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94-161

TENNESSEE--SBC Cooperative Program gifts for 1993-94 set new record.
VIRGINIA--Fight against world hunger: more action, less reaction; photo.
TENNESSEE--Haiti volunteer 'richer for having shared some.'
WASHINGTON--CLC ethicist attacks report urging human embryo research.
KENTUCKY--Mohler gets backing in wake of forced Marshall resignation.
BRAZIL--Guts, Lottie Moon get mission pilot through daring night rescue flights; photo.
TEXAS--To meet today's challenges, draw closer to God: Williams; photo.

SBC Cooperative Program gifts
for 1993-94 set new record

By Herb Hollinger

Baptist Press
9/30/94

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program gifts for the fiscal year 1993-94 totaled a record \$142,866,783 surpassing last year by more than \$6 million and the budget requirement by more than \$4 million, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

The SBC fiscal year -- which ended Sept. 30 -- CP total compares to \$136,539,729 in gifts for fiscal 1992-93, or a 4.6 percent increase.

The 1993-94 SBC program allocation budget called for \$138,234,735. The \$142,866,783 represents 103.4 percent of the budget.

Highest previous year in the CP's history was 1989-90 when \$140,710,282 in gifts was received by the SBC.

"The all-time record high in Cooperative Program receipts is overwhelming evidence that Southern Baptists, the people in the pews of our churches and the pastors in our pulpits, are committed to meeting the challenge of the Great Commission," Chapman said. "It has always been true, and remains true, that the more Southern Baptists know about the enormous challenge of reaching the world for Christ, the more they want to increase their participation."

The year-end total confirms what SBC officials had hoped for -- a reverse of the decline in CP gifts to the SBC following the then-record 1989-90 fiscal year.

"In contrast to those who have said otherwise, this is a demonstration that Southern Baptists continue to support missions through the SBC unified plan of giving, the Cooperative Program," Chapman said.

And the record total sends a message, according to Jim Henry, president of the SBC and pastor, First Baptist Church, Orlando, Fla. The Orlando church leads the 38,000 SBC churches in mission gifts through the Cooperative Program.

"This record giving sends a strong message that the grassroots have a great and growing confidence in our institutions, our leadership and our Cooperative Program," Henry said. "It behooves all of us to be sure we have a word from God before we tinker with changing what our people feel so good about and what God is enormously blessing."

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

"First we give praise to our Lord Jesus Christ for his faithful provision through his people," Henry said. "This record year of giving is bound to give a boost of encouragement to our missionaries, seminarians and agencies. I believe this represents a growing awareness of our people of the golden window of opportunity that's now open to share Christ around the world.

"Perhaps it is an indicator that many of our pastors, laity and churches are experiencing God, and out of their walk with him, prioritizing their financial commitments."

Although total designated gifts for the fiscal year appear to be near the record of 1991-92 of \$127,916,369, the final figures will not be available until after the first of the month.

CP funds for 1993-94 above the budget will be divided equally between Program Advance, all agencies sharing according to the budget percentages, and the 1993-94 Capital Needs Budget as it appears in the 1993 SBC Annual.

The Cooperative Program is Southern Baptists' method of supporting missions and ministry efforts of state and regional conventions and the Southern Baptist Convention. Designated contributions include the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions, the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for home missions, world hunger and other special gifts.

State and regional conventions retain a percentage of Cooperative Program contributions they receive from the churches to support work in their areas and send the remaining funds to the Executive Committee for national and international ministries. The percentage of distribution is at the discretion of each state or regional convention.

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Past 10 Years of SBC Cooperative Program Gifts:

1984-85	--	\$117,526,691
1985-86	--	\$124,232,371
1986-87	--	\$130,345,184
1987-88	--	\$134,787,542
1988-89	--	\$137,332,523
1989-90	--	\$140,710,282
1990-91	--	\$140,200,394
1991-92	--	\$138,234,735
1992-93	--	\$136,539,729
1993-94	--	\$142,866,783

EDITORS' NOTE: World Hunger Day in the Southern Baptist Convention will be observed by many churches Sunday, Oct. 9. The following two stories focus on hunger and human need issues overseas and how Southern Baptists are responding.

