

SUMMER 2009



Southern Wesleyan University

FOCUS

The patience of a servant

By David J. Spittal, president
Southern Wesleyan University

Aesop's fable the "Tortoise and the Hare" is a familiar children's story that tells of a race between the swift, running, boastful hare and the slow, plodding, patient tortoise.

Contrary to the outcome that most expect, the tortoise did actually win the race, while the hare became distracted and lost sight of the finish line. The moral of the famous story concludes with this statement, "Slow and steady wins the race," which may provide all of us with application for our own busy lives.

We live in a competitive culture of rushed schedules and run at a frantic pace ruled by a multitude of commitments, expectations and obligations. Slow and steady is not viewed as a logical response in our "winner takes all" society.

Perhaps the story of this famous tortoise still provides a lesson that we all may need to apply to focus our own lives. It may also

help us better appreciate those who serve Christ through quiet and patient service.

The Apostle Paul specifically encouraged the Galatians to "not become weary" of doing good. When the cameras roll and the awards are presented, those who serve others patiently and quietly are often unseen and uninvited at the winner's stand, but instead they look on from the crowd. Perhaps Paul understood that consistently doing good may be overshadowed by the pressure to be fast or first. Perhaps Paul needed to remind the church, then and now, that God has called his followers quietly to serve others in love.

In Hebrews 6:10, Paul reminds another congregation, "God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them." He affirms that our God has special blessings for the faithful servants who quietly share a cup of water, feed the hungry or share the love of Christ with those often neglected in our world. He continues, "We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure." Scripture clearly states that the race may not be left to the swift or the strong but to those who patiently and faithfully serve.

Southern Wesleyan University exists to serve and to share the love of Christ with a new generation. Its mission and its purpose emphasize the importance of service to others through love, hope and joy and in doing so, extend the influence of Christ's love into the world. Perhaps like the hare, the race may not be won by the swift, but by the patient faithful servants that surround us.

Dr. David Spittal

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Lifting up voices

Stephanie Stagers ministers in music during Southern Wesleyan University's Gospel Extravaganza, held April 5 at the university in Central. Numerous choirs, soloists and worship teams from across the Upstate took to the stage at Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Center in an event emceed by Pastor and Mrs. Mark Burns of Cross Roads Baptist Church in Westminster, S.C. This marks the first time the annual event was held at the new Newton Hobson facility.

Stephanie Stagers

On the cover At Southern Wesleyan University, we believe the Lord rewards his faithful servants. Those who steadily, sometimes quietly, pursue God's will are rewarded for their perseverance and faithfulness. Students at the university are encouraged to serve each other and steadily to pursue God's will for their lives.



Communications major follows God's call to attend SWU

By Nickie Heerschap,
SWU freshman
communications major

I fell in love with Southern Wesleyan University the first time I came to campus.

I was a sophomore in high school and was a member of a Wesleyan youth group. I had never heard of SWU until the youth group came to visit the campus for a CRAVE weekend, but the moment we drove into the parking lot, I felt like this was the college for me. I tried to fight it by looking into other schools, but God kept showing me this was the school He wanted me to attend.

I had all of my financial aid worked out with scholarships and other assistance, with my family paying the balance. However, during my senior year in high school, my mom and my stepdad divorced. My stepfather was the sole breadwinner in my family, since my mom was not working. With two younger siblings and one older sibling, there was no way we could pay for my

tuition. I still felt called to SWU and I told my mom this is where I need to be. I met with Southern Wesleyan University's financial aid office and they were able to help me receive more scholarships and financial assistance, many of which I did not know I even qualified for. My family only has to pay a small portion of my tuition now.

