



Alabama-West Florida Conference United Methodist Women

"We are SPARKS!"  
Pass it on!

*From the desk of the President...*



**Mission Team  
2009**

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President**

**Georgette Griffith  
Vice President**

**Mary Jo Morton  
Secretary**

**Margie Outlaw  
Treasurer**

**Beth Henson  
Communications  
Coordinator**

**Ruth Ann Powers  
Program Resources**

**Nancy May  
Chair, Nominations**

**Virginia Lindley  
Blue Lake**

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**Mission  
Coordinators**

**Virginia Lindley  
Spiritual Growth**

**Edna Williams  
Social Action**

**Betty Worthington  
Membership  
Nurture & Outreach**

**Betty Helms  
Education &  
Interpretation**

**Mary Lou Brown  
Spanish Language**

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**Dr. Paul Leeland  
Bishop**

**Elizabeth Andrews  
Dean of School of  
Missions**

**Charlotte Hobson  
Registrar**

**Lynn Hamric  
Women's Division  
Director**

Greetings,

In March, United Methodist Women will celebrate 140 years of being in mission with women, children, and youth. Imagine being a part of something that lasting! The focus was and continues to be fostering spiritual growth, developing leaders, advocating for justice, and working for change to benefit the "least of these".

Recently, I had the privilege to be one of 11 from AWF Conference to attend the 2009 Quadrennial Training Event at Jacksonville, FL. One thousand three hundred (1,300) gathered with general agency representatives to understand, embrace, and develop strategies for living the United Methodist Way through inspirational worship and learning around our denominational directions adopted by General Conference. The theme "Living the United Methodist Way: Turning the Worlds upside Down" had a familiar ring.

The 4 areas of Focus of the church are to be:

- Developing Leaders (UMW does this through leadership training/officer update annually at Conference & Districts.)
- Creating Places for New People (Not exactly what the church means, but UMW seeks to reach women and help find a place for them to have dignity and feeling of self-worth/ex. Sybil Smith House. We have two online units.)
- Eliminating Poverty (Women's Division, GBGM, provided funds for set up of bank loans to women to begin food or sewing businesses in Asia.)
- Improving Health Globally (UMW worked to bring attention to mercury in some vaccines for children, participated in "nothing but nets", helped dig wells to provide clean water, helped provide school for girls, helped provide hospitals & clinics.)

We, United Methodist Women, are an integral part of the United Methodist Church.

"*Tapestry: Weaving the Threads of Justice in our Lives*" retreat at Dexter Avenue UMC in Montgomery was a special time. Gail Losch, Biblical storyteller, made scripture come alive! Special music, focus groups, and fellowship lifted our spirit and made this a wonderful time apart. Thank you Montgomery/Opelika & Montgomery/Prattville Districts, the ladies at Dexter Avenue UMC, and Betty Worthington for all your work to make it happen. Pensacola District, we are coming to you in 2010!

The next conference opportunity will be the Spiritual Enrichment Retreat, March 27-29 at Blue Lake. Nancy Bearden Hudson will be the leader. She has given us excellent leadership before. Get your registration in and invite a friend to come with you.

Congratulations! Marianna/Panama City District has gotten their online unit going. I have gone online and enjoyed their meeting. The meeting will be available on the 2nd Monday of each month at <http://www.gbqm-umc.org/mpconlineunit/>. Winn Marsh can give you further information. We now have two online units. Christ Church Mobile has an online Circle, the Mary and Martha Mail Circle. See [www.mailcircle.net](http://www.mailcircle.net). Their membership extends beyond their church. Vera Moore can provide more information on this unit

A NEW opportunity this year is to become a Charter for Racial Justice Policies Team 2009 unit. You can pick up the criteria at any conference or district event, on conference or district websites or from me or any other Charter Committee member. All units who chose to participate this year will be recognized as CHARTER UNITS. Check it out.

I feel humble and amazed to be a part of this great organization within our church. We are "sparks" that can "for Christ Sake....turn the world upside down"!

