



The DEAF LUTHERAN



Official Publication of the International Lutheran Deaf Association & the Board for Missions of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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St. Louis, Mo.

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BYINGTON NAMED PRESIDENT-ELECT AS EIGHTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION CONCLUDES AT MILWAUKEE

Ronald Byington, Milwaukee, Wis., general convention chairperson and president of the ILDA Central Regional conference, was chosen president-elect during the final business session of the eighth biennial convention of the International Lutheran Deaf Association July 4-7. Byington, who is also president of

the Wisconsin Association of the Deaf, succeeds Lester Ahls, Cedar Falls, Iowa, who assumed the presidency following the second and final two-year term of Charles J. Kotal, Los Angeles.

Named secretary was Beth Firnhaber, Philadelphia, Pa., succeeding Lillian Long, who was ineligible following four years of service. Jackie Kemper, St. Louis, treasurer and Rev. Ronald Friedrich, Dallas, Texas, pastoral adviser, were both returned to offices for second terms.

Important business matters coming before the convention included at least two resolutions calling for efforts to memorialize Synod to create a separate board for deaf ministry and a full time staff person to oversee the work of serving the deaf. Also called for would be evaluation procedures to study the effectiveness of deaf ministry within the various districts of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and listing consultants proficient in manual communication to carry out this task.

Tabled for further study was a proposal
BYINGTON NAMED (continue on page 4)

BOY GRADUATES IN TOP 2% OF HIS CLASS

Visitors attending the ILDA convention in Los Angeles four years ago may recall a young boy named Tim Johnston being hurt in an accident at the amusement park, resulting in his being in a coma, and a prayer being said for his recovery at Sunday's closing worship. the good Lord surely answered those prayers as Tim graduated from Lahser high school in Bloomfield Hills, Mich. with a 4.0 grade point aver-



TIM JOHNSTON

age.

Out of a graduating class of 350 students, Tim is just one of seven to receive awards this year, among them a 4-year scholarship from the Oakland Press of Pontiac, Mich. Also received was the Presidential Academic Fitness award and Certificate of Academic Achievement. Phi Beta Kappa, national honor society also recognized Tim's extraordinary achievement of graduating Summa Cum Laude

BOY GRADUATES

(continue on page 8)

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF: JUST HOW EFFECTIVE IS IT?

I recently returned from a three-week on-site visit to famine and development programs in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. What I saw and experienced is cause for thanksgiving and a renewed assurance that funds given through LCMS World Relief do make a positive difference in the lives of poor and hungry people.

Yes, your help reaches the poorest of the
WORLD RELIEF (continue on page 2)

MISSOURI SYNOD SUNDAY SCHOOL ENROLLMENT UP IN 1985 AFTER PREVIOUS DECLINE

ST. LOUIS--For the second consecutive year, total Sunday school enrollment in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, has risen, following previous years of decline. Adult Bible class enrollment continued a 13-year growth trend.

Reflecting a gain of 7,350, last year's statistic for total Sunday school enrollment of 591,511 is 5,447 more than the 1983 gain. Just six years ago, figures indicated an enrollment loss of more than 15,000.

Adult Bible class enrollment at 411,494 showed a gain of 11,648, more than double the gain in 1983.

Baptized memberships of the 6,173 congregations in 1984 show a 2,500 drop from the

previous year, and 2,723,019. However, confirmed membership rose by 2,579 for a total of 2,056,915. Child baptisms dropped by 1,543 in 1984, but the number of young people confirmed reversed a declining trend, numbering 40,045, or 843 more than in 1983. Adult baptisms and confirmations totaled 29,575 for the year, a drop of 1,034 from 1983.

People taken off church rolls because they no longer participate numbered 50,497 for 1984, a slight decline (599) from 1983.

Synod congregations reported record high all-purpose giving throughout 1984 at \$638,414,932, up \$45,840,089 over 1983, with this averaging more than \$310 per communicant member (\$22 higher than for 1983).

Out of the total contributions, \$552,796,230 (\$41 million more than for 1983) was kept for work at local levels (an increase of 8 per cent). The amount sent on for districts and synod increased \$2,540,000 (or 4.3 per cent), to a total of \$61,941,320, and the amount for other work-at-large increased \$2,446,382 (or 11.5 per cent) totalling \$23,677,382.