Fight against world hunger:
more action, less reaction

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press
9/30/94

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)--A million or more suffering Rwandan refugees in Zaire and Tanzania. A whole nation of suffering people in Haiti.

Southern Baptists have responded to the first crisis in recent months with missionaries, volunteers and money aimed at helping the neediest of the needy: Rwandan refugee mothers and orphans.

Despite multiple start-up delays and chaotic conditions, the children's camp begun by Southern Baptist missionaries and volunteers in Goma, Zaire, now houses up to 500 Rwandan kids.

It's considered the model camp of its kind by UNICEF, which brings other humanitarian groups wanting to aid kids to see how Baptists are doing it. And the camp won't close tomorrow or next week; Zairian Baptists own the land it stands on and are committed to the ministry.

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In Haiti, meanwhile, the latest political crisis -- now involving U.S. troops -- highlights the Caribbean island's chronic status as the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere.

Southern Baptists are responding to the immediate crisis there, too, by delivering food, medicine and other aid as soon as conditions allow. But Foreign Mission Board missionaries and volunteers have been in Haiti for a long time, fighting chronic causes of suffering and hunger such as dirty water and poor agricultural methods. They'll return to that battle as soon as the current crisis passes.

Which approach is more effective in meeting human needs and communicating the Christian gospel -- crisis response or quiet, long-term ministry to people in need?

"We must be both reactive and proactive," said Jim Foster, who leads the Foreign Mission Board's human needs program. "We can't just sit around waiting for a crisis to happen so we can send a team in there to take care of emergencies, then leave. That doesn't help us accomplish our overarching objectives in any way."

There must be balance, Foster insists -- preferably a 75/25 ratio in favor of long-term developmental projects that help people help themselves out of poverty.

"The more meaningful projects we have are developmental, transformational projects," he explained. "Yet we must be involved in crisis response projects because in some cases they open the door" for long-term work -- and for spreading the gospel in previously untouched areas.

That certainly proved true in Somalia, where civil war and terrible suffering opened one of the most closed countries in the world -- at least for a time -- to Southern Baptist and other Christian relief workers. Risking their lives in a land drenched with guns and violent opposition from Muslim militants, they have communicated Christ by easing pain.

The ministry to Rwandan refugee children in Zaire follows similar lines.

"People 'in the business' of humanitarian aid staff many of the bigger secular relief organizations," Foster said. "It's a job for them. One of the unique characteristics of our work in Goma is our ability to utilize volunteers who go with compassion, with a desire to touch and hold -- not just to dispense food and medicine. The children have that need for comfort, that need for security, that need for love."

News of such crises now reaches Americans instantaneously.

"We need to be able to respond in like manner," he said. "A reactive attitude in response is not going to meet the demands out there, or the desire of Southern Baptists to help."

Effective crisis ministry calls for anticipation of the needs, preparation for response, advance staging when possible, and immediate action, according to Foster.

Meanwhile, the "quiet" projects go on. Some examples:

-- Southern Baptist hunger relief gifts through the Foreign Mission Board continue to fund the training of Asians in SALT (Sloping Agricultural Land Technology) methods, developed by missionary Harold Watson. Recent beneficiaries include about 3,000 tribal people in the Philippines.

-- In Brazil, hunger funds aid families learning gardening and chicken raising in Japoata, malnourished mothers in Aracaju, infants and children in Recife, street kids in Santana de Livramento -- and 216 families (with 680 children) living in "subhuman" conditions while awaiting the cane harvest in several areas.

-- In Peru, aid is funding a project to produce bigger, healthier guinea pigs to supplement the diet and income of 420 poor people near Trujillo.

-- In Guinea, west Africa, medicine supplied by Southern Baptists is saving victims of a cholera epidemic. No other agency could supply it; the massive epidemic among Rwandan refugees in Zaire had virtually cornered the market on available cholera medicine.

-- In Zimbabwe, Southern Baptists funded repair of six dams to provide clean water in an area populated by 20,000 people.

