Robert Wachs, pastor of the Tyson's Creek Baptist Church in Sandy Creek Association and son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wachs, Pittsboro, has been named to a position with the Biblical Recorder, the official newsmagazine of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina here.

The 1966 graduate of Pittsboro High School is a former employee of The Chatham News Publishing Company. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, where he studied journalism.

Wachs served as pastor of a church in Virginia before coming to be pastor of the Tyson’s Creek Church. He is a graduate of the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary where he earned the master of divinity degree.

Mrs. Wachs is the former Shirley Brown, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Coy Brown, Siler City. The couple has two children, Suzanne, 10, and Joseph, eight. Mrs. Wachs is a public school teacher and is currently working on an advanced degree in education.

The Wachs family will continue to reside in the area until housing arrangements are settled in the Raleigh area at some future time. The 36-year-old minister will continue to assist the Tyson’s Creek congregation in the transition of calling a new pastor.

The Biblical Recorder is the fourth oldest Baptist state paper in the Southern Baptist Convention. Founded by Thomas Meredith, the paper recently moved into its own debt-free building in North Raleigh. In January, 1985, the paper will mark the 152nd anniversary of Baptist papers in the Tar Heel State.

Wachs will travel the state, promoting circulation, obtaining pictures and information for news and feature stories about Baptist churches and associations. The paper circulates approximately 100,000 copies each week in all 100 counties of the state and all 50 states of the Union. It also goes into 32 foreign countries.

“This is one more step of progress for the Recorder,” Editor R.G. Puckett stated in announcing the election of Wachs. “Bob will be a great asset to our paper’s staff with his knowledge of journalism and Baptists. His presence on the paper’s staff will enlarge the ministry of the Recorder as it tells of the many good things North Carolina Baptists are doing.”

Rev. Bob Wachs
New director

Robert J. Wachs has been named director of communications of the Baptist Children's Homes, Thomasville. A native of Pittsboro, he has been associate editor of the Biblical Recorder since Jan. 1, 1985. Wachs is a graduate of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where he studied journalism, and of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to joining the Biblical Recorder, he was pastor of Tyson's Creek Baptist Church, Bear Creek. (Contributed photo)
Robert J. “Bob” Wachs has been named director of communications of the Baptist Children’s Homes. In that post, he will also serve as editor of Charity & Children, the 99-year-old monthly publication of the homes.

Wachs, a native of Pittsboro, has been associate editor of the Biblical Recorder since Jan. 1, 1985.

“We’re extremely pleased to have Bob join our staff,” said Children’s Homes’ president Michael C. Blackwell. “His experience in communications and background as a local pastor will be an asset in helping tell the story of the ministry of the homes.

“As we begin our second century of service, there is much yet to do in providing care for children and their families. We’re excited about the future.”

Wachs is a graduate of the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, where he studied journalism, and of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to joining the Biblical Recorder, he was pastor of Tyson’s Creek Baptist Church, Bear Creek. He also served as pastor of Meherrin Baptist Church, Meherrin, Va., while a seminary student.

In addition to his service with Charity & Children, he will work with media across the state in publicizing and promoting the homes. He will also serve the homes’ staff in helping them use communications in their ministries.

“I’m looking forward to being part of the ministry of the Baptist Children’s Homes,” Wachs said. “The chance to help children and their families is both exciting and fulfilling.

“Our churches and people have a long history of care and concern for children and the family. Communications plays an important role in helping them remain informed so they may continue their interest and involvement.”

Before entering seminary, Wachs was publications editor and assistant director of public relations/advertising for FCX, Inc., Raleigh. He has also been a staff writer on the Asheboro Courier Tribune; the Chatham News, Siler City; and the Chatham Record, Pittsboro.

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Pastor called to Clyde church

The Rev. James Edwin Carter of Lake Junaluska, a retired United Methodist Church minister, has accepted a call to serve as associate minister of Louisa Chapel at Clyde.

