suicide, promising to stay in touch, encouraging counseling and being available to interpret events to other friends or family members, as needed.

Bible Preaching Leadership Conference was sponsored by the BSSB pastor-staff leadership department.

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Wales says Christians can
make a difference in media

By C.C. Risenhoover

Baptist Press
8/19/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Tears welled up in Ken Wales's eyes as he talked about his long and difficult journey in bringing the book "Christy" to the nation's television screens on CBS.

"Christy" has had Wales's attention the past 25 years, and it took him 18 years to bring it to the screen.

The co-producer of the "Christy" series for MTM and CBS was the keynote speaker for the ACTS (American Christian Television Service) 10th anniversary luncheon in Fort Worth, Texas, Aug. 6.

ACTS is the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission "Faith and Values" cable TV service that reaches into more than 20 million homes.

Wales shared credit with a host of others for the series for which CBS has received more cards, letters, telegrams and phone calls than any other in the network's history. He also said the series has had a profound spiritual effect on members of the cast and production crew.

"Christians ... you ... are causing some phenomenal things to happen," he said. "The opening show was viewed by 44 million people. That kind of response ... all the letters and phone calls to the network ... it makes a difference. It's the first time a network has let a faith in action story be told. And it was allowed because the story is true and authentic."

Then he gave his listeners good news: The series has been renewed by the network. And a two-hour "Christy" special will air Nov. 24.

"This is God's project," Wales said. "I am the steward."

The "Christy" book also has been reissued in paperback and the programs are being marketed in video by Broadman & Holman Publishers of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

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Honored with a "Founders Award" at the luncheon was Jimmy Allen, 1980-89 president of the RTVC, whom current president, Jack Johnson, said was the dreamer who made ACTS a reality. He was presented with a plaque that read: "Dreamer, Creator, Founder."

Others honored with special recognition for their contributions to ACTS were Chip Turner, state ACTS director for Louisiana Baptists; First Baptist Church of Jackson, Miss.; and William W. Airy, president of Vision Group, Inc. Pam Warren accepted the plaque for the Mississippi church.

Linda Bennett, who produces the weekly children's program "Just Kids" simulcast on ACTS and FamilyNet each Saturday at 11 a.m. EST, received a \$7,500 check from "Covenant" to help with continued production of the series. FamilyNet is the RTVC broadcast TV service reaching more than 50 million homes. "Covenant" is the RTVC voluntary fellowship dedicated to turning America's children away from the proliferation of pornography and violence on secular TV by producing positive alternative programming.

Indiana native Wales, son of a minister, has 33 years experience as a producer, director, writer and actor. The "Christy" project first came to his attention in 1969, Wales said, when he was filming the MGM movie "She Loves Me" starring Julie Andrews. "Christy," the best-selling book by Catherine Marshall also was in production. Both projects were canceled when the studio changed management.

Wales said he never forgot "Christy," the story of Catherine Marshall's mother who journeyed to the Great Smoky Mountains to teach in a mission school when she was only 19. Marshall also was author of "A Man Called Peter," which became a top-grossing 20th Century Fox film in the 1950s. Wales said it also made a lasting impression on him. He said he met Marshall in the late 1970s, they became friends, and he talked to her about reviving "Christy."

Wales said he also had many lengthy conversations with Marshall's mother, Lenora Wood, who was the actual heroine of the story. Neither mother nor daughter lived to see Wales finally obtain film rights to "Christy" in 1987, but he said he still maintains a close relationship with other members of the Marshall family.

Wales said "Christy" has touched a nerve in society -- appreciation for such family values programming has come bubbling to the surface, and some extraordinary things are happening.

"For me this all really began 38 years ago," he said. "It began in the church. It began with my relationship with Christ."

Wales said it is important Christians celebrate their commonality instead of their differences.

"The one thing that unites us is Jesus Christ," he said.

The producer predicted there will be more opportunities such as "Christy," and such efforts will require great financial sacrifices on the part of Christians. "We can make a difference," Wales said, "if we stay the course."

