

(BP)

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KENTUCKY -- Faculty asks procedural changes for discipline, affirms Marshall.
FLORIDA -- Florida Baptist editor resigns after dispute.
ALABAMA -- Ministers seek racial healing in troubled Alabama community.
NEW MEXICO -- Children's workers can do more to limit infectious diseases.
CALIFORNIA -- Cal Baptist trustees elect fifth president.
VERMONT -- Electronic bulletin boards link Christians & their computers.
LOUISIANA -- She was deciding whether to jump into river -- then she remembered.
TENNESSEE -- Correction.
TENNESSEE -- Editors' Note.

EDITORS' NOTE: The following story replaces the (BP) story with the same headline posted as a special, 8/26/94.

Faculty asks procedural changes
for discipline; affirms Marshall By Michael Duduit

Baptist Press
8/29/94

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--Faculty members at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary responded to the recent resignation of associate professor Molly T. Marshall with two resolutions adopted during their Aug. 26 meeting. One resolution encouraged changes in the seminary's disciplinary procedures relating to faculty and the second resolution affirmed Marshall.

The first resolution, while acknowledging their study of the seminary's governing documents confirmed "written notice of specific charges are not required before filing formal charges of dismissal," called upon the president to "take the initiative on our behalf to reshape the dismissal procedure."

Specific additions requested include: that only the president deal with a faculty member "in the process of clarifying and formulating" potential dismissal charges; that all standards be clearly communicated before charges are filed; that written specifications of potential charges be provided confidentially to the faculty member involved; and that the overriding purpose of the president be to guide the faculty member to reconcile his or her teaching to the Abstract of Principles, the seminary's governing confessional document.

In responding to the resolution, which passed by a margin of 44 to 2, with 11 abstentions, Mohler cited his openness to the faculty in working together to improve such procedures.

"Insofar as members of this faculty wish to suggest ways we can learn from this experience, I will give full consideration to such suggestions," Mohler said. "Nevertheless, the purpose of the disciplinary process stands, and it is a necessary and unavoidable responsibility of the institution."

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The second resolution expressed "affirmation and support" for Marshall, who has been a member of the seminary faculty since 1984. Citing her classroom teaching and personal charm, the resolution asserted, "In our opinion, her theology is in accordance with and not contrary to the Abstract of Principles." Expressing the personal nature of the resolution was James Chancellor, chairman of the Faculty Committee, who punctuated his reading of the resolution with the phrase, "She was a good buddy." The resolution was adopted by a vote of 44 yes, 8 no and 6 abstentions.

Affirming that his administration had acted in good faith and had properly followed procedures as outlined by the seminary's governing documents, Mohler expressed understanding for the "collegiality you have shared and the very personal pain you feel at the departure of Dr. Marshall."

"In the history of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, there has never been such an incident which has not caused incredible pain. But these are not issues, brothers and sisters, which can be avoided. I cannot escape the responsibilities of this office, nor would I seek to."

Concluding his remarks to the faculty, Mohler stated: "We all face moments when we have to say, 'This is what I believe is fundamentally right,' and even if a price must be paid, we pay it."

Two days before the faculty vote, five officers of the Student Government Association unanimously adopted a statement.

"Dr. Marshall's reported coerced resignation has shocked and grieved many students," the student officers said. "Consequently many students have grave concerns for the future and integrity of our institution. We hereby call for a full and public disclosure of the events and policies regarding Dr. Marshall's departure."

Of Marshall, the students said, "She exemplifies conduct becoming a Christian minister through her relationships with students and others in the seminary community. In over two decades of ministry, Dr. Marshall has inspired countless clergy and laity throughout the nation. Her dedication to foreign missions has touched lives for Christ around the world.

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Art Toalston contributed to this story.

Florida Baptist editor
resigns after dispute

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
8/29/94

ORLANDO, Fla. (BP)--A dispute over whether the Florida Baptist Witness should continue to use Associated Baptist Press news releases resulted in the abrupt resignation of the editor of the weekly newsjournal.

