IT'S A NEW DAY AT UNION UNIVERSITY
Reflections from February 5, 2009
A Thankful and Hopeful University Community

On February 5, 2009, about 1700 people gathered at the Carl Perkins Civic Center in Jackson for an evening of remembrance and thanksgiving. It was my privilege to offer words of welcome and thanksgiving to the many men and women who have helped this university recover from the dark night of February 5, 2008. Our thanksgiving was first and foremost offered to God through prayers and praise, led by Provost Carla Sanderson and Professor Chris Mathews, along with a 250 voice choir and 30 piece orchestra. We also had the opportunity once more to offer our public expressions of gratitude to first responders and rescue workers, civic and community leaders, members of the media, healthcare provid ers, churches, parents, alumni, faculty, staff, students, trustees, contractors and subcontractors, architects, and the thousands of volunteers and donors. Indeed, at Union University we are a most grateful people and from the bottom of our hearts, we want everyone who helped us to know of our deep, deep gratitude.

Later that evening I was asked to offer reflections on the trials that we have experienced over the past year. These reflections were based on Paul’s Second letter to the Corinthians. From the experiences of the past year we learned afresh that God is indeed the God of all strength and comfort. The trials of the past year have served to strengthen the Union community in many ways. The season of suffering has helped us identify in a new way with the sufferings of Christ, and have enabled Union students, faculty and staff to empathize with the suffering of others. Our tears have been used of God in a redemptive way. The experiences of the past year have also brought about perseverance, and have prepared students for other challenges that they will face in indays ahead. We have at times found ourselves in a desperate situation, and in these times we were energized and enabled by hope. I think we all would say that we never want to go through anything like this long and challenging year again. Like the apostle himself, we can say we have been “hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; struck down, but not destroyed” (2 Cor. 4:8). And by God’s grace, we likewise can say, “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day” (4:16).

Since February fifth of last year we have prayed for that kind of renewal across our campus, for God to bring renewal out of the rubble. We offer thanksgiving to God that he has answered our prayers in abundance. The words of the apostle have become more meaningful for the entire Union University community this past year. We are now able to look back over the past year with wonder and thanksgiving at the recovery and rebuilding process, but not just in the recovery and rebuilding process, for God has been at work bringing spiritual renewal in the lives of students, staff, faculty, administrators, and trustees alike.

As we look back over the past year, we still have many unanswered questions and we still shed tears in our times of reflection. Without hope and trust in God, the challenges of the past year would have seemed insurmountable. As a university community we are now prepared to take the next steps with a full recognition that God’s good providence transcends the experiences of men and women. While February 5, 2008 was perhaps the worst night in Union’s long history, there have been many, many good days over the past 12 months. We have learned that God can take actions that have seemed bad to us and use them for good.

Despite the difficulties of the past year, we now turn our attention to new challenges and new opportunities. As we focus on the distinctive mission of Union University, we do so with the assurance that our great God can and does use such events as those of this past year for his eternal good, even events that are quite difficult for us to fully understand. Therefore we face the future as a most grateful and hopeful people. We are thankful to God for the renewal, recovery, and rebuilding that has taken place, and we are now refocused on the future of Union University for days, months, and years to come.

Soli Deo Gloria,
David S. Dockery

Union University is published biannually by Union University, 1050 Union University Drive, Jackson, Tenn. 38305-3697. Union University is an academic community, affiliated with the Tennessee Baptist Convention, equipping persons to think Christianly and serve faithfully in ways consistent with the core values of biblical excellence, Christ-centered, people-focused, and future-directed. ©2009
Inaugural Willow Ceremony honors nurse practitioners

Nurse practitioners play important roles as health care providers. Depending upon the laws in their home states, nurse practitioners examine patients, prescribe medications and order medical tests.

These and other skills are of special significance to Sherrie Serca, a nurse practitioner student from Cordova, Tenn. and one of 40 students and alumni honored during the School of Nursing’s inaugural Willow Ceremony Nov. 13 on Union’s Germantown campus.

Serca wants to take the advanced knowledge she’ll gain in Union’s nurse practitioner program to the mission field in Africa. She has already made short-term nursing mission trips to Cambodia and China as well as Africa.

“When I go as a nurse I just see so much need there,” says Serca. “I feel like I can be useful if I go over with this experience and education under my belt.”

The Willow Ceremony is a relatively new initiation in nursing schools. Originally conceived at the University of Wyoming, it is patterned after White Coat Ceremonies in medical and pharmacy schools.

“The willow tree is a metaphor for the nurse practitioners,” says Valerie Watters-Burke, chair of graduate nursing programs at Union. She says the tree’s flexible branches represent a network of cooperative nurses working in a variety of situations, while the strong roots signify the demanding academic preparation required for a master’s degree in nursing.

Each student received a willow branch cutting and a gift bag to commemorate the event.

Honorees included recent alumni, soon-to-be graduates and students such as Serca who still have a year or more of coursework to complete.

Union offers a related nurse practitioner as a graduate program on its Germantown and Jackson campuses.

Some students go into the program with specific interests but forge new career goals based on their clinical experiences.

Janet Call, a December NP graduate from Atoka, Tenn., switched her emphasis from pediatrics to family care.

“When you treat a family, it seems like you’re getting a total picture,” says Call, who served for years as a labor and delivery nurse. “Diabetes is becoming such a huge issue, not only for adults but for children.

So, if we can treat them when they’re young, it might help when they get older.”

Serca also sees prevention and education as major needs in Swaziland, where she observed HIV infection rates as high as 50 percent.

“There’s just a terrible belief over there (among some men) that if you’re infected with HIV and you have relations with a young girl, that you’ll be cured. So the need for education and love is great.”

Serca wants her work to have a great impact upon Africa’s youth.

“It starts with the young children, building them up so they know they don’t have to follow the same lifestyle as their parents did.”

Germantown and Olford campuses honor King

With hands clasped, representatives from Union University’s Stephen W. Ford Center and Germantown campus joined with members of True Light Baptist Church in Memphis Jan. 19 to honor the life of Martin Luther King Jr.

“I need you, you need me,” they sang to conclude a special joint worship service at the church. “We’re all a part of God’s body. Stand with me, agree with me. We’re all a part of God’s body.”

The worship service kicked off a day of partnership and service between the Union campuses and the church. It’s the first time for Union’s campuses in Memphis to celebrate the birthday of King in such a way.

Following the service, Union nursing students provided health screenings at Parkview Apartments near the church, while education professors and Union staff members read to children.

Students, faculty and staff at Union’s main campus in Jackson also participated in service projects designed to honor King’s legacy.

“We should be daily involved in stuff like this,” said Timothy Cogbill, a student in the Associate of Divinity program at the Olford Center. “This is a good way for some people to start. I know I haven’t done all that I could, so this is a way for me to be more active in endeavors like this. I thank God for the opportunity.”

Landon Preston, director of operations at the Olford Center, said the holiday carried added meaning in Memphis, where King was killed.

“We wanted to do something in service, but we also wanted to partner with a local African American church to do that.” Preston said.

All classes at the Germantown campus were canceled for the day, said Jimmy Davis, Union’s vice president for the Germantown campus. He expects for the day of service on the King holiday to become an annual event.

The worship service consisted of Scripture reading, congregational singing, testimonies, a drama tribute and the Lord’s Supper, in addition to comments by Frank Anderson Jr., pastor of True Light Baptist Church.

“We really want our church community to be careful about who we exalt and how we go about recognizing great men and great women,” Anderson said. “We always want to recognize them in the context of what God is doing through them. Martin Luther King Jr. was a great man, but he was used of God. While we need to demonstrate some appreciation for what he’s done, we need to give glory to God for what happened.”

Union welcomes new faculty members

The Union community was introduced in fall 2008: Several others are replacing long-time members in the days leading up to the spring.

The new members of the faculty introduced in fall 2008:

• George DeMaagd, professor of pharmacy and associate dean of academic administration

• Webster Drake, associate professor of communications arts and director of debate

• Bidefonal Guarion, assistant professor of physics

• Kim Madewell Jones, assistant professor of pharmacy and director of academic and professional relations

• David Kuhl, professor of pharmacy and chairman of pharmacy practice

• Emily Lean, instructor of business

• Kimberly Lindsay, assistant professor of pharmacy

• Andrew Martin, assistant professor of pharmacy

• Chris Mathews, associate professor of music and chairman of the music department

• John Netland, professor of English and chairman of the English department

• Shawn Okebobiho, assistant professor of psychology

• Joel Owen, associate professor of pharmacy

• Tamara Popplewell, instructor of biology

• Cynthia Powers, assistant professor of nursing

• Mark Stephens, associate professor of pharmacy and director of experiential education

• Denise Thornton, assistant professor of nursing

• Lauren Tucker, assistant professor of pharmacy

• Blake Watkins, assistant professor of pharmacy and chairman of pharmaceutical sciences

(continued from page 5)

(continued from page 4)
10th Annual Union Forum

Union Forum events traditionally are held in the spring. But the Feb. 5 tornado made hosting the events impractical for a number of reasons, including a shortage of parking at that time. It is likely Union Forum will continue as a spring event in years to come.