I am so thankful for the scholarships that I am receiving. I want to thank all of the donors who have contributed and donated to Southern Wesleyan University. Without your contributions, it would not have been possible for me to receive these scholarships. When I did not think it would be possible for me to attend SWU, God made it possible. We as humans tend to worry, but He knows what He is doing and there is no need for us to worry about the future. Matthew 6:34 is a verse that was very special to me during the uncertainty that I was going

through, and it states: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Thank you for helping me achieve my dream of working with people. I hope to one day work overseas as a missionary or as a worker in another part of the world. Thank you for making this dream a reality!

Promise Fund Gifts Make Dreams Come True

If you are interested in making a difference in the lives of students like Nickie Heerschap, please consider donating to the Promise Fund. You may send your gift in with the postage paid envelope enclosed in this issue of Focus, or contact Erin Fellers at (864) 644-5006 or efellers@swu.edu. To give online, go to www.swu.edu and click on "Making a Gift" under the giving tab on the front page.

Golf tournament teams up for the fall

Get in the swing of things with Southern Wesleyan University's annual P.B. Wood Golf Tournament, slated for Monday, Oct. 19, 2009.

The captain's choice tournament has slots for 36 four-person teams. Spaces will go fast, so all are encouraged to sign up quickly. The cost for an individual is \$100 and a team is \$400. Individual players will be assigned to a team. The tournament fee includes greens fees, cart fees, meals and various prizes.

There are also opportunities to sponsor the P.B. Wood Golf Tournament, which allow for name and business recognition, as well as opportunities to network throughout the day. Sponsorship costs start at \$100 for a tee sponsor and \$250 for a hole sponsor. Sponsors receive a sign with their name on it to be placed on a tee box or near a hole.

Corporate sponsorships are \$1,000 and co-sponsorships are \$2,500. These sponsorship levels include the name of your choosing on a banner placed prominently at the tournament and recognition in the upcoming issue of "Focus" magazine.

Prizes awarded to last year's winning teams were Nike Sumo Shot irons, Nike Sumo 5000 drivers and Nike Sumo hybrids. Comparable prizes will be awarded to the top three teams this year. Prizes will also be awarded to the golfer who is closest to the pin and the golfer who has the longest drive.

A post-tournament lunch will be provided by The Parkette of Pickens.

For details, please contact Erin Fellers at (864) 644-5006 or efellers@swu.edu.



Promise Fund nearing goal

Southern Wesleyan University's Promise Fund, which supports student scholarships as well as academic and student programs, is nearing the goal of \$404,000. However, the university needs your help to reach this objective by June 30, 2009.

So far, \$313,549 has been contributed by alumni and friends, but the university still needs an additional \$90,451 to reach its goal of \$404,000. With continued support from friends and alumni, the goal for the Promise Fund can be achieved.

Please prayerfully consider donating to the Promise Fund. Every gift is important and helpful as Southern Wesleyan University strives to provide the best education possible for its students.

To help support the Promise Fund, please send your donation in the envelope enclosed in this issue of Focus. For details about the Promise Fund, please contact Mary Costello at (864) 644-5004 or mcostello@swu.edu.

- Faculty/Staff:** \$21,763
- Corporations/**
- Businesses:** \$34,643
- Alumni:** \$97,193
- Friends:** \$61,057
- Churches/**
- Organizations:** \$22,336
- Trustees:** \$64,872
- Matching Gifts:** \$11,685

Total: \$313,549





“SWUsical” - a celebration of SWU’s musicals

Southern Wesleyan University students perform “It’s a Hard Knock Life,” a selection from “Annie” during “SWUsical,” presented March 19-21 at Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Center on the university’s campus in Central. “SWUsical” was organized as a tribute to more than 20 years of musical theatre at the university and featured performances from several musicals as well as video clips of past musicals and video tributes featuring SWU alumni who performed in productions over the years. For details on upcoming fine arts events, go to www.swu.edu.

S.C. Department of Commerce visits Southern Wesleyan

Southern Wesleyan University Chaplain Ken Dill relates the history of Freedom’s Hill Church to representatives from the S.C. Department of Commerce who toured the university’s campus in Central on Feb. 23. The busload of more than 50 representatives were participating in the department’s annual Rural Summit, designed to find ways for the state’s rural communities to make their areas more attractive for business development. The group took part in the “rolling classroom,” exploring part of the National Heritage Corridor.