"Christy" is being filmed on location in Townsend, Tenn. Co-producer is Barney Rosenzweig, who was Wales's classmate at the University of Southern California. They also co-produced John Steinbeck's "East of Eden," which won the Golden Globe award and several Emmys for best mini-series.

As an actor, Wales appeared in 24 feature films and seven television series. He is probably best remembered for his role as Betty's boyfriend in the TV series "Father Knows Best." Other TV programs in which he had roles include "Father of the Bride" and "Hazel."

The feature films in which he had acting roles include "Imitation General," "Torpedo Run," "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse," "Pocketful of Miracles," "Experiment in Terror," "Soldier in the Rain," "Fate Is the Hunter," "The Great Race," "Cimarron," "The Courtship of Eddie's Father," "What Did You Do in the War, Daddy?" and "Wild Rovers."

Wales was vice president of production for The Disney Channel (Walt Disney Productions) and has feature film production credit on 13 projects. They include "Wild Rovers" starring William Holden and "The Tamarind Seed" starring Julie Andrews.

His network TV credits include being associate producer of the "Cagney and Lacey" series and producer of the one-hour ABC-TV special "Julie," starring Julie Andrews.

Founded in 1984, ACTS was the first religious programming network to feature multi-denominational involvement -- Baptist, Catholic, Church of Christ, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian and Seventh-day Adventist -- local promotion and programming, with no on-air solicitation of funds.

In July 1992, ACTS entered into a "shared channel" arrangement with VISN (Vision Interfaith Satellite Network), owned and operated by the National Interfaith Cable Coalition (NICC). The channel was first called VISN-ACTS. Last January the name of the channel was changed to the "Faith and Values Channel." However, ACTS and VISN continue to operate as fully autonomous networks "sharing" a common delivery system.

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Kids program receives
first 'Covenant' grant

By C.C. Risenhoover

Baptist Press
8/19/94

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--Linda Bennett of Little Rock, Ark., says she was overcome with emotion when she received a check for \$7,500 from "Covenant" to help produce the television series "Just Kids."

"Just Kids" is simulcast every Saturday on ACTS and FamilyNet at 11 a.m. EST. ACTS is the cable television service of the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission that reaches into more than 20 million homes. FamilyNet, the RTVC's broadcast television service, reaches into more than 50 million homes. The "Covenant" award was presented to Bennett by RTVC President Jack Johnson Aug. 6 during the ACTS 10th anniversary luncheon in Fort Worth, Texas. "Covenant" is a voluntary fellowship that attempts to offset pornography and violence in media by acquiring and producing positive Christian family values programs for ACTS and FamilyNet.

"This is the best thing that has happened to us," Bennett said. "The support and encouragement for what we're doing ... I'm just overwhelmed."

Johnson said Bennett represents all that is good in "real Christian" television.

"If we're going to turn things around in this country, save our children and grandchildren from the satanic clutches of pornography and violence that dominate much of the media, we need a lot of Linda Bennetts," he said.

When Bennett was employed by ACTS of Little Rock (Channel 27) in 1986, she was put in charge of program development and promotion.

"Because I was concerned about the lack of children's programming with biblical values, 'Just Kids' was the first thing I suggested," she said. "I was told to put the program together and format it."

Bennett said she penciled the original format in the waiting room of her son's orthodontist.

"Jason was 11 at the time," she said. "Now he's a sophomore at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark."

She also is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University.

The producer said she began by contacting people she knew who had talent and asking them to volunteer their time. One was Larry Henderson, a Little Rock minister/counselor who works with puppets. He has done segments for every program and recently became the top-ranking chaplain in the Arkansas National Guard.

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"This was the first program produced by ACTS of Little Rock," Bennett said, "and our purpose in doing it was ... and still is ... to bring scriptural messages to life for children. I'm amazed that a program developed for a local market became so much larger and now reaches a national audience. My vision for this program was much smaller than God's."

The program premiered Oct. 4, 1986 in Little Rock. Bennett said after "Just Kids" had been on the air a year, Bob Thornton, RTVC vice president for television services, talked to her about changes that would give the program nationwide appeal. However, it did not begin airing nationwide until May 1991.

