



EDUCOMIS

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A Periodic Newsletter

Winter 2019

A Memorable Teacher

by David Hill

A teacher who takes an interest in his students can make all the difference-even when the school where they teach is remote. Sam Gesch remembers a teacher who made a big difference

In the Coronel Portillo Province of Peru, in the Ucayali Region, the jungle dominates the landscape. It is so dense that locals prefer the shores of rivers and lakes for living space.

Bodies of water provided dust and mud-free passage throughout the area. When the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) and Jungle Aviation and Radio Service (JAARS, a partner of SIL/ Wycliffe Translators) established a presence in the area to assist missionaries involved in Bible translation, it made sense to utilize floatplanes, and to establish a base on a point jutting into Lake Yarinacochoa.

From it's founding in 1947 until it closed in 1997, the SIL Center on Lake Yarinacochoa was

home to a dedicated group of missionary with diverse talents: linguists, pilots, mechanics, teachers-and their kids.

Along with homes, hangers, machine shops, and a radio facility, there was a school for the offspring of the missionaries.

Sam Gesch began attending the Yarinacochoa

School with his younger siblings-a brother and two sisters when he was 11. His father was a teacher there. Near the town of Pucallpa, it was home till he graduated from 12th grade in 1988.

During Sam's junior and senior years there was one teacher who stood out.

"Mr. Phaneuf (Uncle Butch) was my history and Bible

teacher during my junior and senior years of high school. He was also one of our youth group leaders.

He challenged our faith, was always open to deep discussion, and loved random, strange humor.

We immediately bonded on a common love of Tolkien, Star Trek, and the Muppets. In Apologetics



Part of the SIL

Center on Lake Yarinacochoa

he argued from an atheist perspective until I was lost in my thinking and didn't know where else to go. Then he would come in and point out to us where we were correct in our arguments, and where we were incorrect. By doing this he let us know that people would not always admit when we had a point. Since I am a philosophical person in the first place, this challenged my faith deeply and helped me to grow in my understanding of the Gospel and its Truth.



The Lake Yarinacocha High School

He opened his basement to us for weight lifting. We cranked up Bon Jovi, Top Gun, and other albums while pumping iron. Sometimes he came down and joined us. He founded the Nuke the Smurf Society. He joked with us, loved us, and I am sure he prayed for us.

In history class he taught us how ideas are the foundation of history. He came in once as Karl Marx to teach us about Marxism. Another time he had us comparing the Age of Exploration with Star Trek.

When I became a teacher, I wanted to be like him. He was marvelously relatable and wanted to spend time with us."

The grown-up Sam lives in Luverne, MN and teaches Spanish and Art online at Alpha Omega Academy. "I have students from all over the world, some of whom are MK's and TCK's. I have worked at AOA for 9.5 years now. I also raise my three children (18,16,13) with my wife of 24 years. I occasionally preach at my church, teach adult Sunday School and visit my Lakota friends to learn from and minister to them. I also involve myself in

my own art, much of which is drawn from my multicultural experience."

Interested in working with Alpha Omega Academy? Go to <https://www.aoacademy.com>.

Changes...Life's One Constant!
An update from the Executive Director

Changes...Life's One Constant! At the 2018 Annual Meeting, we saw the changing of the guard on some of our long-time leaders.

Dr. Les Hill, Retired IMB Missionary, stepped down from the FBE Associate Executive Director and KY State Director. He and his wife Jan remain active in their support of the FBE and KY Baptists! Thank you Les and Jan.

Rhea Lamb concluded two years of service as "Interim" Treasurer of the FBE. She and husband, Bob, have continued to support the FBE. Thank you Rhea and Bob.

Sandy Simpson concluded her term as President of the FBE yet remains actively involved in the FBE and NC Baptists. Thank you Sandy.

With regret and sympathy, we said goodbye to **Bronelle Skaggs** in March 2018, a long supporter of the FBE and Books on Mission; continue to pray for his wife, Lucille. Also, in October 2018, we said goodbye to **Gussie Merle Tonne**, a retired Illinois educator and a former President of the FBE; continue to pray for her family.

Introducing the 2018-2020 Officers:

Dr. Mark Morgan, President, is an Associate Professor of Accountancy at Mississippi College. He is a CPA and Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) and has been active in several local, state, and national professional accounting organizations. Mark was a Criminal Investigator for the Mississippi before joining Mississippi College in 2006. Mark and his wife, Becky, are members of Grace Crossing Baptist Church in Madison, MS.