Freedom’s Hill Church is a historical structure that was a key site for those who stood in opposition to slavery. Originally built in the Snow Camp community of what is now Alamance County, N.C., and dedicated in March 1848, Freedom’s Hill was relocated to the Southern Wesleyan University campus in 1999. For details on the church or to schedule a free guided tour, please call (864) 644-5191.



University confers degrees at May ceremonies

Commencement exercises drew graduates, their families and friends to Southern Wesleyan University's campus in Central on May 7 and May 9.



Dr. Tim Elmore

The speaker for the May 7 graduation ceremony was Dr. Tim Elmore, president of Growing Leaders of Atlanta. Elmore is nationally recognized for his commitment to emerging leaders and the development of leadership skills in the rising generation. He has published several books and has collaborated with Dr. John Maxwell in ministry and in his publications.

The May 9 morning and afternoon commencement ceremonies featured speaker Dr. Jim Rex, superintendent of education for the State of South Carolina. Rex took the oath of office as South Carolina's 16th state superintendent of education in January, 2007. He is a former high school English teacher, football coach and higher education leader.



Dr. Jim Rex

Rex served as dean of education at both Winthrop University and Coastal Carolina University. He is the former president of Columbia College and a former vice president for development and alumni relations and vice president of university advancement at the University of South Carolina.

The Spring 2009 Graduation Exercises of Southern Wesleyan University were held in Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Center on the Southern Wesleyan University campus in Central, S.C.

Students graduating from the university's traditional program participated in the ceremony on May 7. Two separate graduation ceremonies on May 9 were for students graduating from the university's Adult and Graduate Studies programs.



Southern Wesleyan University conferred more than 400 degrees, according to Registrar Rock McCaskill.

Other end-of-semester events at Southern Wesleyan University included Baccalaureate Chapel on May 7 in Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Center. The baccalaureate sermon was delivered by Dr. Anthony Graham, senior pastor of New Hope Family Worship Center in Brooklyn, N.Y. Graham is a highly recognized pastor and dynamic speaker. He is widely known for his passion for Christ and for ministering to the needs of others.



Dr. Anthony Graham

The university's Baccalaureate Chapel includes a "Ceremony of the Servants" and a challenge for graduates of the university to find ways to serve the needs of people throughout the world.

For photo galleries of the graduation ceremonies and baccalaureate chapel, go to www.swu.edu.



Hospital administrator serves pa

Both a servant and a leader, Lee Allen has dedicated his career to taking care of others.

As administrator for patient support services at Greenville Hospital System, the Southern Wesleyan University graduate oversees the daily operations of engineering, environmental services, food service, security and campus safety.

He supervises more than 500 employees, with an annual budget of about \$10 million. Each day, Allen is responsible for 3.5 million square feet of facilities that are located on more than 400 acres of property.

“I love my job and GHS is a great place to work,” the Easley, S.C., resident said.

Allen served in the U.S. Air Force before he began his professional career as an electrician and later as a mechanic. He first came to work at Greenville Hospital System in 1980. Several years later, Allen started an in-house construction team for the hospital system. His group tackled office and medical area renovations.

“At first, I was attracted to GHS because it was a secure job,” he said. Over the years, Allen’s passion for serving others grew and he enjoyed his roles as manager of engineering and as director of community facilities engineering before moving into his current position in 2008.

He sees each day at work

as an opportunity to serve the hospital’s patients and employees by making sure they have the best environment he can provide.

“We’re constantly looking for ways to improve our services to our customers here at GHS. We serve our patients by giving them the best facility we can for their treatment and recovery,” he said. “We really try to provide the highest quality environment for everyone at the hospital.”