"The time has gone very quickly," the producer said. "We've accomplished a lot with very little in the way of finances and lots of volunteers. People are willing to give of their time to get the message of Christ to kids. It's neat to see people giving their time to the Lord. And they get joy from seeing what they've done go all over the nation."

Bennett said she feels blessed to be involved in Christian television and is committed to proclaiming Christ through broadcasting.

"I love proclaiming Jesus Christ," she said. "And I'm much more comfortable in promoting him than in promoting myself. I want all the emphasis on Christ, not me."

Bennett is a member of Markham Street Baptist Church in Little Rock. The facilities for ACTS of Little Rock are at Geyer Springs Baptist Church.

To date, Bennett has produced 64 "Just Kids" programs. The infusion of financial support from "Covenant" will help produce 13 new programs.

"We're revamping, updating ... making the new programs livelier," she said. "But the primary emphasis isn't going to change. Jesus Christ will still be at the center of each program."

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BSSB to add consultant
to Korean churches

Baptist Press
8/19/94

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--A new position of church growth consultant with Korean churches is being added in the Baptist Sunday School Board's multicultural church leadership department.

At the same time, the positions of editor of Korean and Vietnamese materials are being deleted, with editing of the Korean and Vietnamese adult Sunday School periodicals and undated materials to be handled on a free-lance basis, according to Ramon Martinez, department director.

The two editors being displaced will receive severance benefits and outplacement assistance.

"The consultant will be able to give increased emphasis to Korean church development work, with particular attention to helping pastors and church staff members," Martinez said.

Despite recent downsizing of some language editorial positions, he emphasized the board is continuing to produce dated Sunday school materials in Spanish, Korean, Vietnamese, Chinese, and for the deaf. In addition, materials in French and Japanese produced by others are being distributed by the board.

"We are totally committed not only to continue publishing materials in languages besides English, we are exploring ways to make materials available in other languages," he said.

Options for expanded distribution in other languages include brokering with other publishers, forming partnerships with publishing houses in other countries and outsourcing editing to qualified people, Martinez said.

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Anderson College president
to take early retirement

By John Roberts

ANDERSON, S.C. (BP)--Mark L. Hopkins has announced he will retire Nov. 19 as president of Anderson College, a Baptist-affiliated college in Anderson, S.C. He has been president since 1982.

It will be early retirement for Hopkins, who will be 55 on his day of retirement.

Hopkins announced his retirement during a special called session of the board of trustees July 28 in anticipation of Hopkins' announcement; a report of the announcement appeared in the Aug. 18 Baptist Courier state newsjournal.

Hopkins was joined in his announcement by trustee chairman Stuart A. Kersey of Gaffney, S.C. Kersey praised Hopkins for his 12-year record of service, especially his leadership in the transition to senior college status.

"Dr. Hopkins has worked tirelessly to guide Anderson College through the formidable process of transforming itself into a four-year college," Kersey said. "We appreciate what he has done for the college and wish him well in retirement."

Kersey said an interim president will be named and trustees will begin a search immediately for a new president.

Behind Hopkins' early retirement was a year of difficulty with both the faculty and trustees. He received a vote of "no confidence" from the faculty last spring. The trustees dealt with this and related matters in their spring meeting, with a faculty representative appearing before the board.

Difficulty with both trustees and faculty centered in Hopkins' administrative style, coupled with some of his administrative decisions.

In announcing his retirement plans Hopkins had high praise for Anderson and South Carolina. A Missouri native, he said he and his wife, Ruth, plan to live in Anderson, "close to the college where we have experienced so much."

He noted their three children have grown up in Anderson and have settled in the Southeast. A daughter, Sara, is a doctor of optometry in Greenville. Another daughter, Amy, is an administrator at the St. Petersburg campus of the University of South Florida. Their son, Steven, is beginning his final year of law school at the University of Georgia.

Mrs. Hopkins, an artist, is a past president of the Anderson County Arts Association and the Mimosa Garden Club.