Harriet Worsham, Secretary, a retired North Carolina music teacher and middle school counselor. She was the 2002 NC middle school

counselor of the year and the 2003 American middle school counselor of the year. She's the FBE representative for the NC Baptists and an active member of the West Canton Baptist Church; and, she loves to volunteer with the American Red Cross, VA Hospital, NC Baptist on Mission, Haywood County Schools, and of course, the FBE.

Audrey Morehead, Treasurer, has served as an ISC Missionary in West Africa and is a life-long volunteer in Baptist causes, including serving as a Sunday School teacher to first graders, mission events and trips, and lay counseling. Audrey and her husband, Billy, are members of FBC Jackson.

David Hill continues as the Editor of *Educomis*, FBE's newsletter. He is a writer, producer and director, formerly with the Radio-TV Commission of the SBC, as well as NAMB. Presently he is the Broadcast Director of Southcliff Church in Ft. Worth, TX, and leads Glen Meadow Media.

Summary from the 2018 FBE Annual Meeting

The 2018 FBE Annual Meeting was held via Zoom, an electronic video conferencing meeting space on August 2, 2018 as a way to facilitate attendance by more of our members and reduce the costs of attendance paid by our members. The meeting was a success.

1. **Mission:** We continue to focus on moving the FBE forward as an organization of educators using our skills to fulfill the Great Commission. We are working with representatives of the IMB on ways we may partner in providing opportunities on and off the field in both physical and online training of missionaries and missionary children.

2. **Membership:** We discussed ways to reach out to potential members to grow the size and strength of the FBE. Over this next academic year, we will work to create personal relationships with colleges and universities by contacting their presidents, deans of education, and faculty to help grow our organization.

3. ***Educomis:*** we discussed the future of the printed version of the *Educomis* and the costs

associated. We spend around \$3,000 annually on printing and mailing some 900 copies of the *Educomis* (we print extras to distribute them at meetings and events as we travel about). While we continue to look at the length and costs, we know many of you depend upon the printed version to stay in touch. We're considering moving to an electronic delivery only option by 2020. The *Educomis* would continue to be produced and could return to a quarterly update if we posted it on our website and emailed it electronically rather than printing and mailing it. We'd love to hear from you about this matter.

4. **Books on Mission:** see the Books on Mission Update in this issue of the *Educomis*.

5. **Becoming a 21st Century organization.** It is true, we need to include more 21st Century technology in the FBE. To grow our organization, we must meet the younger generations where they are: digital. You can find us on:

a. Look for us on FaceBook @ Fellowship of Baptist Educators – FBE

b. Find us on Twitter: **@FBEducators**

c. Website:
www.TheFellowshipOfBaptistEducators.org

Guam and Saipan...Teaching in the Pacific...half-way Around the World!

Dr. Mark Morgan and I have had the privilege of teaching as visiting accounting professors at the University of Guam for the past three summers. Guam is a U.S. Territory and is



*Moreheads & Morgans
& a student in Guam.*

strategically located in the Pacific close to many U.S. allies (Japan, Korea, Philippines, etc.). While our roles are teaching in a “state” school, we never forget our primary “job” is to tell others about Christ “as we are going.” Guam is a lovely island and has a warm people and hospitality. We have become friends with many of the residents of Guam and have enjoyed getting to know them, minister to them, and attend church with them. As educators, we have many ways in which we can partner around the globe to the heart, hands, and feet of Jesus and we are so thankful we have been allowed to serve in Guam.



*Billy Morehead with Dean,
Administrator, and Faculty at the
University of Guam.*

Books on Mission...Update!

Thank you so much for your faithfulness to the Books On Mission project over the years. Because of your faithfulness, the FBE was able to send \$2,000 to Book Link where we collaborated on one final shipment of books headed to Zimbabwe. The last of the books collected through the FBE and North Carolina Baptists were

delivered to Book Link in Eubank, KY in October 2018. Mr. Olin Williams of Book Link shared that these books will be packed into crates and soon bound for Zimbabwe. At the annual board meeting in August, the board decided to stop collecting books in North Carolina due to the logistical challenge of collecting, storing, packing and shipping the books Kentucky and then overseas. We were spending so many resources and energy on books we were not able to focus our resources as much on connecting educators with teaching opportunities overseas. The FBE continues to support Book Link who continues accepting books directly in its facilities in Eubank, KY; and, they will continue to coordinate shipments overseas. You can find the contact and shipping information on our website at: <http://thefellowshipofbaptisteducators.org/book-link/>.

When Duty Calls...Ready!