-- In east Africa, aid provides vocational training for up to 1,500 refugee widows and orphans in a closed, predominately Muslim nation.

Despite the Rwandan crisis and response this year -- perhaps the highest-profile humanitarian disaster since the 1985 Ethiopian famine -- Southern Baptist gifts to world hunger and relief have continued a downward trend.

Hunger and relief receipts at the Foreign Mission Board from January through August totaled only about \$3.3 million -- down almost 9 percent from last year at the same point. If the trend for 1994 gifts holds, the year's total will be about \$6 million.

Last year's total was about \$6.6 million, the lowest since 1983. The decade in between saw yearly gifts top \$7 million every year and \$8 million three times. In 1985, the year of the Ethiopian tragedy, Southern Baptists gave nearly \$12 million.

"Southern Baptists have always responded quickly" when they know the needs, Foster said. "I think the problem often is simply lack of awareness. They still do not perceive the Foreign Mission Board as an agency actively involved in humanitarian aid."

Still, he added, a \$7 million annual average is "rather remarkable" without the hard-sell promotion or fund-raising many relief organizations employ. "To have that amount coming in on a regular basis indicates Southern Baptists really care" about meeting human needs year in and year out.

To increase the commitment calls for more awareness of the needs, according to Foster. The response to World Hunger Day in the Southern Baptist Convention "will be critical" this year, he said.

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(BP) photo (vertical) mailed Sept. 29 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outline available on SBCNet News Room.

Haiti volunteer 'richer
for having shared some'

By Mary E. Speidel

Baptist Press
9/30/94

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--Connie Bull wept when she couldn't return to Haiti.

She knew she'd probably get another chance to do so. But she cried for Haitians she might never see again.

"I wept for the faces of the children who may not be there when I get back because they have starved to death," said Bull, an elementary music teacher in Jefferson City, Tenn.

She planned to teach this summer at Baptist music camps in Cap-Haitien, Haiti, the island nation's second-largest city. She taught there several earlier summers as a volunteer through the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

"Some of the kids will save money for an entire year just for the bus fare" to the camp, said Bull. "They'll practice the entire next year (after) one week of lessons."

Bull never thought of canceling her own travel plans earlier this summer when tensions escalated between Haiti and the United States. "Everyone in my church kept saying, 'Surely you won't go now.' But I said, 'If there's a plane leaving, I want to be on it.'"

But the planes didn't leave. In June she learned the U.S. government was banning commercial flights to and from Haiti. The move was supposed to help pressure Haiti's ruling military junta to give up power.

"When I heard there would be no commercial air travel, I fell apart. I mourned, I wept, I wailed. I prayed in Creole (the heart language of Haitians)," said Bull, who picked up the language in just five weeks of service in Haiti.

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Since then, she has found comfort in a videotape of her Haitian students sent by fellow Southern Baptist Dawn Goodwin, who taught with her in previous camps. Goodwin, of Jefferson City, currently teaches in a Christian school in Port-au-Prince, Haiti's capital.

"It has witnessed to me -- their faith, their faces, the way they smile and praise God amid all this adversity," said Bull of the tape.

Bull gets regular reports of such adversity. "I just got a letter from someone (in Haiti) who said eggs were 40 cents each, gas \$28 a gallon," she said.

"I'm told the children who beg on the streets don't use the money to buy food anymore. They buy a clay substance called 'agil' that expands in their stomachs" and numbs hunger pangs.

She's heard that orphanages once feeding 100 children now try to feed four times that number.

"It's impossible. Nobody gets enough nourishment, so they all suffer from malnutrition. Those are just some of the hard choices that have to be made," she said.

But she knows hard choices are nothing new in Haiti. Bull heard stories about hunger in Haiti long before economic sanctions took their toll there.

She told of a Haitian Baptist pastor's family who at mealtimes often "would gather and sit at the table in front of empty plates, say grace and get up," she said. "There was (no food) for anyone. That was even before the embargo."

She recalled another story she heard from Mary Brentham, International Service Corps volunteer in Haiti through the Foreign Mission Board.