Hopkins referred to his 12 years at Anderson College as a time of "tumultuous change." He said when he arrived at the college in 1982, "change was not only necessary; it was inevitable." He said the change from junior to senior college was mandated by shifts in student demographics, by the growth in the state's two-year technical schools and by changes in South Carolina Baptist Convention.

"It has been a joy for Mrs. Hopkins and me to be here during the sometimes difficult years of the transition," he said. "It will also be our joy to walk away and turn over to our successors a new four-year college whose personality is yet to be formed and whose distinctive areas of contribution and service to Anderson and to South Carolina Baptists are still being defined."

The trustees voted in December 1989 to proceed to four-year status, and the move was completed in May 1993 with the granting of baccalaureate degrees to the first graduating class.

Actually it was a return to four-year status for Anderson, which had been a senior college from its founding in 1912 until financial difficulties forced it to assume a two-year college role in 1930.

Hopkins is Anderson College's 10th president. Only two served longer: Annie Dove Denmark, 25 years; and J. Edward Rouse, 16 years.

**Thousands of students, missionaries
expected to attend 'Mission 95' By Chip Alford**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Final plans are being made for a global missions conference designed to "open the eyes of college students to what God is doing in the world and invite them to be a part of it," student ministry worker Jeff Lewis said.

Registration opens Sept. 1 for "Mission 95," a Southern Baptist conference expected to bring together more than 5,000 college students and 100 home and foreign missionaries at the Commonwealth Convention Center in Louisville, Ky., Dec. 27-31. The conference is sponsored by the Baptist Sunday School Board National Student Ministry in cooperation with the Foreign and Home mission boards, the Brotherhood Commission and Woman's Missionary Union.

"Mission 95" is the sixth national student ministry conference sponsored by Southern Baptists, Lewis said, adding similar meetings are held only once every five years.

"More than any other single missions meeting, these conferences probably have the greatest effect on Southern Baptist mission efforts in the United States and around the world," Lewis said. For example, more than one-fifth of the 4,000 students attending "Mission 90" in Fort Worth, Texas, made a public commitment to missions, he said.

"Mission 95" will offer a host of well-known speakers "with a heart for missions," Lewis said. Major program personalities will include:

-- Sammy Tippit, founder and president of God's Love in Action/Sammy Tippit Ministries. An evangelist, author and speaker, Tippit has conducted citywide evangelistic crusades and prayer and spiritual awakening conferences in Germany, Peru, India, Ghana, Russia, Romania and other countries around the world.

-- Tom Sine, futurist and director of Mustard Seed Associates. Sine helps Christian denominations with future research and planning and has also written several books, including "The Mustard Seed Conspiracy," a national best seller.

-- Pam Moore, director of intercessory prayer at Dallas Baptist University. Moore was the personal companion of Corrie Ten Boom for the last seven years of the Christian author's life.

-- Scott Wesley Brown, contemporary Christian singer/songwriter. Through his work with I Care Ministries, Brown has taken more than 100 Christian musicians on mission trips around the world.

-- Louie Giglio, founder and director of CHOICE Ministries in Waco, Texas, which seeks to provide "relevant and informal worship experiences in the university setting.

-- Jennifer Kennedy Dean, a free-lance writer and communications specialist from Atlanta who also serves as director of ministries for The Praying Life Foundation.

-- Leroy Gainey, senior pastor, First Baptist Church in Vacaville, Calif., and associate professor at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif. Described by Lewis as "a prophetic voice for heterogeneous church growth in the United States," Gainey serves as pastor to a congregation made up of 26 ethnic groups.

-- Erwin McManus, senior pastor of The Church on Brady in East Los Angeles, a multicultural congregation with more than a dozen missions and more appointed missionaries on the field than any other SBC church. McManus also serves as founder and president of Global Impact, an organization committed to developing innovative leadership for the 21st century and initiating urban church planting projects worldwide.

-- Mike Stroope, area director for the Foreign Mission Board's Cooperative Services International. CSI workers reach into nations and regions closed to traditional missionary work.

-- Catherine Allen, president of the women's department of the Baptist World Alliance.