God bless you as we work together in MISSION for women, children, and youth.

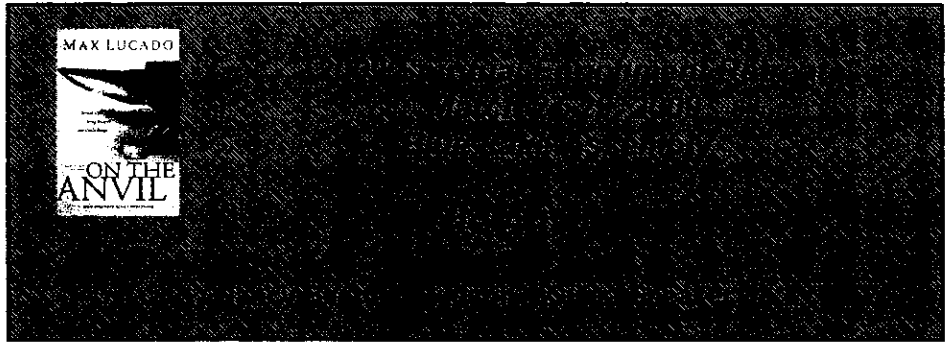
Beth Bowdin, President  
bbowdin@entercomp.com

**Important Dates to Remember**

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2009

- **Mar 27-29, 2009**  
Spiritual Enrichment  
Retreat "On the Anvil"  
Blue Lake
- **June 7-10, 2009**  
Annual Conference  
Frazer Memorial UMC  
Montgomery, AL
- **June 11-14, 2009**  
South Atlantic Regional  
School  
Kentucky Wesleyan
- **July 10-11, 2009**  
Executive Committee  
& Nominations Meeting  
Blue Lake
- **July 24-25, 2009**  
Cooperative School of  
Christian Mission  
Blue Lake
- **October 3, 2009**  
Executive Committee  
& Nominations Meeting  
Blue Lake
- **October 30-31, 2009**  
District Officer Updates  
Conference Annual Meeting  
Blue Lake
- **November 8, 2009**  
United Methodist Women's  
Sunday




**Cooperative School of Christian Mission**  
July 24-25, 2009  
**Blue Lake Assembly**  
Registration deadline: July 10, 2009  
No late registration or walk-ins

**Theme: "Together At The Table"**

<p><b>Spiritual Growth</b> <i>Food and Faith</i></p>	<p><b>Geographic</b> <i>The Sudan</i></p>
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**General Issue**  
*Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival*  
*Teaching Missions to Children – The Sudan*

**Sponsors**  
Alabama-West Florida CORE Team  
Board of Church & Society  
Conference Board of Global Ministries  
United Methodist Women



You will only take  
**ONE** study this year



The organized arm of United Methodist Women... (text is very faint and partially obscured by a dark background)

**Websites**

<p><b>General Board of Global Ministries, UMC/Women's Division</b> <a href="http://www.gbgm-umc.org/umw">www.gbgm-umc.org/umw</a></p> <p><b>Mission Resource Center</b> <a href="http://www.missionresourcecenter.org">www.missionresourcecenter.org</a></p> <p><b>United Methodist Women Alabama-West Florida Conference</b> <a href="http://www.gbgm-umc.org/awfconfumw/">www.gbgm-umc.org/awfconfumw/</a></p>	<p><b>United Methodist Church</b> <a href="http://www.umc.org">www.umc.org</a></p> <p><b>UMW Online Community</b> <a href="http://www.umwonline.org">www.umwonline.org</a></p>
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Spiritual Growth

Have you ever wondered spiritual growth?
More than an intellectual exercise, the Wesleyan
Tradition teaches us that spiritual growth is not
merely a matter of the mind but also of the heart
and will. Spiritual growth is about what we
want to do, how we want to live, and how we
want to relate to others. It is about the
relationship between the individual and the
community. It is about the relationship between
the individual and the world. It is about the
relationship between the individual and the
community. It is about the relationship between
the individual and the world.

