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'Bicycle Philosophy'  
Saves Lives In Uganda

By Robert O'Brien

BUNAMBALE, Uganda (BP)--Some people joke that David Sorley's "bicycle philosophy" of community health took root because a nun was taking driving lessons.

When the Southern Baptist missionary physician arrived in Uganda, he began to look for a place to test his community health philosophy. He considered Munamba to take advantage of the expertise of a nearby Catholic nun community health nurse.

Sorley met with people at the Catholic clinic several times. They expressed interest but made no concrete move. He began to grow impatient. Then the nun moved to Mbale to take driving lessons.

By that time, Sorley had decided to stop wasting time and selected Bunambale, even though it was less accessible than Munamba. The community, which has a good record of self-help, responded enthusiastically to his offer of medical assistance. Townspeople appointed a community health committee and selected 14 women for him to train as community health workers.

The fact that two young Baptist churches were nearby cemented his decision. Sorley and his wife, Darlene, believe that spiritual life and health rank as the major need in the lives of people they seek to reach.

Sorley's "bicycle philosophy" is based on people learning to care for their own and others' physical and spiritual needs. Sorley usually rides and pushes a bicycle up the mountain on his appointed rounds--for more reasons than one.

"I ride a bicycle both to show the people I'm willing to operate on their level and to show them I'm not able to bring them a lot of goodies," said Sorley, who grew up as a Baptist General Conference missionary kid in India.

"A real problem in Uganda and in many developing countries is that they associate a white face with handouts. Community health is basically built on the idea that people need to be able to help themselves."

Sorley, formerly a family physician in his native Minnesota and former chief epidemiologist for the state of Maryland, began gravitating from curative to preventative medicine while serving as a Baptist General Conference missionary physician in Ethiopia for five years.

The Sorleys joined a Southern Baptist congregation, Woodbrook Baptist Church, Baltimore, Md., after returning to the states from Ethiopia. Baptist General Conference medical work had ended there because of war. The Sorleys eventually returned to mission work under SBC Foreign Mission Board appointment.

Now the veteran physician is chairman of the Baptist mission of Uganda. He also advises churches and specializes in community health--capitalizing on Africans' natural bent toward music and dramatization.

He uses music and drama, among other techniques, to teach community health trainees to teach their neighbors to save lives. For example, when the hills become alive with the sound of music around Bunambale, it'll likely be "The Diarrhea Song."

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That song, written by the trainees, teaches them to teach others how "oral rehydration" saves the lives of children. As they sing, they pantomime how a mother--or even an older child--can prepare a mixture which can save lives.

"Dehydration from diarrhea causes many deaths in this part of the world among children," Sorley said. "We have been teaching the trainees how to teach mothers to make their own simple solution to save their children, using a teaspoon of sugar and a three-finger pinch of salt dissolved in a glass of clean water."

The sugar and salt act together to pump the badly needed salt water into the system. Although sugar is often hard to get in Uganda's hard-pressed economy, the families can improvise. "They can substitute sugar cane juice or honey or a sweet drink they make from bananas," Sorley said.

When the physical problem is really a spiritual one, the Sorleys are ready to handle that, too.

Recently in Mbale they got a call from the district medical officer, Dr. Pauline Tsekkoko. She told them her 19-year-old sister, Rose Namalwa, suffered from demon possession. The Sorleys prayed with Namalwa, witnessed to her and taught her scripture. Eventually she accepted Jesus Christ and became free of her problem.

Tsekkoko spoke not long after that at the graduation of some Christian health workers in Mbale, where another participant commented that medical personnel must also deal with the spiritual condition to treat people adequately.

"I agree," Tsekkoko told the group, "because I have experienced that in my own home. As a doctor I know the value of teaching health, but the Sorleys have shown me how God can change lives."

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Graham Cited With  
Medal Of Freedom

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WASHINGTON (BP)--Southern Baptist evangelist Billy Graham was one of 12 prominent Americans honored by President Reagan with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award.

In a White House East Room ceremony Feb. 23, Reagan cited the 64-year-old Graham as one whose "untiring evangelism has spread the Word of God to every corner of the globe and made him one of the most inspirational spiritual leaders of the Twentieth Century."

The citation continued: "As a deeply committed Christian, his challenge to accept Jesus Christ has lifted the hearts, assuaged the sorrows and renewed the hopes of millions. Billy Graham is an American who lives first and always for his fellow citizens. In honoring him, we give thanks for God's greatest spiritual gifts--faith, hope and love."