Jack Brymer, 58, editor since 1984 of the 55,000-circulation Baptist state paper, said the ongoing dispute with commissioners over the use of the news service amounted to "harassment," according to a transcript of the meeting obtained and reported by ABP.

His Aug. 26 resignation came at the end of a two-day meeting of the nine-member board of commissioners which oversees the paper for the Florida Baptist Convention.

Brymer has faced questions by some commissioners in past meetings about the usage of ABP articles in the Witness but this time commissioner William "Bob" Parker, a pastor from Lake Mary, moved to halt the usage. His motion failed on a tie vote, 3-3, the same outcome of another motion to "suggest" the Witness not use the news service.

Parker said ABP is linked to the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a group of moderate Baptists who hold "radical" theological views. Noting the Southern Baptist Convention took action in June to distance itself from the CBF, according to the transcript, Parker said the Witness should follow suit by abandoning use of ABP.

Associated Baptist Press has an autonomously elected board of directors but receives nearly half its revenue from the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, a fledgling organization of moderate Baptists critical of SBC leadership. Critics have charged the news service has a CBF preference. It was begun by some state Baptist editors when the SBC Executive Committee fired two Baptist Press editors in 1990.

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Even though the two motions failed, Brymer resigned at the end of the meeting saying his efforts to please the board were "hopeless" because the commissioners couldn't put the matter to rest. He said he could not continue and still maintain his credibility with the board.

Brymer said the issue was not ABP but his professional integrity and editorial freedom.

"The issue is whether or not people are going to be adult enough and open enough to the truth. I'm in it for the integrity of the paper and my own conscience, which says if you are going to be a newsjournal you've got to keep the people informed, even when it's not popular and when some power people don't like it," Brymer said, according to the transcript of the meeting.

Commissioners had, in previous meetings, affirmed Brymer as editor but the question of the paper's use of ABP has continued to surface at the meetings.

ABP's executive editor, Greg Warner, responded: "ABP has become the focus of anger for the SBC's conservative leadership, who are unhappy that they can't control what the rest of us read and know. When they can't assail ABP on the merits, they resort to guilt by innuendo, such as this national campaign by some SBC leaders to link ABP with the Fellowship. ABP is not aligned with the Fellowship, not controlled by the Fellowship but, like most SBC agencies until recently, it is funded by the Fellowship."

Commissioners agreed to appoint a committee to negotiate a date and terms for Brymer's departure. Brymer indicated he has no immediate employment possibilities.

Brymer had been managing editor of the Alabama Baptist 17 years prior to accepting the editor's post at the 110-year-old weekly based in Jacksonville, Fla. A native of Alabama, he has degrees from Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., and the University of Alabama.

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Ministers seek racial healing
in troubled Alabama community

By Mark Baggett

Baptist Press
8/29/94

WEDOWEE, Ala. (BP)--When John Duncan arrived at First Baptist Church of Wedowee, Ala., the morning of Aug. 6, hours after a fire had destroyed Randolph County High School, a Channel 2 helicopter from Birmingham sat in the church parking lot.

It was just the beginning of another media siege of the town of 800 people near the Alabama-Georgia line. Later, at least a half-dozen media vans with 12-foot antennas would set up in town, covering the volatile racial controversy that erupted in the high school fire -- the cause of which is still being investigated.

Since April, when the high school principal Hulond Humphries allegedly threatened to cancel the school prom because of interracial dating, the state and federal governments and the news media have descended on Wedowee. Local residents have found themselves pictured in The Atlanta Constitution and The New York Times.

For Duncan, pastor First Baptist, Wedowee, the saturation of coverage grew old fast. He eventually had to tell the news crew from Atlanta to move its chopper because reporters were bringing people to be interviewed with First Baptist prominently in the background.

The church reflects the diversity of the white community. Many members are close friends of Humphries, who was reassigned to an administrative post in the school system, and are passionately angry about the way he was treated. Many also hope optimistically for a lessening of racial conflict, which had grown violent in the weeks before Humphries made his remarks about the school prom.