Methodist criteria for discerning the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Methodist criteria for discerning the presence of the Holy Spirit.



Are you a Charter for Racial Justice Policies Team Unit for 2009?

Check out our web site at http://www.gbgm-umc.org/awfconfumw/ for the information.
Deadline is September 1, 2009.

Education & Interpretation

Looking for a good program to use at your next meeting?
Why not use the 2009 Prayer Calendar?
What a great and handy tool to have in your hands!
You could start by going to the page that has your
own birthday on it. All through the calendar there
are pictures drawn by children from across the
United States and around the world - a true
representation of the many places the church is in
mission. I would start by using the scripture listed on
my birthday. Maybe you could get someone to act
out the short mission story included as well as
showing the place places on a map where the mission
projects are located. Also, I would tell the names of
the mission personnel that have the same birthday as
mine. Read where they're in mission and what
service they are providing. These are General Board
of Global Ministries funded mission projects. The
United Methodist Women Pledge to Mission is part
of this funding. I would then proceed to take prayer
requests and have a prayer time. Don't forget to
include the people and places that you've read out of
the Prayer Calendar. It would be good to have five
Gift to Mission cards in your hands. Get members of
your group to pick five people out of the Prayer
Calendar. Have them look in the back of the back of
the Prayer Calendar. There you will find the
information you need to send them the Gift to
Mission cards.

If you continue to use the Prayer Calendar at each
unit meeting, you will take care of Mission Today
criteria #1. If you send those five Gift to Mission
cards, Mission Today criteria #6 was taken care of.
By sending the Gift to Mission cards, you have given
to one of the five channels of Mission Giving as
stated in Mission Today criteria #11 - only four more
to go!

What a great start for 2009! Use the Prayer
Calendar at your meetings to tell the stories of
mission and keep in touch with those serving that are
listed there. They all appreciate your prayers and
support!

Betty Helms
Mission Coordinator
(334) 794-2172
Helms10@centurytel.net





## Treasurer's Report

### Greetings from Your Treasurer!

As I write this article for the Alert, I hope you are busy with your UMW Unit. I appreciate all the support you gave last year in our effort to help Women, Children and Youth. Let's see who can come out the big winner in The Pennies for Mission this year! I want to remind everyone this year of the beautiful Mission cards we have for \$5.00 and ask you to buy one of these cards rather than a \$5.00 card from some other source. We also have Christmas Cards.

Hope to see you at Blue Lake for Spiritual Day March 27-29.

GOD IS SO GOOD!

In HIS service,

Margie Outlaw  
Treasurer  
(334) 299-6877  
moutlaw200@centurytel.net

## Social Action

I will be attending at my own expense the 7th annual ECUMENICAL ADVOCACY DAYS and the UM Women's Division Office of Public Policy Legislative Event in Washington, DC March 12-15, 2009. The Advocacy Days theme this year is, *Enough for All Creation*. Attendees are faith-based advocates and activists from across the United States and will explore ways to bring about a world with *Enough for All Creation*.

- Learn about the connections between climate change, migration and poverty in the U.S. and around the world.
- Discuss the abundance of our world and how it can be allocated in a way that is fair and just for all creation.

