

# THE ECHO Uniting Volunteers for Christ

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Number 3

## The Marie I Knew

*by Trula Cronk*

When Marie Wright Hanna died in India on April 23, 1998, a part of me died, too, those shared experiences that only she and I could talk about. She is mixed up with so much that I cherish in my past that her going leaves a deep hole in my heart that no one else can fill.

Marie's calm quiet spirit made all who knew her more peaceful. Not loud herself, she was content to do a lot of listening. I remember our monthly prayer meetings when the four of us would feel the Lord so very near. I remember the fun times when we got together to complain. During one such session, the cook called us to dinner. As talking stopped we all bowed our heads and Dan said, "Whoever feels worthy should pray." SILENCE, until we all burst out in uncontrollable laughter.

More than anything, I remember Marie's quiet strength. When she had just buried her firstborn child, she quietly and without complaining to us went on with her language study. She had been called to be a missionary before God blessed her with husband or child. She would be faithful to that call.

Her strength was apparent when her own mother died in America while Marie was in India. She talked to her father on the telephone to console him, but never thought of going home to do it. To leave without a "no-objection-to-return" endorsement, which required many days, was unthinkable. Her call was to India. Another



time I was aware of her real strength was when her baby son was sick almost to the point of death, but it never made her fear bringing up her children in rural India where there was not adequate medical care at the time.

Marie was a great mother. She ennobled the role of mother by the way she cared for her children. To give them the most Christian and rich childhood experiences, she sacrificed time with her husband while she made a second home for them near their school in the mountains. Because of her wisdom, three beautiful, accomplished Christian adults adorn her garland of praise.

She was a devoted wife and an excellent hostess. Dan, Randy and I loved going to her house, and whenever we arrived, mostly unannounced, we knew we would be given breakfast, tea or whatever the time of day demanded.

The Lord let Marie make a home in India where she lived, reared her children, launched them into the world, and returned to her place by her husband where, at the Biblical age of three score and ten, she died and was buried in the yard of the church which she helped to build and which had nurtured her while she expended her energy for it.

I am bereft, but I grieve not as one who has no hope. I expect to see Marie and baby Sheila again because I believe in the resurrection.

# Bible College Graduates 56

Free Will Baptist Bible College graduated 56 students in five degree programs at Commencement Exercises held on campus May 14. Dr. William Hill, a 1957 alumnus of the college and a former Free Will Baptist pastor, brought the final challenge to seniors in a packed auditorium. The graduates came from 16 states and three foreign countries. These 56 young men and women walked across the stage in Memorial Auditorium and received the degrees they worked so hard to earn. What a joy it was to see 18 preachers, 7 foreign missionaries, 13 Christian school teachers/preacher's wives and tentmaker home missionaries equipped for service. Thirty-seven already have plans to serve as pastors, pastor's wives, missionaries, and Christian school teachers. Some are going on to graduate school, some into the business world as Christian businessmen and women. Others are finalizing their plans

The college granted its first Bachelor of Music Education (B.M.E.) degrees to three graduates. Eighteen students received Bachelor of Arts degrees, 30 received the Bachelor of Science degree, three received Associate of Christian Ministries degrees and two received Associate of Arts degrees.

Dr. Hill's message on "How To Be Number One" stressed service. Each graduates' life will be his ministry, he said. "The great ones are not those who have the most servants, but those who serve the most."



*The Class of 1998*

## From My Heart

*by Charles A. Thigpen*

It is very thrilling for me to be able to announce the opening of New Life Bible Institute in various locations in East Tennessee. This is an answer to my prayer. Many preachers and lay workers sincerely desire more and better Bible training and preparation. Courses will be offered for preachers, Sunday School officers and teachers, CTS leaders, and for others who want to get more training in God's word and related fields.

For several years now, Upper Cumberland Bible Institute has been in operation at Cookeville, TN. Several scores of our people have been blessed and helped by the training they have received there. UCBI will open this fall for a new school year. If you are in East Tennessee or in the Cookeville area, please consider attending—and encouraging others to attend. Pastors, please promote these Bible Institutes and encourage your people to attend.

# Bible College Scholarship Honors Late Pastor



*Rev. Jeff Cates (back center) with  
McNeese family*

A new Free Will Baptist Bible College scholarship honoring the late Rev. Charles McNeese was presented in a chapel service on campus May 1 for the first time. Rev. Steve Swango made the presentation for the South Central Quarterly.