Duncan is something of an outsider thrust onto a hot seat. The former director of missions in Alabama's Shelby Baptist Association, he lives in Columbiana but has been pastor in Wedowee 30 months, staying in the local parsonage for five to six nights a week. He serves a kind of "permanent interim," as the church wanted him to take them through a building program.

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"What I do as pastor is to walk a straight line down the middle," he says. "I haven't backed away from it, but I haven't backed any factions. As Christians, we claim to love God and hate evil, and I've tried to point out that our role is that of peacemaker."

To encourage peace, he and a local black pastor, Robert L. Heflin of Antioch Baptist Church, organized a local ministerial alliance. The group of 26 pastors -- which is evenly divided, white and black, and includes ministers from all denominations -- promoted a Community Healing Prayer Service in the high school's parking lot on Sunday, Aug. 21. About 200 persons, mostly white, attended the prayer service Sunday morning.

"I never intended to get involved in something like this," Duncan says, "but someone has to. We have to get this community together to solve its own problems. We can't do anything about the fire now. This community is fragmented. We've got to come together and learn to live together."

"My hope is that the ministers can come together on a regular basis, get communication started and could influence our congregations to start healing."

Heflin agrees, saying if the outside world would leave Wedowee alone, the town would make more progress.

"I'm optimistic," Heflin says. "I think we have it in pretty good hands. It's on its way toward cooling down if the media would stay out."

Heflin, who lives in Roanoke, attended segregated schools in Chambers County growing up and admits there has been "mighty little relationship" among black and white ministers in Randolph County in the past. But he is not bitter, alluding to Romans 8:28: "Whatever betide us, the Bible says, all things will work together for the good."

"You can't blame one race or another," he says. "We're all careless about getting together."

Still, even though the fire has cooled and tractors haul away the wreckage of the high school's classroom building, tension hasn't disappeared. "Tensions locally have calmed down, but outside agitation has grown worse," Duncan says. While the ministers alliance held its organizational meeting in a local restaurant, a Ku Klux Klan group from west Georgia left its literature in the restaurant's restrooms.

Both Heflin and Duncan agree the least-welcome outsiders are members of the news media.

"The news media has contributed to the tensions," Duncan says. "We expected them to come in with their minds made up, but we didn't expect the local and Birmingham media to come in and not even listen. The news media has been rude and inconsiderate. They believe we should be happy they're here."

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Children's workers can do more
to limit infectious diseases

By Susan Doyle

Baptist Press
8/29/94

GLORIETA, N.M. (BP)--Child care practices followed in the average Southern Baptist church are not adequate for the proper control of AIDS and infectious diseases, said a child care expert recently.

Speaking to a group of children's leaders in a conference sponsored by Southern Baptist Woman's Missionary Union, Wendy Dever, minister to preschoolers and children at The Rock Baptist Church in Rex, Ga., talked about how infectious diseases are being handled in the church setting.

"The church today is in trouble," Dever said. "If the state inspectors came in and looked over our practices, I'm sorry, but I think there would be a whole lot of church nurseries closed down."

If nursery workers love babies and children and want to work with them, they should follow the procedures every time, she said. There is no room for just some of the time.

"If workers won't follow the procedures, they should not be allowed to work with little people," Dever said.

Dever listed the following as just a few of the practices which should be performed without fail in all church children's areas to help control disease:

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-- Wearing gloves. Gloves should be located in every room in the children's area of the church. A fresh pair of gloves should be worn each time a worker changes a diaper, cleans a cut or scrape, changes a bandage or cleans up after a child has vomited.

Gloves provide protection not only for the worker but also for all the children, she said.

Gloves should be made of the proper material, should fit well and should be disposed of properly.

-- Changing diapers. Diapers should be thrown away only after they have been placed in a plastic bag and the bag closed properly, she said.

The diaper changing surface should be cleaned with a bleach/water solution after each diaper change. Babies hands should be also be wiped clean during the diaper change.

-- All surfaces in the room should be cleaned on a regular schedule and with proper cleaning materials -- floors twice a day, beds once a day, toys at least twice a day.

"Little people just don't have the resistance they need," she said.