Allen oversees the food, environmental and engineering services for patients, making sure they have clean, comfortable rooms as well as quality food at each meal. His employees also make sure that hospital workers have good meal options and a nice working environment. He enjoys the people he works with and finds his greatest satisfaction in serving the patients and his fellow employees at the hospital.

The call to pursue his education at Southern Wesleyan University came loud and clear one day in 1995, Allen said. He was headed to work from his home in Easley and listening to the radio when he heard the university’s radio advertisement, Allen said.

“If I wanted to stay in a manager’s role, I would need to see how to earn a degree,” he said. “And it all worked out.”

Allen hadn’t been in a classroom since the late 1960’s and the prospect of studying and exams made him nervous, he said. But the Southern Wesleyan University professors and his study group helped him throughout his classes, Allen said. He earned his bachelor’s

lients, employees

degree in business administration, then continued on to earn his master's degree in business administration, also from Southern Wesleyan University.

"It's tough to get yourself squared away as to how much time is required for each part of your life," he said. But after a few classes, Allen found a comfortable balance for work, family and education.

Allen chose to attend classes at the Central, S.C., location of the university. He wanted a more traditional college campus experience, he said. Southern Wesleyan University also has locations in Greenville, Columbia, North Augusta and Charleston, as well as Greenwood and Spartanburg. He would encourage those who are interested in earning a college degree to consider attending Southern Wesleyan University.

"If you had the tenacity to finish high school and you have a dream of getting a college degree, Southern Wesleyan University is a way you can make that dream come true. If you do the work, you'll be successful," Allen said. "Having God in the plan makes Southern Wesleyan University different. It allows students to reach deep down and succeed."

And Allen attributes his career success to many of the things he learned at Southern Wesleyan University and to God, who led him to pursue his education.

"I'm a firm believer that God had a hand in my coming to Southern Wesleyan University. I would not have heard that ad and decided to



Lee Allen

come if that wasn't in God's plan and having that feeling has always led me to be a big supporter of the university," Allen said.

He has served as the first adult graduate president of Southern Wesleyan University's Alumni Board as well as a member of the SWU School of Business Academic Advisory Board.

Allen said he especially enjoyed professors like Dr. Laura Black, Dr. Jim Mahoney, Dr. Bob Black, Dr. Don Wood and Dr. Jim Bross.

"They all had an impact on who I am today," Allen said. "I think every professor wanted me to succeed. I never felt that the goal was to eliminate anybody."

Allen's father especially wanted him to continue his education and was proud to see his son at his bachelor's and master's graduation ceremonies.

"The day I walked across that stage with my bachelor's degree, I don't know who was more proud – him or me," Allen said. "That will always be special to me."

SWU hosts all-county bands

Ryan Westberry conducts a group of high school musicians at Southern Wesleyan University as they rehearse a patriotic tune. Westberry was among the clinicians helping band students from grade 6 through 12 to fine-tune their musical skills as part of the Pickens All-County Honors Bands Clinic, sponsored by the Pickens County School District and hosted by Southern Wesleyan University Bands. Their performance was held Jan. 30 in the Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Center at Southern Wesleyan's campus in Central.



'Holy graffiti'

Southern Wesleyan University students decorated the area in front of Newton Hobson Chapel and Fine Arts Center with "Holy Graffiti" as part of a Maundy Thursday chapel service on April 9. Celisa Patterson, a human services freshman from Clemson, S.C., writes out a meaningful Bible verse as an expression of her faith.



SWU grads score top marks as teachers



Several Southern Wesleyan University alumni have been named as Teachers of the Year at their schools and one SWU graduate is a finalist in the state's Teacher of the Year competition.

'06



Deborah Moore

Deborah Moore, a master of education graduate of Southern Wesleyan University and a first-grade teacher at Gallman Elementary School in Newberry County, is among five outstanding teachers named as finalists in the 2009-2010 South Carolina's State Teacher of the Year program.