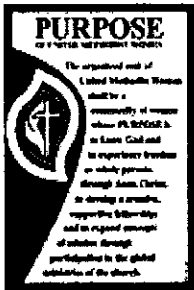
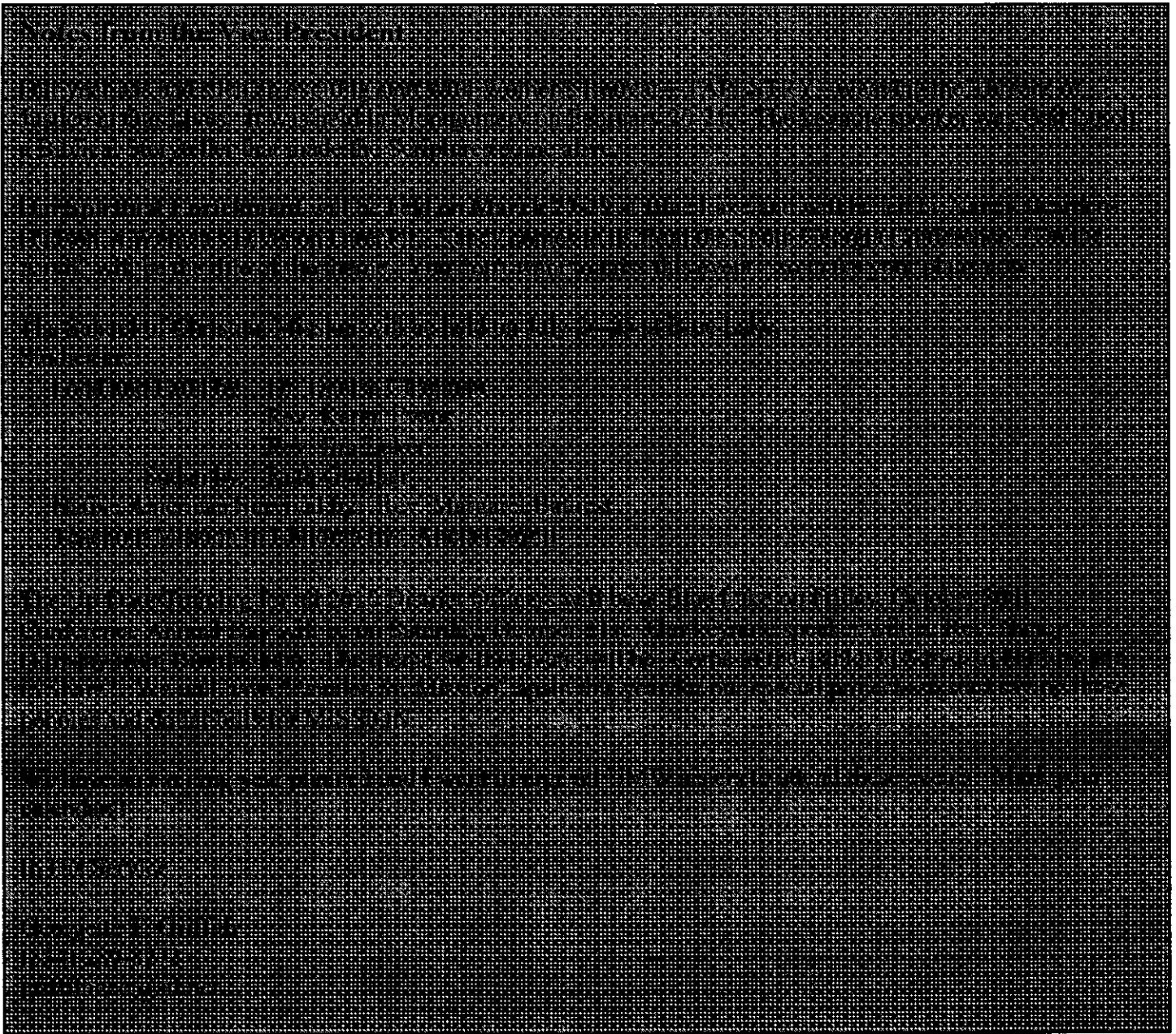
The United Methodist Women's Division Office of Public Policy will be meeting with all Conference Social Action Coordinators on Thursday evening and Friday, until the start of the Advocacy Days event on Friday evening.