Opportunities to serve at home or abroad pop up frequently. You can find ways to serve on mission through your local church, the IMB, and our website. We continue to receive updates from MK schools and other international schools around the world who are in need of both short- and long-term teachers. When God calls, are you ready to answer? Please share your email address with us at FBEducators@outlook.com so we may contact you in a more timely manner when a need arises.

Have Faith...in All Things!

The Bible tells us to have faith in Christ; and, that every perfect gift comes from above. During the recent Thanksgiving and Christmas season, we were ever so thankful for you and the many blessings you have bestowed on the Fellowship of Baptist Educators. As you plan your giving budget for 2019 please consider donating to the FBE so we can continue our role in fulfilling the Great Commission by using our gifts, talents and resources as educators.

Make a secure donation online through our website at: www.TheFellowshipOfBaptistEducators.org and click “Donate to FBE.” All gifts are tax-deductible by the IRS as allowed by law.

*Educating Souls & Reaching the "Ends of the Earth"...
Through Mississippi Baptists' Three Christian Colleges*

By: Billy Morehead

Mississippi Baptists are reaching the world for Christ through their direct support of each of their three Baptist colleges. Cooperative Program dollars given from the over 2,000 Mississippi Baptist churches, are multiplied like the loaves and fish and are used, in part, educating souls and reaching the "ends of the earth."

Mississippi Baptists continue their long-standing support and interaction with their three Baptist affiliated colleges; something that is wavering in other state conventions. Approximately 28% of the budgeted dollars of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB) is used in some facet of student and educational support here in MS. Some \$7 million go toward funding the three Baptist colleges. Another \$2 million go toward the support of the Baptist Student work on 22 of Mississippi's community college and university campuses. All of the students attending public and private colleges and universities in MS represent a combined mission field of over 100,000 students from all over the world.

Mississippi Baptists collectively support Blue Mountain College, Mississippi College and William Carey University through generous gifts to the Cooperative Program. In addition, these institutions receive most of their financial support through the tuition and gifts from students, parents, alumni and donors.

The Education Commission of the MBCB, which meets on each campus once a year, serves as

the liaison between Mississippi Baptists and the colleges. One of the purposes of the Education Commission, as stated in its Constitution, is to "seek to strengthen the colleges of Mississippi Baptists and unify the efforts of these institutions in the Convention program of Christian higher education." Mississippi Baptists are blessed to have dedicated and capable leadership through their college presidents: Dr. Barbara McMillian (Blue Mountain College), Dr. Blake Thompson (Mississippi College) and Dr. Tommy King (William Carey University). Their faithful service to our Lord, our colleges and Mississippi Baptists is a tremendous asset and one of the key reasons Mississippi's Baptist colleges are so strong and unified.

During the Education Commission meetings, members hear reports from the presidents regarding programs, facilities, finances, faculty, staff, and student life. Perhaps the most encouraging, uplifting and rewarding aspects of each meeting are the testimonies heard from students. They share about their professors who want them to achieve academically, spiritually and to approach life and learning from a Christian perspective. Students have shared about their relationship with Christ and the journey that brought them to one of our Baptist colleges. These students' testimonies and the reports from campus presidents remind the Commission of the impact our Christian colleges have. The Commission is further reminded of how important it is that Mississippi Baptists continue their support of Christian higher education.

A few years ago, I had the privilege of serving on the Education Commission for six years (the last two as its chair) and can honestly say that GREAT things are happening at Mississippi's three Christian colleges. Mississippi Baptists should be proud. In Genesis 12:3 we read that we have been "blessed to be a blessing." Mississippi Baptists are very blessed; and, we are a blessing to others by educating students who go around the world fulfilling the Great Commission.

Over the past decade, there has been a continued decline in giving to the Cooperative Program of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC). Sadly, individual churches and state conventions have made and continue to make budgetary reductions in their contributions to both the state and national conventions. This is unfortunate, as Southern Baptists have long recognized that we can do more together rather than individually. Each church in the SBC is autonomous and chooses whether to give to the CP; but in giving, the church is helping advance the cause of Christ by contributing to the fulfillment of the Great Commission.

Some throughout the SBC have questioned whether state conventions are spending their dollars selfishly on themselves at the expense of not using their dollars for more "mission-worthy" opportunities. The indication is the conventions should take these monies spent in each state and direct them into "real" mission opportunities (such as direct mission projects, to the International Mission Board, and/or North American Mission Board) to fulfill the Great Commission. I submit to you that the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's (and likely all of the state conventions') dollars, while spent locally, impact globally. For anyone to indicate

otherwise is false and quite misleading.