Growing up as one of eight children from a poor household without books, Moore entered school having no school supplies. When she reached sixth-grade, Moore caught the attention of a teacher who took an interest in her and helped her overcome a disadvantaged background. She's now a 10-year veteran teacher who hasn't forgotten the valuable mentoring she received from her teachers. In that same fashion, Moore's approach is to get to know her students and ensure they make the connections that are essential to learning.

"I know there are many roads to each of the goals and standards that I want my students to meet, and I try to find a road that will guide each child to that destination. It's hard work, but it is worthwhile and

necessary work for a nation that has gone from melting pot to rainbow," Moore said.

'04

Bryan Stepp was named the 2008-2009 Teacher of the Year for Boiling Springs Junior High School in Boiling Springs, S.C. Stepp has been teaching science at the school for five years. He was also named the 2008 Girls' Tennis Region Coach of the Year for S.C. Region II 4-A. Boiling Springs Junior High is in Spartanburg County School District 2.

"My experience at Southern Wesleyan University was truly wonderful," Stepp said, adding that SWU provided him with "the best training possible" for entering the education profession while upholding high standards and morals. Stepp received his bachelor's degree in elementary education from SWU.

"My professors at Southern Wesleyan helped mold me as a teacher. They were not only knowledgeable educators, but also Godly examples of how to facilitate a classroom. The professors taught me to have passion for teaching. I remember Dr. Woodworth, my advisor at the time, reading "You Are Special" by Max Lucado to our class. By the end of the story, he was tearing up. I saw firsthand that he truly believed all children are special and that this is a message we are to convey to our students daily," Stepp said.



Bryan Stepp

'05

Gisele Butler was named teacher of the year at Northside Elementary in Seneca, S.C., for the 2009-2010 school year by her peers.

"I think that is the most honorable award I could ever get," said Butler, moved to happy tears by her nomination. A second-grade teacher at Northside, Butler received her bachelor's degree in early childhood and elementary education from Southern Wesleyan. She feels that the SWU faculty and staff provided her with a great foundation. Butler is in her fourth year at Northside.



Gisele Butler

"We have a great group there. It's very humbling that your coworkers see something in you," she said.

Teaching is a natural for Butler because of her love for kids.

"Kids have to know you care for them," Butler said, adding that teaching is something she's wanted to do since she was in third grade. After a long break from college studies, Butler said that SWU has made her transition back into college an easy one. The supportiveness of faculty and staff made her feel right at home. An example of this, Butler remembers, was a research librarian who saw her studying late at night and offered needed encouragement.

She said of the SWU faculty and staff, "They always put God first – they walk what they talk."

SWU Alumni Association salutes those

Each year, the Southern Wesleyan University Alumni Association grants special awards to encourage and recognize alumni in their efforts to advance in their occupation and relationship with Christ.

These awards honor those who embody Christian values and who strive to become the person Christ intended them to be in their work and personal life.

The awardee for the Outstanding Alumnus Award, Lee Allen, was selected on the basis of the broadest aspects of service in the areas of humanity, community and Southern Wesleyan University, as well as achievement in his chosen vocation. Please see pages 8 and 9 for an article featuring Allen.

The following SWU graduates were honored at a recent alumni association banquet.



Katie O'Connor
Young Leader Award

Katie O'Connor graduated from Southern Wesleyan University in 2001 with a major in psychology. Upon graduation, she spent a year in Croatia with World Hope International/Global Partners teaching English as a second language and working with youth programming.

She later earned a degree in international education from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Next, O'Connor joined the staff of Save the Children, an international relief and development non-governmental

organization, where she worked for three years with a particular focus on programs in Africa and Asia.

O'Connor left Save the Children in 2007 to work at Jumpstart for Young Children, an AmeriCorps program and national early childhood education organization that works with low income preschoolers to prepare them for school success. O'Connor has worked at Jumpstart for over a year now and supports programs in Washington, D.C. She is a member of Grace Presbyterian Church in Washington.