The 1984 numbers are compiled from the reports of 5,383 congregations, 87 per cent of all Synod-member congregations.

World Relief

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poor. People are being saved from imminent starvation through your gifts. I saw and talked with well-trained and experienced people who administer and work in programs and services at the grass root level. Programs and services visited include the following: water enhancement; afforestation; small vegetable gardening; grain storage; introduction of organic pesticides; nutrition; health care; soil conservation; appropriate technology; sanitary systems; refugee and displaced persons resettlement and food distribution centers for famine victims in the Hurri Hills region of Kenya, the Arua region of Uganda and the Province of Eritrea and Tigray in northern Ethiopia.

As a result of conversations with relief and development workers, local church, village and government leaders, I came away with the assurance that LCMS World Relief funds are multiplied to help people in miraculous ways. The dedication and Christian commitment of relief and development workers at all levels is of the highest caliber and is cause for confidence in the integrity of this caring and life-saving ministry.

Thank you for caring and sharing. May God's sacrificial love for you, and for the victims of poverty and drought be a blessing to you and to them.

(The above is an excerpt from a letter by Rev. Melvin E. Witt, secretary of WORLD RELIEF, of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and sent to the members of Rogate Lutheran church in Clearwater, Fla.)

Looking at Deaf Ministry . . .

After reading the above report on the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, our thoughts naturally go to work among the deaf in the LCMS--how have we done?

According to the latest statistical report available (1984), overall stewardship (gifts) increased an average of 11 per cent with giving per member increasing approximately 13 per cent while the number of communicant members dropped 3 per cent.

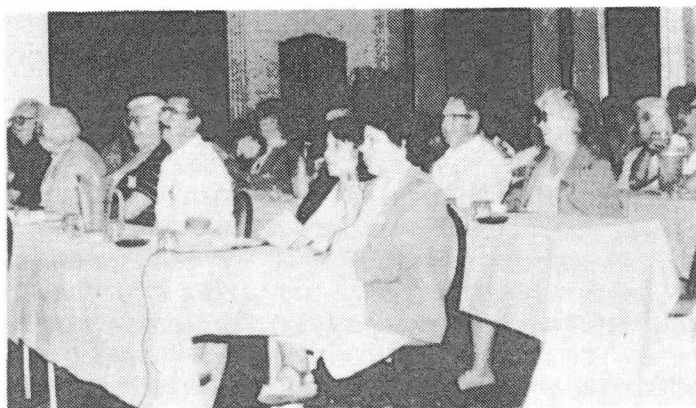
POINTS TO PONDER . . .

Some folks think their faith is strong enough to get them to heaven . . . but why isn't it strong enough to get them to church?

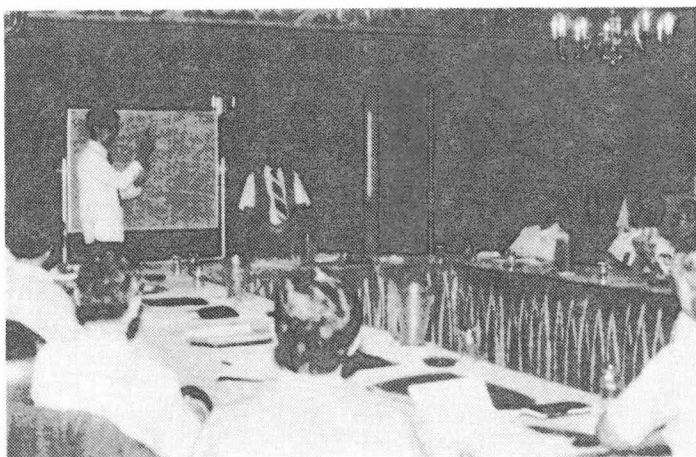
DID YOU KNOW? . . .

The Liberty Bell was hauled from Philadelphia to Allentown, Pa. by a Lutheran in 1777 and hidden under the floor of Zion Lutheran church there to keep it from the British.