Shalom,

Edna L. Williams  
(334) 727-0314  
elwilli@bellsouth.net

I hope that you have the **Cooperative School of Christian Mission** marked on your calendar as it is going to be an exciting event---July 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. The School will begin with registration at 10 am on Friday and will convene at 11 am. I am especially excited that we will have a Native American from Oklahoma presenting the Native American Survival course. So if you have not yet taken that course or you took the course but still want to know more, this is your opportunity to learn from Rev. Margaret Battiest, a Cherokee from Oklahoma where she serves as a district superintendent. Three of our leaders have experience teaching at the college level: Rev. Jim Luther, associate pastor of Lynn Haven UMC and former seminary professor; Denise Chapman, a dean and professor at Alabama State University, and Ruth Gynther, a retired professor from Auburn University. Our two other leaders include Rev. Karen Evans, associate minister at Pensacola FUMC and a graduate of Duke Divinity School, and Alicia Cargill, the youth minister at Ozark FUMC and a graduate of Asbury Seminary. Our course offerings include Spiritual Growth – Food and Faith; Geographical Study – The Sudan; Social Issue – Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival, and Teaching Mission to Children – Piecing Together Peace for Sudan. Come and study and fellowship so that you can learn more about your faith, your church, and the world we live in. I hope you will leave renewed in faith, refreshed in body and ready to serve those in need here and throughout this world. Please contact me with any questions or concerns.

Elizabeth Andrews, Dean of School of Missions, (850) 437-0905, [elizand01@aol.com](mailto:elizand01@aol.com)



**AL/West Florida Conference UMW  
Conference Specials (Mission Askings)**

- Blue Lake Assembly Grounds (Andalusia, AL)**
- Dumas Wesley Community Center (Mobile, AL)**
- Hispanic Ministries (Pensacola, FL)**
- Inner City Mission (Mobile, AL)**
- Nellie Burge Community Center (Montgomery, AL)**
- Noah's Ark (Panama City Beach, FL)**
- SKIP, Inc. (Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents) (Montgomery, AL)**



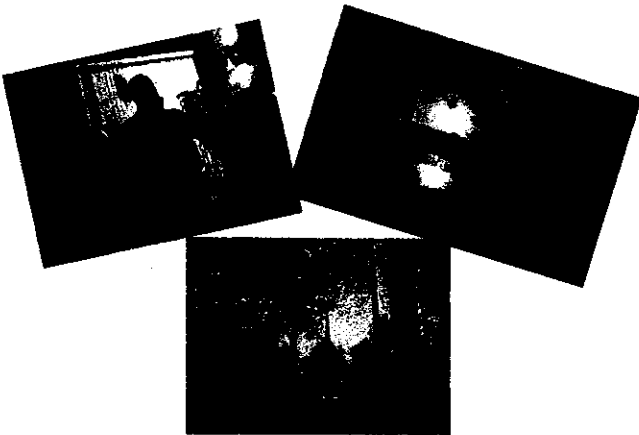
Blue Lake has raised 2.2 million dollars during the Capital Funds Campaign. Blue Lake leaders are striving to reaffirm its mission and to clearly define its future impact as a ministry. New leadership, new vision, new participation with churches, districts and the Annual Conference along with progressive, professional insight into camp and retreat ministries will be part of Blue Lake's future.

There will be many opportunities for you as a United Methodist Woman to be a part of the new Blue Lake ministry this spring and summer. I encourage you to read your district newsletters and the Conference Alert to become aware of some of the events that will be taking place at Blue Lake. Invite members of your local church to "check out" Blue Lake for some of their activities.

There is nothing more spirit-filled and uplifting than time spent at Blue Lake. Try it-you'll like it.

May God continue to bless us in His service.

Virginia Lindley  
Blue Lake Representative  
(850) 235-7879  
vlindley@bellsouth.net



## Program Resources

Program resources sold very well at the Tapestry meeting in Montgomery. Reading program books and organizational materials were the first to go. Don't worry; there will be more at the Spiritual Enrichment Retreat. The study book for the "Food and Faith" spiritual growth study is now available and will be available for purchase at the SER in March. Having the book available early is what we have wanted and I hope you will buy them at the retreat. The study "Giving Our Hearts Away: Native American Survival" is the continuing study for 2009. That book and resources are available. The "Sudan" study materials are not available at this writing. If they become available, I will try to have them for sale in the resource room at SER. Catalogs are available as are the brochures for the reading program. The reading program brochure has the book lists as well as the forms for keeping track of personal lists of the books read and the categories.

