

Baptist Briefs_41805

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CBF receives \$5 million gift. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions received a \$5 million gift from a donor who chose to remain anonymous. The majority of the funds will go to field personnel salaries, benefits, equipment and training, with additional designated funds for expanding HIV/AIDS initiatives and Partners in Hope, the CBF rural poverty initiative. The remaining \$300,000 will go to the Asian response fund for tsunami relief.

Wellness Walk/Run set for SBC. GuideStone Financial Resources-formerly the Southern Baptist Annuity Board-will sponsor the third annual Living at Your Best Wellness Walk/Run June 21 during the Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting in Nashville, Tenn. Warm-up will begin at 6:15 a.m. for the one-mile and 5K courses for both runners and walkers. Start times will begin at 6:30 a.m. and will be staggered for runners and walkers. Interested individuals can register online at www.GuideStone.org or by calling (800) 262-0511.

Judge in Schiavo case leaves his church. George Greer, the Florida judge who ordered Terri Schiavo's feeding tube removed, resigned his membership from Calvary Baptist Church in Clearwater, Fla., after receiving a letter from the church's pastor, Willy Rice. According to the St. Petersburg Times, Rice wrote that, although he was "not asking (Greer) to do this," that resigning his membership nonetheless "would seem the logical and, I would say, biblical course" given Greer's inactive status in the congregation and his publicly stated disagreements with church decisions.

The pastor's letter to Greer came after a profile of the judge appeared in the paper. In it, Greer noted that, although he had been very active in the congregation in the past, tensions over the Schiavo issue and others had caused him to stop attending services and contributing financially to the church in the fall of 2003.

Fellowship development coordinator to retire. Tom Newsom of Waco, development coordinator for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, will retire effective July 31. Before coming to the Fellowship four years ago, Newsom worked for Baylor University, Phoenix Baptist Hospital, Grand Canyon University, Arizona Baptist Children's Services and Texas Baptist Children's Home. Newsom and his wife, Jane, are members of Seventh and James Baptist Church in Waco. They have two grown children and one grandchild.

Gilbert named to CBF staff. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions has named Karen Gilbert as the associate coordinator for volunteers and partnerships, a Dallas-based position left vacant by Tom Ogburn since Dec. 31. She begins May 1. Gilbert served as minister of missions at Wilshire Baptist Church in Dallas since May 1996. Her previous experience includes community minister at Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth and case manager for Family Services Inc. She has been on the Fellowship's national Coordinating Council and the CBF Texas Council since 2003. She also has been on the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board since 2001. Gilbert has a master of religious education degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth and a bachelor's degree in social work from Longwood College in Farmville, Va. Gilbert and her husband, Timothy, have two daughters, Katie and Mary Beth.

WMU leader pressured to decline Missouri invitation. National Woman's Missionary Union executive director Wanda Lee will honor a

commitment to speak at the annual meeting of the moderate Baptist General Convention of Missouri—despite an attempt to convince her to decline. David Clippard, executive director of the conservative Missouri Baptist Convention, sent a letter to Missouri Baptist pastors and WMU leaders complaining about Lee's planned speech. Missouri, Texas and Virginia each have two competing Baptist conventions as a result of the controversy in the Southern Baptist Convention. The national Woman's Missionary Union, which raises money for Southern Baptist missions, attempts to relate to women in churches affiliated with all those conventions.

News of religion, faith, missions, Bible study and Christian ministry among Texas Baptist churches, in the BGCT, the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and around the world.