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Liberty University, "Board of Trustees Holds Annual Meeting on Campus" (2009). *April/May 2009*. Paper 10.
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Board of Trustees holds annual meeting on campus

April 01, 2009 ¦ Sarah Funderburke

Liberty University could not have become the successful school it is today without a lot of divine guidance and a strong group of dedicated supporters. The Board of Trustees has always been an important part of Liberty's support system.

The Board of Trustees works with Chancellor Jerry Falwell, Jr. to ensure that Liberty's future is academically, financially and physically secure and that the university is growing in ways that are congruent to the school's mission, training Champions for Christ. Board members confer at an annual meeting on the Liberty campus about general university policy and also work in committees for more specific initiatives and planning.

These committees cover student affairs, academic affairs, buildings and grounds, the School of Law, Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and executive affairs. Board members may also confer on school name changes, dean appointments, long-range university plans such as the Five Year Strategic Plan (detailing LU's goals from 2005-2010) and a variety of other administrative business.

At the trustees' March 2 meeting, the 37 current board members considered a request from Liberty's chapter of Students for Concealed Carry on Campus to allow LU students with concealed weapons permits to carry their guns on campus.

The board decided not to make any policy changes at this time, as LU does have a 24-hour, gun-wielding police force on campus.

Board members, however, do more than sit in a boardroom discussing policy; they can often be found in campus classrooms and at LU podiums. Throughout the year many trustees visit Liberty's campus and share their life experiences and spiritual knowledge with LU students by speaking in convocation. Other trustees are involved in campus organizations, such as trustee Richard Osborne, who chairs the Parent's Development Board, a group dedicated to assisting LU parents in raising money for student programs, internships and more.

The men and women on the Board of Trustees have helped build Liberty University piece by piece. They help fund simple campus improvements, such as paving and field resurfacing, and have also contributed to larger construction and remodeling projects. Their mark, in many cases, can be physically seen on campus; the LaHaye Ice Center, Liberty's ice arena, was named for Drs. Tim and Beverly LaHaye, board members and university donors. Other trustees have Liberty awards named in their honor. Many trustees helped push Liberty forward when the university was experiencing financial strife.

Others have helped initiate and support the creation of new programs at LU. Trustee and longtime university supporter Wayne Booth pitched the idea of starting vocational programs at Liberty to Dr. Jerry Falwell, Sr. several years ago and was one of the first to financially support the start-up of these courses.