Dr. Kenneth Schenck
Professional Excellence Award, College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Kenneth Schenck graduated summa cum

laude from SWU with a degree in religion. In 1990, he earned a master's of divinity degree from Asbury Theological Seminary. He later received a master's degree in classical languages and literature from the University of Kentucky and a doctorate in theology from the University of Durham, England.

Schenck is a professor of religion at Indiana Wesleyan University, where he has been on the faculty since 1997. He was named Professor of the Year in 2003. Following that honor, he became a Fulbright Scholar and spent the Spring of 2004 researching and lecturing in Tubingen, Germany, on the topic, "Three Afterlife Traditions in Second Temple Judaism."

A prolific author, he has published numerous scholarly books, articles, book reviews, chapters in books,

periodicals and papers. Schenck is also an ordained minister in The Wesleyan Church and a member of the Society of Biblical Scholars. He currently is the Coordinator of Liturgical service, one worship venue option in the College Wesleyan Church in Marion, Indiana.



Ken Whitener
Professional Excellence Award, School of Business

A 1974 graduate of Southern Wesleyan University and a CPA

licensed to practice in three states, Ken Whitener is the senior partner of Whitener, Pettigrew & Company based in Clemson, S.C. He has distinguished himself professionally as a business development consultant, a corporate CPA of record on various boards and a holder of series 6 and 63 securities licensure.

Whitener provides litigation services as an expert witness in tax, civil, fraud and family court cases, and serves as a representative for clients before various courts and boards, including large tax appeal cases, fraud cases and valuation cases. A member of the board of trustees of Southern Wesleyan University, he serves as chair of the finance and investment committee and as a member of the executive committee. Whitener also has been a leader in Rotary Club International since 1986.

Whitener is an active member at Central First Wesleyan Church and is chairman of the Table Rock Conference and Retreat Center, owned by The Wesleyan Church.

who honor Christ



Wanda Whitener
Professional Excellence Award, School of Business

Graduating from SWU in 1973 with a degree in business

administration and accounting, Whitener later earned a master's degree from the University of South Carolina before pursuing a life calling into a career in healthcare.

She worked for Oconee Memorial Hospital before moving to ANMED Health, where she held several positions before becoming director of corporate compliance for the entire ANMED Health Organization. In this position, she promotes a legal and ethical environment where employees, medical staff, patients and their families can report concerns without fear of retaliation. She also provides oversight to prevent illegal, unethical or improper conduct. She also enforces HIPAA privacy regulations and ensures proper security and confidentiality of protected health information.

Whitener is active in the Foothills Alliance and United Way of Anderson County and also serves on the board of visitors of SWU.



Charles Paxton
Professional Excellence Award, School of Education

A 2004 music education graduate of Southern Wesleyan

University, Chaz Paxton serves as the director of bands and instrumental

activities at Batesburg-Leesville High School in South Carolina, where he directs the Symphonic Winds, Percussion Ensemble, Jazz Ensemble and the award winning Panther Marching Band, a consistent South Carolina AA state finalist. The band was lower state runner-up in 2007 and 2008 and is the 2008 SC AA Marching Band State champion.

Paxton was voted the 2008 Batesburg-Leesville High School Teacher of the Year by his colleagues. Paxton has worked with various high school bands in South Carolina as a consultant, arranger and designer as well as an instructor and arranger with the Clemson University Tiger Band Drumline.

He resides in Batesburg with his wife, Leah, and their daughter, Cadence Lynn, who was born last August.



Dan Wood
Athletic Hall of Fame Inductee

Through the direction of the Warrior Club, the Southern Wesleyan University Athletic Hall of Fame is

designed to recognize and honor former student-athletes, coaches, administrators and other individuals who have made significant contributions to the university and its athletic program.