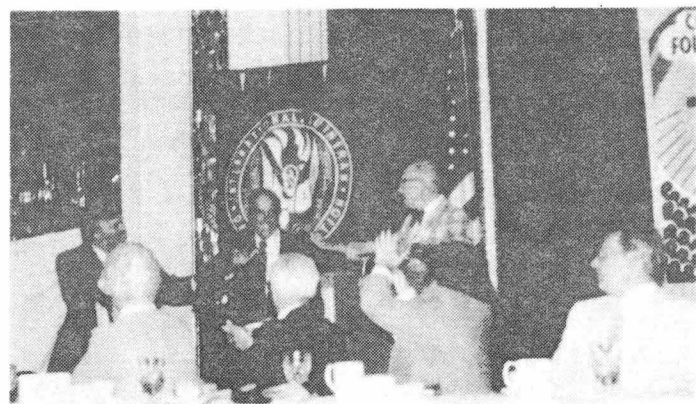
1985 ILDA CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



BUSINESS SESSIONS--A small group watches the proceedings. The two ladies in the center, foreground, are interpreters.



LEADERSHIP TRAINING WORKSHOP--Rev. Ron Friedrich makes a point during a special workshop for participants in this year's LTP program to be presented later this year.



CONGRATULATIONS--Robert Schneider acknowledges plaudits from well-wishers as he accepts RIGHT HAND AWARD from Donald Mowl. Note honoree making the "I love you" sign with his right hand.



VOTE FOR ME--Harold Thuve, Gardena, Calif. makes a pitch for votes as candidates line up prior to voting for president-elect. In background, left to right: Ron Madding, Portland, Ore.; Ron Byington, Milwaukee; Elmer Francisco, Detroit, Mich.; Joe Kindred, Indianapolis, Ind., and Charles Kotal, outgoing president.



MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE--This cast presented an hour long drama on "Colby" a loveable computer who loves to play his own music, much to the ire of the professor, who insists on original music of the Psalms. The play pointed out that praise is our natural response in the joy of knowing the Lord and music is a "very special part of us."

BYINGTON NAMED PRESIDENT-ELECT

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that would create yet another region within the ILDA to be known as the eighth or Canadian Region. The report on the findings of a special committee to study the proposal will be printed in the pages of **THE DEAF LUTHERAN** prior to the 1987 convention.

A budget of \$36,800 was approved for the coming biennium, which included \$14,300 for **THE DEAF LUTHERAN** as well as various mission projects. For the first time, mission projects were decided on the basis of votes received in balloting by the convention assembly, rather than by the board of directors, modeled on a plan used by the Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML). First to be funded, on the basis of votes received, will be Concordia special school, Porto Alegre, Brazil; Lutheran School for the Deaf, Detroit, Mich. and scholarships for prospective ministerial and educational students planning to enter deaf ministry. Other worthwhile projects, on the basis of votes received, will be funded as resources become available.

Convention goes not going on the tour of Milwaukee had the choice of four workshops to participate in on Friday afternoon: Computers, preretirement planning, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and leadership training program (LTP) for those who would be workshop leaders later in the year when the seminar was held in their areas.

Visitors were treated to a rare interview with a young girl who was present at the convention as an International Christian Youth Exchange student from Kugpig, Finland. Miss Katja Merentie answered questions put to her by Ron Byington in American Sign Language (ASL) which made it extremely difficult for members of the audience to differentiate her from an ordinary American teen-ager from one of our state schools. She also fielded questions from the audience, explained the differences in signs used in both countries and generally kept members of the large audience in rapt attention. She was to return to her homeland about Aug. 1, after having been in the United States for about a year.

Saturday evening saw the large hall filled as members and guests gathered at the festive board to do full justice to a delicious dinner. Master of Ceremonies Albert A. Arneson, Schaumburg, Ill., introduced various personages on the head table as well as among the audience, among them being Rev. Harvey Krueg-

er, president of the Southern Wisconsin District of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, who addressed the gathering.

The Association's coveted Right Hand Award was presented to Robert Schneider, a member of Emmanuel, Milwaukee, for many years of service to both his congregation and Region. Bob, as he is fondly known by his friends, has held virtually every office in his church and has taught Bible class for many years. Chosen from a field of 12 applicants, and suffering from terminal cancer, his qualifications for the award stated that "it would be easier to say what he has not done than what he has."

