

# Baptist

## Mississippi

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### A Word From President Ed Stephenson

## 64th Annual Meeting of the BMA of America set for Oklahoma

Greetings,

Mark these dates, April 22-24, 2013, for our national meeting which will take place in the Embassy Suites Hotel & Conference Center, Norman, Oklahoma. This is a very beautiful and comfortable venue located within driving distance of many restaurants and shopping areas for your enjoyment between sessions.

Our desire is to make the national meeting an inspirational and motivational time for all who attend. We realize that the churches have business to take care of, but we also want to make the national meeting a time of worship, fellowship and information. Your officers have committed themselves to making the national meeting an event that will be looked forward to rather than an event to endure.

Your presence is a key component to having a successful national meeting! Over the past few years we have watched our attendance spiral downward and we are asking you to help reverse this trend. The work of the BMAA is a work for the Lord and it deserves our attention and our atten-

dance.

Two areas for your consideration

1. If possible, please consider making your reservations with the Embassy Suites to help us fill the block of rooms that have been set aside for the messengers. Last year we failed to fill the rooms at the host

2. It is important that our churches consider an increase in their offerings for the "Minute Fund" which is used to pay for the national meetings expenses. Over the past few years this fund has become more and more depleted and it is at a dangerously low level.

Our theme for the upcoming year will be "We Must" and it will be introduced during the president's message



President Ed Stephenson

## Missionary accepted to Medical School in Philippines

**Editor's Note:** Missionary Alisha Ramshur was home recently for a brief visit during the holidays. I had a chance to speak with her about work and recent events in her life and ministry. The article that follows tells of the leadership of the Lord in her life and the future of her medical ministry in the Philippines. She has been accepted into medical school to become a physician and plans to use that position to grow the medical ministry at the Bible College and in mission outreach.

She shared with this writer that the cost will be about \$2,000.00 per semester. That is a lot of money, but a bargain by U.S. standards. I want to encourage our churches, auxiliaries, and interested individuals to consider helping Alisha with this expense. Funds directed towards the cost of medical school

on Monday night. The local churches of the BMA of America "MUST" recognize that there are areas of our work which "MUST" be given special focus if we are to be successful for the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the strength of His local churches that make up this cooperative work.

should be sent to the Missions Office in Little Rock, Arkansas, and designated for this expense.

If churches, groups and individuals would pledge a small amount each month for the next four years, this would alleviate the cost and be a wonderful investment in the lives of those to whom they will minister. What a blessing and opportunity the Lord has given us.

## Following The Lord To Medical School

by Alisha Ramshur

BMA Missionary to the Philippines

My interest in missions started as a little girl in GMAs learning about missionaries. I didn't think that I would ever actually get to be one but the Lord continued to grow my heart toward



Alisha Ramshur

missions. As a senior in high school, I

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A word from Missions Director Dr. John David Smith

## World Missions Sunday – February 24, 2013

World Missions Sunday is February 24th. This day is intended to draw our focus toward a missionary God and our role as an association of churches in His global mission. This day is also a day to express our gratitude to our awesome God for his faithfulness in and through BMAA international and North American missions. God has indeed blessed us to be able to expand to 78 countries in the world where we have hundreds of humble servants who are proclaiming the message of Jesus

Christ.

We stand poised to send as many as ten new missionary families this coming year. If this indeed takes place, it will represent the highest number of American missionaries that our association has ever had on the mission field (around 60). Combine these American missionaries with the hundreds of national



Dr. Smith

missionaries we partner with around the globe, and you see both the opportunity and responsibility we steward.

We continue to cry out to God to allow us to see a church multiplication movement here in the U.S. We pray that our churches are becoming convinced of their need to reproduce. The BMAA missions department is ready to come alongside your church with orientation, assessment, training, coaching, and partnerships in planting churches here in the U.S.

Our Perpetual Prayer Calendar will be mailed the first of February with the intention that our people will begin praying through the calendar on World Missions Sunday. These calendars are provided by the department of missions for your use in praying for our missionaries throughout the year. You may order your calendars now by calling our office: 501-455-4977 ext.29 or by sending an email to kboyd@bmaam.com.

# Medical School in the Philippines

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began to pray for the Lord to show me the career path that He would have me pursue that could be used on a foreign mission field. I had never considered nursing. My oldest sister wanted to be a nurse and I wanted to be a pastor's wife, but I became a nurse and my sister married a pastor.

The Lord placed nursing on my heart so I never questioned it but instead, began to pursue a career in nursing. I spent 2 years (2002-2004) at Pearl River Community College in Poplarville, Mississippi, where I received a general studies degree that provided me with all of the basic courses needed to enter nursing school. In the fall of 2004, I began nursing school at William Carey University.

After nursing school, I spent 3 1/2 years working in the Intensive Care Unit at Wesley Medical Center in Hattiesburg. My interest in healthcare continued to grow as I continued to learn through practice. I learned to love nursing. I always told people that missions was my #1 passion and nursing was my #2. My heart's desire has always been to open a medical clinic on a foreign mission field.

