



**-- BAPTIST PRESS**  
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92-7

**Fire severely damages  
Baptist library in Gaza**

**By Mike Creswell**

GAZA (BP)--Fire virtually destroyed a 10,000-volume Southern Baptist library facility in Gaza -- the largest of three public libraries in the Israeli-occupied area.

Arson was blamed for the Jan. 9 blaze.

The fire at the Center of Culture and Light was denounced by most Palestinian political groups in the territory. But Southern Baptist representatives in Gaza said the arson did not appear to be politically motivated.

When the fire was discovered, the building had been unused for five days because of a strike that shut down stores and other public buildings in the territory. Strikes and shutdowns are part of the Intifada, the Palestinians' ongoing opposition to Israeli occupation of Gaza and the West Bank.

Conditions in Gaza have been calmer in recent months with fewer strikes. But opposition efforts have stepped up since Middle East peace talks began. They intensified when Israel announced plans to deport a dozen Palestinians, a move that stirred worldwide attention.

Smoke coming from a window at the library facility was seen by Southern Baptist representative Debbie Peterson about noon Jan. 9. When workers examined the building, they saw that someone apparently had entered through a broken window and smashed a door to get inside and set the fire.

Firemen responded quickly to a call but their entry to the building was delayed by heavy smoke. Most furniture and books in the center of the main reading room were burned to ashes. Books along the outer wall were charred and heavily damaged by smoke.

"We may be able to get some of the books re-bound, but most of them are just gone," Southern Baptist representative Dona Fitzgerald said. Kerosene and gas lanterns stored in an outer room did not ignite, she said, or damage would have been worse.

Although the concrete building itself remains structurally sound, wooden doorways, electrical wiring and windows were damaged and will require extensive repairs. Southern Baptist representatives and the Palestinian library staff have cleaned much of the smoke damage. One of four new computers set up to teach young people was stolen; cords on the three others were damaged. Repair costs will not be known until estimates are obtained.

"We don't know if this was done maliciously or as an act of theft," Fitzgerald said. "But we are encouraged that the major political groups have come out and condemned it." Denunciations of the action were printed in local newspapers and also appeared as graffiti on walls throughout the city, a common way of expressing strong sentiments in Gaza known as "handwriting on the wall."

The burning of the library will be a loss for the Palestinian people. It was the largest of only three library facilities in the area serving about 750,000 people, Fitzgerald said. A new Islamic cultural center containing a library has been constructed but the opening of the facility has been delayed for several years.

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Southern Baptists have operated the Center of Culture and Light since 1969 as a service to the Palestinians and as a way of showing God's love in a heavily Muslim land. Between 50 and 60 people used the facility daily and about 6,500 Palestinians hold library membership cards, Fitzgerald said.

As world attention has focused on the Middle East peace talks and the political jockeying accompanying them, economic conditions have worsened in Gaza during recent months, Fitzgerald said. The crime rate has skyrocketed.

The homes of two Southern Baptist representatives have been burglarized in recent weeks. Audio-visual equipment was stolen during a break-in at the School of Allied Health Sciences operated by Southern Baptist representatives in Gaza City.

A single class of 15 students is enrolled at the nursing school -- a fraction of the enrollment of previous years -- because of the ongoing difficulty of life in the troubled territory. Electricity and water are sometimes shut off, books are hard to get and travel is often impossible for days at a time as tensions rise and tempers flare.

Eleven Southern Baptist representatives work in Gaza. Most work with the nursing school or at a hospital once operated by Southern Baptists that was turned over to the Anglican Church in 1982.

Gaza is a strip of land about 25 miles long and 5 miles wide along the Mediterranean Sea. Israel took control of Gaza from Egypt and seized the West Bank, an area along the Jordan River, from Jordan during the Six Day War of 1967. Many of the Palestinians in Gaza live in refugee camps. All but about 1 percent of the population is Muslim.

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'Retired' pastor Red Shaw  
continually shares his faith

By Toby Druin

Baptist Press  
1/14/92

DALLAS (BP)--"Soul winning is like swimming," says H.P. "Red" Shaw. "If you are going to do it, you have to get in the water."

And the "water" for the 82-year-old retired Dallas pastor is just about anywhere he happens to be -- having breakfast with his wife, Mary, at a restaurant, jogging or reading his morning paper. He uses all of those opportunities to tell others of the salvation available to them through faith in Jesus Christ.