Mississippi Baptists are on mission with God and we are about fulfilling the commandment found in the Great Commission – we don't need a resurgence to get us moving in the right direction because we have never lost our focus. We have been about Christ's work for quite some time; and, we continue to keep the Great Commission in the cross hairs of all of our efforts.

I want to share with you the GREAT things that have come through Mississippi Baptists' continued support of higher education and the far reaching impact of the Cooperative Program dollars given in partnership among the over 2,100 Mississippi Baptist churches.

In the fall of 2017, approximately 10,000 students were enrolled in three Baptist colleges in MS; of these, nearly 500 were international students from 40 different countries. Each semester, these students are exposed directly to the gospel, many accept Christ while in college and then graduate and return to their home country filled with a love and passion to share Christ with their families and people groups. And, many go to the Last Frontier, those parts of the world where we cannot go as Christian missionaries.

Many alumni from our three Baptist colleges actively share Christ as missionaries around the U.S. and the world. But, alumni don't have to be in missions as a vocation to be about sharing Christ with those around them. Many actively share their faith in far reaching ways throughout the states and around the world.

Dr. Elvin Smith, a 1960 Carey graduate, dedicated his life

to the research of heart and vascular diseases and was instrumental in the establishment of the medical school at Texas A & M. Dr. Smith said, "William Carey reinforced my Christian values, especially the worth of every individual." Valeria Sherard, a 1945 Blue Mountain graduate, felt called to missions during her college experience. After graduation she went to Alaska and worked for 35 years as a Home Mission Board (now North American Mission Board) missionary until her retirement in 1990. Her passion was sharing Christ's love with the people of Alaska. In 1977, she was (and is still to this day) honored when Alaska Baptists named their state mission offering the Valeria Sherard State Missions Offering.

Dr. Michael Catt, a 1975 Mississippi College alumnus, serves as the senior pastor at Sherwood Baptist Church in Albany, GA. But, he's better known for forming his own production company, Sherwood Pictures, which has produced such inspirational films as "Facing the Giants" and "Fireproof."

Melanie Ward Butler, a 1989 Carey graduate, began her career with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC) right after graduating when she moved from Columbia, MS to Los Angeles, New York City and later to London, England where she served as a forensic services partner in one of the world's largest professional accounting firms. Carey's unique blending of a small town caring atmosphere with the international influences of students from around the world allowed Melanie to learn how to approach broader opportunities while maintaining a caring attitude. Melanie said, "I will always be thankful for the experiences I had at Carey and the people, professors and students who challenged me and opened my eyes to the many

choices and possibilities that were available."

Barbie Bassett, a 1993 Mississippi College graduate, is a stellar communicator and author. She presently serves as the award-winning Chief Meteorologist at WLBT-TV 3 in Jackson, MS. During the days, weeks and months following Hurricane Katrina, Barbie's strong Christian faith was clearly evident to the viewing public as she covered the aftermath of the deadly storm. The Marks, MS native shares her faith and life's story in her book "Forecasts and Faith: Five Keys to Weathering the Storms of Life."

Dr. Jim Futral, a 1967 Blue Mountain graduate, pastored several churches including Broadmoor Baptist Church and has served Mississippi Baptists as Executive Director-Treasurer of the MBCB since 1998. Dr. Futral's impact for Christ is far reaching. He authors a weekly article, *Directions*, in *The Baptist Record*; and, recently he has served as President of the Executive Director's Association which represents all state Baptist associations.

So, the impact of Mississippi Baptist's three Christian colleges, as well as our other Baptist colleges throughout the Southern Baptist Convention, is far and wide. Let us continue to pray for our colleges, our presidents, our students and their parents, as well as, our college faculty and staff members. Let us actively encourage our high school students to consider attending one of our Baptist colleges. Through our giving to and support of the Cooperative Program, we are able to impact the lives of these students attending our Christian colleges which are on mission with God to reach the "ends of the earth."

Help Support the FBE!

Did you know it takes approximately \$1,000 to produce and distribute the Educomis to our membership of over 900 educators around the world? The FBE survives on your donations. This past year we received just over \$3,000. Please consider helping by sending \$10, \$25, \$50, or more to:

Fellowship of Baptist Educators
 Billy Morehead, Executive Director,
 116 Devereaux Drive, Madison, MS 39110
 All gifts are tax-deductible by the IRS as allowed by law.

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If you would like to donate by credit card, please go to the FBE website, www.TheFellowshipOfBaptistEducators.org, and click on 'Donate to the FBE' for a secure payment.

FELLOWSHIP OF BAPTIST EDUCATORS

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*An organization of educators who use their educational skills
to fulfill the Great Commission*



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