Africa Mission: from page one

Taylor now lives in Fort Worth and is the wife of Dr. Chet Taylor, pastor of Lakeview (Baptist) Fellowship for over 25 years. They have been married for almost 28 years and have one son and two daughters ranging in age from 19 to 25.

Taylor and 17 other participants from Texas, Oklahoma and California visited Sierra Leone from Nov. 1-11 in a mission trip directed by the International Commission, a 40-year-old organization based in Lewisville, Texas. This entity has carried out almost 1700 mission projects during its history, with almost 19,000 Americans participating.

The International Commission, known as International Crusades until 2000, was started at First Baptist Church of Seminole in 1973. Ben Mieth, who founded IC with his wife Bertha, resided in Seminole from 1967-1973. The Mieths now make their home in Glen Rose, Texas.

Ben Mieth's daughter, Debra Cavett, is the wife of current IC President Rodney Cavett. She declared, "Gene Hawkins was the pastor of First Baptist-Seminole when IC was founded. He came up with the idea of forming an organization." Cavett indicated that Leon Foote, who has been a Seminole resident for many years, served on the original IC board in the 1970's.

Rodney Cavett lived in Andrews from 1954-1972 and graduated from Andrews High School in 1972.

Concerning the mission trip, Taylor explained that the International Commission "has frequently utilized natives of the particular country to carry on and accelerate the work of the IC group. The native believers frequently work before the mission trip to prepare conditions that will help the actual trip to be spiritually productive and fruitful. The native believers do a tremendous amount of followup work after the actual trip."

She noted that Sierra Leone, bordered on the north by Ghana and on the south by Liberia, "is probably the poorest country in the world and went through a bloody civil war 10 years ago. You will see a lot of people in Sierra Leone with missing limbs after being brutalized by the rebels. A movie called 'Blood Diamond' focused on the warfare and other atrocities."

"There is 70 percent employment; conditions are worse than I can even begin to explain," she lamented, "There is no running water or electricity. Life is seen as a curse and death is seen as a blessing…Malaria and cholera are the most rampant illnesses in that country; malaria is the leading killer."

Taylor stated that Sierra Leone is "sixty percent Muslim, 10 percent Christian and 10 percent tribal religions. The people were very open to the Christian gospel and responded positively throughout the trip… They are very appreciative that we as Americans would be concerned about their spiritual situations."

The Americans would "go to the homes of some of the local church members and encourage them," she emphasized. "We went to a hospital to encourage the mothers of children afflicted with malaria. Many people were eager to hear the gospel as we shared it on the downtown streets of Freetown, Sierra Leone."

Taylor commented that the trip made her "more aware of the needs of Third World countries…This trip made me more sensitive to human needs in America and the need to make a positive impact on those in material and spiritual poverty."

Taylor stressed that the seeds for her overseas trip were planted several weeks earlier during lunch with a close friend who works with Campus Crusade for Christ. Taylor's friend had been touched by an IC representative that had visited her church expressing the need for volunteers to visit Sierra Leone to share the Christian message. Taylor then "realized that I too needed to carry out the great commission by going to a third world country and share with those who had never heard of Christ…Within four weeks, I received all I needed (financially) and enough left over to help my mentor go."

Gary Godkin, an IC enlistment coordinator who also traveled to Sierra Leone, stated, "We always visit countries at the invitation of local believers… Some of our people went to amputee camps…The hearts of the church people were very similar to those of us in the U.S…There were 5120 professions of faith while we were there; we were involved with 283 baptisms."

IC's mission statement calls the organization "an autonomous evangelistic ministry serving Baptist churches worldwide to equip and enable them to conduct church-based partnership evangelism projects to reach believers and make disciples for Christ."

IC "works in cooperation with Baptist conventions and associations. This cooperative spirit involves the Baptist leadership in the U.S., the countries in which we work, and the missionaries in the field, as well as the International Mission Board…IC is not a part of any Baptist convention or agency and receives no funding from any Baptist convention or agency."

IC spreads the Christian message "through visitation, in church services, and in other events designed specifically for sharing." Visitations take place in "locations such as homes, parks, factories, prisons, schools, and wherever the host church desires. Many other evangelistic opportunities come outside the scheduled visitation."

Taylor indicated that her father lived in Seminole for 40-plus years before moving to Bowie, Texas a year prior to his death in 1998. He and his second wife, Flossy Wicks, owned the Sweet Shop, a bakery that operated in Seminole for a number of years and featured a snowcone stand outside.

