

Pins mark 55 years perfect attendance

January 6, 2006

Posted: 1/06/06

Pins mark 55 years perfect attendance

By Charles Richardson

Howard Payne University

BROWNWOOD—Bob Sartain has 55 consecutive years perfect attendance in Sunday school classes at the churches where he has been a member, and he's on his way toward 56.



With pins to
commemorate
their
achievement,
Jan and Bob
Sartain, who
work at
Howard
Payne
University,
have more
than 80 years
of combined
perfect
attendance in
Sunday
school class.
Their family
has more
than 146
years of
combined
perfect
attendance.

Sartain, chair of the mathematics department at Howard Payne University, also serves as minister of music at First Baptist Church in May.

He has held similar music responsibilities in other Texas Baptist congregations, including Woodland Heights Baptist Church in Brownwood, Bethel Baptist Church in Plainview and the First Baptist churches of Santa Anna and Coleman.

He was interim music director at First Baptist Church in Levelland, and he has been with the May church more than two years.

At age 11, while his father was pastor of First Baptist Church in Clarendon, Sartain made "a commitment to the Lord and told him that as long as he kept me healthy enough to be in Sunday school on Sunday morning, I would not miss."

His example has inspired family members to emulate him. The May congregation recently honored him for the achievement, along with his wife, Jan, pianist and part-time Howard Payne staff member, who achieved 25 years of perfect attendance.

The Sartain's oldest son, Tim, had 23 years before he missed. Younger son Dave achieved 30 years, and daughter Melissa marked 13 years before missing a Sunday school class.

The Sartain family to date has more than 146 years of perfect attendance to their credit.

"There have been times when I wasn't sure we'd make it," Sartain acknowledged.

On one occasion, Dave became ill and it was necessary to take him to the hospital. But Sartain managed to attend Sunday school in spite of the unexpected visit with a physician.

Mrs. Sartain's record was curtailed when sickness occurred in the family.

"I stayed home with the kids when they were sick," she says.

On several Sundays, the Sartains have been out of state. On one occasion while traveling in Colorado, the family drove 40 miles to attend Sunday school.

Sartain's perfect attendance is marked with pins presented by his church for each year—even though in recent years, the church has had difficulty finding a supplier that makes pins marking such longevity.

While he enjoys receiving the pins and recognition at the congregations that he and his wife are a part of, neither is important in itself, he says.

“What really is important is that I keep my commitment to the Lord,” he said.

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.