The O’Donnell event was sponsored by First South Bank/FSB Insurance, West Tennessee Healthcare, The Jackson Sun, TLM Associates and Trumbull Laboratories LLC.

Wells, Carrier assume key roles in Union community

Wells is dean of the chapel and professor of Christian studies. Carrier is assistant dean of students.

Wells came to Union from South Canyon Baptist Church in Rapid City, S.D., where he had served as senior pastor since 2003. Prior to that he was president of Criswell College from 1997-2003.

Wells also taught preaching at Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School for many years.

Carrier comes to Union from Westminster College in Fulton, Mo., where he served as director of residential and Greek life. Prior to that, he held several positions at Trinity Christian College, including assistant dean of students, residence life and housing coordinator, residence director and director of student activities.

As assistant dean of students, Carrier also serves as the university’s chief judicial officer. He is responsible for overseeing campus security, residence life and events coordination.

Keep up with the latest news from Union at www.uu.edu/uniontoday

Union opens Middle Tennessee campus in Hendersonville

Union University launched a new campus last fall in Hendersonville, Tenn., with eventual plans to offer graduate degrees there in Christian studies, nursing, education and business.

Classes are conducted at First Baptist Church of Hendersonville, and Charles Lee, retired academic vice president at Volunteer State Community College and a deacon at the church, serves as the executive director of the new campus.

Union’s Master of Christian Studies program in the Nashville area relocated from Brentwood to Hendersonville at the start of fall semester. An Education Specialist degree program began there in February. Other degree programs could also be introduced on a regular basis.

Union University welcomed C. Richard Wells and Bryan Carrier to key positions of service at the start of fall semester.

Wells is dean of the chapel and professor of Christian studies. Carrier is assistant dean of students.

As dean of the chapel, Wells serves as pastor of the entire Union University community—students, faculty and staff. He oversees the Union chapel, including all aspects of worship, service and mission.

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Van Neste contributes to new ESV Study Bible

Associate Professor of Christian Studies Ray Van Neste is one of 95 top scholars contributing study notes to the newest edition of the English Study Version (ESV) Study Bible from Crossway Books & Bibles.

Van Neste, who is also director of the R.C. Ryan Center for Biblical Studies, wrote notes for 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus.

“I was moved when I heard of how the Crossway staff worked to create study notes which are available in this Bible, from an overview of the Bible’s story, to an overview of systematic theology.”

Originally published in 2001, the newest edition of the ESV Study Bible is getting a lot of attention in the blogosphere. Executives at Crossway say “the carefully generated maps and illustrations beautifully illuminate the thorough thematic articles.”

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Union offers new graduate programs in Social Work, Nursing and Preaching

Union University is on track to become the only private institution in Tennessee offering an accredited Master of Social Work program. MSW classes began in fall semester with about 70 students, and the Council of Social Work Education already has approved the program's course syllabi, academic standards, field manual and student handbook.

As is typical of many programs, final word on accreditation comes after a full evaluation that follows the start of classes. “Once we attain accreditation, it will allow us to apply to all students who were in the program from the beginning,” says Mary Ann Poe, chair of Union’s social work department.

Jane E. Furniss directs the new MSW program. Furness started at Union in March after serving as an MSW program director at Roberts Wesleyan University in Rochester, N.Y. She is a published author in social work practice and social work ministry.

Union President David S. Dockery said that Union remains strong financially. The 2007-2008 year was the largest giving year in history, with more than 8,000 donors giving more than $19 million.

Dockery said financial challenges remain. Tuition payment is coming in slower, and like everyone else, he said Union has lost money on investments. In addition, student loans are increasingly harder to get and the payments of those loans are slower arriving.

Some experts are suggesting that with the economy in a recession, private Christian colleges will suffer. He reported predictions that by 2015, many small colleges and universities will close. But Dockery told trustees that Union at this time is in a positive situation, noting that Union is now an institution with an emerging national profile.

In addition to receiving Dockery’s report, Union trustees approved two new doctoral programs for the university – the Doctor of Nursing Practice and the Doctor of Ministry in Expository Preaching.

Union trustees also named Roy White and Bob Hundley as emeritus trustees. White and Hundley have served on the Union board for many years, and have contributed generously to Union’s work.

Conference explores moral judgment in the public square

Proponent’s Robert D. George, University of Chicago professor Jens Bethke Ehlefan and other prominent thinkers were featured speakers at a conference hosted by Union University Feb. 25-27.

The conference, “Making Men Moral: The Public Square and the Role of Moral” was designed to address the themes from George’s book, “Making Men Moral,” written 15 years ago.

Watson said the conference was also designed to be beneficial for those interested in the political changes in Washington, D.C., and how they can bring their convictions to the public square in a way that is winsome and effective, and yet also work together with those who may not share their view.

Other featured speakers: David Novak, a professor at the University of Toronto; Russell D. Moore, dean of the School of Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; noted authors James Stoner and Christopher Tellesen; Union’s School of Christian Studies Dean Gregory A. Thornbury and Charles Colson Professor of Faith and Culture Harry L. Poe.

White Coats for 45 new Doctor of Pharmacy students

George DeMaagd, associate dean of the School of Pharmacy, presents a white coat to Darren Awender during a special Aug. 27 ceremony celebrating the launch of Union’s pharmacy program. The ritual for medical schools and pharmacy schools involves taking a professional oath and receiving the white coats they will wear throughout their years as students and in their professions. The inaugural class included 45 students.

Carrington finishes in top six for Miss America title

Just prior to the naming of the new Miss America in Las Vegas Jan. 24, four women stood on the stage, still in line to wear the crown.

One of the four was Union University senior Ellen Carrington, a music major and Jackson native who was named Miss Tennessee last June.

The title went to Katie Stam, Miss Indiana, but Carrington finished sixth out of 52 contestants. Her strong showing enabled her to appear throughout the two-hour live broadcast of the pageant.

“I was very honored to have made it that far and, honestly, it was icing on the cake to place sixth,” Carrington told The Jackson Sun following the Miss America pageant.

Carrington took a year off from classes at Union to compete for the Miss America title and to fulfill her duties as Miss Tennessee. She expects to graduate in May 2010.

She works to promote volunteering, her platform in the pageant. Carrington wrote a book entitled “Chester’s Helping Paws” that encourages children to volunteer.

“Ellen Carrington is a wonderful young lady from a great family,” Union University President David S. Dockery said. “We offer congratulations to her for representing the university so very well.

For the talent portion of the competitions in Jackson and Las Vegas, Carrington sang “Vole Mon Ange.” She is the daughter of Pat and Katrina Carrington of Jackson.

As the Miss Tennessee pageant winner, Carrington gets a $12,000 scholarship and is Gov. Phil Bredesen’s spokesman for the Safe and Drug-Free Tennessee program.

A Good Start for Union’s New Debate Team

In early October, freshman Emily Wellborn made modern Union debate history.

She captured the Individual Novice Championship at the Bolt Werd Debate in Monticello, Ark. It was the first of what promises to be many success stories for Union’s new debate program.

“It was an excellent showing for a first-ever tournament,” said debate team coach Web Drake. “I think this bodes well for the future of Union Debate. We performed strongly from top to bottom.”

The team competes in the International Public Debate Association. By the conclusion of the current academic year, the plan is to compete in up to 10 tournaments throughout the Southeast.
Union Grows on the National Stage

Unprecedented recognitions for Union programs and overall quality

These are many ways to track a school’s national profile, and to put too much stock in any one source probably provides an incomplete picture. But in the case of Union University, there are sources recognizing excellence in a variety of areas.

For example, U.S. News & World Report attempts to measure name recognition alongside academic strength and a host of other factors in its annual rankings of colleges and universities. When the magazine’s annual Best Colleges edition hit the newstands and Internet in August, Union had retained its ranking at 20th among Master’s Universities in the South and achieved a top-tier designation for a 12th consecutive year.

But it also received a recognition that had not existed prior to 2008. Editors opened a new category. It focuses on schools that “have recently made the most promising and innovative changes in academics, faculty, students, campus, or facilities.”

Union University was among only 70 schools placed on this new list of “schools to watch,” and ranked fifth of only 160 institutions named to the list for three straight years, and one of only six four-year schools in Tennessee with that distinction.

Union’s sixth annual “Campus and Community: A Day of Remembrance and Service” took on even greater significance in November. The day was originally conceived as an ongoing way to thank the community for its response following a tornado in 2002. Memories of the February destruction of Jackson and Jackson’s kindness led to a huge response in 2008: more than 800 students, faculty and staff formed 60 work teams.

Despite losing prime recruiting time during February and March, Union’s fall enrollment of 3,770 represents a whopping 14 percent increase from the record enrollment of fall 2007; it was up 91 percent from fall 1996.