Several years ago some Texas Baptist women sent Mrs. Brentham and her husband, Ed, some new underwear to give to poor Haitian boys. The Brenthams, from Belton, Texas, distributed some of it in a village "way out in the boonies," said Brentham, who with his wife is staying temporarily in south Florida until they can return to Haiti to help lead some relief projects.

After distributing the clothing, the Brenthams later worshiped at a local Baptist church. On the front-row sat two Haitian boys wearing only their new T-shirts and undershorts.

"When Mary saw them, she just burst into tears. The boys had clothes that day so they went to church," explained Bull.

Many families in that village couldn't afford to clothe their children, so boys under age 9 usually went naked. "That's the story in a lot of villages all over Haiti," said Brentham, who leads a Baptist water well project providing clean water for Haitians.

Bull wishes she could have spent more time meeting physical needs she saw in Haiti. Doing so often opens doors to tell Haitians about Christ.

"It will get their attention if you can save their child's life," she said. "If you can build a well so their child won't die from diarrhea, then they'll listen to what you have to say. If you can meet that physical need, they know your God is strong and he can meet other needs."

Bull wishes she could volunteer for an upcoming relief project in Haiti sponsored by the mission board and the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission. The project will involve at least 150 Southern Baptist volunteers in food distribution. Volunteers also may work in water well repair, water purification, medical care and construction.

So far, the Foreign Mission Board has pledged \$386,000 in hunger and relief funds for the projects. The board may also contribute more than \$400,000 for a two-year project to repair about 550 water wells.

"If I weren't teaching school I'd be there," said Bull. "And I'd pack everybody's bags" who could go.

"A cup of water given in Jesus' name -- that may be too simplistic for some because a cup of water sure isn't going to meet all the need," said Bull.

But it's a significant drop in the bucket.

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"It's like when Esther was considering whether to go in to beg for the lives of her people. Mordecai sent word, saying, 'If you do not take this opportunity, God will send someone else,'" said Bull, recalling the Old Testament story of Queen Esther who saved the Jews from annihilation during the reign of King Ahasuerus.

"Some people might say, 'OK, God, send someone else.' But then they'll have to answer for the missed blessing, the missed opportunity," said Bull. "It makes all of us richer for having shared some."

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EDITORS' NOTE: Qualified Southern Baptists who want to volunteer for the Haiti relief projects should call the Brotherhood Commission at 1-800-280-1891 or (901) 722-3787. Financial contributions for the projects may be sent to the human needs department of the Foreign Mission Board, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, VA 23230-0767 or to the Brotherhood Commission, 1548 Poplar Ave., Memphis, TN 38104.

CLC ethicist attacks report
urging human embryo research

By Tom Strode

Baptist Press
9/30/94

WASHINGTON (BP)--A Southern Baptist ethicist assailed a National Institutes of Health panel's recommendation supporting federal funding of experimentation on early human embryos.

"Embryos are bearers of the image of God," said Ben Mitchell, consultant on biomedical and life issues for the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission.

"Embryos are not static entities; they are developing human beings in a dynamic process of growth -- unless killed. It is clearly wrong to create a human person with the express purpose of killing her."

The CLC and other pro-life organizations reacted in horror at the Sept. 27 announcement of the panel's report endorsing such research because the group determined embryos do not have "the same moral status as infants and children." At the same time, the panel said the embryo "warrants serious moral consideration as a developing form of human life" and has "special character." The panel recommended research be limited to the first 14 days of the embryo's life but allowed for some exceptions.

The panel's logic is "completely inconsistent," Mitchell said.

"The panel acknowledges that human embryos are 'developing human life' and then recommends ways to stop the development by experimenting on the embryo and, finally, killing it," Mitchell said. "This is scientific double-speak at its worst."

"How do they know the embryo does not have the same moral status as infants and children? Did they find the 'moral status' marker under a microscope or at the end of a pipette? Science possesses no means by which to measure moral status."

The panel's endorsement of the experimental use of ovaries from newly dead women and girls is "ghoulish," Mitchell said.