In August 1990 Shaw ordered 1,000 copies of the tract, "How to Have a Full and Meaningful Life" and with the help of his wife finished giving them out a couple of months ago. He has ordered 200 more.

Shaw retired as pastor at Walnut Terrace Baptist Church in 1986, which he helped start in 1966. He previously led South Loop Baptist Church from 1952-65. He was managing a Safeway store in Oak Cliff when he was won to Christ at Hillcrest Baptist Church. The pastor, D.D. Sumrall, taught him to be a soul winner, Shaw said, and the church ordained him to the ministry.

When he retired, Shaw said, he didn't want to "just sit back in a rocking chair."

"The only reason we are on this earth is to tell others about Jesus," Shaw said.

On most mornings he and his wife eat breakfast at an area restaurant. On a recent morning they were at the International House of Pancakes. As they waited to be seated, Shaw said, he spoke to the others in line: "Good morning, I'd like to share something with you about the Lord, Jesus Christ," and gave them all a tract.

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When the waitress came to their table he asked her if she had trusted Christ as her Savior. When she answered that she had accepted Christ, Shaw gave her tracts for her friends.

Before they left the restaurant, he had spoken to a wrestler from Iowa who said he was a Christian and to a policeman. Shaw won the policeman to Christ and bought his breakfast. He also got professions of faith from the busboy and the woman who seats the customers, gave her a tract for the cook and passed out others to a group of students waiting for seats as he left.

Shaw is a member of First Baptist Church in Garland but his primary focus is not enlisting people for the church, he said. "The thing I am dealing with is salvation; the church will take care of itself."

Later, on most days, Shaw jogs several miles and doesn't miss an opportunity to witness along the way. He stopped by a drive-in bank on his route recently and left tracts for all the tellers. "I'm not here to rob or steal," he said he told them. "I'm here to tell you about Jesus."

The reception he usually gets is warm, he said, but he noted "not everyone wants to be saved."

While going witnessing "house-to-house and heart-to-heart," he has been unwelcome in some homes. One man, mud-covered from a backyard project, answered Shaw's knock and quickly told him to leave until he was ready to get in the mud with him. Shaw went home, changed clothes and went back to the man's home to help and witness to him but the man still ran him off.

Shaw just shrugs off those kinds of encounters and goes to the next door -- or the next opportunity. He said he had seen people at intersections selling flowers and newspapers and used the same tactic to give out a bucketful of tracts to passing motorists.

He also uses the bad news in the morning paper as an opportunity to share the gospel. He pores over the paper, noting who has been arrested or otherwise fallen on hard times, and writes to them and includes a gospel tract.

Shaw has written to many murderers, including Charles Manson. When he wrote to Manson, he said, the FBI came to see him to question his motivation. "I'm trying to get him saved," he said.

"People are ready and waiting" for salvation, Shaw said. "All we have to do is tell them about Jesus."

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AIDS patients' decorations  
brightened Uganda holidays

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press  
1/14/92

KAMPALA, Uganda (BP)--AIDS angels joined the Christmas scene in Uganda in 1991.

So did peanut men, tinsel-laden painted trees, crocheted ornaments and numerous other decorations -- all made and marketed by the local Baptist "People With AIDS Christmas Project." Several stores in the Ugandan capital of Kampala and the city's largest Anglican church, along with the Baptist bookstore, offered the items for sale.

"We're selling things about as fast as the 'PWAs' can produce them," said Southern Baptist missionary Linda Rice before Christmas. She pointedly uses the term "PWA" as an acronym for "people with AIDS."

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"We're trying to get away from the term 'AIDS victim' -- that makes them sound helpless," said Rice, of Christiansburg, Va.

The AIDS patients may not be helpless but they certainly face a bleak future once they become ill. Although the Ugandan government is battling the disease that has swept the east African nation, no money is available to weave a social security net. Families and friends often reject anyone known to be HIV-positive.

That often means mounting medical bills and no income.

Kampala Baptist Church has led the effort to minister to people with AIDS for years. So when Rice came up with the idea of assisting PWAs in making and selling Christmas decorations, church members Patrick Galabuzi and Sarah Namirembe responded.