This 11th consecutive enrollment increase came just a few months after another Union record: a 2007-08 graduating class numbering 950. Replacing so large a number of students and achieving a record enrollment in a year when the campus sustained $40 million in tornado damage surpassed the expectations of many, including President David S. Dockery.

“Seven months ago, we didn’t even know if Union University would still exist today,” Dockery said. “And now, considering our highest enrollment ever and an unprecedented growth of 14 percent in a single year.”

Community Service

For the third straight year, Union University has been named to the President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll for exemplary service efforts and service to America’s communities.

This year, 635 colleges and universities were named to the honor roll, including 12 from Tennessee. Union is the only West Tennessee institution, outside of Memphis, on the list. Union is also one of only 160 institutions named to the list for three straight years, and one of only six four-year schools in Tennessee with that distinction.

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Roland Porter Directs Union’s Center for Racial Reconciliation

Campus citizens – the group Mosaic, Greek letter and non-Greek letter organizations, as well as individual students, staff and faculty – are proactively seeking to broaden relationships with people who are racially different from themselves.

Racial reconciliation has practical value beyond obedience to the Great Commandment. It is also preparing students to live and work in a world much different than the place where young Roland Porter grew up. It will be essential for them to interact with people from a wide range of backgrounds and native languages.

“I think that will help us to prepare our students better to go out into a world that is becoming different than the world I grew up in.”

Toward a Great Commandment campus

Roland Porter grew up in a segregated “name that is due to our sinful nature. Otherwise, it’s the status quo. If things are going reasonably well, why bother?”

One of Porter’s goals during the Center’s first year is to encourage further diversity in Union’s student population. But the goals don’t end there.

“I would hope we can have more African-American and other non-Caucasian staff,” he says. “I would hope we could have more African-American students in fraternities and sororities.”

The Center has plans to host “brown-bag” and other gatherings in connection with Black History month. Campus-wide discussions of George Yancy’s book, “Beyond Racial Gridlock” are planned. A special chapel service was held Feb. 11 with Frank Anderson, pastor of True Light Baptist Church in Memphis as the featured speaker.

“We have to acknowledge that we have been parties to each other’s pain,” says Porter. “If we do that and then say ‘we really want to move forward from here’ we can move forward from here by generally caring for each other.”

Caring strategies are already unfolding at Union.

To achieve those goals, Porter wants to make use of research, advocacy, clinical studies, internships, public forums and scholarships.

Porter says Christians of all races should be “engaging in important work, but he also observes many do not participate. Some of that is due to an insulated mindset. Otherwise, it’s the status quo. If things are going reasonably well, why bother?”

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Step into the new Heritage Center inside the Grant Events Center on Union's campus and you'll take a visual journey that tells the story of Union University from 1823 to the present.

You'll see pictures of Adams Hall, Lovelace Hall and Barton Hall on the old campus in downtown Jackson. You'll see a timeline of significant events in Union's history. You'll see photos of people and places and nostalgia.

"We finally have a place on our campus that shows where Union's been," said Todd Mullins, Union's director of creative services, who served as the creative director for the Heritage Center project.

"Our heritage is one for which we are grateful," said President David S. Dockery. "For everyone who has helped to shape and to invest in our past, we are thankful today."

The $81,000 project, executed by Harding Creative in Memphis, took about a year and a half to plan and implement. In addition to the photo panels, the Heritage Center also includes a President's Wall, with photos of the university presidents in Union's history, as well as a high-definition flat screen television mounted on the wall to display more of Union's heritage and even some recent events at times.

"Having the TV in the room helps tremendously," Mullins said. "It's not just a bunch of pictures on a wall. It's also a living exhibit."

Mullins said the display has some photos and information that will surprise a few folks – such as the advertisement from the World War II era promoting Union's aviation courses.

"I think it turned out extremely well," he said.

Steve Baker, Union's associate vice president for academic resources and library director, said the Heritage Center provides a needed historical context for the university. While many people think only of the current Jackson campus when they think of Union University, the fact is that the institution has a rich history stretching back almost 200 years.

Said Baker: "Dr. Dockery has made it very clear that the future-directed nature of the institution, while it isn't tied to the past, it certainly looks to the past for some guidance."

The Carl Grant Events Center is a $3.5 million, 16,000-square-foot conference and banquet facility dedicated Oct. 22. The new center seats up to 600 people for banquets and also includes a spacious lobby area, public restrooms, a staging room, state-of-the-art audio-visuals and a new president's dining room.

The building is named in honor of Carl J. Grant, who donated $2.5 million for the project.

"Without his generosity, without his commitment to Union University, without his gracious blessing to this place, this facility would not have taken place," said Union President David S. Dockery.

Grant, in turn, expressed his gratitude to Dockery, the Union staff and trustees for their role in the vision and implementation of the Grant Center.

"We feel like we were really quite honored to get to do such as we did with this particular facility," Grant said.

The banquet facility can be divided into three sections that will each seat 200 people. It will provide space for conferences and banquets both for Union and for the Jackson and West Tennessee communities.

Soon after work crews departed and the dedication concluded, the Grant Center hosted its first major event – The Union Forum featuring Norah O’Donnell of NBC News (see separate story). It was the first of 27 events booked for the Grant Center in its first five weeks of operation.
As the summer weeks drifted away and the start of the fall 2008 semester drew near, one scene was common on the Union campus — especially at the site of the new student housing complex.

Head shaking.

Head shaking, as in, “How in the world did all these buildings get done this quickly?” Head shaking, as in, “Why has God been so good to us?”

In the dawn of Feb. 6, few at Union could have predicted the course the university would take over the next seven months. Hours before a tornado had smashed much of the campus, causing $40 million in damage and leveling 70 percent of Union’s student housing. The Hurt and Watters complexes bore the brunt of the storm. None of the buildings in those two complexes was salvageable, and both complexes were demolished the week of Feb. 11.

Many wondered how Union could possibly recover. To stand on the campus on Feb. 6, that was not an unreasonable question to ask. But as the writer of 2 Chronicles expressed, it seems that the eyes of the Lord were running to and fro throughout the earth, to give strong support to those whose hearts are loyal to him. And in the weeks and months to come, God certainly demonstrated his power on the campus at Union.

On Feb. 22, Union broke ground on the new student housing complex. Original plans called for half of the 14 buildings to be ready by the start of the fall semester, with the other half to be completed by the spring semester in 2009.

But the two contractors working on the project — Worsham Brothers Construction Co. of Corinth, Miss., and Brasfield Construction Co. of Jackson — managed to finish the task earlier than expected. When freshmen arrived for the fall semester on Sept. 4, they were greeted by 14 completed student housing buildings, ready for occupancy.

“Our 10-year plan for replacing our student housing became a six-month plan,” Union President David S. Dockery said. “Construction proceeded ahead of schedule, and we are grateful to God for providing for us in this way. It is truly overwhelming to think about where we were on Feb. 6, and where we are now.”

Even the contractors working on the project couldn’t believe how quickly it was completed.

“This is highly unusual to complete a project of this magnitude as quickly as we have,” said Ken Brasfield, president of Brasfield Construction. “As I sit back and analyze what’s happened, I think Union’s need is what motivated the response.”

From the top right:

One of the many new kitchens in the 16 new residence life facilities. Included in each apartment in the kitchen area is a washer and dryer.

Each of the new first floor residence life apartments includes a safe room.

BY TIM ELLSWORTH

Renewal from the Rubble:

THROUGH GOD’S GRACE, UNION REBOUNDS FROM TRAGIC TORNADO.

Union rebounded from tragic tornado.

continued on page 16 >
Everybody has had a total commitment and a passion to make sure that the job was completed by Sept. 1.

The 14 new student housing buildings consist of about 158,000 square feet and house 699 students. The complex consists of four “quads” (named Watters, Hurt, Ayers and Grace) with four buildings in each quad. A 15th residential building is currently nearing completion that will complete the Ayers quad, and a 30,000-square-foot commons building that will complete the Grace quad is also under construction. It is expected to be complete during the fall 2009 semester.

The new student housing facilities are located in the former location of the Watters and Hurt complexes. The apartment-style suites in the new housing complex accommodate four students, each of whom has a private bedroom. Each suite also features two bathrooms, a kitchenette and a washer/dryer. Each building in the complex contains 40, 48 or 56 bedrooms.

All downstairs apartments contain a safe room to provide storm shelters for students. A memorial marker to the previous buildings is located on the sidewalk through the middle of the complex. In addition to the 14 new buildings, the university rebuilt two buildings – Gray and Dodd – in the Heritage Residential Complex. MG Construction Co. was responsible for the reconstruction of those two buildings, which house 78 students. MG also handled the renovation of Jennings Hall, which sustained heavy damage from the tornado. Jennings also was ready to go for the fall 2008 semester.

