'Together We Build' Program

Catawba Heights Baptist Subscribes $468,000

Members of the Catawba Heights Baptist Church, Belmont, subscribed $468,000, either through cash gifts or three-year commitments, during their thirteen-week TOGETHER WE BUILD program.

The church received $349,097 in total offerings for all causes last year.

The program was directed by Charles High, a TOGETHER WE BUILD consultant with the Southern Baptist Convention Stewardship Commission in Nashville, TN.

Buddy Herndon, a layman, was the program director. Max Pendleton is pastor.

The funds will enable the church to save thousands of dollars which would have been paid out in interest on a long-term note.

For one dollar raised through a TOGETHER WE BUILD program, it means more than a dollar saved.

The savings is even more significant since the church will be able to support present and new programs and ministries.

It will also enable the church to upgrade its mission support through the agencies of the Southern Baptist Convention.

In addition to the monetary value of the TOGETHER WE BUILD program, the church has experienced significant spiritual benefit. In his evaluation of the program, Rev. Pendleton said, "Our church saw that through a cooperative effort that far reaching goals could be achieved.

"The spiritual values of this campaign is far reaching beyond measure."
Catawba Heights Baptist Church will observe Homecoming Sunday.

The 11:00 o'clock Homecoming message will be delivered by the pastor, the Rev. Max Pendleton.

Sunday School will begin at 9:45 a.m. Immediately following the 11:00 o'clock worship hour, picnic style lunch will be spread. After lunch, at approximately 2:00 o'clock, a special singing service will be held. A number of gospel singing groups have been invited to participate in the service.

All former members and friends of the church are invited to attend Homecoming services. Bring a well-filled basket, drinks will be furnished.

Belhaven: Beaufort-Hyde News
Belmont Banner
Benson Review
Bessemer City Record
Black Mountain News
Blowing Rock: Rocket

8/10/77
In answer to God’s call

By Lynn Wooten
Gazette Lifestyle Reporter

BELMONT — Thirty years ago, young Raymond Johns attended worship services with his family at Catawba Heights Baptist Church, then located in what he calls “the little white church” nearby.

He listened to the church’s pastor, the Rev. Max Pendleton, give his sermons each Sunday. He went to school with the Pendletons’ son, Randy.


Once the Rev. Pendleton announced his plans to retire last year, people asked the Rev. Johns over and over, “Can you fill Max’s shoes?” After all, the Rev. Pendleton was with Catawba Heights 33 years and had established himself as a popular figure in Gaston’s faith community.

“It’s like following a legend,” the Rev. Johns says. “Max is well-known everywhere I go.”

Still, the Rev. Johns was determined not to be daunted by succeeding a man he calls “my spiritual father.”

“My main concern was whether people would let me be who I am,” the Rev. Johns says.

Who he is and what he’s doing with his life surprised even him.

In 1975, the Rev. Johns was working as a plant operator for Duke Power when First Baptist Church in Stanley asked him to serving as its lay speaker during a Sunday service.

The night before he was to speak, he was awakened by a voice. “I heard my name being called. I thought it was my wife.”

It wasn’t.

The incident repeated two more times that night. The Rev. Johns concluded the voice he was hearing was a spiritual calling. “I told God that if three people — no more, no less — came down during the invitation the next day, I’d be a pastor. And that’s exactly what happened. I was overcome with emotion.”

His wife, Janet, he remembers, told him, “I married a Duke Power operator, not a minister.”

But she supported him as he pursued pastoral training and obtained his master’s of divinity degree from Southern Seminary in Kentucky.

“You could never have told me in a million years that I’d be a pastor,” the Rev. Johns says.

He first worked at a church in Indiana, followed by a long stint as pastor of Immanuel Baptist Church in Durham. He returned home to Gaston County in December 1996 to serve as co-pastor of Catawba Heights.

“The church has changed so much since it was the little white church,” he says.

Much of Catawba Heights’ growth and development can be attributed to the Rev. Pendleton’s leadership, making it even more challenging to succeed him. But the Rev. Johns has his own plans for his 1,500-member church.

He wants to repeat some of the efforts he made while in Durham, gearing Catawba Heights toward enhanced mission work with a more global approach.

“We live in a consumer society that seems to have invaded the church,” he says.

“It’s what I call ‘Me-ism’.”

People ask, “What can you do for me? What does this church offer me?” It should be, “God, here I am. What would you have me do?”

Sunday School classes are already making this point, he says. Other ideas include establishing a home for an impoverished family who would be taught improved ways to live, including finance management, and helped back into a mainstream existence.

The church now requires potential members to complete a new course called “Basic 101,” which instructs some of religion’s basic tenets as well as Catawba Height’s vision for itself.