The two university graduates do not have AIDS, but as committed Christians they felt a call to help PWAs. The pair overcame some initial personal apprehension and wound up co-directing the project. They took Rice's design ideas and adapted them in addition to coming up with original decorations.

A \$1,000 grant from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board provided seed money while Rice pored over the craft books she buys with a yearly gift from the Women's Missionary Union of Virginia.

The project was launched in October and by late November was operating in the black -- paying almost 50 PWAs for their work and providing modest salaries for Galabuzi and Namirembe.

"The crocheted ornaments sold best among the expatriate community because they 'look African.' But the Ugandans are really taken with the peanut men," Rice said. "They came up with that idea themselves, went out and bought an old electric motor and used the copper wire from it to string the unshelled peanuts together."

Later the project members began stripping bark off small trees, painting the trees in bright colors and draping an assortment of their decorations on the limbs. The units sold for around \$20. Another bestseller, the 10-inch-tall angels, cost about \$1.75.

Two work groups, one at Kampala Baptist with 28 members and the other at Lugogo Baptist Church with 20 participants, were paid as soon as they turned in finished products.

"Goodness knows they always need the money as soon as they can get it," Rice pointed out. "They often don't know from day to day what they will eat or how they will pay transportation to the clinic."

The original plan was to let PWAs work at home. But Issac Munyagwa, pastor at Kampala Baptist, saw another benefit in gathering a support group for the dying and often desperate people.

The Kampala group began meeting Saturdays at the church. Munyagwa makes a point of being with them each week. "The pastor's idea has been a real blessing," Rice said. "As they work together on the decorations they also are helped with basic emotional needs of acceptance and self-support. And certainly the spiritual needs are a priority; there are PWAs being saved and baptized."

The Saturday meeting usually begins on a low note emotionally "but as they talk and open up with one another things begin to brighten," she said. "Each time there are astounding testimonies of how God has seen someone through a tough time or given some special spiritual insight. It makes you want to shout, and by the time they leave most of them are ready to face another week with AIDS."

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With Christmas over and the demand for ornaments gone, Galabuzi and Namirembe are trying to convert the project into a year-round operation by branching into other craft areas.

Rice hopes they will be successful. It's "a good chance to love many into God's kingdom," she said.

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Baptists in troubled Uganda  
praying for remnants of USSR

Baptist Press  
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KAMPALA, Uganda (BP)--Thousands of Ugandan Baptists -- the vast majority of whom know nothing about the political events convulsing the former Soviet Union -- have pledged to pray for the countries emerging from that chaos.

In November Southern Baptist missionary Linda Rice wrote assorted Ugandan Baptist associational leaders, pastors and missionaries informing them of a "prayer alert" issued by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board focusing on the former Soviet Union.

She recapped the political and economic situation in the Soviet republics, highlighted the opportunities for evangelism suddenly available and listed specific prayer requests, including the planned Billy Graham crusade, Bible translation needs and the use of the "Jesus" film.

The appeal touched a responsive chord among Ugandans, a people who have known almost a quarter-century of turmoil from civil war and AIDS. Rice's letter was written in English, one of the official languages of Uganda, but was translated by pastors into Luganda and Ateso.

Hundreds of copies were distributed at the annual meeting of the Baptist Union of Uganda in December. Many others were mailed or hand-delivered to remote churches and preaching points.

Eventually the letters reached each of the 500 churches and preaching points affiliated with the union.

"I left some almost everywhere I went," said John Ekuru, who translated the letter into Ateso. "And I asked the people to put the letters up where other people could see them. Who knows who might read it and be convicted by the Holy Spirit to pray for our brothers thousands of miles away? It's not just Baptists who should be concerned about this."

Numerous churches reportedly included special prayer for the former Soviet Union at their traditional New Year's Day services. Rice is confident Ugandan Baptists, who understand the power of prayer from their own history, will pray faithfully throughout 1992.

"I was convicted to share the prayer request and I am repeatedly amazed by the spiritual depth of the believers in Uganda," she said. "But the response to this surpassed even my expectations."

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Sports Illustrated only tells  
part of Baptist deacon's story

By Gary Griffith

Baptist Press  
1/14/92

CLINTON, Miss. (BP)--For one 46-year-old Louisiana Baptist deacon, the 1991 NFL football season held an honor most sports enthusiasts only dream about: being featured in Sports Illustrated.