The recovery didn’t stop there. On Oct. 21, Union dedicated the new Carl Grant Events Center, a $3.5 million, 16,000-square-foot conference center and banquet facility. The new center seats 600 people and includes a lobby area, public restrooms, a staging room, state-of-the-art audio-visuals and a new president’s dining room. (See story on page 12)

The recovery could not have been possible without the people who served as “God’s agents and instruments of grace and mercy,” Dockery said. Five thousand volunteers came to campus to help in the days after the tornado, and 6,500 donors contributed nearly $17 million to help rebuild the campus.

“For each and every one of these, we are thankful,” Dockery said. “For all that has happened on campus since Feb. 5, we can only say, ‘Thanks be to God.’”
Union students air daily news program in high definition

Camera one has the anchor two-shot. The microphone checks are good. “50 seconds!”
The show opens up to null. Scripts in hand, the anchors look confident and ready. The studio crew relays director cues from the control room with precision and authority. “Open is up. Stand by.”

Such a scene unfolds in hundreds of commercial television stations every day. But this is also happening on the campus of Union University.

Jackson 24/7 is on the air. Although Union students produce the program, it is not limited to campus news. In fact, the intent is to produce a credible, professional news broadcast that covers the entire Jackson community.

“It’s not everyday broadcasting students can sit down behind a news desk and actually produce a live TV show that will mean something to the community,” adds co-anchor Julianne Robbins.

The studio crew and control room leaders. Students rehearsed their roles as anchors, the studio crew and control room leaders.

This as close to the real world of broadcast news as they’re going to get at a school our size,” says Union broadcasting professor Steve Beverly. “Not too many schools our size are doing something five days a week.”

The program includes a summary of local news and weather, plus live interviews that focus on issues and events. Some interviews are in studio, while others are over the phone. After the program airs live at noon, it runs again on tape at 10 p.m. and again the following morning at 7:30.

Juliana Robbins and Matthew Kuchem anchored the first Jackson 24/7 broadcast in late October. President David S. Dockery was the first guest interviewed on the new set. Prior to launching the program, students rehearsed their roles as anchors, studio crew and control room leaders.

“This is something a lot of college students don’t get to experience,” said Robbins, a sophomore from Lawrenceburg, Tenn. “To have this experience now is going to help me a lot in the future.”

“он’t get to experience,” said Robbins, a sophomore from Lawrenceburg, Tenn. “To have this experience now is going to help me a lot in the future.”

It’s not everyday broadcasting students

“Open is up. Stand by.”

“Camera one has the anchor two-shot. The microphone checks are good. “50 seconds!”

Remembering with thanksgiving

Union marks first anniversary of the Feb. 5 tornado

A remarkable recovery from tornado damage left the Union University community thankful — both for God’s providence and for those who helped the university in many different ways during the past year.

A special service at the Carl Perkins Civic Center in Jackson was designed for both expressions of thanksgiving. The event, titled “Remembering February 5: An Evening of Thanksgiving,” included a moment of silence at 7:02 p.m., the precise time the tornado touched down on campus one year earlier.

“From the bottom of our hearts, we want you to know of our deep, deep gratitude,” Dockery said.

But the renewal and restoration hasn’t just taken place to the physical campus, Dockery said. It has taken place in the lives of Union students, faculty, staff and trustees as well.

“Of the big things for me has been understanding what God’s presence really looks like in my life,” said Courtney Bragg, a junior from Birmingham, Ala. “There are times, I think, in everybody’s life when we don’t necessarily understand what God’s doing in the circumstances. We don’t necessarily understand how he’s working or where he is. But we know that he’s there.”

For Kevin Furniss, a senior from Bartlett, Tenn., the last year has given him a renewed appreciation for life. Furniss was trapped for three hours in a collapsed building after the tornado strike and at times thought he was going to die.

But since then, he’s worked in a summer camp, and gone on mission trips to Honduras and Kenya.

“It has really shown that it wasn’t just protection that night, but it was a plan for the rest of my life, that God is still in control and has a future and a plan for me,” Furniss said.
Not long after David Blackstock ('64) retired from his post as Union’s athletic director, he found himself greeting guests at the newly dedicated Heritage Center inside the Carl Grant Events Center. In his new role as a part-time fund raiser for the advancement office, he even led informal tours of the permanent display, which chronicles Union’s history all the way back to 1823.

One of his guests joked that Blackstock was the perfect tour guide, since he had experienced most of Union’s history first-hand. Blackstock’s good-natured sense of humor allows him to deflect such bars with ease. But there is no hyperbole in this observation: David Blackstock’s leadership played a key role in shaping one of the nation’s most successful small college athletic programs over a period of four decades.

He says one of the biggest changes he’s seen in that time is the expansion of areas of study that are available to Union students.

“That number has grown so dramatically that we are able to recruit from a wider pool of students from all over the world,” says Blackstock. “It’s really expanded to the extent that it’s mind-boggling.”

His association started in the early 1960s, when he entered Union as a student-athlete. He played baseball for all four years, on a team that earned a small college national championship in 1963 and was runner-up the following year.

His wife Armita is also a Jackson native and Union graduate (’68). Within nine years of graduation, Blackstock had earned a Master of Education degree from the University of Memphis and a Doctor of Education degree from the University of Southern Mississippi. In 1973, he returned to Union to become athletic director.

Along with co-head coach Linn Stranak, he guided the baseball team to a third-place finish in the 1983 NAIA World Series, still the only season Union has participated in the event.

Perhaps he will be remembered most for his leadership of the women’s basketball program. Starting in 1981, Blackstock spent 18 seasons as head coach of the women’s team, compiling a 509-89 overall record. He credits those outstanding numbers to the student athletes he coached.

“I found out that you can be pretty good if you have pretty good players.” He earned his 500th career victory during the 1998-99 season, and led the Lady Bulldogs to the 1998 NAIA Women’s Basketball National Championship. He also laid a firm foundation for national titles under the leadership of Mark Campbell in 2005 and 2006.

“Sometimes I still slip down to practice,” Blackstock admits. “After all these years, it’s in your blood.”

“David Blackstock court” in large letters. When he watches practices in Fred Delay gymnasium, he sees a recently refurbished facility that now bears the name “David Blackstock court” in large letters.

Sadler, acting athletic director. “He has been a great coach, administrator and friend for not only students, but the players and fans throughout his career.”

As with many high achievers, retirement will require adjustments. He enjoys having a role as fund raising, and he gives a very good tour of the Heritage Center.

“Sometimes I still slip down to practice,” Blackstock admits. “After all these years, it’s in your blood.”

“When he watches practices in Fred Delay gymnasium, he sees a recently refurbished facility that now bears the name “David Blackstock court” in large letters.”

“Walking in and seeing that for the first time was a humbling experience,” he says. “But we will be there a lot. We’ll be Bulldog supporters for the rest of our lives.”
Sandra Andrews Robertson strolled through the old Union University campus in downtown Jackson – a place where she hadn’t been in 50 years.

The memories came flooding back. She recalled the excitement of pledging Chi Omega her freshman year. An only child, Robertson said that day was special because it gave her a whole batch of sisters for the first time.

She pointed to the old women’s dorm – Lovelace Hall – and noted how ill-fitting that name was for the building.

“It was anything but loveless, because there was all kinds of courting that would go on on the front porch,” she said.

Robertson was one of the members of the class of 1959 who came to Jackson in November for Union’s annual Homecoming celebration. As part of the weekend’s activities, the class members took a tour of the old Union campus. Union left that site and moved to its present location in 1975.

“It gives you a lot of memories and support for Union University and how far they’ve gone in the last 50 years,” said Jerald Hill, also a member of the class of 1959, who toured the old campus. “This is something you won’t ever forget.”

Homecoming 2008, “Extreme Makeover: Union Edition,” gave alumni a chance to visit the Union campus to see how it has changed since the Feb. 5 tornado that wiped out most of the student housing buildings.

Visitors to campus toured the new student housing facilities, reconnected with old friends and celebrated the achievements of a number of Union students and alumni who were honored during the weekend’s events.

continued on page 24 >
ALUMNI NEWS

60’s SIXTIES

Beverly Davidson Reid Walton (67) would like to be in contact with Union graduates from 1967 to 1968. She has lived in Australia since 1979 and has worked as a teacher, social worker and professional musician and now continues to work part-time. Address: P.O. Box 1172, Spring Hill, Brisbane, Australia AA 4004. Phone: 07 3839 9097 (Australia). E-mail: beverly9@myway.com

Don L. Dilday (69) is currently administrative pastor at Immanuel Baptist Church in Lexington, Ky. Address: 2013 Hill Gail Way, Versailles, KY 40383. E-mail: dond@lex.org.

70’s SEVENTIES

Denise McCoy (73) has recently been promoted to the Southeast regional vice president of Community Education Partners. The Nashville-based company works in partnership with school districts to provide an alternative setting to help low achieving and disruptive students. Denise received her educational leadership master’s degree from Nova University. She has spent 20 years coaching girls’ basketball in the Orange County public schools and is recognized as one of Florida’s most successful coaches with 399 wins. She was selected to the Jackson-Madison County Sports Hall of Fame in 2002. Address: 2809 Marsala Court, Orlando, FL 32806.