Southern Baptist agency executives participating in the program include Larry Lewis, president of the Home Mission Board; Dellanna O'Brien, executive director of Woman's Missionary Union; and Jerry Rankin, president of the Foreign Mission Board. Gene Mims, vice president of the Baptist Sunday School Board's church growth group, also is a featured speaker.

Dramatic presentations during the week will be made by Paul and Nicole Johnson of Murfreesboro, Tenn.

In addition to attending Bible studies and worship services, students will choose from a variety of missions-related seminars. They also will meet in "community" and "family" groups for reflection, discussion and prayer.

Other activities will include "Global Encounter," which Lewis described as "a walk-through, interactive missions experience where students will can meet and talk with home and foreign missionaries and learn what God is doing around the world." The 30,000-square foot area "will not be your standard exhibit with booths staffed by people handing out information," he said. "We'll have computers and games and students will be involved in mission projects like building furniture for churches."

When the exhibit area is closed, it will serve as working clothes closet for the homeless and needy in the Louisville area. Items for the closet will be donated by students attending the event.

Many students also will be involved in mission projects in the Louisville area, Lewis said, adding opportunities for community ministries, evangelistic outreach and creative ministries will be available.

In conjunction with "Mission 95", a workshop for student ministers also is being offered by National Student Ministry. Student ministers can participate in general sessions of "Mission 95" with their students and then attend their own workshops featuring speakers like popular Christian author Calvin Miller, now a professor at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth.

The "Student Ministers Workshop" will include tracks for both church and campus student ministers.

All costs for the "Student Ministers Workshop" are included in the "Mission 95" program fee which is \$85 per person. Housing will be offered at the Galt House Hotel for \$56 per room with one to four people per room. The hotel also is offering an optional meal package for \$49 per person which includes four luncheon buffets and three dinner buffets.

After Dec. 1, the program fee increases to \$100 per person and the meal package increases to \$54 per person.

Beginning Sept. 1, registration inquiries can be directed to the "Mission 95" registration office at (817) 581-4711. General questions about the conference should be directed to the National Student Ministry office in Nashville at (615) 251-2777.

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2,500 collegian 'resources'
receive evangelism training

By Chip Alford

Baptist Press
8/19/94

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--College students represent "not just a great mission field, but a great missions resource," student ministry leader Bill Henry believes.

Approximately 2,500 members of that "resource" attended August's Student Week 1994 conferences at Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist conference centers. More than 1,600 attended the Glorieta meeting and more than 800 participated at Ridgecrest. Both conferences focused on evangelism, using the theme, "Empowered to Proclaim ... Hope."

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In addition to Bible studies and worship services focusing on evangelism, students chose from a variety of seminars with witnessing-related themes. They also broke into "share groups" to study a recently updated version of "The Share Seminar," a personal evangelism training workbook by Milt Hughes, former editor of "The Student" magazine.

"This is really our launch for a year-long emphasis on evangelism," said Henry, director of National Student Ministry of the Baptist Sunday School Board. The emphasis, he said, is tied to the "Here's Hope. Share Jesus Now" campaign organized by the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board. "These students will take what they learn here back to their campuses and train their friends in witnessing. I really believe it is going to make a significant impact."

Hughes, who served as Ridgecrest Bible study leader, told students the "unbelieving world" is not impressed by the level of mediocrity in the lives of most Christians.

"I believe one reason most people are not witnessing is because nothing is going on in their own lives," he said. "Witnessing is not something you go do. ... It's who you are. All the witness training in the world will not get the job done unless there is something going on in your life (with Christ)."

In one evangelistic seminar, Bill Reid, Baptist Student Union director at Ohio State University, urged students to make sure they have the right motivation for witnessing.

"We shouldn't do it to earn respect or gain notches on our spiritual belt, but we should do it because Christ has commanded us to out of our love for other people," he said.

Hundreds of students responded during worship service invitations at both conferences. Some made commitments to vocational ministry or missions. A few accepted Christ for the first time while others made rededications.

Most, however, simply made their way to their altar to pray alone or in small groups.

"I've never seen the Spirit descend on a place like it did here last night," Ohio State University student Tim Norman said, referring to the Aug. 16 worship service at Ridgecrest.