The first recipient was Jeff Cates, a sophomore ministerial student from West Plains, Missouri.

Rev. McNeese, a 1986 alumnus of the Bible College, died last year in an accident. He was pastor of Faith Free Will Baptist Church, Columbia, Tennessee. He had also pastored Perry Free Will Baptist Church in Perry, Georgia. The entire McNeese family is pictured above, along with Jeff Cates.

The scholarship is sponsored by the churches of the South Central Quarterly of the Cumberland Association, but contributions are being accepted from all who wish to support it. It will be awarded annually to a married ministerial student who is at least a sophomore and has financial need.

Anyone who wishes to make a contribution to the Charles McNeese Memorial Scholarship may send it to:

**Free Will Baptist Bible College  
McNeese Scholarship  
3606 West End Avenue  
Nashville, Tennessee 37205**

# Tennessee is Still Number One!

This past year—1997—was a good year for Tennessee Free Will Baptists. The good people of Tennessee gave \$1,483,918 in their support of the various national ministries. The amounts given were:

Foreign Missions .....	\$786,605
Home Missions .....	472,418
FWB Bible College .....	183,482
Executive Office .....	17,128
WNAC .....	10,939
Master's Men .....	7,058
Retirement & Insurance .....	3,784
FWB Foundation .....	1,997
Various Commissions .....	502
	<u>\$1,483,918</u>

The ten leading states in giving to national ministries for 1997 are the following:

Tennessee .....	\$1,483,918
North Carolina .....	1,070,751
Oklahoma .....	870,860
Arkansas .....	666,905
Missouri .....	661,907
South Carolina .....	552,930
Alabama .....	546,685
Georgia .....	441,160
Ohio .....	372,155
Michigan .....	326,343

The people of Tennessee gave \$413,167 more to national causes than that which was given by the next state. To everyone who had a part in this, we say "Thanks, and may God bless you."

## Dates to Remember

July 12-16 — National Association of Free Will Baptists, Tulsa, OK  
 Sept. 19 — Don and Billie Sexton Walk-a-Thon (Statewide)  
 Nov. 9-11 — Tennessee State Association of Free Will Baptists, First Free Will Baptist Church, Elizabethton, TN

# Tim and Robyn Osborn Report

## New Missionaries to Memphis, TN



The last couple of months have been very busy for the Osborn family. Robyn continues to home-school the children while I am on the road much of the time raising support. Most of the time we travel as a family to the various services we have

scheduled. The whole family is involved in the ministry. We see it as a family calling to plant a church designed to reach young families.

We have raised about 40% of the faith promise commitments needed to leave for Memphis. Pray that God will speed up our departure. Pray for our account. At the present time we are over \$9,000 in the red. The good news is that we have about raised our support enough to start being in the black every month. Pray that God will help us start paying down this debt and that the monthly commitments needed will come in.

I would like to personally thank all those who have joined us as faith-partner team members. Your prayers and financial support are absolutely essential to accomplish the work in Memphis. Thanks also for the many letters of encouragement. They mean more than you will ever know. I would also like to thank those churches who have joined us as sponsoring sister churches. Your partnership is a blessing. We look forward to the day we can relocate and begin to see God touch the lives of the people of Memphis. Pray that even now God would prepare the way for us.

## New Life Bible Institute

In September, New Life Bible Institute will open in two or more locations in East Tennessee. This is sponsored by the Tennessee State Christian Education Board. The stated mission is: "To assist the local church by providing a biblical education to the pastors, church leaders and adults who desire to further their own education and ministry effectiveness."

This will be accomplished by having qualified instructors who will use carefully selected materials along with the Word of God.

Through the course of a year, NLBI will conduct three six-week classes. Also, two fast-track studies which are completed in a single weekend will be offered. Students may choose between the two or take both if they desire to accelerate their educational experience.

Also, two tracks are available, one for the minister who desires to enhance or prepare for the ministry. Pastors Track Courses deal with subjects such as theology, evangelism, counseling, administration and many others.

There is also a Lay Ministry Track available. Courses in this area are provided by Evangelical Training Association. Topics dealing with teacher training techniques, outreach, Bible study as well as a host of other practical studies will be offered.