Taking first place this year in banner competition was Hope Lutheran church, Portland, Ore. Runner-up was Our Savior, Detroit followed by Holy Cross, Columbus, Ohio. Donald Mowl, of Trinity, Pittsburgh, Pa. read off a long list of churches meeting their goals of 5 per cent growth in membership and stewardship the past year and presented certificates of achievement.

Departing from the usual mode of entertainment following the banquet of past conventions, this year saw a "Special Olympics" presentation which served to remind every one that the XV World Games of the Deaf would open in Los Angeles on July 10, shortly following the close of this year's ILDA convention with upwards of 200,000 visitors and athletes from 28 nations competing in 12 events expected. The event had an aura of reality as evidenced by a torchlight procession to open the "games" immediately followed by the National anthem being sung by all present. Contestants in several divisions performed mime, drama, skits and even jokes to capture gold, silver and bronze medals in much the same manner as the real games. The entire performance, which lasted well into the evening, greatly enlivened the entire convention.

Portland, Ore. won the right to host the 10th biennial convention in 1989 after an expected contest with Denver, Colo. failed to materialize. A large delegation of visitors from Cedar Rapids, Iowa, hosts for the next convention at their famous Five Seasons Convention Center, were on hand to "liven things up a bit" and invited everyone to Iowa in

BYINGTON NAMED

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BITS OF INTEREST FROM HERE AND THERE . . .

When we read the distressing news nowadays that marriages have a survival rate of something less than 50/50, it is, indeed, refreshing that some unions are really made in heaven! Mr. and Mrs. Earl (Betty) Leffel, members of Good Shepherd Lutheran church, Toledo, Ohio, observed their 60th wedding anniversary July 5.

The happy couple were married at Carmel, Ind. on July 5, 1925 and are the parents of seven children. Earl is retired from Jeep after 40 years of service and Betty after 22 years with Pilliod Cabinet Co.

A planned open house on July 6 had to be canceled when Betty slipped and fractured her hip the preceding Monday. We wish them well in the years ahead and God's constant care as Betty mends.

Two long time educators of the deaf, Dr. Stanley D. Roth, 74, former superintendent of the Kansas School for the Deaf at Olathe and Dr. William "Ted" Griffing, 82, a retired teacher of the Oklahoma School for the Deaf at Sulphur died about three months apart of each other this past winter and spring. Both were widely known and respected in their chosen fields.

Rev. Fred Gehrs, Vancouver, B.C. has accepted a call to be chaplain at the Provincial Prison near where the Ontario School for the Deaf is located at Belleville. The move will occur during July.

Rev. Richard Vossler has accepted a call to serve both St. Matthews Lutheran church in Elmhurst/Queens and St. Mark in Manhattan, both within the environs of New York City and vacant since last spring following the death of Rev. Michael Hayes. Rev. Vossler will be ordained into the ministry at his home congregation in Wellsville, N.Y. and then installed later during the summer.

The Florida School for the Deaf and Blind at St. Augustine began its second century of service to its deaf and blind and deaf/blind students this year. Dating back to 1882 and with its first students arriving in 1885, the school today encompasses 48 buildings on 70 acres, making it one of the oldest institutions in the state and largest in the country.

The recently ended eighth biennial convention of the ILDA at Milwaukee saw people going forward to literally "rain" donations on the speaker's platform to bolster the general

fund and when it was over, \$205 had been counted . . . the Sunday offering totaled about \$1,300.

Mr. Richard French, Lay worker with Our Redeemer Lutheran church, Seattle, Wash., suffered a heart attack on May 9, and was hospitalized in the intensive care unit for a few days.

David C. Johnson is the name of the new vicar serving Holy Cross, Columbus, Ohio, having been installed Sunday, July 14. Vicar Johnson has completed all his studies at the seminary and will be receiving a call at the end of his vicarage.

Valley Lutheran Church for the Deaf, who are part of the continuing 57-year history of the deaf ministry by the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod in northern California, are celebrating their 5th anniversary of worshipping and studying together as a Christian congregation. First established in the Bay area communities of Oakland and San Francisco in 1928, Lutherans in the Sacramento, Stockton and neighboring valley communities started having services May 11, 1980 every Sunday at Sacramento and Stockton.