"People were really humbling themselves and seeking God," Norman said. "I was broken. Everyone around me was broken. People were restoring relationships. It was unbelievable."

Norman, state Baptist Student Union president for Ohio, said he believes many students came away with a new vision for evangelism.

"I've seen that developing a passion for Jesus in our lives will make us want to share our faith. You've got to make Christ Lord of your life and you've got to be ready (to share)," he said.

Michelle Harter, state BSU president for South Carolina, agreed.

"I've learned the importance of being prepared, of sharing that one-on-one time with God," she said. "We're in a spiritual battle in a big way on campus. This week has really helped me to say, 'Here's where it is, here's the evidence, here's the fact. Jesus is the only answer.'"

Joel Wayne, state BSU president for Georgia, said he realized "the freedom to proclaim hope is more of a privilege than anything else. And it's a privilege that can be developed by simple discipleship -- sitting down with the Word and spending time in prayer. Sharing our faith should be something that just comes out of our personality, out of what's going on in our life."

Tennessee's BSU president, Brian Holt, said he also discovered the importance of building a strong foundation in Christ.

"So many Baptists don't know what they believe; they have a weak foundation. But how can we share (our faith) if we don't know what we believe?" he asked.

James Berry, a senior at Michigan State University in East Lansing, said it is important for students to realize they "don't have to go out there and save the world. But we can start with one or two people."

"The first thing students need to do is make a commitment to know more about God and develop a relationship with him. Then, be sensitive to the Spirit as he pushes you out little by little."

Berry's first witnessing effort involved starting a small off-campus Bible study group with two of his friends and another student. All three eventually became Christians.

He later started a dorm Bible study and this summer shared his faith as a summer missionary in the Philippines.

Feeling the joy and excitement of leading others to faith in Christ "can really take away the apprehension of witnessing," he said.

The Student Week 1994 conferences were sponsored by the BSSB National Student Ministry.

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Summer missions experience
leaves college students changed By Chase Peoples

Baptist Press
8/19/94

RIDGECREST, N.C. (BP)--"I knew I would grow doing summer missions, but I didn't know that I would grow this much," University of North Florida student Michael Denton said of his summer spent in Tanzania.

Denton and many other students shared similar experiences during Student Week 1994 conferences at Glorieta (N.M.) and Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist conference centers. They were some of the 200-plus students who worked or are working as summer or semester missionaries through the Foreign Mission Board this year.

Denton worked with local Baptist associations in Tanzania leading soccer clinics and Bible studies with nationals. The soccer games helped him to develop personal relationships which, in turn, resulted in opportunities to share the gospel.

"All these years, I've been playing and coaching soccer. I began to ask God why I was still playing if I wasn't going to use it in any other area of my life. While I was in Tanzania, I saw how God used that gift to break down barriers and build relationships. Now, after all those years of wondering, I know."

Denton joined several other student missionaries who participated in debriefing sessions during the Ridgecrest conference.

"I think this time of sharing is important for the students," Vickie Polnac, a consultant for the Foreign Mission Board's international service department, said. "They have a time to tell what is on their heart because they may not have the opportunity later to tell others about all the great things that happened."

Many of the students shared how much they had learned about other cultures and themselves.

"I learned so much about the universality of God," said Melissa Burt, a student at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala., who ministered to college students in South Korea. "He crosses all boundaries. Even though I was in an entirely different culture, I had the security of knowing he was there."

Jim Berry, a student at Michigan State in East Lansing, spent his summer in the Philippines. He worked with local pastors and visited residents living near local churches. Many of the nationals he met were involved in spiritism or other religions. Building relationships was sometimes difficult.

"After the fast pace of school, it was really hard for me to slow down," Berry recalled. "I went at my work in the Philippines full-force which is the wrong thing to do in a laid-back culture. I had my own agenda. I had to learn to let God work instead of doing it on my own."

The student missionaries also came away from their missions experience with a different view of American culture.

"Everything is so easy here, so superficial," said Felicity Watson, a student at Florida State University in Tallahassee who also spent her summer in Tanzania. "We take so many things for granted. Over there, you always took time to talk to people. Even if you were buying something in a store, you would stop and talk.