Taylor noted that she did not grow up in church while in Seminole. She remembered "riding bikes behind the mosquito trucks" and "large tumble weeds blowing down the street… One Christmas our tree was a massive tumble weed we sprayed white; was hard to put a star on top since the 'tree/weed' was so flat on top. I remember how safe it was as a child to ride your bike to the store and get a gallon of milk for your mom and taking $1 and always getting a nickel back."

Taylor was a cheerleader for all four years at Andrews High School and was homecoming Queen her junior year in that city. While in Andrews, she attended two summer youth church camps where God did a great work in her life.

Taylor's brother, Jackie Wicks, is an Odessa Homecoming Queen at Odessa Permian High.

Elsa Cortez
758-3234
Freedom Bail Bonds

Community Calendar

Check Dates and Times Below for All Weekly Community Happenings

SUNDAY, January 27

Attend the church of your choice.

MONDAY, January 28

8:00 a.m.-12 noon and 1:00-5:00 p.m.--South Health Clinic, 704 Hobbs Hwy.

9:00-11:30 a.m. and 1:30-3:30 p.m.--Immunization clinic, South Plains Health Department, 704 Hobbs Highway. (Clinic in Seagraves every third Monday, 1:30-3:30 p.m.; open from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. the first Monday and from 7 a.m.-5 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month).

9:00 a.m.--Exercise class, Senior Citizen Center.

10:00 a.m.--Gaines County Commissioners Court Meeting, Commissioners Courtroom, Gaines County Courthouse.

6:30 p.m.--Masonic Lodge #957 Meal and Meeting (meeting at 7:30 p.m.), Masonic Lodge...meet 1st Monday of every month.

7:00 p.m.--Seminole City Council Board Meeting, Board Room, City Hall.

8:00 -9:00 p.m.--Alcoholics Anonymous, CR 402K, #110.

TUESDAY, January 29

8:00 a.m.-12 noon and 1:00-5:00 p.m.—South Plains Health Clinic, 704 Hobbs Highway.

9:00 a.m.-12 noon—Seagraves shot clinic, Senior Citizen's Center, 1204 Avenue F.

12 noon—Seminole Lions Club, First Presbyterian Church.

1:30-4:00 p.m.--First Monday of the month Adult Learning Center Registration, SE 4th St.

7:00 p.m.--Al-Anon Group, 109 SW Ave G (First Assembly of God Fellowship Hall).

6:00-7:00 p.m.—Young People's Group, Gaines County Rehabilitation Center, 110 Southwest Avenue B.

7:00 p.m.--Al-Anon Group, 110 SW Ave B.

7:00 p.m.—Seminole EMT Volunteer Association. EMS building. (First Tuesday of each month).

7:00 p.m.—Gaines County Committee on People with Disabilities, Seminole City Hall. (First Tuesday of each month).

7:00 p.m.—"Wings of Glory" Chapter of the Christian Motorcycle Association, Thelma's One Stop. (Fourth Tuesday of each month).

7:30 p.m.—Seminole American Legion, Legion Hall, two miles west of Seminole on U.S. 180. (First Tuesday of each month).

WEDNESDAY, January 30

8:00 a.m.-12 noon and 1:00-5:00 p.m.—South Plains Health Clinic, 704 Hobbs Highway.

9:00 a.m.—Exercise class, Senior Citizen's Building.

10:00 a.m.-12 noon—Bob Lewis Mission open, 109 Southwest Avenue B. (Open each Wednesday during the same hours.

8:00 p.m.--Alcoholics Anonymous (Spanish), Community Rehabilitation Center, 110 Southwest Avenue B.

8:00 p.m.—Al-Anon, Community Rehabilitation Center, 110 Southwest Avenue B.

THURSDAY, January 31

8:00 a.m.-12 noon and 1:00-5:00 p.m.—South Plains Health Clinic, 704 Hobbs Highway.

12 noon—Seminole Rotary Club, First Presbyterian Church.

7:00 p.m.—Alcohol and other drug education group, 110 Southwest Avenue B.

7:00 p.m. (Mountain Time, 8 p.m. Texas Time)—Alzheimer's Disease and Related Demential Disorders Support Group meeting, Columbia Lea Regional Hospital Educational Complex Room, Hobbs. (Last Thursday of each month).

8:00 p.m. (Texas Time)--Gambler's Anonymous, 800 West Bender, Hobbs, N.M., First Assembly of God Church (across from Albertsons).

FRIDAY, February 1

8:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. and 1:30-3:00 p.m.—South Plains Health Clinic, 704 Hobbs Highway.

9:00 a.m.—Exercise class, Senior Citizen's building.

SATURDAY, February 2

No scheduled activities

SEMINOLE THRIFTWAY
ANDREWS HWY. 758-9869

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