MAY I ASK A QUESTION?—Yachtman Sue, former Wisconsinite now president of the Pacific Regional Conference, stops to chat with some ladies at the desk.

FRIENDSHIP . . .

No need to explain . . . your friends do not need explanations and your enemies will not believe it anyway.

FOUR THINGS GOD CANNOT DO

Rev. David L. Carstens
Hope Lutheran Church
Portland, Ore.

1. God Cannot Accept Evil.

In this way easy going age people do not like to draw sharp lines between right and wrong, but God speaks clearly. He tells us "all wrongdoing is sin." (1 John 5:17). Every sin, from personal sins to national sins, whether greed or hatred, or lack of love, or disobedience, is an offense to God. If we wish to live forever with God, we must be pure and holy as He is. The Old Testament

Refugees From Romania

Our Savior Lutheran church, Detroit, has accepted a request from the Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) to sponsor two deaf men, who are refugees from Romania and had been waiting in Austria for several months before finally arriving in Detroit May 22. Vasile Jitaru, 34 and Adrian Pichineru, 35, are both married and with families behind the Iron Curtain. Both men are presently living and working at the Lutheran School for the Deaf. Jitaru is a tool and die maker and Pichineru is a painter and paper hanger. It is hoped both men will be able to have their families join them within a year and be resettled with jobs in the near future. Members of Our Savior are helping them learn English and sign language and thank the Lutheran School for the Deaf for hosting them during their resettlement period.

prophet describes God this way: "Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. (Habakkuk 1:13)

2. God Cannot Accept Any Answer Except the Saving Work of His Son Jesus.

The ancient Romans were great road builders. In those days there was a saying, "All roads lead to Rome." Many people think that all religions lead to God. Not so! Jesus is the only way to God. The New Testament says this: "For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. (1 Timothy 2:5)

Others think that if we do the best we can we will get to heaven. But good works, good thoughts and good lives are not enough to pay for the guilt of sin. Only the death of Jesus on the cross could pay this price. Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)

3. God Cannot Reject Anyone Who Comes in the Name of Jesus.

God does not punish twice. No one could bear the punishment for sin, only Jesus, and He bore it all. If you accept the sacrifice of Jesus for your sins, you will never be condemned. St. Paul writes: "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1). Jesus says: "Whoever comes to Me I will never drive away. . . . For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life. (John 6;37,40)

4. God Cannot Take Second Place in Your Life.

To be a Christian is more than to say at one time "I believe in Jesus." "Faith without deeds is dead." (James 2:26) Because of thankfulness for God's great salvation, in Jesus the Christian obey God in all things, fights sin, loves his neighbor and live a thankful and God-pleasing life. Living in such a way leads to true joy and fulfillment. Paul tells the Romans, "I urge you . . . in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices. . . . Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (Romans 12:1, 2)

What cannot God do? He cannot deny Himself. These glorious truths are absolutely certain. These truths can be yours.



VASILE JITARU

ADRIAN PICHINERU

I Was Just Thinking

In 1947, major league baseball began a pension plan for its veterans who had put in at least 20 years as a player, coach or manager that would pay at least \$675 a month at age 65, which still seems like a pretty good figure to the average person almost four decades later. Traditionally, the pension fund has been funded with a contribution from the owners which amounted to about a third of their revenues from annual television royalties. Last year, a record \$1.1 billion network contract was signed and owners are less willing to dole out a third of this for pensions, which would amount to about \$90,000 a year, or over \$7,500 a month for each covered pensioner.

So what has this got to do with our churches, schools and many other things usually associated with it? More than a hundred years ago, teachers in our Lutheran schools may have been asked to endorse contracts that looked something like this:

1. Teachers each day will fill lamps, clean chimneys.

2. Each teacher will bring a bucket of water and a scuttle of coal for the day's session.

3. Make your pens carefully. You may whittle nibs to the individual taste of the pupils.

4. Men teachers may take one evening each week for courting purposes, or two evenings a week if they go to church regularly.

5. After 10 hours in school, the teachers may spend the remaining time reading the Bible or other good books.

6. Women teachers who marry or engage in unseemly conduct will be dismissed.

7. Every teacher should lay aside from each pay a goodly sum of his earnings for his benefit during his declining years so that he will not become a burden on society.