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"You developed a relationship with people. Here people hardly seem to take time to notice anything but themselves."

Berry added: "Here in the United States we seem to say, 'God, what can you do for me?' In the Philippines, the Christians were eager to learn about God, simply just to know him better."

Denton shared a story about the generosity of the Tanzanian people.

"The daily wage there is less than a dollar, but the people were so giving. They would provide our meals and even give us their houses for a week to stay in.

"One day an old lady who was crippled hobbled over to us outside one of the churches we were at. She told us how thankful she was the church was close to where she lived because she could not walk far. She kept thanking us for coming and handed us the equivalent of about four cents.

"I was amazed and shocked because it reminded me so much of the story of the widow's mite."

All of the student missionaries at the Ridgecrest meeting encouraged other students to pursue missionary involvement.

"I had plenty of excuses for not going," Denton said. "I had bills I needed to pay and I didn't want to leave my church where I worked as a youth minister.

"I really spent some time praying and felt like I needed to do foreign missions this summer and it all worked out. I had my job back in the fall when I returned and my church, which only has about 100 people, gave me a check for \$1,500 to cover all of my bills so I could afford to go. ... If God wants you to go, he will provide a way."

Watson added: "Before I would say, 'Just do it,' I would tell anyone thinking about summer missions to know yourself and know if you're willing to change. Don't go looking to do something. Look to be something.

"It's not so much what God does through his missionaries as much as what he does in his missionaries."

According to FMB representative Quintin Ratliff, the demand for student summer missionaries remains high.

"We had 398 positions available, but we only filled 206," he said. "Students need to know that these are available to them through their Baptist Student Union or by applying directly to the Foreign Mission Board."

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Peebles is an editorial intern for the Baptist Sunday School Board's National Student Ministry department.

**Request for a low-cost idea
results in free training week** By Charles Willis

**Baptist Press
8/19/94**

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--When Wenona Hardcastle of Ely, Nev., wrote to the director of the church media library program at the Baptist Sunday School Board in May, she expected no more than some free advice in return.

But Hardcastle's request was so striking, the response she got was an invitation from BSSB staff member Dennis Conniff to spend Aug. 13-19 at the Church Media Library Leadership Conference at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, free of charge.

Hardcastle, who has been media library director at First Baptist church of Ely since 1975, told Conniff her church had no budget for the library and she could no longer afford to subscribe to the Church Media Library Magazine at her own expense.

She had just finished leading her church in the April observance of Church Media Library Emphasis by showing a Christian videotape on the life of Martin Luther, followed by a hamburger cookout at the church on a Sunday afternoon. She said the event was well-attended, resulting in approximately 50 people remaining for the Sunday evening worship service. And she said her pastor, John Babb, observed people had many pertinent questions to ask him after viewing the tape.

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Hardcastle said she was at a loss to know what she would do the next year and wrote to the Sunday School Board for "a fre idea."

A dietary aid at a health care center in Ely, 68-year-old Hardcastle and her retired husband, James, were guests of the Church Media Library Program for the week in what Conniff called "a one-time scholarship to get training and ideas to continue a needed and desired ministry through the media library of her church."

Conniff said the unique opportunity afforded the Hardcastles to attend a leadership conference came because of the dedication and enthusiasm Wenona Hardcastle exhibits despite hardship circumstances.

"With limited or no resources, she continues to find ways to minister," Conniff observed.

In her earlier years of media library work, Hardcastle said she gained her volunteer skills by studying Sunday School Board media library materials, but reduced retirement income and a lack of church budget for the library had limited her acquisitions to donations.

Ely, a northeastern Nevada town of approximately 6,000 people, has a depressed economy due to the closing of local mines, Hardcastle said, so financial resources are limited among the 50 people who attend Sunday school in an average week.

Yet in her years of work for the church, Hardcastle has accumulated approximately 1,700 total resources which are regularly used. Though she admits not all the materials are up to date, she said she is convinced the media library "can be an outreach for the church. It reaches people for Christ."