The Rev. Johns holds up a photograph he keeps on a shelf in his office. “It’s of a sailboat in the ocean, with a huge sun in the background. He says he lives by the quote that runs across the picture: “Risk — You cannot discover new oceans unless you have the courage to lose sight of the shore.”

With the retirement of its longtime pastor, Catawba Heights Baptist Church’s new leader has some tall shoes to fill.

For a man who never even envisioned himself in the ministry, the Rev. Raymond Johns says he’s ready to do God’s work.

In the mid-’70s, the Rev. Raymond Johns was awakened repeatedly by a voice during a night before he was to serve as a lay speaker at a Stanley Church. “I heard my name being called,” he says. After that night, he decided to become a minister.

Please see Call 20
COMBINED YOUTH CHOIRS - The combined youth choirs of Catawba Heights Baptist Church, East Belmont Baptist Church, and Sandy Plains Baptist Church will be in concert on Saturday, May 17, at 7:30 p.m. at East Belmont Baptist. The theme of the program will be "The Warrior Is A Child." Rodney Boutwell of Catawba Heights Baptist Church is the director of the choir.

Youth Celebration Slated
At East Belmont Baptist

The combined youth choirs of Catawba Heights Baptist, East Belmont Baptist, and Sandy Plains Baptist are "making it happen" on Saturday, May 17. It will feature the combined choirs in concert at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 17, at East Belmont Baptist Church. Rodney Boutwell of Catawba Heights Baptist Church will be the director.

Other adult leaders are Linda Burrell, Jane Ray and Selina Robinson of East Belmont Baptist, and Charles Cabiness of Sandy Plains Baptist.

Soloists will be Wendy Mullis, Durin Wrinn and Chris Thomas, Catawba Heights Baptist, and Chris Ray and Amy Ray (brother and sister) of East Belmont Baptist.

The leaders began working with the choirs in January 1985. They had their initial practice together on Feb. 16 of this year.

On Monday, May 19, the combined youth choirs will perform at Kate's Skating Rink on Myrtle School Road in Gastonia, where Church Night will be observed.
Catawba Heights Baptist Church Sets Friend Day

Catawba Heights Baptist Church will celebrate FRIEND DAY on Sunday, April 6.

Each church member has been requested to bring a friend with them to the 9:30 a.m. or 11 a.m. Worship Service.

Featured speaker at both services will be Dr. Logan Carson, professor of Old Testament at Gardner-Webb College.

The pastor, Max Pendleton invites you to attend Friend Day at Catawba Heights Baptist Church, 101 Beatty Rd., Catawba Heights the first Sunday in April.
Catomba Heights - 1950
Belmont

1949 - boys' meeting Dec 11 of lst BC, Belmont
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1951 - watch case Bston
1952 - full meal at Bston (25)
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1969 -
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1971 -
1972 - Association met with History sketch (6)
1973 -
1974 -
Hitting the big time: The Catawba Heights Baptist Church choir will sing during the Young Messiah Tour.

BY AMY S. ADAMS
Gazette Lifestyle Reporter

This Christmas season will be special for Belmont residents Connie Atkins. Mrs. Atkins, a member of the Unity Baptist Church, will sing back up for the Young Messiah Tour when it comes to Charlotte on Friday.

"It's going to be like a little piece of heaven," Mrs. Atkins said of the performance. She and other ensemble members will back up Christian musicians, including Sandi Patty, Twin Parks and Wayne Watson. The group will perform 7:30 p.m. Nov. 24 at the Charlotte Coliseum, 100 Paul Blvd., Charlotte.

"It's a real opportunity of a lifetime for me," she said. "It's such an uplifting experience to be with so many people singing," she said. "It's just a wonderful way to worship." Mrs. Atkins said.

Thirty-two other members of Unity's choir, including Mrs. Atkins' daughter, Courtney, will sing with the choir. "It's such a special experience to be with that many people singing," she said. "It's just a wonderful way to worship." Mrs. Atkins said.

Doug Parks, Unity's choir director, agreed. "It's a fun time when we can all get together," Parks said. "It's a real feeling the audience has every year on the radio."

The Catawba Heights Baptist Church choir will sing with the Young Messiah Tour two years ago, the Catawba Baptist choir will sing with the tour for the first time ever.

Mrs. Atkins was one of 22 members of Belmont church's choir who along with the tour's song director Greg Altizer, "It's like it's a great opportunity," she said. "I kind of get to get the Opportunity and Altizer said, "It's the concert even if I wasn't singing."

"I went to see it when it was here the last time," Altizer said. "I've had a very worshipful and prayerful experience and praise God!"

But performing with the Young Messiah Tour isn't a one-time event. It's nice to be a part of it, he said. "We are family friends."

Altizer said he has been listening to her practice tape day and night since she got her part. She and Parks agreed this year's music is completely different from the two years ago. "It's going to be so much newer this season, more so than it was two years ago," Parks said. "But they kind of enjoy it, that's all." Mrs. Atkins said.

