



--FEATURES

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Family Wins Hearts Of Mescalero Indians

MESCALERO RESERVATION, N.M. (BP)--If Wendy hadn't come along in 1970, James and Joan Huse might never have turned the corner in their ministry to New Mexico Indians.

An abused child, the two-year-old Mescalero Indian girl had stopped growing. Doctors believed she would never fully develop, physically or mentally.

The Huses disagreed. They took Wendy into their home on the Mescalero Apache reservation. They fed and clothed her. Most of all, they held her, touched her and "just loved her," Joan recalls.

Wendy grew six inches in six months. She talked, laughed, played with the Huse children, attended school at the usual age--progressed as a normal child.

The constant care the Huses gave Wendy earned them the trust of all who lived on the Mescalero reservation, a trust they worked years to gain.

It began when Joan, a registered nurse, joined the staff of the reservation hospital. In 1970, she learned of the need for couples to take in foster children from troubled Mescalero families. The Huses volunteered; Wendy followed.

James had performed all the typical pastoral duties, but foster parenting offered a way to minister to tribal families with need.

Mescalero Apaches, a self-reliant, close-knit and hard-working people, have avoided much of the poverty that afflicts many native Americans, relying on imaginative and aggressive use of their resources. Mescaleros own cattle herds and a timber cutting operation, a popular resort and a ski area on reservation land.

But alcoholism plagues the people. Deaths from liver disease, automobile accidents and other alcohol-related mishaps have left only 150 people over 50 among a reservation population of 2,200. The median age is 16.

Attempting to break the cycle of alcoholism, the tribe operates education and alcoholic rehabilitation programs and a group foster home for children of troubled families.

For the Huses, caring for suffering children became a way of soothing vulnerable, hurt tribal families. Since 1970, the Huses have cared for 60 children, newborn to teen-agers. They even have taken in offspring of children they once fostered.

After 25 years of ministry among the people he loves, James has earned respect, affection and trust from the Mescalero tribe and its leaders. He has a close working relationship with tribal judges who occasionally ask him to counsel troubled families.

The depth of his involvement was revealed when Arnold, grandson of a tribal judge, had found an old, beat-up hat. He was showing it off to the other kids.

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"Where'd you get it?" one asked.

"My dad gave it to me."

The kids knew Arnold's dad had not lived with the family for many years. "Oh, yeah? Your dad's not here," they teased.

"He is!" Arnold replied. "Everybody knows Daddy Huse is my dad."

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Texas Head Announces
Third Retirement Try

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DALLAS (BP)--James H. Landes, executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas since Jan. 1, 1974, has announced his intention to retire at the end of 1982.

Landes, who will be 70 in August 1982, tried to retire as director of the Southern Baptist Convention's largest state convention both in 1976 and 1978 but continued at the request of his executive board.

Membership in the state convention has grown from 2 million to 2.2 million during Landes' tenure and fully one-sixth of all Southern Baptists are in Texas. The state's Cooperative Program budget has grown in eight years from \$16.7 million to a 1982 proposed budget of \$45.4 million and Texas Baptists have started more than 1,000 churches and missions in that time.

Landes told the administrative committee, "I have no intention to quit helping our churches and ministers. I plan to give the rest of my life helping friends who may not have had the benefit of the many experiences that I have been privileged to have."

Landes is a graduate of Ouachita Baptist University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was president of Hardin-Simmons University from 1963-1966 and was pastor of churches in Eagle Lake, Bryan, Wichita Falls and Richardson, Texas, and Birmingham, Ala.

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Texas' Brazil Push
Peaks in September

By Orville Scott

Baptist Press
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DALLAS (BP)--An army of Southern Baptist volunteers will march on Brazil in September.

About 750 Texas Baptists, mostly laypersons, will fly to 10 of Brazil's major cities in a cooperative witnessing venture called Mission to Brazil. They will join forces with Brazilian Baptists and Southern Baptist foreign missionaries to help achieve a goal set by Brazilian Baptists for their 100th anniversary--to double the number of Baptist churches and church members to attain 6,000 churches and a million members.

The armada of volunteers in 1981 contrasts sharply with the scene a century ago when Texas Baptist newlyweds W.B. and Anne Luther Bagby left their homes to plant their lives and faith in Brazil. They met strong opposition, and while preaching, Bagby was struck on the head by a stone and knocked unconscious. But, in 1882, the Bagbys joined missionaries Z.C. and Kate Crawford Taylor and a converted Catholic priest to establish the first Baptist church for Brazilians in the old city of Salvador.

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Some 800 Texas volunteers already have provided their own expenses and served for an average of about two weeks in Brazil. The volunteers serving with career missionaries and Brazil Baptists reported about 20,000 decisions for Christ.

Since a fourth of Brazil's 120 million people live in 10 major cities, the focus of Texas Baptists is on major cities evangelism. Ten cities and areas of Texas are matched with 10 major cities of Brazil. For example, Houston and Gulf Coast Association is a partner with Sao Paulo, Brazil's largest city with a metro area of 14 million people.

The volunteers, who range from teenagers to teenagers, share their faith door-to-door, on the streets and in church revivals. The language gap is bridged by printing the volunteers' testimonies and the plan of salvation in Portuguese on a small leaflet. Returning Texans report that most Brazilians receive and read the testimonies. Many say with amazement, "You came all the way from Texas to tell us about Jesus."

Southern Baptist missionaries agree that Brazil is one of the most responsive nations to the gospel on earth. Brazil is traditionally Catholic, but the influence of Catholicism has diminished, and there is a nationwide spiritual hunger, says Mission to Brazil Coordinator Bill Damon. Often people have filled the void with spirit worship, a mixture of Catholic traditions and African voodoo.