Graham, a Charlotte, N.C. native, joins 220 other Americans cited with the Medal of Freedom since the award was instituted by former President Harry Truman.

Others honored in the Feb. 23 ceremony were George Balanchine, founder of the New York City and School of American Ballet; Paul (Bear) Bryant, the late head football coach of the University of Alabama; Eric Hoffer, a philosopher; Dumas Malone, an American historian; James Burnham, founding editor of National Review;

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James Cheek, president of Howard University, Washington, D.C.; R. Buckminster Fuller, an architect-designer; Clare Boothe Luce, a playwright, diplomat and former member of Congress; Mabel Mercer, a recording artist and blues singer; Simon Ramo, an engineer, businessman and physicist who founded TRW, Inc. and Jacob K. Javits, a former U. S. senator from New York.

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Seminary Professor Williams  
Dies In Louisville

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LOUISVILLE, Ken. (BP)--Donald L. Williams, a member of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary faculty since 1961, died Feb. 21 after a three-year battle with cancer.

Williams, 49, was associate professor of Old Testament interpretation at his alma mater, where he received a B.D. degree in 1958.

During services on the Southern Seminary campus, senior professor Penrose St. Amant, who was dean of the school of theology when Williams joined the seminary faculty, recalled his colleague's courage.

"For him, life was not a mournful event," St. Amant said. "It was a struggle shot through with zest and joy."

Williams, a native of Fort Smith, Ark., also was a graduate of Baylor University and Southern Methodist University. He was awarded the Ph.D. degree from Duke University in 1961.

He is survived by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Hill Williams of Fort Smith.

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Consultant Ignores Threat,  
Witnesses To Assailant

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NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)--When George Fletcher arrived in Lake City, Fla., the last thing he expected to do was witness to an ex-convict who was holding him at gunpoint in a hotel room.

Fletcher, a church architecture consultant at the Sunday School Board for 16 years, had arrived in Florida to begin a week-long consulting trip with churches in the area.

Returning to his room after a late supper, he was followed by a young couple. "I thought they probably had a room near mine, so I didn't give it a second thought," he said.

However, when Fletcher reached his room, the couple forced their way in behind him, held him at gunpoint and demanded all his money.

"He threatened to shoot me if I didn't give him my wallet," Fletcher said. "I told him no, but that I could see he had a problem and would help him in any other way I could."

Fletcher said the young robber soon asked the woman to leave the room. "He told her he was going to blow my brains out and he didn't want her to watch."

After the woman left, Fletcher again refused to hand over his wallet. The young robber asked him how he managed to stay so calm. "I told him my relationship with the Lord gave me peace, courage and strength. I offered to give him \$40 if he would spend just a few minutes talking with me."

Fletcher said he had a 30-minute conversation with the young man who had been out of prison on parole on a manslaughter charge for only two weeks. "During the conversation I told him about God's love and offered suggestions as to how he could get his life back on the right track."

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When they had finished talking, Fletcher said the young man asked if he were a minister because "I was the first person who had ever really cared about him.

"He told me he and his companion needed to get to Orlando," Fletcher said. "So I wrote a note for him to take to Jim Henry, pastor of First Baptist Church there." Fletcher also gave the young man the \$40, which the assailant promised to pay back "someday."

Fletcher said he found out the following week several young men matching his attacker's description visited the counseling center at First Baptist Church, Orlando.

"That's the closest I may ever come to knowing if he ever sought help," explained Fletcher. "But one thing I know for sure is that the apology he offered, the hug of gratitude and the tears in his eyes when he left my room were all very genuine."

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Golden Gate Names  
Sewell To Faculty

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MILL VALLEY, Calif. (BP)--Donald E. Sewell has been named to the faculty of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary as assistant professor of religious education.

He has been with Cargill Associates of Fort Worth, Texas, where he was a consultant in the church division in which he directed capital stewardship programs.

Previously he was a Southern Baptist missionary to Mexico for four years. While there he was professor of education at Mexican Baptist Theological Seminary in Mexico City.

Sewell holds a bachelor of arts degree from Baylor University in Waco, Texas; and master of religious education and doctor of education degrees from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.

He has done additional study at North Texas State University in Denton and the University of Texas at Dallas. He is a graduate of the Spanish Language Institute in Guadalajara, Mexico.

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