"September 27, 1994, will be recorded in history as a nauseating milestone on the way to this 'Brave New World,'" he said.

The report, written after four months of work by the 19-member NIH Human Embryo Research Panel, recommends research on embryos produced by in vitro fertilization or flushed from the woman prior to implantation in her uterus.

The panel classified types of embryo research in three categories: Acceptable for funding; warranting additional review; and unacceptable. Among research the panel found acceptable were studies on improving the possibility of a successful pregnancy, research on fertilization and genetic diagnosis.

Federal funding of embryo research has, in effect, been prohibited since 1979.

The report must be reviewed by the Advisory Committee to the Director of NIH. In a meeting Dec. 1 and 2, the committee will present its recommendations to the director, Harold Varmus.

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A public comment period is open until Nov. 1. Written comments may be sent to: Division of Science Policy Analysis and Development; National Institutes of Health; 9000 Rockville Pike; Building 1, Room 218; Bethesda, MD 20892.

Every citizen should express "moral outrage" t NIH, President Clinton and Congress, Mitchell said.

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Mohler gets backing in wake
of forced Marshall resignation By Art Toalston

Baptist Press
9/30/94

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (BP)--R. Albert Mohler Jr., who sought the resignation of associate professor of theology Molly Marshall, has received a laudatory statement endorsed with four pages of signatures from pastors and lay people.

Mohler, just a year into his presidency of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, requested the resignation of Marshall, a 10-year faculty member; otherwise, Mohler told her, he would initiate formal proceedings against her for teaching outside the seminary's doctrinal Abstract of Principles. After her Aug. 22 resignation, Mohler said he felt it inappropriate to discuss theological issues that would have been at raised.

The statement of affirmation of Mohler was circulated by three pastors in Louisville, Ky.: Michael W. Routt of Eastern Gate Baptist Church; Bill Hancock of Highview Baptist Church and a former chairman of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board; and Terry Sammons of New Heights Baptist Church.

The statement they circulated made no direct reference to the Marshall resignation, but a cover letter penned by Routt did.

"This statement of affirmation is a response to the harsh criticism Dr. Mohler has received recently as a result of the resignation of Dr. Molly Marshall," Routt stated.

The forced resignation was criticized by the faculty in an Aug. 26 meeting and, earlier and in stronger words, by an informal faculty group and the officers of two student groups.

Routt in his letter commented, "If time had permitted, hundreds of other names could have been added. ... So often the majority is silent. Because of this ... we desire for everyone to know that the majority of Southern Baptists are grateful to God for Dr. Mohler's visionary and creative leadership"

The statement itself commends Mohler "for his strong, non-compromising, visionary leadership. We are deeply grateful to God for his interpretation and defense of the Abstract of Principles as intended by the founding fathers of this world-renowned institution.

"In exercising the responsibilities of his office, Dr. Mohler has manifested both courage and integrity in a Christ-like manner," the statement continued. "We commend Dr. Mohler for the serious manner in which he views the accountability of his office to grass-roots Southern Baptists. In fulfilling these responsibilities, difficult decisions must be made. Hence, conflict is inevitable. Yet, Dr. Mohler displays courage to look beyond the conflict at the long-term results."

The statement marks the second time since the forced resignation that Mohler has received affirmation.

Members of the Southern Baptist Convention Executive Committee approved a resolution during their Step. 19-20 meeting affirming Mohler, although not mentioning the controversy over Mohler's request for Marshall's resignation.

The resolution, submitted by James Merritt, pastor of First Baptist Church, Snellville, Ga., stated, "Dr. Mohler's sensitivity to the concerns, intents, and purposes of the supporting constituency of the seminary ... and the trustees duly elected by the Southern Baptist Convention reflects the kind of servant leadership and commitment to Christ and to our Baptist and evangelical faith that will, in our perspective, maintain Southern Seminary as an institution of distinctive academic recognition."

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Guts, Lottie Moon get mission pilot
through daring night rescue flights

By Jan Johnsonius

BRASILEIA, Brazil (BP)--Missionary pilot Warren Rose had never put his life at risk by landing at night on an unlighted, dirt runway.