Carter retired a year ago from the Greensboro District; Friendship and Brown Summit Churches.

He and his wife, Johnnie Speas Carter, built a home at Lake Junaluska in 1951. A native of Caswell County, he has held pastorates from Andrews to Carolina Beach. He has degrees from Appalachian State University and Duke Divinity School.

The Carters have one daughter, Rachel Huggins of Winston-Salem, and four grandchildren.

Rev. James Edwin Carter... to Louisa Chapel

R. J. Wachs... communications head
The Chatham County Historical Association (CCHA) had the best kind of speaker Sunday afternoon in Pittsboro — an eyewitness.

The Rev. Bob Wachs, pastor of Bear Creek Baptist Church and news editor of The Chatham News/Record, told the story of Jordan Lake's creation from his own recollections and news experience.

"The land beneath the water" told the human story of homes and lives disrupted forever by the creation of Jordan Lake. Wachs drew from his childhood and recollections.

"Dad drove around eastern Chatham County to collect dry cleaning," Wachs remembered. "We all have feelings about Jordan Lake and the world it used to be."

Wachs created a mind's eye picture of what was — "... the railroad crossing US 64; Seaforth store and Seaforth Lake, where you could fish all day for a dollar; Bell's School, Ebenezzer, Farrington... all thriving, now gone," Wachs said. "The house sites that were there are underwater now; only a state sign reminds you where Farrington once stood."

Many of the old families of the area — the Scotts, Parkers, McCoys, Hortons, Farringtons — are now moved away.

"These were very old, very settled communities," Wachs said. "One area around there was known simply as 'The Valley.' It was a rich tobacco-growing land, along with corn and cattle and pastures."

In 1945, a hurricane hit Fayetteville and the lower Cape Fear River basin flooded. Something had to be done to prevent such a thing from happening again, thus the idea of a series of dams — which ultimately became one dam and Jordan Lake — was formulated by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Chatham was to be the loser in this effort.

In 1963, Congress authorized the "New Hope Dam and Reservoir." By 1967, forests were being cut down. "Roads that went nowhere crossed what would be the lake. The railroad tracks were moved."

"Many sold their land without great joy in their hearts," Wachs said.

"There was an emotional attachment to the land that was taken away," Wachs said. "That was what hurt the most."

In 1973, the project name was changed to B. Everett Jordan Lake. By 1981, water was impounded and by early 1982, the lake reached its maximum level of 216 feet above sea level.

A new flood control device and recreation area was created. But a way and place of life was forever lost.

From an economic standpoint, Chatham County lost. There was to be very little development on the lake. Approximately 14,000 acres of Chatham are underwater and another 30,000 acres are watershed and not for development.

For this acreage, Chatham County receives approximately $30,000 a year — $.75 per acre — in lieu of property taxes and economic livelihood from the federal government.

Every year, the county commissioners ask that figure be increased, and every year they are rebuffed.

And although that figure has been "raised" to $60,000 a year, as Congressman Fred Hagerman announced to the county commissioners recently, the increase is so far unfunded.

At least, Chatham has a lake to jump into. Fayetteville and the lower Cape Fear River region will probably be spared future terrible floods for all time.

"It's (the lake) here and it's not going away," Wachs said.

What benefit came to the Scotts and Farringtons and McCoys whose land and history are now "down under?"

Chatham gets better water quality and recreation, though the great bulk of lake-users are not locals. The right to develop its land and the tax base are forever eroded.

Chatham even has the added expense to provide support services boaters expect and demand.

Benefit often is in the eyes of the beholder. In this case, "benefit" was created by bureaucrats hundreds of miles away, most of whom never even saw the area, much less ever sat on the porch and talked with the Farringtons and Parkers.

The eyes of those whose homes were taken for "benefit" might see it differently.

Benefit often is in the eyes of the beholder. In this case, "benefit" was created by bureaucrats hundreds of miles away, most of whom never even saw the area, much less ever sat on the porch and talked with the Farringtons and Parkers.