

Holiday Greetings

from the
Vision America Team



the
Vision



The Newsletter of Vision America • www.visionamerica.org • December 2001

Dear Friends,

What an incredible journey Vision America has been on over the past five years! In 1996 David Lane, a godly and gifted layman with a clear calling and vision to mobilize pastors and Christians into the moral and civil arena, and I took \$10 and filed a "D.B.A." (Doing Business As) with the State of Texas. We chose the name Vision America.

Shortly afterwards David and I traveled to meet with Dr. Jerry Fallwell in Lynchburg, Virginia, to attempt to persuade him to take the lead in the effort. After an hour of discussion he offered assistance and encouragement but said to me, "Rick, this is your passion, your vision. You should do it."

Reluctantly and without much understanding as to how, we launched Vision America. With limited resources and visibility it became unreasonable to ask David to stay on and he left to successfully engineer and lead several important projects that have impacted our nation including the Proposition 22 initiative in California which defined marriage as a covenant between a man and a woman.

Meanwhile, we worked together, as funds and opportunities allowed. Then in May of this year, I met with the Board of Vision America to discuss a \$25,000 deficit and whether or not it was time to close the doors and lay off our small but dedicated staff.

We decided to hold on to the vision of a great movement of pastors and Christians impacting our culture and to pray for 30 days for God's provision. Within days a layman underwrote a check for the entire shortfall. Soon other significant checks and confirmation that God wanted Vision America to move forward appeared.

In July we received a \$200,000 grant

*National Office Team: Top Row - Mike Reynolds; Laurence White; Rick Scarborough; Bill Gattis
Bottom Row - David Lane; Martha Jahn; Shannon Werner; Mary O'Rarden (not pictured)*

from one foundation and a \$50,000 grant from another, plus hundreds of other smaller but equally important donations. Clearly God spoke His desire for this work.

David Lane is now the full-time Executive Director of Vision America Mobilized Inc. Dr. Laurence White is our National Co-Chairman and Bill Gattis, a retired executive with ExxonMobil, is now overseeing the day-to-day operations and providing invaluable input in long-term strategy and development. Mike Reynolds has joined the team as our information technology expert along with Shannon Werner who oversees our Pastor Events across America. Martha Jahn provides invaluable assistance to the leadership team and Mary O'Rarden serves as my assistant as well as the keeper of all corporate records and related data.

Over the past four months we have been engaged in a massive new project called Vision Texas, an effort to prove our model that pastors and Christians can make an impact on this culture when they are motivated and mobilized with adequate information. We have a budget for this project of over \$1.2 million of which \$800,000 has been committed. The money is being invested in an effort to identify and register hundreds of thousands of Christians in Texas and then to mobilize them to the polls on Election Day. Already we have conducted events in Houston, Dallas, Ft. Worth, Tyler, Austin and San Antonio and we have 18 more such events scheduled before the March primary.

Numerous outstanding Christian leaders like Dr. James Dobson and D. James Kennedy will be walking with us by providing 30 – 60 second spots. We will in turn purchase time

on numerous Christian radio stations across the state in February in an effort to mobilize voters to the polls. We are producing hundreds of thousands of handbills to be distributed to over 20,000 churches in Texas, and tens of thousands of identifiable Christian conservatives will be contacted and urged to vote their convictions.

Beloved, we need your help. As you plan your end-of-the year giving, please prayerfully consider Vision America. We need to raise an additional \$400,000 to complete this project.

And pray for us. We are getting requests to replicate this project in other states as well. Right now we are praying with pastors calling us from Missouri and Pennsylvania.

Recently, Vision America weighed in on the Houston mayoral race. While we did not and would not endorse a specific candidate, we informed voters of the moral positions of the candidates and in the end a pro-life, pro-family challenger to a two-term incumbent narrowly missed becoming Houston's first conservative mayor in three decades.

Christians can make a difference. For the sake of America – we must.

Please make the most generous contribution you can afford. And as always, please give to your local church first.

I remain...

Your friend,

Rick Scarborough

**Merry Christmas and
a Blessed New Year!**

Moral and spiritual revival a must!

Vision Texas to build model of Christian citizenship to be duplicated across America



In Pastors Policy Briefings, David Barton brings a stirring history lesson about the Christian faith of our founding fathers.

Isaiah prophesies that God is going to breathe on that stump and bring it alive again. Out of the stump is going to come a sprout, a new life. God is going to usher in a future that is not warranted by our past -- brand new and full of life. God is going to breathe hope into us -- hope in the midst of all of His judgment.