During her week at Glorieta, Hardcastle said she tried to attend every class possible, as has her husband, who will work alongside her in the library when they return home.

Before the end of the week, she planned to participate in a class on using computers in the media library, "in case some day we can get a computer and I can quit typing all my cards on a typewriter. "

"I've gotten ideas to use for our shelves, and I took all the courses on small church libraries to get no-cost ideas," she declared. "I've taken classes on witnessing through the library, too."

For those who may attend a similar conference in the future, Hardcastle advises, "bring all your library resources, like your Dewey Decimal and Sears classification books. Come ready to learn."

Church Media Library Leadership Conference was sponsored by the church services department of the Baptist Sunday School Board.

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Church secretaries find stress,
coping are as old as the Bible By Charles Willis

Baptist Press
8/19/94

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Stress is not a phenomenon of the '90s. It doesn't even belong exclusively to the 20th century, according to a national consultant who works with Southern Baptist secretaries.

Donna Gandy, consultant in staff development at the Baptist Sunday School Board, said stress and evidence of coping with stress can be found in the Bible.

During an advanced certification seminar for Southern Baptist secretaries at Glorieta (N.M.) Baptist Conference Center, Aug. 13-19, a brief time of reflection by conference participants brought to mind people across biblical times who experienced negative stress. Secretaries almost immediately included David, when he faced Goliath, and numerous events in Moses' life.

A search of Scripture, Gandy observed, turns up direct quotes from people who expressed negative stress, including Job and the Psalmist David. Likewise, expressions of coping with stress through th comfort of God can be found.

Even Jesus, after a day of healing and casting out demons, went out alone early the next day "to a lonely place" to pray, Gandy said.

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For the church secretary, stress can come in an office setting others may perceive to be a sort of heaven on earth where everyone gets along just fine all the time, she continued.

According to Gandy, stress is multifaceted, resulting in emotional responses and physical ailments, and in some instances, resulting from physical problems. Stress can, in turn, cause behavioral and relationship problems.

Stress can be positive in that it can make us stronger, she also teaches.

"It can make us feel challenged, focused, motivated and give us a zest and vitality in our lives."

But it also can strain people beyond the ability to bounce back readily, requiring the ability to recognize when one has gone beyond challenge to negative responses mentally, behaviorally and physically.

Gandy said physical symptoms of negative stress can range from dry throat, perspiration, digestive problems and headaches to muscular pain, tooth grinding, breathing difficulties and sleep disorders.

Psychologically, stress manifests itself through feelings of irritability, anger, resentment, inadequacy, disorientation and the overwhelming urge to cry, among others.

Interpersonal symptoms include irritating, nagging behavior; grumpiness; being overly critical and sarcastic; and withdrawing from interaction with co-workers.

For church secretaries, Gandy said, routine work conditions can be stressful, including multiple, recurring deadlines; a variety of real or perceived "bosses," including the paid church staff as well as church members who telephone or visit the office; and a range of interruptions that thwart progress toward meeting established deadlines.

Compounding the problems of the work day may be other factors related to the role of church secretary, including a feeling of being unappreciated, a sense of sameness to the work routine, a growing impatience with interruptions and career uncertainty related to lack of upward career opportunity.

Gandy suggests church secretaries who successfully cope with stress know what they have control over, know when they can influence, know what they cannot control or influence, have a positive view of themselves, know the skill of positive Christian living, believe they can prevail over difficulties, think the best is yet to be and expend energy to achieve success.

Gandy urged church secretaries to avoid what she calls "dumb mistakes," including "Chicken Little Syndrome," mind reading, perfectionism, trying to be someone they are not, what-if thinking, employing "should" when "might" gives more breathing room and "yes-butism" that finds a negative that outweighs any positive.

"Learn when to let go and leave," she advised of situations that cannot be overcome, "and learn to forgive. Allow room to make mistakes."

Finally, she advised, "take care of your body and take care of your spiritual needs."

Both basic and advanced certification seminars for church secretaries were sponsored at Glorieta by the pastor-staff leadership department of Baptist Sunday School Board.

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