



**“What’s in a name?”** This oft

quoted passage from William Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet may lead us to believe that names are not that important. Of course, we know that is not true.

Names are markers. They identify not only who we are but also whose we are, and who we want to be.

Various cultures have evolved different naming practices. For example, some Latin American traditions name the first-born son after the father’s father. Whereas, many African Americans in the United States had names passed down through a slave-holding society until about 1960 when families started drawing names from the African continent.

The Burmese will tell you that they are very thoughtful in selecting names for their children as they believe that a person’s name can have a great influence on the child’s future life.

So, when it comes to looking at a new name for our region, great care and thought is to be given.

I believe it is a good thing that the Delegates decided to give this more time, thought and prayer.

Clearly, our name, which is tied to geography, no longer fits a region that spans the entire country. Like the Burmese, the selection of a new region name may greatly influence our region’s future life.

Not only should we attend to the name but the acronym as well, as in most cases, a name is reduced to an acronym more times than not.

The name suggested by the Executive Board was the **“RGR Network of Transforming American Baptists.”** Yes, this is a long name. (Yet, it is three words less than our current name.) Furthermore, the acronym would be RGRNOTAB. Perhaps not the best acronym.

The approved motion to suspend has given us time to ponder a while longer and perhaps allow the creative juices to flow more fully. But the motion prevented us from getting any feedback from our churches. Therefore, we have created a survey, which you can access through this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XN2WSHP>

You are encouraged to share this survey widely throughout your church.

Thank you,

Rev. Alan Newton