Wayne Watson of 'Messiah'...

**MESSIAH STAR: Family comes first; music comes second**

BY AMY S. ADAMS
Gazette Lifestyle Reporter

Singers residents who attend the Young Messiah Tour on Friday will watch Wayne Watson perform in the spotlight. But a music career comes second to Watson. His first priority? His family.

"I'm a husband and a father before I am a musician, and I think that's paid off," said Watson, in his fourth year on the tour.

Watson first performed with the tour during its debut season when he substituted for an artist who had to pull out of the tour the week before.

"It's become a big Christmas event, it's now to be a part of that," Watson said. "It's become a very popular event and people love it."

Watson said he is now a part of the tour and is singing solo as well as with other artists. "I want everybody to get the simple message," Watson said. "I want what we do on stage for the Messiah Tour to be everything like.

"It's a very worshipful event."

But Watson has some concerns that only God knows about. "I would hope and pray that nothing we do or stage for the Messiah Tour would embarrass Him."" Watson said.

After the tour finishes in Dec., Watson will head back into the studio to work on his 16th album. But a decade from now, Watson hopes to have slowed down to head home to Houston to spend the holidays with his family and Marcy. "I hope the things I do in life make the Messiah Tour worth it," Watson said.
Healing for many begins at the wall

BY JIM HEFFNER
Staff Writer

"I have eight people up there," the man said. "They were my brothers. We were on the same team. They were all my best friends." Tears streamed unashamedly down his face. He is an ex-Green Beret, and he was standing in front of the Vietnam Memorial in the nation's capital. The wall contains 58,479 names of those killed or missing in Vietnam.

It is an exact replica of the Memorial in Washington, which is the most visited monument in the country by Pointman International Ministries, sponsored wherever it stops by a local church or other entity.

Tears streamed unabashedly down his face. He is an ex-Green Beret, and he was standing in front of the Vietnam Memorial in the nation's capital. The wall contains 58,479 names of those killed or missing in Vietnam. The replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington is transported around the country by Pointman International Ministries, co-sponsored wherever it stops by a local church or other entity.

"I don't want any publicity," he said, "because I'm still bitter... I'm sorry." The Green Beret was typical of some who visited "The Moving Wall" last week at Catawba Heights Baptist Church. They walked up and down the length of the wall, talking quietly among themselves. Many couldn't hold back tears. Little knots of veterans chatted among themselves, comparing notes and discussing cities and villages with odd sounding names.

"I was the kid who always had something going," he said. "I had the lemonade stand and sold baseball cards, and things like that." Jordan became interested in computers at a young age, so interested he began writing computer programs at the age of nine. Even with his abiding interest in data processing, Jordan didn't take it up in college. After graduating from Cramerton Christian Academy, he enrolled at UNC Charlotte and majored in pre-med and psychology.

Even with his abiding interest in data processing, Jordan didn't take it up in college. After graduating from Cramerton Christian Academy, he enrolled at UNC Charlotte and majored in pre-med and psychology. Jordan worked for several years, from a young age, in the retail grocery business. He decided to get into the computer business when he took a look around and identified a need.

"I had started to help BI-Lo with some of their computer problems," he said. "I looked around and realized that most companies cannot afford to add a computer support guy to their staffs. I sat down and developed a business plan. That took me about six months." At that point Jordan made the decision to market his skills as a computer specialist.

Now Gaston Technical Support has 31 customers, all in Gaston County. His latest is the City of Mount Holly, one of his two largest clients. The other is his high school alma mater Cramerton Christian Academy. His first customer was Phoenix Chiropractic in Gastonia. He saved the City of Mount Holly a few months ago, as "I thought the city was ready to go with some new ideas." Jordan's computer business has 31 customers, all in Gaston County. His latest is the City of Mount Holly, one of his two largest clients. The other is his high school alma mater Cramerton Christian Academy. His first customer was Phoenix Chiropractic in Gastonia.
Wall replica to visit Gaston County

BY DANA HAYDOCK
Gazette Staff Reporter

BELMONT — For those who can't make the 10-hour drive to Washington, D.C., to view the Vietnam Memorial Wall, a replica of the wall will visit Gaston County this week.

A four-fifths scale model of the wall containing the names of all who died in the Vietnam War will be a part of the Point Man International Ministries conference at Catawba Heights Baptist Church.

Point Man Ministries offers vets and their families strategies for overcoming trauma from war. The conference is only open to vets and their families. After the Sept. 11 attacks, the organization opened its doors to people in the emergency services who respond to emergency scenes.

"They see traumatic things, too," said Dean Black, who founded the local chapter of Point Man Ministries.