Besides the volunteers going to Brazil, thousands of Texas Baptists are participating in a massive prayer lift in which 1,000 churches in Texas are prayer partners with churches in Brazil. Also, a special 66 days of prayer are being observed on two continents from United States Independence Day July 4 through Brazil Independence Day Sept. 7.

Since December 1980, Texas Baptists have given about \$750,000 to support major cities evangelism in Brazil, above their special gifts for foreign missions worldwide.

Besides evangelistic work, volunteers are helping to construct churches and encampment facilities to provide for the thousands of new Brazilian Baptists.

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Determination, Courage Are
Hallmarks of Bruce Adkins

By Jim Lowry

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TULSA, Okla. (BP) — Bruce Adkins is proving he's one of those special people with the fortitude to push onward when obstacles appear overwhelming and hope comes only from faith.

Adkins, son of Betty Adkins, an employee of the Tulsa Baptist Book Store, received critical injuries in June 1978 when his motorcycle was hit by a car. His brain stem was severely injured and he received major chest injuries.

For almost six months, Adkins lay in a coma—first in the hospital, then at home as his mother and friends attended him day and night, praying for recovery. He had five life-threatening operations while hospitalized, and doctors said each time he might not make it.

Adkins, 26, now exercises daily with the dedication and diligence of an athlete in training. Most days, he works six or seven hours with his mother or friends. Progress has been monumental but the path ahead is sure to be arduous.

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In the accident, his nervous system was damaged extensively. When he came out of the coma he had no speech or muscle control. He was fed through tubes and severe spasms wracked his body.

Coordination is difficult as Adkins tries to learn to walk again. He must consciously tell his body to lean slightly forward, lift one foot and move it ahead, all while picking up the trailing foot in a single, smooth motion.

It is a totally exhausting hour's work to walk the length of the living room four times with the aid of a walker. At Northeastern Oklahoma A & M Junior College, Bruce was on the gymnastics team. Now he trains to be self-supporting and is dedicated to the long, painful hours which are the price of progress.

The price for Betty Adkins has been round-the-clock care, hard work and stress. Her ability to endure, she says, is because of a faith that wouldn't allow her to give up.

Evidence of her son's progress, however slow or fast, has been a primary ingredient in Mrs. Adkins' dedication. She also has a whole new understanding of the meaning of friendship and selfless giving from people around her.

She received a job offer from now retired manager Lola Allen to start work for the Baptist Book Store just a few days after her husband was murdered in 1968. Allen trained her at night to operate the office machines.

After her retirement in 1979, Allen started working with Adkins daily. She cooks for the Adkinses occasionally and gives them canned food, in addition to taking Bruce to therapy sessions and on other errands.

Lola is one of about 40 persons who has donated time to help the Adkinses. Though some helped for a short time, there has developed a seemingly indefatigable core of Christian friends who believe Bruce and Betty are special.

Two girls in this group were walking down the street one day, saw the wheelchair ramp into the house and stopped to ask if there was anything they might do to help a handicapped person who lived there.

These girls are members of a singles group in a Tulsa Methodist church. That singles group now takes Adkins out nearly every week to a movie or bowling, and they work with him and visit often in the home.

Kemp and Cynthia Fox are two others who have worked with Adkins, almost from the time he regained consciousness. Because of the frozen muscle condition it took two men to uncross his legs when Fox started working with him. Fox helps Adkins walk three times a week.

The contributions of Lola Allen, the Methodist singles group, the Foxes and other church members and friends have made Adkins' recovery period a valuable lesson of concern and love.

For Mrs. Adkins, there were times when she wasn't sure she could go on caring for her son all night and working all day. Each time she felt she was nearing the bottom emotionally, another friend would step in to encourage her and not let her quit.

Mentally alert since he came out of the coma, Adkins has been an inspiration to his helpers. He has witnessed of his faith to friends and nurses, and feels God has a reason for his being alive today.

Most persons in Adkins' condition go to nursing homes, doctors advised Mrs. Adkins. But the mountain of caring, love, faith and work of friends enabled him to stay home and progress.

A lot of people are not willing to give up on Bruce Adkins. And as one might suspect, he is no quitter.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Sunday School Board bureau of Baptist Press.

Way Clear For Dental Clinic: First Baptist Work In City

BOHICON, Benin (BP) — Buying land is difficult in Benin, West Africa. But with the right help, Tom Starkey, a Southern Baptist missionary dentist, found it could be done.

As soon as Starkey arrived in Bohicon in July 1980, he began searching for land to build a dental clinic. First he tried chasing down a few leads Beninese style—locating the supposed proprietor, who turns out to be someone who knows someone who knows someone who knows the proprietor.

Frustrated with that, he decided he needed more than just a little help from the Lord in locating his clinic. He needed to put him in complete control.

With that done, Starkey, a former Elizabethton, Tenn., dentist, began to spread the word around Bohicon that he wanted to purchase land. Eventually an electrician contacted him. He knew a major landholder who had property to sell along the road to Cove. Although unpaved, it was one of Bohicon's major roads and already had electricity and water hookups, a fact which would save a large sum when the clinic was built.

The land, 82 feet by 112 feet, was just large enough for the clinic, a fact that would help keep down already high land and building costs.

Not only did Starkey find the land more quickly than expected, but he also learned the owner already held the title, a document often difficult or impossible to obtain in Benin. This cut months from the time required to close the deal.

As the first Baptist work in Bohicon, the clinic will be a contact with people who normally would not be exposed to the message of Jesus Christ and will show that Baptists are there to aid Benin and its people.

The clinic will provide basic dental services rarely available in Benin. The nearest dental to Bohicon is very limited and almost 90 miles away.

Starkey is just learning the local language, Fon, but he hopes to reach many people and villages with the gospel by having a Fon cassette ministry at the clinic, from which home Bible studies could result.

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