*Resources for Racial Justice: Tools for UMW Leaders* is available on line at <http://new.gbgm.org>. Once there, go to UMW and then to resources. At the 'resources' site, there is a tab for 'racial justice'. It offers you many ways to get involved in implementing the *Charter for Racial Justice*, including Bible studies, worship services, programs, workshops, displays, issues and action ideas. When it opens, don't panic. The material is a PDF file and is 187 pages. As you look through it, you will only need to print the pages you want to use. Please use all the different types of information available. It will make you a better person and an educated United Methodist Woman. Remember, you are the heart of United Methodist Women and the apple of God's eye.

Ruth Ann Powers  
Program Resources Coordinator  
(334) 298-6405  
rall@ctvea.net



Dear Secretaries.....



We are off to a great start for 2009. I missed a lot of the things that went on at the end of 2008 and I want to thank all of you for the prayers you said on my behalf. I can do without ever having a holiday season like that again.

I hope all of you are keeping good records of what is going on in your districts. These records need to be archived every four years. That means minutes, committee reports and audits. Let me give you an example. If you began as secretary in 2000, you and the President could prepare to archive records for 1997-1996. You must always keep the latest four years on hand in case they are needed. This is much like setting a budget for next year based on last year's income. There are specific ways these things are done.

Plan to attend the Spiritual Enrichment Retreat and see some friends that you see only at UMW get-togethers. I have made some very valuable friends over the years that I would not have ever met otherwise.

Mary Jo Morton  
Secretary  
(850) 482-3688  
mjmorton@embarqmail.com

### THANK YOU

A great **BIG THANK YOU** to Betty Helms for filling in for me as secretary at the January mission team meeting. Thanks, also, to those who have prayed, sent cards, etc. during my convalescence. I hope to be back to normal one day. God knows when that will be.

Mary Jo Morton

### Nomination Committee

The Nominations Committee are scouting for New Bold TALENT LEADERS for 2010. We need your assistant to RECOMMEND someone out of your District by filling out a TALENT BANK FORM and sending it to me. You can get a TALENT BANK FORM off the UMW website at <http://www.gbm-umc.org/aw/locallmw/talentbankform2008.pdf> or contact me and I will send you one. If your Nominations Committee District Officer does not have one. We will be looking for YOU at the Spiritual Enrichment Retreat also! We hope you will be willing to serve. We will be happy to help you!

Nancy May  
Nomination Chairperson  
3159 Gladewood Lane  
Pace, FL 32571  
(850) 994-1108  
monkmay@yahoo.com



### Communications Corner

What a blessing to serve our Lord and share His love with others. May God bless you with many opportunities to witness for Him. "We can do ALL things through Christ who strengthens us" Phil. 4:13

Newsletters - Design

- Integration

All elements of art, headlines and copy are integrated. This means grouping items that relate to each other and aligning items vertically and horizontally.

- similar articles should be grouped together
- columns should be aligned
- headlines go with correct articles

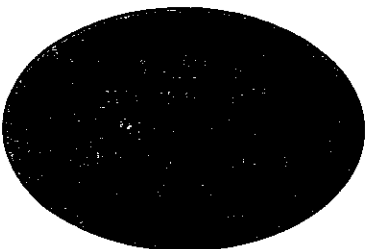
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<p><b>ALERT</b> Subscription Form</p> <p>All Local Unit Presidents will receive a free copy of the Alert. All other officers and members may subscribe for \$2.00 per year. The March 2009 issue will start the subscription year.</p> <p>You may receive a copy of the Alert free by email. You must submit your email address in order to receive your free copy. Please complete the form below to receive a subscription to the Alert by mail or email.</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Church Name _____ District _____</p> <p>Email Address _____</p> <p>Are you paying for a subscription? _____</p> <p>Cash or check enclosed? _____</p> <p>Mail Subscription Form to:</p> <p>Beth Henson ALERT Editor 27558 Stratford Glen Dr. Daphne, AL 36526 (251) 621-4198 <a href="mailto:bah9103@aol.com">bah9103@aol.com</a></p>
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