Dan Wood is the 21st individual to be inducted into the SWU Athletic Hall of Fame. Wood graduated from SWU in 1982. He was the goal keeper for the men's soccer team during his time with Warrior athletics. Wood helped his team defeat teams such as Winthrop, Wofford, Coastal Carolina, College of Charleston and USC-Spartanburg en route to their appearance in the NCCAA National Championship Tournament.

Outstanding Alumnus of the Year

Lee Allen ('99)
Business Administration
Easley, S.C.

Young Leader

Katie O'Connor ('01)
Psychology
Washington, D.C.

Professional Excellence, College of Arts and Science

Dr. Kenneth Schenck ('87)
Religion
Marian, Ind.

Professional Excellence, School of Business

Ken Whitener ('74)
Business Administration
Salem, S.C.

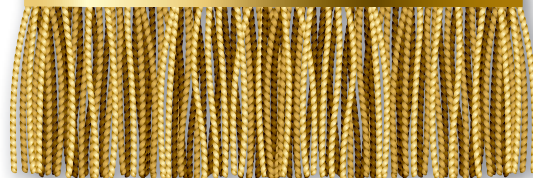
Wanda Y. Whitener ('73)
Business Administration
Salem, S.C.

Professional Excellence, School of Education

Charles Paxton ('04)
Music Education
Batesburg, S.C.

Athletic Hall of Fame

Dan Wood ('82)
Physical Education
Central, S.C.



Wood has coached at all levels and various sports along the way. He has coached at Oklahoma Wesleyan University and Indiana Wesleyan University. Wood has also worked in the golf business and golf management. He currently serves as executive director of the National Christian College Athletic Association.

Wood and his wife, Kelly, have two children, Courtney and Grant.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

NEWS FLASHES

'73

AnMed Health's fourth Extraordinary Women in Health Care Symposium, honored **Wanda Whitener**, director of corporate compliance at AnMed Health in Anderson. Whitener was recognized for her tireless work in the community, including volunteering with United Way, Foothills Alliance, the Westside Community Center and Southern Wesleyan University.

'82



J. Frederick "Fred" Johnson, chief executive officer of the Farmers Telecommunications Cooperative, was elected to his first full term as a member of the board of directors of the Rural Telephone Finance Cooperative. Johnson was also recently re-elected as president of the Foundation for Rural Service, a foundation that seeks to support the rural telecommunications industry.

Johnson received a bachelor of arts in accounting and business administration from Southern Wesleyan University. He also holds a MBA from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

He and his wife **Susan Millwood Johnson ('81)** have two daughters, Paige and Peyton; and a son, Phillip. His father is **James Johnson**, trustee emeritus with SWU.

'87



Byrnes High School physical education teacher and coach **Debbie Holcombe** was selected as the 2009 High School Physical Education Teacher of the Year for the southern district. She went to Tampa, Fla., to receive her award during the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance's national convention March 31-April 4.

Holcombe received an undergraduate degree from Southern Wesleyan University in physical education and business administration and holds a graduate degree in physical education from Furman University.

'94

Michael Matlock, his wife **Robin**, ('94), and three children moved back to Wilmore, Ky., where he is serving as an assistant professor of Inductive Biblical Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary.

'00

Alex Baxter has been named general manager of PARADE Digital, the online component of the Sunday newspaper supplement. Baxter will lead PARADE's online initiatives for consumers, newspaper partners and advertisers.

BIRTHS

'02 & '04

Elijah George Hucks was born Feb. 20, 2009, to **George** and **Hope Haithcock Hucks**. Grandparents are **Randy** and **Joy Haithcock ('76 and '77)**.

'96



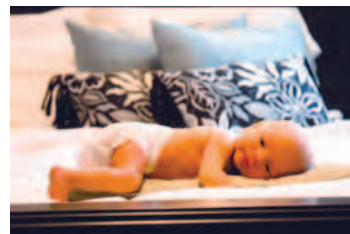
Heather Bailly Cooper. Ian weighed 6 lbs. and was 20.5 in. long. Grandparents are **Phillip** and **Martha Faye Bailly, ('65, '70 and '01)**.