Dolorios J. Williams (73) has been named the new director of workforce development for the Greater Memphis Chamber. Williams was an economic development representative for Memphis Light, Gas and Water, and recently retired from his employment there after 29 years of service. In his new position, Williams says he will pursue partnerships with business, education and training operations. “I will work to identify the skills that are needed in the work force to promote growth.”

Harvey Grounds (74) and Linda Allen Grounds (74) serve on the board of directors for Charterman Inc., where he has been in management since 1991. He also owns Harvey Grounds Coins—dealing in American silver and gold coins. Linda taught English at the college level for 15 years and is now self-employed editing books and writing neighborhood newsletters. She recently edited a novel by Harold Torak. Their one daughter, Sonya, and her husband, Adam Thomas, graduated from law school in May 2008. Address: 6571 Hickory Brook Road, Chattanooga, TN 37423. E-mail: rambletree122671@yahoo.com

Mike Hardy (75) has retired in East Tennessee. Address: 598 Coco Creek Road, Sunbright, TN 37872.

Rick A. Myer (75) is the director of the Center for Crisis Intervention and Prevention at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pa. E-mail: myerwa@mail.duq.edu.

Kay Delaney Hart (78) was named the West Tennessee Grand Division Director of the Year at its annual banquet held in Kayville. Kay was one of the top three veterans in the state for 2008. She teaches English, drama and creative writing at Scotts Hill High School in Henderson County. Address: 31905 Highway 104 S, Reagan, TN 38363. E-mail: hartkev412tn.net

Ramona Vance (78) and her husband David recently celebrated 28 years of marriage. They have three children and two grandchildren. Their son, U.S. Army Spc. Christopher Vance, has a son, 8-month-old Colton. Their daughter, Marcia V. Davis, lives in Hattiesburg, Miss., and has a 6-month-old daughter, Autumn Elyse. A second son, Michael J. Vance lives in Louisville, Miss. Ramona is a self-employed registered nurse working as a nurse consultant specializing in long term care—www.ramonomade.com. Address: PO. Box 10865, Jackson, TN 38308. E-mail: myhappylivespensivt@hgod@ yahoo.com

Glenne Moore (79) has been named the president-elect for the 5,000-member Memphis Area Association of Realtors®. He is principal broker and owner of Glenn Moore Realty in Collierville, Tenn. In 2007 he was elected to the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations Board of Review. He is the Bishop of the Unitarian Universalist Association’s annual convention. He also serves on the board of directors for Page Rob- bin Adult Day Care Center (Alzheim-er’s) in Collierville, Tenn. Address: 1260 Tyler Place, Cordova, TN 38018. Email: gmoore@glennmore.com

80’s EIGHTIES

Leo Perser (82) was appointed program director for the new Doctor in Theology and Apologetics degree at Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary in January 2008. Perser had been instrumental in the program’s start up. He and his wife Lisa are leaders in a new Sunday school class for graduate students and young professionals at Thomas Road Baptist Church. Address: 186 Tanglewood Drive, Lynchburg, VA 24502-4074. E-mail: Perser8@uno.edu

Carol Morris Silder (85) was licensed to the gospel ministry by the Miami American Baptist Church USA in May 2008. Carol has served as choir director and adult Sunday school teacher since the death of her husband, Charles T. “Chuck” Silder (86) in 2003. She continues to work in the agricultural and biological engineering department at Purdue University. Address: 2300 Estancia Lane, Lafayette, IN 47909. E-mail: sikler@purdue.edu

Thomas Smith (85) and Donna Dunavant Smith (85) have relocated to Golden, Colo., where Thomas assumed the role of vice president for In- trawest Shared Services. Intrawest resorts are found in some of the world’s most spectacular settings including Canadian Mountain Holidays, the largest heli-ski- ing operation in the world. Address: PO. Box 16520, Golden, CO 80440. E-mail: testsimh@earthlink.net

continued from page 23

Six new inductees were honored at the annual Sports Hall of Fame dinner during homecoming festivities: James A. “Jimmy” Bryant, ’90, track; Bonnie G. Giddens Jr., ’87, baseball; Keith Reynolds, ’77, base- ball; and Jim Swope, men’s basketball coach, 1975-87. Two were inducted posthumously: Joe Gannon, football coach 1919-25; and Lisa Hinens, ’83, basketball.

The Homecoming chapel service on Nov. 7 included a time of recognition for the class of 1959, in addition to the pres- entation of the annual Alumni Awards. Union history professor Stephen Carls has spent 20 years coaching girls’ basketball in the Orange County public schools and is recognized as one of Florida’s most successful coaches with 399 wins. She was selected to the Jackson-Madison County Sports Hall of Fame in 2002. Address: 2809 Marsala Court, Orlando, FL 32806.

When Gary Williams was hired as the 2008 Homecoming head coach, he promised the fans, “There was something new and different by both alumni and friends of the Uni- versity. There was something for the entire Union University family.”

• Jessica Yates, sophomore, from Melbourne, Fla. She is the daughter of Jess and Bertie Yates.

• Natali Wall, junior, from Memphis. She is the daughter of Don and Jana West.

• Tori Gill, senior, from Union City, Tenn. She is the daughter of Brock and Stacie Gill.

• Sarah Logan, senior, from Franklin, Tenn. She is the daughter of David and Terri Logan.

• Ashley Schreiber, senior, from Murfreesboro, Tenn. She is the daughter of Mike and Ange Schreiber.

In addition, Will Guenewald and Elizabeth Walker were named Mr. and Miss Union. Guenewald, a senior from Hender- sonville, Tenn., is the son of Bill and Terri Guenewald. Walker, of Louisville, Ky., is the daughter of Doug and Virginia Walker.

In every way, the 2008 Homecoming was a huge success, from Friday’s 50-year reunion for the class of 1959 and the Sports Hall of Fame, all the way to Saturday’s “Arts in the Park” celebration on the Great Lawn and the Sports Hall of Fame, all the way to Saturday’s “Arts in the Park” celebration on the Great Lawn and the Sports Hall of Fame. Afterwards, the entire Union University family was invited to enjoy “Arts in the Park” on the Great Lawn before the Homecoming 2009, November 6-7
Alumni will help create new Union Directory

Union University needs your help in preparing a new alumni directory. Starting Feb. 26, alumni can phone in listing information to Harris Connect, the company that is compiling the directory. The dedicated line for Union University alumni is 800-546-3730. Calling hours are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekdays, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Saturdays and 12:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. Sundays.

Harris operators will begin contacting alumni from whom they have not heard on March 23. Harris will accept updates until May 18.

There are opportunities to participate beyond simply updating your entry in the 2003 edition. Alumni will be asked to help choose a cover for the book, which is scheduled for release in August. They are also invited to submit brief essays and some photos to update everyone on their lives since leaving Union.

Alumni may also elect to have information omitted from the publication, and anyone who chooses to do so will not obligate the Alumni Office to make a submission for publication.

Cover proposals

William E. Haynes (HI ’91) was named to Reuters Advisors’ Top Advisors of 2008 for the East South Central Regional achievement and the state of Tennessee as one of the top financial advisers across America. Billy, and his wife, have two children. Address: 2746 Meigs Drive, F42, Murfreesboro, TN 37128. E-mail: bitb@haynesbarker.com

Bert Montgomery (90) and Jennifer Hicks Montgomery (78) have recently moved to Starkville, Miss. Bert is serving as pastor of the University Baptist Church on the Mississippi State University campus. Bert’s book, “Elvis, Willie, Jesus & Me & the Misunderstandings of a Church Misfit,” will be published by Smyth & Helwys in early 2009. Address: 106 Tanglewood Drive, Starkville, MS 39759. E-mail: bertmont@juno.com

Carrie S. Rostollan (90) has been offering entertainment programs as a professional magician to the public for five years. Her Web site is – www.proximity-illusions.com. She is an active member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians and Fellowship of Christian Magicians.