There will be a reasonable charge for tuition. All who are interested should write or call: New Life Bible Institute  
 P.O. Box 1776  
 Elizabethton, TN 37643  
 Phone 423/542-8702

Tennessee State Association of Free Will Baptists  
 Treasurer's Report  
 March-May 1998

# New Celebration Center at Donelson

**INCOME**

<b>Appalachian Assn.</b>	
Appalachian Assn. ....	\$ 77.84
Elizabethon First .....	100.00
Grace .....	181.65
Johnson City First .....	200.00
Keensburg .....	75.00
Watauga Valley .....	165.00
<b>Central Assn.</b>	
Crossville .....	100.00
<b>Cumberland Assn.</b>	
Ashland City .....	309.08
Bethel .....	162.83
Bethlehem .....	240.00
Brandon's Chapel .....	556.89
Calvary .....	121.60
Cross Timbers .....	65.00
Cumberland Assn. ....	430.24
Donelson .....	838.14
Dunbar Chapel .....	75.00
East Nashville .....	75.00
Friendship .....	45.00
Heads .....	181.86
Hendersonville .....	200.00
Oakwood .....	75.00
New Hope .....	150.00
Richland .....	91.55
Sylvan Park .....	75.00
Trinity .....	117.16
Waverly First .....	75.00
Western Q.M. ....	75.00
Woodbine .....	150.00
<b>Liberty Assn.</b>	
Cookeville .....	150.00
Liberty Assn. ....	86.68
<b>Northeast Assn.</b>	
Union Street .....	150.00
<b>Union Assn.</b>	
Bethany .....	20.00
Fellowship .....	150.00
First, Church Hill .....	500.00
First, Newport .....	175.00
First, Oak Ridge .....	202.97
Forest Grove .....	75.00
Limestone .....	75.00
Loudon .....	25.00
Shady Grove .....	150.00
Unicoi .....	75.00
Union Assn. ....	320.83
West Greene .....	75.00
<b>Toe River Assn.</b>	
Berea .....	17.00
Individuals .....	175.00
Valley Forge .....	1468.67
Total Income .....	\$8,899.99
Total Expenditures .....	\$8,108.68

Thank you for your gifts to support the State Association work. All checks should be made payable to Tennessee State Association of Free Will Baptists and sent to E. B. McDonald, P.O. Box 685, Ashland City, TN 37015.

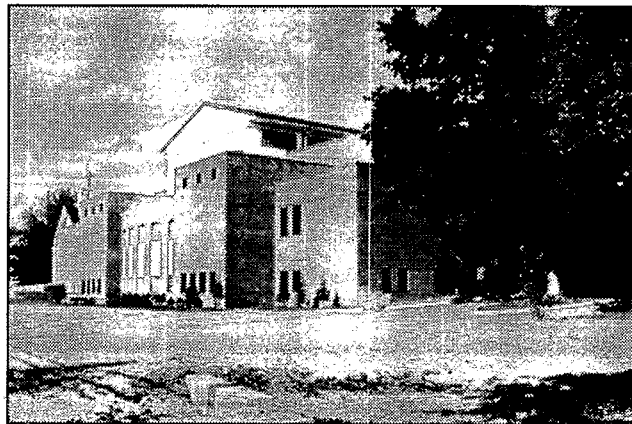
—E.B. McDonald, Treasurer

On May 17, 1998 the Donelson Fellowship celebrated God's goodness in the opening of the new Celebration Center. This beautiful multi-purpose facility seats 800 worshipers; provides recreational gymnasium when not set up for worship, workshops and more. It also includes a commercial kitchen, suite of music offices and storage space, as well as provides for 16,000 square feet for future educational space.

The structure is the first of its kind, utilizing a large stage area which can be winched up against the wall when the area is needed for other events. It was designed in such a way that on Sundays worshipers would have no sense of sitting in a gym, but has the flexibility to serve very well in that capacity at other times. Pastor Robert Morgan and fellow Donelsonians have been overwhelmingly pleased with this beautiful and very useable building.

In 1955, Donelson Free Will Baptist Church purchased the property at McGavock Pike and Knobdale Road and built a basement facility (which is now under the old sanctuary) for their first worship area. In 1962 the church purchased an adjoining lot and built a parsonage. It soon became obvious that the church needed to step out in faith and build an auditorium, and the first services in the new facility were held in 1963. When the church started Donelson Christian School (now Donelson Christian Academy) in 1966, it became necessary to construct a 14-room education wing. And just twelve years ago, the members trusted God for the funds and energy to expand again and built the three story educational and office section of the church.

This newest facility has allowed the church to move from three morning worship services to one, allowing the congregation to not only worship as one body, but to get to know each other better! Several prospective families have also been drawn to the church as a result of this new addition.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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