'04



Sharidan Weiters was born Dec. 12, 2008, to **Sharon Weiters**. She weighed 9 lbs., 6 oz., and was 20.25 inches long.

'04



Landon Lee Logan was born Feb. 28, 2009, to David and **Kristen Biggerstaff Logan**. He weighed 6 lbs., 12 oz., and was 20.5 inches long.

'04



Georgia Roper was born Jan 21, 2009, to **Ginger Roper**. She weighed 7 lbs. and was 19 inches long.

WEDDINGS

'08

Dena Rene Garrard and Jeffrey Lane Cason were married on April 3, 2009.

Former SWU president Newby dies

Dr. John Newby, president of Southern Wesleyan University from 1979 to 1994, entered into the presence of the Lord on April 6, 2009, after an extended illness.

Newby is survived by his wife of 60 years, Becky, and together they served the university with distinction, said current SWU President David Spittal. Newby's passing is deeply felt and condolences and prayers have been expressed by the Southern Wesleyan community, he said.

Funeral services were held at the Spring Arbor Free Methodist Church, 120 W. Main St., Spring Arbor, Mich., on April 11 at 11 a.m. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be directed to Southern Wesleyan University, P.O. Box 1020, Central, S.C., 29630 and designated to the Newby Scholarship Fund.

Newby was respected by the university and the community and during his tenure as president of Southern Wesleyan University. He contributed much to the advancement of the university and Wesleyan Higher Education, Spittal said.

"He was a man of deep faith and courage who led the university through some of its most difficult and challenging years," Spittal said.

"His vision and foresight lifted the institution toward opportunities that came through his leadership. He worked tirelessly on the reduction of university debt and construction of the Jennings Campus Life Center."

Spittal continued, "Under his leadership, the Adult and Graduate Studies Program was initiated for working adults, which currently enrolls 1,700 undergraduate and graduate students. In addition, he led in the purchase of 110 acres of valuable highway frontage land which has provided the university with room for expansion now and in the future. His vision and foresight provided a solid foundation for the continued growth and advancement of the university.

"John Newby was clearly a powerful man of faith whose love for his people and for students was only exceeded by his love for his family and his God," Spittal said. "I was honored to follow his presidency and consider my relationship with this great man of God to be a significant aspect of my own experience. He will be greatly missed by all who knew and respected him."

During his term as president, Newby was active in the Rotary International, a commitment that was continued for 50 years. He was



Dr. John Newby

named a Paul Harris Fellow and was honored by the state of South Carolina with the award of the Order of the Palmetto. He was awarded the honorary Doctor of Humane Letters by Southern Wesleyan University. And in 2004, he was further honored with the naming of the John M. Newby Education Center in recognition of his leadership and contributions to the university.

The Southern Wesleyan University Board of Trustees, faculty, staff and students extend their condolences and prayer to Becky Newby and to his family and his many friends, Spittal said.

Alumni to gather in July for fellowship

In July of 1988, a few old friends who had attended Central Wesleyan College decided to get together and have a summer weekend of fellowship. It turned out to be a lot of fun, so the group decided to make it an annual affair, usually meeting around the last Saturday in July.

Alumni retell and embellish events of past college life and renew old acquaintances. Former musical groups rehearse to show friends

that their musical abilities have not diminished with the passing years. After dinner, an informal program of music, stories, jokes and conversation entertains the group. The 2009 gathering will be held at Collins Ole Towne at 228 Lawton Road in Central on July 25, beginning around 2 p.m., with an afternoon meal around 5 p.m. Entertainment will follow the meal.

All Southern Wesleyan and Central



Wesleyan alumni are invited to attend. Contact David Funderburk at (404) 296-6018 or davidfunderburk@comcast.net for details or to be placed on the group's mailing list.

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For details, please call the Alumni Center
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or e-mail jcrain@swu.edu.