While in nursing school, I would drive about 30 minutes from my house in Marion County to William Carey. On my route, there was a new clinic being built which was my daily inspiration for the task at hand. Seeing the development of the medical clinic from the ground up gave me encouragement and inspiration to continue to pursue the dream God had placed in my heart.

Today, I am a missionary serving in the Philippines. In May 2012, my dream became a reality and we opened a medical clinic on the campus of the Baptist Missionary Association Bible College. This is just the beginning of the vision God is developing through medical missions in the Philippines. Our vision for medical missions is a vision that will serve three primary purposes.

1. To care for the medical needs of the Bible students who

# Tiny Slim

A careless word spoken to me the other day has incited a need in me to write about an inherent urge people have to be prejudice against skinny people. I believe the exact wording was "you're so skinny that you could lay under a bob-wire fence and be in the shade, har, har, har"! If I was a faster runner and knew karate I would have told the blimpo, fatty, uh...overweight...uh... Well, I would have thought of something mean and witty. As it was, I just smiled and went away seething inwardly. That's the curse of skinny people. We are too small to defend ourselves physically.

However, I can honestly say that I have never once felt compelled to go up to an overweight

person and comment on their obesity. Oh sure, there are some friends of mine (and you know who you are, so don't deny it) that I can joke around with about our assorted shapes and sizes, but as a whole, I never would go up to someone out of that circle and say something to degrade them. It has been tempting at times to run yelling, "Call Ahab, I found Moby Dick!!!! Run for your lives!!!!!"

And I guess I will admit that seeing a rotund dude in his front yard mowing the lawn without his shirt on has prompted me into a combination gag/hysterical laugh fit every now and then. And while I am confessing, ladies, please,

## From The Mind of



Chuck Lee



are studying and preparing themselves for the work that God has and will call them to; To educate the students studying at the BMA Bible college to give them knowledge and information concerning healthcare in order to prepare them to care for themselves



and their families as well as the people God is placing in their lives through the ministries to which He has called them, in order for them to be

healthy in the service of the Lord.

2. To assist the pastors and workers of the BMAP with healthcare needs in order to encourage them as they continue to work hard in the ministry God has placed them. Healthcare is often difficult to access and more expensive than a pastors family can afford. We desire to minister to those who faithfully serve the Lord by helping them with their physical needs so they may continue to serve the Lord for many years to come.

3. To be a mobile evangelistic ministry that assist the local churches of the Philippines through medical outreach programs that are implemented in areas where new missions

and new outreach programs are being started by the local churches. We are partnering with local churches in the Philippines. The idea is church multiplication. As a church prepares to implement their vision of starting a new work in a new area, we desire to assist them by helping to lay

step on the scale before you attempt to wear spandex in public. It is for the safety of the children. Really, think of the children before you attempt fitting into a size two when you are a size 28. You are fooling no one.

It doesn't bother me that Santa is called a jolly person, even though for years I thought "jolly" meant fat. Getting word meanings mixed up can cause unnecessary inconveniences such as spending the holidays in the ER getting your nose put back into its proper location. When Santa was invented in our imagination, why couldn't he have been skinny Santa? He could fit down the chimney easier and I'm sure Rudolf and Donner, and Blitzen, and uh...Charlie, and umm...Ray, and, well the other reindeer, would have greatly appreciated a lighter load to pull. Come on Santa! Do some sit-ups and crunches while you are on your off time.

What about ugly people? Try

asking someone about the accident that disfigured their face only to find out they were in no accident. It's hurtful. Not that anyone has ever said that to me, even though it has been years now and I can almost go to bed at night without having to cry myself to sleep. Being skinny and ugly is a tough way to go through life.

I try to encourage people to remember that we are all made in the image of God. This sometimes has the desired effect of making them feel guilty, but oftentimes it just encourages the small-minded (said affectionately) to proceed in their quest to be as offensive as possible to the offended party. Again, a black belt, instead of a black eye, in the martial arts would serve me well at times like this.

Maybe we should all just remember the famous words of a tiny fellow that has found a place in all of our hearts and let it go at that. "God bless us, every one!"

the ground work in these areas through medical missions. We plan, prepare, and implement a medical mission in these areas in order to draw people to hearing the gospel of Jesus. Our motto is to meet the physical needs in order to meet the spiritual needs.

In 2012, we were able to conduct four medical missions with over 200 souls saved. A medical ministry is an expensive ministry due to the medicines

and the small medical equipment that is needed. God continues to provide but there is a great deal of work to be done.

The pastors of the Philippines are very supportive and excited about a medical ministry that can assist them in the visions and plans that God has given to them and their local congregations.

As with any other job or ministry activity, there are always challenges and obstacles to overcome. One of the challenges that we face as a medical ministry is the lack of medical personnel. Our churches in the Philippines are blessed with some medical professionals, but since many have jobs that must



be maintained, it is often difficult to find particularly doctors who can volunteer and be a part of medical missions. Because of this, the Lord has burdened my heart about continued education.

For the past few years, I have desired to continue my education, but I always thought I would continue by becoming a Nurse Practitioner. After moving to the Philippines and realizing that Nurse Practitioners are not recognized in the Philippines, I felt that this would not be beneficial to the ministry. I then thought about pursuing my Masters in Nursing. I

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