8. Any teacher who smokes, uses liquor in any form, frequents pool or public halls, or gets shaved in a barber shop will give good reason to suspect his worth, intention, integrity and honesty.

9. The teacher who performs his labor faithfully and without fault for five years will be given an increase of 25 cents per week in his pay, providing the board of education approves.

LWML CONVENES IN IOWA

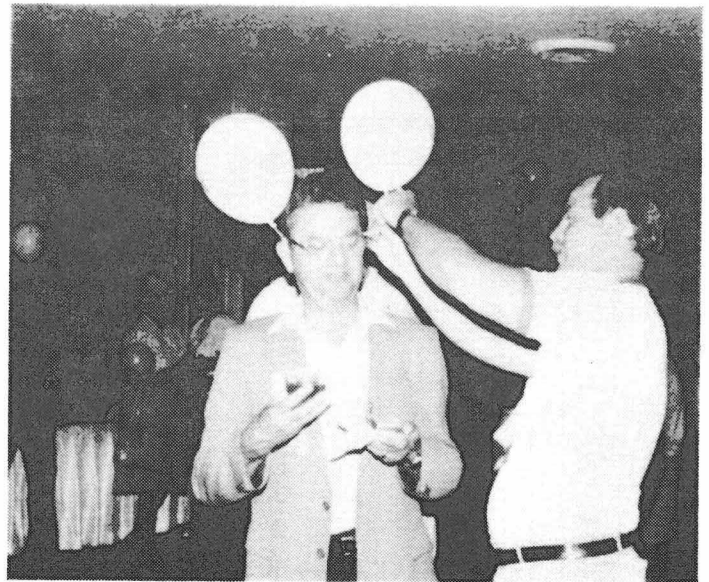
AMES, Iowa--An estimated 8,000 members of the International Lutheran Women's Missionary League met in convention here for a few days of singing, praying and Bible study and to give money for Christian missionary work.

Alberta Barnes, Cleveland Heights, Ohio, president of the 200,000 member organization which has approximately 5,800 local societies nation wide stressed that "the women here are obviously happy with things as they are in the church" and although there could be some "minor discontent" the group was not pressing for changes, but to assist synod in any way it could.

The group, which is autonomous in its missionary endeavors, was praised by Iowa Governor Terry Branstad during his address for its strong pro-life, anti-abortion stance.

During the 1983-85 biennium, the LWML had given more than \$3 million for missionary projects with approximately 75 per cent going to projects within its own districts. One of the main items coming up at this convention was the choosing of which programs to support during the next two years. Among them are medical missionary work, children's programs, scholarships and anti-abortion programs.

Dr. Ralph Bohlman, president of the 2.6 million member Missouri Synod, second largest of the three major Lutheran church bodies in the USA, addressed the convention, which adjourned on July 25.



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE--We can't figure out what Rev. Bud Palmer is doing to Rev. Don Zuhn while having coffee, can you? However, we detect a slight smile on the victim.



"Let us not stay away from church meetings. Some people are doing this all the time. Comfort each other as you see the day of His (Jesus') return coming near" (Hebrews 10:25).



SITTING DOWN TO THE FESTIVE BOARD--Part of the large throng sitting down to enjoy the banquet Saturday evening.

Boy Graduates (continue from page 1)

with its Award of Honor for Academic Achievement.

Tim's parents are Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Johnston, member of Our Savior Lutheran church of Detroit, of which his father is president of the congregation. His father is a printer and his mother a housewife who also instructs sign language classes.

Tim will enter the National Technical Institute of the Deaf at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, N.Y. this fall.

Congratulations, and may God's blessings go with you, Tim.

Byington Named (continue from page 4)

1987. Slides were shown of the city. Expected dates were announced as being June 25-28, 1987.

This year's convention visitors, numbering close to 400, and expecting the warmest temperatures of the year, were pleasantly surprised to find Milwaukee just naturally "air conditioned" inasmuch as the shores of Lake Michigan were just a short distance away from the Marc Plaza, convention headquarters. Cool breezes blowing in from the lake kept visitors deciding to take a stroll downtown for a cup of coffee or a bit of shopping free from the hot weather that was true of other areas farther away from its shores.

The DEAF LUTHERAN

September-October 1985

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