-- Washing hands. Hands should be washed often while working with children, Dever said. Workers should wash their hands before they enter the children's room, before and after physical contact as often as possible, after trips to the bathroom, after a cough or sneeze, before handling any food or drinks and after handling diapers or contaminated items.

"I can't say this enough," Dever said. "Wash your hands as often as necessary."

-- Marking food and bottles. Children's food and bottles should be clearly marked and only given when following instructions given by their parents.

"Never send home dirty bottles and dishes," Dever said. "The message you'll send home is that this child is not important to us."

Adults will be watching to see if children are well cared for and secure, she said.

"When young families come to your church, they don't want to go down to the young adult department and see what's going on. They want to go to the children's area and meet the people who are going to be loving their children," she said.

One way children's workers can show their care and concern is by providing an environment where everything that can be done to eliminate and contain disease is done.

Dever told the group that if they had not been touched by AIDS, it probably would not be long before they are.

"If AIDS is going to become all that doctors tell us it's going to become, we who work with little people had better learn all that we can," Dever said.

There are numerous myths about AIDS which are now widely accepted as truth, she said.

"The best thing we can do as people who love little people is be informed."

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Cal Baptist trustees
elect fifth president

By Brenda S. Flowers

Baptist Press
8/29/94

RIVERSIDE, Calif. (BP)--California Baptist College board of trustees elected Ron L. Ellis as the fifth president of the college Aug. 26.

Ellis, 38, executive vice president of Campbellsville College in Campbellsville, Ky., the past five years, will assume his new responsibilities Nov. 1.

The search for a new president began in November 1993, when Russell R. Tuck announced his plans to retire at the end of June 1994 after 10 years as CBC president. Jeff S. Sanders, former insurance company president, has served as interim chief administrative officer since January of this year.

Ellis, after his election, said, "We will build on its strong history of academic excellence, Christian environment, and will seek to be a force for positive change in Riverside, Calif., on the West Coast, and throughout the world."

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The 11-member search committee voted June 24 to recommend Ellis to the full board at the special called session Aug. 26. Scott Williamson, presidential search committee chairman, said the committee recommended Ellis because of his experience, background, his aggressiveness in achieving goals and his desire to help students.

"Ron Ellis sees students as clients of the college and, therefore, sees the school as responsible to service them. We were also drawn to him because of his youthfulness, which gives him an energy and drive we believe are going to be necessary to lead California Baptist College," Williamson said.

"First, I am convinced God has led him to us," commented John Funk, chair of the board of trustees and member of the search committee.

"Second, I believe everything Ron has done right up to this moment has prepared him for this position. He is prepared to move ahead with this college; he has all the right experiences," he continued. "Third, I believe he can form a partnership with the leadership of the California Southern Baptist Convention and help fulfill the strategic direction the state is moving.

"He has an aggressive leadership style which gives people confidence that goals will be accomplished and that the vision will be realized," Funk concluded.

As executive vice president of Campbellsville College, Ellis was responsible for the daily operations of the college including budget and program planning.

Prior to his work at Campbellsville College, Ellis served as executive assistant to the president at Lee College in Baytown, Texas; assistant director of institutional research and testing at Baylor University; registrar and coordinator of church and associational relations at Louisiana College in Pineville, La.; and junior high school history teacher at Hornbeck High School in Hornbeck, La.

He earned a bachelor of arts degree from Houston Baptist University in education and social studies in 1977; a master of science degree from Baylor University in educational administration, minoring in church and state studies in 1981; a doctorate from Texas A&M University in higher education administration, minoring in labor relations in 1987; and has done further study at the Institute for Educational Management, Graduate School of Education at Harvard University.

Ellis and his wife, Jane, have two sons, Ashton, 11, and Zachary, 9.

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Electronic bulletin boards link
Christians & their computers

By Ben Armacost

Baptist Press
8/29/94

BRATTLEBORO, Vt. (BP)--It seems that everything in our world is going "high-tech." Communication is no exception.

Years ago, there were just three choices for communication: the telephone, the mailbox and the face-to-face visit. But today, there are many more options.

Believers called to be lights in a dark world should use any means of communication available, whether it is to share the gospel with a lost soul or to encourage a fellow believer.