But for the 25 burn victims stranded Sept. 9 near the Brazilian jungle town of Brasileia, he was their only hope for survival.

Minutes earlier, Rose had signed a document releasing the Brazilian government from responsibility in the event of a crash. Now his thoughts focused on avoiding the unlighted antennas and towers that surrounded the landing strip.

As he broke through the low-lying clouds and dense smoke, he was met by an amazing sight: The townspeople had lined up their cars, with the headlights illuminating the airstrip. The rest of the jungle remained in darkness.

"The way the Lord worked is amazing," said Rose, a Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board missionary from Covington, Tenn.

"Half the city's lights went out, and it was exactly the half where the airport was located. Instead of hurting, it actually helped. Instead of having other lights around to confuse you, all you had was the lights of the cars on the runway."

Such night flights normally are illegal in the Brazilian state of Acre, but the emergency outweighed the risks.

Earlier that day, a flatbed truck was traveling the jungle road between the towns of Brasileia and Asis. On the back sat about 30 people -- and a container of diesel oil.

As is common in Brazilian jungle areas, brush fires had been set to clear land. High winds blew the smoke across the road, forcing the truck driver to stop. He didn't realize how fast the brush fire was moving, and it overtook the vehicle. The diesel oil exploded, burning 25 of the 30 passengers and the driver.

Three people died at the scene. The others were transported to a small clinic in Brasileia, but the clinic had no supplies or anesthesia.

Meanwhile, Rose had just landed his single-engine Piper aircraft in Rio Branco, the capital of Acre. He was fresh off another emergency flight to transport two heart attack victims from Asis.

"A Rio Branco doctor met me at the airport and said they needed help to rescue the burn victims, and I had one of only two planes equipped for night flight," said Rose.

"That was at 6 p.m. But no local officials wanted to assume responsibility for letting us fly. At 9 p.m. I finally got approval from an air force colonel in a large city up the Amazon. He tried to talk me out of it. He gave me 20 reasons why I shouldn't make the flight, and they all made sense. But every time he gave a reason why I shouldn't, I thought of a reason why I should."

Through it all, Rose's wife, Kathy, said she had a sense of peace, although she knew the dangers of flying over a jungle in the dark, through smoke clouds, and landing on a runway lit only by the headlights of cars.

"But all those people were there, with no medical resources whatsoever, dying one right after the other," she said. "Something had to be done."

So Rose took off on a flight which would earn him the state's highest award for valor and gain new respect for Baptist work in Brazil.

When he made his first landing at the dark Brasileia runway, thousands of people lined the airfield.

"The city of Brasileia only has about 20,000 inhabitants, but I think half of them were there that night," Rose recounted. "A couple of patients were in the only ambulance, and the rest were in a flatbed truck with IV fluids going. Army officials and local police were trying to control the crowd."

Th missionary had removed the seats from his plane, and three patients on pallets were loaded aboard.

"They were all in terrible shape," he said. "There was one man, 63 years old. All his fingers were gone from one hand -- terrible third-degree burns, skin gone, bones showing. The smell was hideous. A girl, 16, was burned everywhere but her face, which she had obviously covered with her hands. A 2-year-old girl was burned over 100 percent of her body. They were in a lot of pain."

A nurse from Brasileia flew with Rose to keep the IV fluids going. Besides being a pilot, Rose also is a trained physician's assistant who has a provisional license to practice medicine in Brazil. He has studied at a Brazilian medical school.

"It was a hard thing to fly the plane, knowing they were in pain and I couldn't treat them," he said, but the flight required all his concentration. "It was a rough airstrip. I was dodging holes to avoid breaking the landing gear, especially the nose wheel. And at night you can't see anything."

The missionary completed his second trip about 3:30 a.m. with four more patients. This time his father, Coy Rose, visiting as part of a volunteer team from Covington, Tenn., went along to offer his flying expertise if needed.

"I was physically exhausted," the younger Rose admitted. "I had brought in three flights of volunteers that day, along with the emergency flight with heart attack victims, and I'd been sick on top of that."