The express purpose of Vision America and the Vision Texas plan is to complement that breath, that sprout of new life, and to awaken church members to their Christian responsibility to be good citizens.

Through Pastors' Policy Briefings, pastors across the state are urged to inform, inspire and mobilize their congregations to become active citizens, with the ultimate result being a moral and spiritual revival in Texas and across America. The goal of Vision Texas is to build a model of renewed Christian citizenship that can be duplicated across this nation.

In these Briefings, pastors and Christian laypersons are challenged to be proactive in restoring Judeo-Christian values into the culture and civil institutions of our nation. The message is structured as a framework that is designed to help overcome the myth of "separation of church and state." Pastors can and must participate in the process ... "Historically We Did" ... "Legally We Can" ... and "Biblically We Must."

David Barton founder of WallBuilders, presents a stirring history lesson about the Christian faith of our founding fathers. His presentation emphasizes the intimate role their faith played during the formative process of America and the importance of it in our Constitution and law.

Kelly Shakelford, a Constitutional attorney with Free Market Foundation, talks about the misinterpretation of the Constitution by many and the frightening trend toward restricting religious freedom and freedom of speech through promoting a false doctrine of "separation of church and state."

Dr. Scarborough and Dr. White frame the Biblical bases for involvement and present a call to action. The vast majority of pastors attending are moved to a commitment to actively work within their respective congregations toward the overall goals of the Vision Texas plan and the vision for America.

The initial round of Texas Pastors' Policy Briefings kicked off in November 2001 in Austin, Dallas, Ft. Worth, San Antonio, Houston and Tyler.

Eighteen additional events are planned before the March primary election, with the goal of mobilizing 5000-7000 pastors who will commit to 'reclaiming Texas for Christ' and to promote effective Christian citizenship over the next year.

Vision America currently has affiliate churches in 17 states, representing over 15 major denominations.



Shakelford discusses rights of pastors and congregations to participate in the political process.

Influencing public policy with a Biblical perspective

A government "... of the people, by the people and for the people ..." cannot function without the people. Most importantly, as President John Adams said, "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

Any entity and institution will decay into immorality and corruption without the salt and light of Christ applied to it. The family, church and government all depend on dedicated, Bible-believing Christians performing our duties consistently year in and year out. This is not "politics." This is stewardship.

Let Him find us faithful in ongoing efforts of Vision Texas, that we may address salvation and spiritual growth, with special focus on these pressing issues: sanctity of life, protection of marriage, protection of religious liberty, and strengthening and enforcing pornography laws.

America is facing a moral crisis! Across this land, evangelical grassroots strength is diminished as more and more believers become discouraged and withdraw from the basic citizenship process. The fact is that many do not even vote! In addition, fewer and fewer men and women of Godly principle are entering the civil government arena and/or are being elected.

As a result, the voice of conservative Christianity is not being heard. By default, we are surrendering America to a liberal value system, and are drifting farther and farther from the Christian principles upon which this nation was founded.

Yet, as the great prophet Isaiah promised, though God has judged his people -- a people whose leaders have not always been good leaders and whose social structure is literally coming apart -- at the end of the judgment is a stump of Jesse and the holy seed is in its stump.

¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

²The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him - the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord -

³and he will delight in the fear of the Lord

¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious.

Isaiah 11:1-3,10 [NIV]



Gov. Rick Perry recently told more than 325 pastors and laypeople attending the *Houston Life and Family Forum* (sponsored by Vision America and the Niemöller Project) that “If Christian conservatives make their voices heard at the ballot box, people who share Christian values will be elected to defend them.”

Gov. Perry emphasized that “each and every vote is critical” in every election.

Scarborough offers perspective to Whistleblower magazine

Pastor Rick Scarborough and other “prominent religious and cultural leaders” were asked to contribute to a special Christmas edition entitled “One Nation Under God.” Whistleblower says this issue “shows how, since America endured one of the most evil attacks in history, a transformation within the nation has occurred, and continues unabated - a transformation that goes far beyond flying the red, white and blue, singing “God Bless America” and attending church more often.”

Whistleblower’s editors contacted a number of prominent religious and cultural leaders and asked them to participate in this special edition by offering their perspective, during this Christmas “season of miracles,” on the subject of miracles in today’s world.

Contributing to this issue are Dr. James Dobson, Pat Robertson, Dr. Tim LaHaye, David A. Noebel, Rick Scarborough, Michael Medved, Dr. Laura Schlessinger, Hal Lindsey, Dr. Ted Baehr, Jerry Falwell, Bob Just, Rabbi Daniel Lapin, David Barton, Professor Carol Iannone and columnist Ann Coulter.