One means of communication which has surfaced in the last 15 years is known as a bulletin board service (BBS). This is simply a means of connecting one computer to another by telephone lines using a device called a modem.

The bulletin board provides a means of exchanging messages and programs with other users. It may carry any number of features, such as a database.

Most bulletin boards have some sort of theme; nearly 500 bulletin boards in America are Christian-based. Christians with access to a computer should consider "tapping into" a Christian BBS.

But you may ask, "Why should I consider using a Christian bulletin board service?"

First of all, it builds literacy in computer communications.

Let's face it: Christians can either get on the computer bandwagon and keep up with the times, or they can ignore it and be behind the times. The information age is here to stay, and everyone ought to try to understand it.

Besides, learning the computer -- a language many people speak -- offers opportunities to communicate with a lot more people out there.

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A second benefit is that a BBS gives the opportunity to meet dozens or even hundreds of new people.

This is accomplished through the use of electronic messages, or "E-mail." Someone on a BBS can leave a message for any other user.

When the other party "logs on," he or she can read the "mail" and reply. Many bulletin boards are networked, meaning messages can be sent to another part of the country or world.

What an opportunity for worldwide evangelism!

Third, the BBS user can find an abundance of useful software.

All software legitimately available on a bulletin board is either "shareware" or public domain software.

Shareware refers to a whole realm of software that the user is allowed to copy and distribute freely. When users try the program and like it, they are required to register by sending a fee to the author.

This "try before you buy" procedure is an inexpensive way to see what software will work best for each user. Some bulletin boards carry thousands of programs for the user to "download," or receive on computer.

The BBS user also can "upload" or send software from his or her computer.

There is a growing number of bulletin board applications for pastors, teachers and Christian workers.

Bulletin boards also can keep the user up to date.

SBCNet, for example, carries current updates to the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board literature. By calling SBCNet, the user can receive any last-minute changes to next week's Sunday school lesson.

"The Mission Bulletin Board" in Brattleboro, Vt., features a database of regularly updated directories for the Green Mountain Baptist Association. Soon, this will be expanded to include information from all of the associations in the Baptist Convention of New England and the Southern Baptist agencies.

While books and paper lists go out of date quickly these days, bulletin boards can be kept updated to the very day.

Finally, accessing a BBS is fun. Checking in with a bulletin board is a great way to take a break from the ordinary routines of life. Online games are a basic feature of many bulletin boards and sometimes allow the user to challenge another user.

Simply said, if you enjoy computers, you will enjoy bulletin boards even more. If computers and computer communications seem far removed from your lifestyle, you still might consider getting involved. It just might change your life -- or someone else's

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Armacost is pastor of the Brattleboro (Vt.) Baptist Fellowship and the Baptist Fellowship of Hinsdale, N.H., and is the system operator of "The Mission Board BBS," a Christian bulletin board he started earlier this year. Call the board by dialing (802) 258-2463 at 2400 bps, 8-N-1. Armacost can be reached by voice at (802) 254-4211.

She was deciding whether to jump
into river -- then she remembered

Baptist Press
8/29/94

By C. Lacy Thompson

LULING, La. (BP)--Who knows how long the 42-year-old woman had driven her car back and forth across the rust-covered cable suspension bridge bending high into the sky.

It may have been for hours. She was alone -- alone and trying to decide whether to stop her car at the top of the bridge and jump.

The bridge across the Mississippi River in Luling arches high. Jumping would mean death. For her, death would mean an end to her struggle, an end to the fight against her obsessive gambling.

She had a good job. But gambling had cost her telephone and other material items already. It was about to cost her car.

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Finally, a little before 6 a.m., she remembered something -- something from the past, from a year earlier.

She recalled the name of a church, remembered the Baptist volunteers who knocked on the door to her house one day to ask her some questions about her church membership and spiritual life.

She remembered it was a church in Hahnville, about 10 miles from her house. Maybe that was what had lodged in her mind, that a group of people would go that far to talk to others about their spiritual lives.