Address: 9400 Springs St., Auburn, AL 36832. E-mail: suahn@juno.com

90sNINETIES

Teddy Cloar (95) and Ronda Machalek Trent (94) has completed a master’s degree in education with an emphasis in instructional technology and design at Texas Tech University in 2008. Address: 9105 Peace St., Keller, TX 76248. E-mail: the.trent@verizon.net

Jennifer Schlenker Branton (92) was named a vice president with Regions Bank where she works as a manager overseeing portfolio administration in the corporate real estate department. She and her husband, Mike, have two children, Emma Caroline, 9 and Bennett, 4. They relocated to the Birmingham, Ala., area in 2007 and are members of Hunter Street Baptist Church. Address: 2216 Pleasant Street Baptist Church. Address: 2216 Pleasant

E. Blake Watkins (94) is the chair of pharmaceutical sciences at the new School of Pharmacy at Union University. Lisa Meadows Watkins (94) is a nurse at the Humboldt Manor Nursing Center. The couple has two boys, Daniel, 14 and Matthew, 11. Address: 86 Breaston Square, Jackson, TN 38305. E-mail: Blake–bwatkins@uua.edu and Lisa–watkins@spuls.net

Michele Cain (95) has moved and is director of Sylvan Learning Center in Florence, Ala. Address: 1617 Birdwood Drive, Florence, AL 35630. E-mail: michele_cain@hotmail.com

Dwayne Clair (98) and Pam Honeycutt Clair (98) have four children. Pam is a homemaker and home schoolers for the children. Dwayne accepted the program director position with the Alamo Area Council Boy Scouts of America in San Antonio, Texas. Dwayne has been a part of the West Tennessee Area Council, Jackson, Tenn., for five years as a district executive. Address: 7411 Fiddlerwood, San Antonio, TX 78250. E-mail: dld08@msn.com

Chad Rowland (95) and Kristy Vaughn, a Texas DPSS have been a part of a Clarksville, Tenn., church plant, Grace Community Church – www.gracechurch.com – since the fall of 2005. Chad and Charity have two children, a daughter, Madison, 8 and a son, Broek, 6. Address: 5137 Clydesdale Drive, Clarksville, TN 37043. E-mail: chad@gracechurch.com

Matthew Schubert (95) works for Central Texas Veterans Health Care system and was promoted to administrative officer and program specialist for social work service in the Office of the Chief of Social Work Service. He continues to teach as adjunct faculty in Baylor University’s Honors Program. He also serves on the editorial board and board of directors for various professional publications and organizations. Address: 10141 China Crest Drive, Waco, TX 76708. E-mail: germaine@yahoo.com

Klay Aspinwall (96), a graduate of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, has been called to be senior pastor of historic First Baptist Church in Washington, Ga., which was founded by Elder Jesse Mercer in 1827. He and his wife Amy are the proud parents of five children, Hannah, Klay Jr., Elizabeth, Abigail and Jackson ranging from 4 to 13 years old. He is currently considering doctoral study at the University of Georgia. Address: 105 Tignall Road, Washington, GA 30673. E-mail: mlas@prodigy.net

Frederick Firtle (96) is now working for the Tennessee Department of Corrections, Nashville, Tenn., as an information resource support specialist. Frederick had been living in Mississippi. Address: 22 Archway Circle, Apt. C22, Dickson, TN 37055. E-mail: firtle@msn.com

Cover proposals

John Larry Kea HI’91 and his wife Elizabeth is serving as pastor of the Nashville Mission Board in Western Europe. John received his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the University of Kentucky in 1994. He is currently a master at The Southern Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. The couple has three children: Noah, Elina and Metra. E-mail: johnleaitobarkena@bellsouth.net

Jerry Carter (86) has accepted a full-time position at First Baptist Millington as director of media and technology. Jerry had previously worked for First Tennessee Bank for 19 years. Jerry is married to Victoria “Vicki” Sanders Carter (87) and has one son, Christopher. Jerry and Vicki reside in Millington, Millington, TN 38053. E-mail: jcarten@fbc-millington.org

Omar L. Hamada (86) accepted a position as director of regional maternal research. Pfizer Global Medical, Neurosciences, Pain & Inflammation Division East. He has relocated his consulting practice from Rutherford County to Cool Springs, Tenn., and maintains an office at Baptist and Vanderbilt hospitals. Hamada serves as an associate clinical professor at Vanderbilt University’s School of Medicine and as conference faculty and speaker for the American Academy of Family Physicians. He is the teaching director of the Brentwood Evening Community Bible Study and co-founder and executive board member of Peace Fund Lebanon, a 501c(3) global fund supporting re-construction via micro-economic growth. He and his wife have three children. Address: 1581 Fawn Creek Road, Brentwood, TN 37027. E-mail: olhamada@comcast.net

Diane Arthur Harris (86) from Jacksonville, Fl., and former roommates Karen Turk from Memphis, Tenn., Sharon Ford Bouman from Homer, Ark., and Pamela Barlow Willer (missionary – Africa) had a Duncan 5 Roommate Reunion in Jackson, Fla., in May 2008. E-mail: lady662@dad.com

Howard K. Hadley (87) recently received the Award for Financial Reporting Achievement. As city treasurer, Howard learned that the City of Humboldt, III., attain the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting awarded by the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada. The GFOA is a nonprofit professional association serving approximately 17,000 government finance professionals.

Robin Cooper Wilbanks (88) joined the faculty of Nashville State Community College as a member of the psychology department. Robin has been an adjunct professor at NSCC-Humphreys County since 2005. In addition to teaching duties, Robin continues to work in the private sector as a therapist. Address: 198 N. Forrest Ave., Camden, TN 38320. E-mail: robin.cooper.wilbanks@nscc.edu

Ryan and Michelle Arvis (90) have been living in Mississippi. Ryan has published a book entitled “Hurst’s Wurst: Colonel Fielding Hurst and the Six Turquoise Cavalry U.S.A.” It describes the experiences of a regiment of Southerners who sided with the Union rather than the Confederacy during the American Civil War. The book is available on his Web site – www.kevinmunday.com. Address: 204 Delaney Circle, Dickson, TN 37055. E-mail: kmd008@comcast.net

Richard Christian (94) was called to Berean Bible Church in New Orleans as pastor of worship and children’s ministries. Richard and his wife, Jamie, have two children, Caleb, 15 and Lydia, 12. Address: 2417 Woodward Blvd., Harvey, LA 70058. E-mail: richard@bereanola.com

Melissa Crews Neff (90) is a principal at Firus, the independent accounting firm based in Bartlet, IL. Melissa has 10 years of experience in public accounting and has specialized in income tax compliance and transfer strategy. Melissa’s areas of expertise include international, financial and personal income tax. Address: 270 Stage Road, Reogn, TN 38368. E-mail: melissa200660@yahoo.com

Trey Holden Simer ('94) is a reporter for The Jackson Sun. Trey received his first place award in features reporting from the Tennessee Associated Press Managing Editors. Her story “Finding Home” focused on the homeless problem of Jackson. She received second place in features reporting from the Tennessee Press Association for the same article. Address: 61 Twin Oaks Place, Jackson, TN 38359. E-mail: tracie@sunet.net.

Lindsay Stavish McDonald ('05) was awarded third place by the Tennessee Associated Press for her feature photo of a local carnival published in The Jackson Sun. She and her husband Jon have now moved to southern Illinois. Lindsay is working as a teaching assistant in a local elementary school and facilitates in wedding photography and family portraits. Jon is a pastor of a country church and the Lord is greatly blessing the ministry. Address: Route 1, Box 230, Albion, IL 62960. E-mail: tskight@woh.rr.com.

Johnathan Newman ('06) received his Master of Divinity degree from the University of Memphis and is teaching at a family medicine residency program in June. He plans to return to classroom teaching next year. They have two children: Nathan, 7 and Lily, 3. Address: 15445 Highway 61, Wilsonville, AL 35186.

Michele Heck ('03) serves as an admission counselor for the University of Missouri School of Law. Michele was selected for recognition by the 2008 class of the Mizou ’39 Award. Each student selects a faculty or staff mentor who had inspired him or her during their time at Mizou. This program was created by the Mizou Alumni Association Student Board to honor the spirit of service modeled by the university foundation’s leaders in 1839. E-mail: heckm@mizzou.edu.

Trent Okerson ('02) earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Nashville School of Law in May 2007. Jay and his wife Jennifer are serving with World Medical Missions in Africa with the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. They have three daughters Sahara, 7, Cambria, 5 and Tirza, 2. Address: 12570 Westbury Lane, Murfreesboro, TN 37129.

Mandy Marie Smith White ('08) married Darrell White on Oct. 23, 2007, at a beach wedding in Negril, Jamaica. Darrell works for Kaplan’s Home Inc. as the new store coordinator and Mandy works for the Jackson Area Chamber of Commerce as the manager of research and economic development. Address: 59 Carriage Drive, Jackson, TN 38305. E-mail: mwhite@jackson.com.

Carole Smith ('93) will be serving with the International Mission Board in Central and Eastern Europe. Carole earned the MAIS degree from Union. E-mail: carolamillie@yahoo.com.

Nathan Smith ('03) and Alexis Abney Scott ('03) have received master’s degrees recently. Nathan received a Master in Sport Administration from the University of Louisville. Alexis is in his third year of ministering as the director of recreation ministry at Red Bank Baptist Church. Alexis completed her master’s in teaching from Lee University. She teaches third grade at Alpex Crest Elementary School. Address: 3909 Tacoma Ave., Chattanooga, TN 37415. E-mail: nathan@nathan.com.