Whistleblower and WorldNetDaily.com Editor Joseph Farah said “this issue of Whistleblower is full of hope, inspiration, and yes, miracles. It is simply the best issue of any magazine I’ve ever read,” added Farah.

Yes! I want to help Vision America by helping to fund this effort

Enclosed is my gift of \$_____. I want to make a monthly pledge of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Please send your book “*Enough is Enough*” with my gift of \$20 or more.

Please add me to your E-mail list for future notifications. My E-mail address is _____

Please make your check payable to Vision America and mail in the postage paid business return envelope provided.

You may also make contributions by credit card online at www.visionamerica.org.

Are you ready to make an impact?

Vision America, a non-profit organization, was founded in 1998 as the motivating force to reach out across this nation to network pastors of all denominations into the moral debates in America, and promote Biblical values back into every aspect of the public arena. Our mission is to inform, encourage and mobilize pastors to be proactive in restoring Judeo-Christian values into the culture and civil institutions in our nation.

If you’re ready to make a difference, your donation to Vision America can make

a positive impact on this mission. You may also request to receive the book “Enough is Enough” with a gift of \$20 or more

You may make a one-time gift or break your contribution into monthly payments. Simply complete the form above and return it along with your check in the enclosed postage paid, pre-addressed envelope. If you prefer, you may contribute online at www.visionamerica.org.

Donations to non-profit organizations are generally tax deductible.

What pastors can do ...

While active electioneering cannot legally be done by churches, there are clear guidelines (established by the Federal Election Campaign Act and the Internal Revenue Code) on permissible political activities of churches and pastors. As a 501 (c)(3) exempt organization, a church may not participate in a political campaign by expenditure of its funds. However, not all political activity which would influence a political campaign, falls under this prohibition. Even within the parameters of the non-profit regulations, the church has sufficient rights to ensure that its members are active, informed, involved and voting.

In this respect, a pastor’s legal role includes encouraging congregations to register at least one month before an election, and to vote on election day. To motivate their congregations, pastors are urged to appoint Citizenship Coordinators and ministry team in their church membership who will be responsible for acquiring voter registration forms and absentee ballot request forms.

On a day designated as “Citizenship Sunday,” the Coordinator and ministry team could ask ushers to provide the forms for all non-registered voters and request that they either complete and mail them themselves, or return the completed forms to the Coordinator to be sent to the local elections office. Follow-up telephone calls should be made by the ministry team to remind members to vote on election day.

Below are target dates for 2002:

Phase 1

‘Register To Vote’

Sunday, Jan. 20 and 27, 2002

‘Get Out The Vote’

Sunday, March 3, 2002

Phase 2

‘Register To Vote’

Sunday, Sept. 22 and 29, 2002

‘Get Out The Vote’

Sunday, Nov. 3, 2002



Vision America
P.O. Box 168
Houston, TX 77001-0168

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 12721
Houston, TX

Stand up! Speak up!
And refuse to Give up!

National Advisory Board

Jerry Falwell

*Pastor, Thomas Rd. Baptist Church
Lynchburg, VA*

Ronnie Floyd

*Pastor, First Baptist Church
Springdale, AR*

D. James Kennedy

*Pastor, Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church
Ft. Lauderdale, FL*

Tim LaHaye

*President
Tim LaHaye Ministries*

Tim Lee

*President, Tim Lee Ministries
Garland, TX*

Peter Marshall

*President, Peter Marshall Ministries
Orleans, MA*

Dan Patrick

*President & Part Owner
KSEV Radio
Houston, TX*

Paul Pressler

*Texas Court of Appeals (Retired)
Houston, TX*

Adrian Rogers

*Pastor, Bellevue Baptist Church
Cordova, TN*

Paul Weyrich

*President
The Free Congress Research and
Education Foundation
Washington, DC*

Don Wildmon

*President
American Family Association
Tupelo, MS*

Vision America Online

Keep informed about Vision America publications, activities and events by frequently going online to our newly re-designed web site. You'll find calendars, action alerts, updates and more at:

www.visionamerica.org

Mission Statement

The mission of Vision America is to inform, encourage and mobilize pastors and congregations to be proactive in restoring Judeo-Christian values into the culture and civil institutions in our nation.

Vision America
P.O. Box 168
Houston, Texas 77001
713-869-1413
Toll Free 877-486-6633
Fax 713-869-1290
www.visionamerica.org



© 2001, Vision America