Maybe she remembered that along with the Hahnville residents who were volunteers from Lewis Lane Baptist Church in Owensboro, Ky. Maybe she was impressed that people had come that far to share their faith with strangers.

Whatever the reason, she remembered. And when she reached the west side of the bridge this time, she turned her car toward Hahnville.

Once there, she stopped somewhere, asked someone for a telephone book or maybe called information for the number to Hahnville Baptist Mission.

It was 6 a.m. as she dialed the number.

The phone rang in the home of mission pastor Tony Bellow.

By this time the woman was crying. "She was telling me her life was in a terrible condition," Bellow recalls. "She was crying and crying. And then she asked if she could come by and talk to me. I told her she could. In about three minutes, she was at the house."

Once at Bellow's house, the mission pastor heard the story of the gambling, the desperation and the driving back and forth across the bridge. "She said she was tired of it all," Bellow says. "And I told her the only way she could stop gambling permanently was to accept Jesus."

The two talked for another 30 minutes or so. Then the woman responded to Bellow's witness and prayed to receive Christ as her personal Lord and Savior.

The day was just beginning.

For Bellow, it was not a typical day, of course. But then again, it was representative of what he seeks to do in his days.

For the past year, the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary student has been pastor of the Hahnville mission, begun by Williams Boulevard Baptist Church in Kenner, La. During the year, he has focused on doing whatever he can to get into area homes and share the gospel message.

The mission sponsors a lot of home Bible studies and conducts Backyard Bible Clubs and a tutoring program for area children. Bellow has organized three basketball teams as a means of making contacts with area residents as well.

Bellow also works with the local school board and with the local court school, where he is able to minister to troubled young people and make contact with their families.

Mission members do a lot of surveying as well. In fact, they already have surveyed a 15-mile area around the mission site.

Members also do a lot of witnessing, Bellow says. It shows. In the past year, 40 people in the Hahnville area have accepted Christ as their Savior as a result of the mission's presence and witness. The woman from the bridge is included in that number. She has attended services at the mission and is considering baptism now.

The results are impressive for the area, which Bellow estimates is 98 percent Roman Catholic. And as in many communities, there are a host of visible needs. At Hahnville and in his work as pastor at Coliseum Place Baptist Mission in New Orleans, Bellow works with all sorts of people with all kinds of needs.

But that is why he is where he is.

"This is a very tough ministry," he acknowledges. "But we're not here to reach people who already are saved. We're here to reach lost people. And we're using all kinds of means to do that."

The response indicates as much. The Hahnville mission is located in an Anglo neighborhood, Bellow notes. But it has broken racial barriers. Its members include blacks, Hispanics, Koreans and caucasians.

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And it could include even more members if the mission had means of transporting people to services. More than once, Bellow emphasizes the need for a bus or van, anything to carry people back and forth to the mission. "If we had a bus, we'd pack this church," he predicts.

He also cites the need for "a lot of prayer" from Baptists across the state.

In doing so, he recounts his prayer upon arriving in Hahnville. "I asked God as I was preparing to go out visiting for the first time to show me if this was where he wanted me to be," Bellow says.

A woman in her early 20s opened the door at the first house Bellow visited. He spoke to her, witnessed to her -- and she accepted Christ as her Savior.

"That was my sign that I was supposed to be here," Bellow emphasizes.

And if the young pastor needed a reminder of the sign, it came at 6 a.m. one morning this summer.

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CORRECTION: In the 8/25/94 (BP) story, "Volunteer team helps bring new life to Rwandan children," please correct the name at the outset of the story to Tim Malone, not Jim. The correction also should be made to the accompanying photo.

Thanks,
Baptist Press

EDITORS' NOTE: In 8/23/94 (BP) story, "7-year-old girl gives all for Rwandan babies in need," replace the 10th paragraph from the bottom with the following paragraph, which includes the latest figures related to giving for Rwandan children in Goma, Zaire:

Sixty-nine percent of the money received by the board's human needs office for Rwandan relief since publication of the Word and Way story has come from Missourians. As of Aug. 26, their donations totaled more than \$8,000 over period of a little more than two weeks.

Thanks,
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