Nina Kight (’92) and Rita White Kight (’98) were bridesmaids. Nina’s Chi Omega little sister, Elly Smallman Hall (’98), was a bridesmaid. Amanda Brown McClellan (’98) married Derek Dennis on Dec. 15, 2007, at First Baptist Church of Hendersonville, Tenn. Andrea earned her Master of Business Administration degree from Middle Tennessee State University and is a project manager at Fox Ridge Homes of Middle Tennessee, Inc. Andrea graduated with a Master of Science in Science degree from St. Louis University in 2005. After completing her graduate degree, he was employed by Missouri Valley Partners as an assistant equity trader. E-mail: robinjohn@gbeglobal.net.

Mark Bustrum (’06) and Hannah Gillihan Bustrum are serving with the International Mission Board in Western Europe. They have three daughters Sahara, 7, Cambria, 5 and Tira, 2. Address: 32 Bradford Lane, Jackson, TN 38305. E-mail: bustrum@gmail.com.

Maysville Hoge (’02) married Edie Ward Barnett in Huntington, Tenn., on June 18, 2008. They were married in a beachside ceremony at Santa Rosa Beach, Fla. Johnathan and Edie are making their home in Jackson, with their daughter, Ali Elizabeth Butler, age 9. Address: 64 Oxford Drive, Jackson, TN 38350. E-mail: ediebarnett@hotmail.com.

Blaire Dalhke Lindsay ('03) was married on July 22, 2006, to Timothy Lee Lindsay, of Davison, Mich. Blaire teaches third grade at Oakland Elementary School. Tim works for bankrate.com’s credit card division located in Burtlett, Tenn. Address: 20 Michelle Core, Oak- land, TN 38060. E-mail: timandblaire@yahoo.com.

Natalie D. VanEman ('96) began her coursework in the Master of Art in Interpretation program at Gallaudet University, Washington, D.C. in her August 2008. Address: 193 E. Maynard Ave., Columbus, OH 43202. E-mail: ndv@hotmail.com.

Todd Reid ('96) celebrated his five year anniversary with Wyeth Pharmaceuticals where he is a territory m.D.G. in their vaccines division. He also received a Level II promotion for performance and for pursuing a certified medical representative title designation. Address: 5488 Chapel Meadow Cove, Arlington, TN 38002. E-mail: reidt@wyeth.com.

Jay Bush (’98) earned his Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from Nashville School of Law in May 2007. Jay and his wife Dana have relocated to Jackson, where he is an attorney with Waldrop & Hall, P.A. Address: 34 Farmington Drive, Jackson TN 38305. E-mail: bushj@waldropall.com.

Brad (’99) and Jillie Gambrell Hambrick (’98 ’99) have a new address. Jillie accepted a position to complementing the work of local ministries. Address: 1344 Shadow Oak Drive, Lakeview, KY, in 2007.

Carlie Scarbrough (’90) completed her residency training at At His Image Family Medicine Residency program in June. She is currently living in Birmingham, Ala., and is teaching at a family medicine residency program there. She has been appointed with World Medical Missions and will be leaving in January to serve in Central Asia for two years. Address: 224 Maxwell Road S.E., Birmingham, AL 35202. E-mail: cascarbro@hotmail.com.

Carrick Bell (’01) is a new address. Carrick continues to serve as executive director of Crossroads Counseling – www.crossroadscounseling.org – a para-church ministry committed to complementing the work of local churches through counseling and seminars. Address: 1344 Shadow Oak Drive, Evans, GA 30809.

Greg Parsons (’99) accepted a position with First Bank as vice president of commercial real estate. Greg and his wife, Cassee and two sons, Marcus and Luke, have relocated to Jackson. Address: 49 Storm- away Drive, Jackson, TN 38305.

Carly Beth Puckett (’01) is a new address. Carly accepted a position with Red Deluxe Brand Development, a retail management group. She will be working in Arizona.

Julie Dodson (’02) accepted a position with the Alcoa Foundation as their assistant to the director of community relations.

Mark Bustrum (’06) and Hannah Gillihan Bustrum are serving with the International Mission Board in Western Europe. They have three daughters Sahara, 7, Cambria, 5 and Tira, 2. Address: 32 Bradford Lane, Jackson, TN 38305. E-mail: bustrum@gmail.com.

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Mary C. Mount Dunbar (’02) married Chris Dunbar on July 17, 2007. She served a Master of Arts in English degree from the University of Mississippi in May 2008. Chris is in the U.S. Army and currently serving in Iraq. Address: 485 Montezuma Road, Henderson, TN 38340. E-mail: marykd3@hotmail.com.


Carly Bell (’01) is a new address. Carly accepted a position with Red Deluxe Brand Development, a retail management group. She will be working in Arizona.

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Mary C. Mount Dunbar (’02) married Chris Dunbar on July 17, 2007. She served a Master of Arts in English degree from the University of Mississippi in May 2008. Chris is in the U.S. Army and currently serving in Iraq. Address: 485 Montezuma Road, Henderson, TN 38340. E-mail: marykd3@hotmail.com.

Karen Reeves Wyatt (’92) and her husband Steve welcomed their first child, Matthew Logan, born May 28, 2007. He weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 20 inches long. Brynna Spain (’01) is Luke’s proud grandmother. Address: 909 Cleves St., Old Hickory, TN 37138. E-mail: x061700@aol.com

Damon Juckett (’99) and Alicia Jackson Juckett (’98) welcomed their first child, Jackson Brown, on Sept. 12, 2007. They currently live in Collierville, Tenn. Email: a.juckett79@yahoo.com.

Miriam L. Miller Davis (’99) married Whitt Davis and has two children, Evan Charles, born in 2006 and Katharine, born in 2008. Whitt is a certified public accountant working as a controller in Franklin, Tenn. What works at Franklin’s Laurel Core Golf Course as superintendent. Address: 1904 Balies Trace Drive, Spring Hill, TN 37174. E-mail: s061700@aol.com

Bryan Yosso Spain (’00) and her husband Bart are happy to announce the birth of Luke Henry on Jan. 16, 2008. Luke weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 20 inches long. Brynna is a designer for Mckinney & Ferrer Interiors, Nashville, Tenn. Beverly Yosso (’02), is Luke’s proud grandmother. Address: 909 Cleves St., Old Hickory, TN 37138. E-mail: brynnas@yahoo.com. www.uu.edu

Matthew R. West (’99) and his wife April welcomed their first child Isaac Steven on Aug. 7, 2007. Isaac weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Matt works at Ted, McCormick & Maroney, P.L.C. and April works at The Eye Clinic. Address: 646 Gettysburg Drive, Jackson, TN 38305. E-mail: mtrwtt77@yahoo.com

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Matthew R. West (’99) and his wife April welcomed their first child Isaac Steven on Aug. 7, 2007. Isaac weighed 7 pounds, 14 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Matt works at Ted, McCormick & Maroney, P.L.C. and April works at The Eye Clinic. Address: 646 Gettysburg Drive, Jackson, TN 38305. E-mail: mtrwtt77@yahoo.com
Elizabeth Matthews Brogdon (’01) and husband Stephen have a new baby, Peyton Elizabeth, born on Feb. 5, 2008. Peyton weighed 7 pounds, 2 ounces and was 19 inches long. Elizabeth is currently working as a neonatal nurse practitioner serving the Middle Tennessee Hospital Corporation of America hospitals with Mid-Tennessee Neonatologists. She received her master’s in nursing from Vanderbilt Uni- versity in 2005. Address: 6200 Willow Oak Drive, Nashville, TN 37221.

Justin Taylor Perry (’01) and his wife Jacey are pleased to announce the birth of Abigail Renée. She was born July 18, 2007, weighed 7 pounds, 10 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Mary was a stay-at-home mom and Daniel is a bond trader for Humboldt City Schools. Address: 1403 Clifton Pond Road, Louisville, NC 27754. E-mail: jtperry_30@yahoo.com

Russell Hilton (’02) and Julie Black Hilton (’04) are pleased to announce the birth of a son, James Hilton, born on Aug. 25, 2007. Jameson weighed 8 pounds, 2 ounces and was 19 1/4 inches long. His mother and father are both nurses and are currently living in Shreveport, La. Address: 2910 Old Caldwell Road, Prizeville, TN 38251. E-mail: timjenkins1980@hotmail.com and jenkins1980@hotmail.com.

Brenda Moon (’03) and husband Adam are pleased to announce the birth of their son, Hunter Thomas, born on Nov. 10, 2007. He weighed 6 pounds, 10 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Adam is currently working as an attorney in Nashville. Address: 2620 Willow Oak Drive, Nashville, TN 37221.