The conference, like the organization, will focus on helping these people overcome post traumatic stress, and will include motivational speakers such as Chuck Dean, author of "Nam Vet: Making Peace with Your Past," Bunny Burch, director of Homefront, the organization for wives of veterans and Dana Morgan, CEO of Point Man Ministries.

Pastor Raymond Johns of Catawba Heights Baptist Church said veterans have played a large role in his ministries since he was in seminary.

"The conference will feature speakers who are veterans themselves who know how to confront the pain the wounds of the past and break the bonds of the past and know how to live."

Black, a career Army soldier who spent three tours in Vietnam, said he didn't go to counseling until he found the Point Man group. He said many veterans don't know they have post-traumatic stress disorder but Vietnam veterans faced extraordinary circumstances.

"The bottom line is the average age of the Vietnam vet was 18 years old," Black said. "He was not programmed to win a war. He was programmed to survive for 365 days. Then you came home, and the country you dearly loved has turned their back on you."

In addition to the Vietnam Memorial Wall replica, the public portion will include the Vietnam Women's Memorial, the world's largest POW/MIA flag and an art display by Vietnam veteran Norm Bergsma.

You can reach Dana Haydock at (704) 869-1819.

Want to go?
Veterans, their families and people who serve as first responders in the emergency services can attend the Point Man International Ministries conference starting at 9 a.m. Thursday through Saturday at Catawba Heights Baptist Church. People interested in attending can contact Dean Black at (704) 827-2837 or deanblack@carolina.rr.com or Catawba Heights Baptist Church, 311 Belmont Ave., Belmont at (704) 827-8474. The conference is free. The display of the Vietnam Memorial Wall replica, POW/MIA flag, Vietnam Women's Memorial and artwork by Norm Bergsma is free and open to the public starting at 9 a.m. Thursday through Sunday.

"The bottom line is the average age of the Vietnam vet was 18 years old. He was not programmed to win a war. He was programmed to survive for 365 days. Then you came home, and the country you dearly loved has turned their back on you."

Dean Black
local chapter founder
Odyssey foes urge phone call barrage

By Kristin Scheve
Gazette Staff Reporter

BELMONT — Members of a group protesting the Odyssey program urged citizens Sunday to bombard Board of Education members with phone calls demanding that they abandon the program.

The Rev. Gregory Dry also urged the more than 400 listeners at Catawba Heights Baptist Church to call the New American Schools Development Corporation, a non-profit group that is paying for the $20 million project.

“We've got to stay on the backs of these people until they start listening to us,” Dry said. “We need to make our voices heard.”

At Sunday's meeting, members of Gaston County's Concerned Citizens for Public Education criticized school board members for not responding to their concerns and questioned how Odyssey officials have spent grant money.

“We believe that the Odyssey budget relates to an old country song,” said Brenda White, a group leader. “The team is getting the gold mine and our children our getting the shaft.”

Plans for Odyssey call for three “learning centers” to open in the north Gaston area by January 1994. Odyssey will group students by age and skill level, not by grade.

The program will require students to perform 200 hours of community service to graduate and will also encourage the use of computers.

At the meeting, Dry read reports critical of outcome-based education, which is a cornerstone of Odyssey.

School officials have said outcome-based education will focus on basic skills and knowledge students should possess when they graduate.

Please see ODYSSEY/38

ODYSSEY
FROM 1B

Dry, pastor of Ranlo Baptist Church, said the teaching method has failed in school systems in Pennsylvania and Chicago. He has been leading the crusade against the program for the past month.

During Sunday's meeting, Dry read reports stating that students' test scores fell in many subjects and said teachers disliked the program.

He also said outcome-based education requires students to accept specific morals and values to progress and destroys traditional religious values.

“It is a method of manipulating students through B.F. Skinner's method of repetitive reinforcement,” Dry said, reading from a report from Citizen's for Excellence in Education. “What I am against is them teaching in opposition to Christianity.”

Sandra Frye, executive assistant to Superintendent Eddie West, said Odyssey will follow state public education standards.

“It's exactly what we are teaching in every school in Gaston County at this time and will be taught in Odyssey schools,” Ms. Frye said. “It has nothing to do with religion.”

Dry urged listeners to mail in to NASDC prepared letters asking the group to drop Odyssey.

Ms. White said school board members and administrators have refused to meet with her and other concerned parents to talk about the program.

“There is nothing that NASDC, the school board, Dr. West or the Odyssey design team could do to make me support this project and let them enter the mind of my child,” she said.

Ms. Frye said school administrators could not meet on the date Ms. White suggested. She said officials have been trying to get up to speed on the program since the death of Joe Miller, the program's director, who was found dead more than a week ago in his garage of carbon monoxide poisoning.

Ms. White also questioned how much of the $20 million grant would go to purchase computer and other technology. She said much of the money was going to pay for Odyssey leaders salary and travel expenses.