He completed the last flight at 7 a.m. By that time several victims already had died. Within days the three passengers from Rose's first flight would be dead. The death toll now stands at 20 and could go higher.

But Rose's willingness to take such risks for the Brazilian people opened their eyes in ways nothing else could. His mother, Jeanette, noted the people "were amazed that an American would risk his life" for them.

Brazilian newspapers were filled with stories of the daring night flights of Rose and Brazilian pilot Silvio Abilio Almeida de Lima, who also joined the rescue effort with his twin-engine Piper.

"They made us look like heroes, saying we risked our lives and flew by instinct," said Rose.

"That instinct was the Global Navigation System, provided by Southern Baptists through the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering," he said with laugh. "It was right there on my panel telling me where the runway was. It's so sophisticated that I not only knew where the airport was, I had the end of the runway programmed into the computer on my plane." The Brazilian pilot also had the navigation system.

But Rose admits there was a risk. No computer could program in how to avoid unlighted antennas and towers.

State legislators in Acre obviously realized the risk. They voted in September to award Rose and the Brazilian pilot the Order of the Star, the highest medal of honor and courage given by the state. The governor of Acre will present the medals in the near future.

"What has happened has called attention to what we're doing as Baptists," said Rose. "Sometimes we're seen as only being concerned about sharing the gospel and not the physical needs of others.

"This says we care. It lends credibility and opens the doors for people to be more receptive. The authorities and mayors now have a higher opinion of who we are as Baptists."

Rose's mother remains in awe of how the Lord has used her son.

"He's always had a spirit of adventure and been a daredevil, and the Lord has taken that and used it. I wondered at times, will this child ever live to be grown?"

He made it, Mrs. Rose.

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Johnsonius, a missionary assigned to Argentina, is working with Foreign Mission Board news office during U.S. furlough. (BP) photo (horizontal) mailed Sept. 29 to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press. Outline available on SBCNet News Room.

To meet today's challenges,
draw closer to God: Williams By Tim Yarbrough

DENTON, Texas (BP)--Southern Baptist men are being challenged today as never before, but their ability to lead depends on the faithfulness they have to their heavenly Father.

"To lead other men, we must be filled with the fullness of God. Our inner strength and power comes from God," said James Williams, Brotherhood Commission president, before a group of more than 130 men from 17 states gathered for Brotherhood University at Camp Copass near Denton, Texas.

Referencing Ephesians 3:14-21, Williams said God wants to bless people's lives in ways that seem impossible. It is walking with God daily and knowing him that makes possible the seemingly impossible, he said.

"The day you decide to let God work in and through you is your lucky day," Williams said. "One of my favorite definitions of a Christian is 'a person who does the impossible.'"

As an example of how God blesses beyond people's expectations, Williams told the group about the Brotherhood's new agreement to enlist volunteers for world relief efforts. He said as the first call for 100 medical volunteers went out from the Foreign Mission Board to serve in Rwanda and Albania, he wasn't sure the Brotherhood Commission could enlist the numbers needed.

Smiling broadly, Williams exclaimed, "I want to tell you that we have a waiting list of more than 30 people ready to go with visas in hand."

The audience responded with numerous "amens!"

Other speakers during the Sept. 22-25 conference were Paul Barkley, assistant professor of psychology, Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and Douglas Beggs, vice president of program services at the Brotherhood Commission.

Brotherhood University participants attended conferences on topics ranging from Men's Ministries, Challengers and Royal Ambassadors to family issues. Conference titles included "Men Facing Crisis," "Making Peace With My Past," "Experiencing God Weekends" and "Learning to Pray from Scripture."

A "Share Fair" highlighted programs and ministries of the Brotherhood Commission. Afternoons were used for special experiential learning labs that included building and racing RA Racer cars, mastering outdoor cooking techniques and constructing toys to be used for missions outreach.

At the close of the conference, Clarence Collier, Brotherhood director for the Montana Southern Baptist Fellowship, was presented with toys made by conference participants. The toys will be given to needy children on the seven Montana Indian reservations.

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by the Brotherhood Commission.

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