Clint Smith (’05) and his wife Deborah announce the birth of Nathan on Oct. 8, 2007. He weighed 6 pounds, 11 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Clint is the associate pastor of students and education at First Baptist Church in Camden, Tenn., and Deborah is a nurse at a local hospital. Address: 123 Camden Bay Lodge Road, Camden, TN 38320. E-mail: cmrithall@bellsouth.net

Mary Ellen weighed 8 pounds, 5 ounces and was 22 inches long. Address: 1100 American Way, Jonesborough, TN 5769. E-mail: paul.d.richey@gmail.com

Daniel Banks (’02) and Katie Hemphill Banks (’02) welcomed a daughter, Aubrey Dare, on May 12, 2007. She weighed 8 pounds, 5 ounces and was 21 inches long. Katie is a stay-at-home mom and Daniel is a bond trader at Morgan Keegan in Memphis, Tenn. Address: 893 Sheridan St., Memphis, TN 38107. E-mail: dlbanks@hotmail.com.

Bethany Bosser Vickery (’02) and her husband Jonathan welcomed a daughter, Claire Elisabeth, on Dec. 22, 2007. Claire weighed 6 pounds, 6 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Bethany had been a special education teacher for Shelby County schools and is now a stay-at-home mom. John is in his second year of residency in internal medicine. Address: 3548 Tiffany Oaks Lane, Bartlett, TN 38135. E-mail: brickery@comcast.net

R. Adam Clark (’02) and Heather Mounbray Clark (’03) announce the birth of their daughter, Aurora “Rory” Nicole, born Dec. 5, 2007. She weighed 6 pounds, 8 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Rory has a big brother, Wilkes. Address: 3466 Stargrove Drive, Franklin, TN 37067. E-mail: nicoleeaton@comcast.net

Jeremy Hollie (’02) and Rachel Poll Holdie (’03) were blessed with twin girls, Esther Lynn and Joy Eliza- beth on Feb. 2, 2008. They have served with an alas name for some time in Central Asia and now serve at the International Christian School of Lima in Peru. Address: 3882 Fawn Valley, Memphis, TN 38125. E-mail: jeremyhollie@uaisis.org

Diego and Mariana Greco (’03) are pleased to announce the birth of their first son, Robert Miles, on Nov. 1, 2007. Address: 3415 Plum Point Drive E., Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: ljd6259@hotmail.com

Bethany Bosser Vickery (’02) and her husband Jonathan welcomed a daughter, Claire Elisabeth, on Dec. 22, 2007. Claire weighed 6 pounds, 6 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Bethany had been a special education teacher for Shelby County schools and is now a stay-at-home mom. John is in his second year of residency in internal medicine. Address: 3548 Tiffany Oaks Lane, Bartlett, TN 38135. E-mail: brickery@comcast.net

Kelly Rhodes Paschall (’03) announces the birth of her second son, Gavin Thomas, born July 6, 2007. Address: 225 Old Caldwell Road, Puyallup, WA 98371.

Jeremy Wright (’03) and Katie McBride Wright (’04) welcomed a third child, James Nolan, on Aug. 25, 2008. Address: 3415 Plum Point Drive E., Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: jjnwright95@yahoo.com

Joshua had a son, Cooper John, on Nov. 24, 2008. Address: 3415 Plum Point Drive E., Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: jnwright95@yahoo.com

Tim Jenkins (’06) and his wife Angela announce the birth of their second son, Nathan, on Oct. 1, 2008. He weighed 6 pounds, 2 ounces and was 19 1/2 inches long. Tim works for Hershey and Christi is a homemaker. Address: 6225 W. Ttreet St., Unit 3, Ratirjohn, ID 83858. E-mail: jandbrigg@yahoo.com

Mary Beth Jett (’03) and husband Tico Parson, July 7, 2007. Their daughter, 2-year-old Anna Marie. Tim works for Russell Stover Candies in Kansas City, Mo. Address: 205 N. E. Thames Court, Blue Springs, MO 64014. E-mail: Tim-jenkins1980@hotmail.com and Angela-speckledeeg@yahoo.com

Jeremy Hollie (’02) and Rachel Poll Holdie (’03) were blessed with twin girls, Esther Lynn and Joy Eliza- beth on Feb. 2, 2008. They have served with an alas name for some time in Central Asia and now serve at the International Christian School of Lima in Peru. Address: 3882 Fawn Valley, Memphis, TN 38125. E-mail: jeremyhollie@uaisis.org

Paul Richey (’02) and his wife Rachel were pleased Mary Ellen welcomed May 8, 2008.

Lindsey Grace Darby (’05) was blessed with her first son, Robert Miles, on Nov. 1, 2007. Address: 3415 Plum Point Drive E., Olive Branch, MS 38654. E-mail: ljd6259@hotmail.com

Memorial:


Rosa B. Anderson (’31) June 3, 2008 Nashville, Tenn.

Mary Adair Settle (’35) Jan. 19, 2008 Biggersville, Miss.


Hannan Andrews (’38) Dec. 11, 2007 Holoulka, Miss.

Arlene Johnson Dent (’38) March 10, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Sara Emerson (’38) Aug. 29, 2008 Nashville, Tenn.


Mildred L. McLeom (’41) Aug. 4, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Mary Jo Henderson (’42) Mar. 12, 2008 Oak Ridge, Tenn.

Mary Willene Neely (’42) May 5, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Tom Meredith (’43) Sept. 8, 2008 Edwardsville, Ill.

Mildred Hall Blevel (’44) Jan. 29, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Pauline M. Frick (’44) June 1, 2008 Memphis, Tenn.

Raymon B. Carlock Sr. (’44) April 11, 2008 Memphis, Tenn.

William F. Crawford (’45) April 17, 2008 Memphis, Tenn.


Frederick Jr. (’45) Sept. 27, 2008 Brentwood, Tenn.


Wayne Austin Hinson (’47) Sept. 27, 2008 Blytheville, Ark.

Betty J. Seabough (’48) June 24, 2008 Kansas City, Mo.


Paul F. Carr (’49) June 24, 2008 Kansas City, Mo.


Paul F. Carr (’49) June 24, 2008 Kansas City, Mo.

Vance Marberry (’56)
Feb. 14, 2008 Olde Branch, Miss.

Rita Jean Tillman Burkert (’57)
Oct. 12, 2007 Humboldt, Tenn.

Billy Rhea Daster (’57)
Aug. 6, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Jo F. Bateman (’58)
Aug. 8, 2008 Crossville, Tenn.

Bobby Brown McWherter (’58)
Aug. 19, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Gayla Hope Dennis Farrar (’59)

Samuel Frank Congiardo Jr. (’62)
June 22, 2008 Selmer, Tenn.

Joe Scott Layman (’67)
Jan. 21, 2008 Marshfield, Mo.

Carolyn Jenkins Barnette (’69)
March 15, 2008 Montgomery, Ala.

Diane Clarke (’70)

Joy Truex (’74) (’80)
Oct. 12, 2007 Jackson, Tenn.

Amy Elizabeth Jowers (’76)
Nov. 27, 2007 Jackson, Tenn.

Jerry L. Roberts (’79)
May 30, 2008 Decatur, Ala.

Lela Ulely (’83)
Jan. 24, 2008 Memphis, Tenn.

Melissa Moore (’84)
June 21, 2008 Lobelville, Tenn.

Jacqueline A. Dunavant (’91)

Addie King (’97)
Sept. 19, 2008 Jackson, Tenn.

Betty Phinnessee (’97)
March 14, 2008 Hickory Valley, Tenn.

Amber D. Mathenia (’91)
Jan. 22, 2008 Millington, Tenn.

Jonathan Stonecipher (’93)
Feb. 21, 2008 Manford, Tenn.

Sholonda Thomas Miller (’06)
Oct. 21, 2008 Memphis, Tenn.

Alvin Lee “Al” Allen Jr. (Professor)
Feb. 14, 2008 Kansas City, Mo.

Evelyn Carter Foote (Instructor)
Aug. 23, 2008 Fairbanks, Alaska

Bill Dameron (Friend)
Aug. 29, 2008 Trenton, Tenn.

David Melvin with patient Mary Ann Deck, celebrating the 20th anniversary of heart transplantation in Cincinnati. Photo Courtesy University of Cincinnati Department of Surgery

David Melvin: Heart Surgeon and Innovator

David Melvin (’64) died Nov. 8, 2008, at University Hospital in Cincinnati following a three-week hospitalization. He was 66.

Melvin led one of the Midwest’s early heart transplant programs at the University of Cincinnati 25 years ago. He performed more than 100 successful transplants, but said in a summer 2006 Unionite story the decisions before surgery were more difficult for him than the procedure itself. “The most difficult part of it is deciding who gets one, and who doesn’t,” Melvin said.

At the height of his career, Melvin gave up heart surgery and started taking freshman engineering classes. Ultimately, he earned a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering and started doing extensive research on mechanical hearts. He patented an external harness for diseased hearts called RePower.

A native of Bradford, Tenn., Melvin was vice president of the student body and a founding member of the Lambda Zeta chapter of Lambda Chi Alpha on the Union campus. He is survived by four sons and his wife Sue, all of whom were with him when he passed away.

You want to invest in building a strong union for the next generation.
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The sun sets as Homecoming 2008 came to a close on November 8th. Be sure to save the date for Homecoming 2009 November 6-7.