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But why would the nation's premier sports magazine be interested in a deacon at First Baptist Church of Clinton who owns and operates a dairy farm 40 miles north of Baton Rouge? Because Billy Andrews hasn't always been a deacon or farmed for a living.

As a 25-year-old linebacker for the Cleveland Browns, he helped "launch the American cultural phenomenon" of ABC Monday Night Football on Sept. 20, 1970. That's the reason "Sports Illustrated" gave for featuring Andrews 21 years later in its Sept. 2 issue.

What was Andrews' contribution to the first Monday Night Football game played on national television? He tells the story again for the umpteenth time, but the details are still clear. He remembers it well.

"It was a complete experiment," Andrews recalls. "Football was played on Sundays. Nobody knew if America would watch football on Monday night television. Nobody knew if the fans would come out to see games on Monday. The players didn't like having to wait around until Monday night to play."

But America did watch, with an estimated audience of more than 1 million viewers tuned to ABC. Browns fans did come out to see the game, with 87,000 people packed into Cleveland's Municipal Stadium. And the Browns faced the defending Super Bowl champion New York Jets led by "Broadway Joe" Namath in a game that went down to the wire. That's where Andrews comes in.

"With less than a minute to play, Namath had the ball on his own 8-yard line and we (the Browns) were ahead 24-21. He was known for his comebacks and they had trailed us the whole second half. So everybody was expecting Joe to make his move. We just braced for it," Andrews says.

"On first down, I remember seeing him fade back to pass. We got good pressure on him, and he rolled away from the pressure. I think he was trying to throw a pass to Emerson Boozer coming out of the backfield."

Namath didn't see Andrews around the 25-yard line providing short coverage underneath. The legendary quarterback underthrew his receiver and Anderson dove for the ball. He caught it and rolled over in one motion. Jumping up Andrews started to run. He avoided the first tackler with a spin move. Three yards later he got past a tackler and used the referee as a shield to avoid another tackler. Cutting back left, Andrews dragged a tackler while stiff-arming another to make him miss the tackle. While Namath stood motionless, Andrews leaped into the end zone. "Most valuable player" awards weren't given for football games in 1970 but Andrews was touted as the hero of that first Monday night game as the Browns beat the Jets 31-21.

But that's not all the story for Andrews. There's a story he wants told that Sports Illustrated didn't ask about and probably didn't care to hear. Looking back, Andrews says he made football and sports his god. "Of course, there's nothing wrong with football or sports but I gave them the wrong priority in my life. Actually, that means that I made myself my own god. I did anything that would gratify myself but I was never satisfied."

From youth Andrews pushed himself to higher and higher achievements in football, including all-state honors two years in high school and all-conference honors three years at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond. "But it never satisfied," he says.

"Still, I continued to pursue my god and eventually made it into pro football. The Cleveland Browns drafted me in 1967 and I worked 'til I became a starter. That was as far as my god could take me but I still wasn't satisfied."

In May 1971 Andrews gave up the "god of football," accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Lord and Savior and found a new life, he says.

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"It was funny that I was saved at a conference in Dallas to show Christian pro athletes how to share their faith with other athletes," Andrews says. Because he attended the Browns' chapel services religiously, he was asked to attend the conference.

"But anybody could tell by the way that I lived that I wasn't a Christian," Andrews says. "I had a good dose of religion because I had been going to church since I was born in Clinton. But that didn't change the fact that I had always done whatever it took to please myself.

"I agreed to go to the conference so I could go out on the town of Dallas and party hearty. But God, in his mercy, had a different plan. He saved me." With football in proper perspective, Andrews went on to become the Browns' defensive player of the year for 1971 and team captain in 1973. He retired from professional football in 1977 and coached high school football for two years. During that time, Andrews joined First Baptist Church in Clinton, began serving as a deacon, and started teaching Sunday school.

Recently Andrews gave up his post as chairman of FBC's deacons and Sunday school teacher to devote extra time to his dairy farm. The state's economic situation, labor costs and falling milk prices have forced Andrews to do much of the work himself, though two hands assist in milking 120 cows every morning before 7 a.m.

However, Andrews still teaches an FBC church training class for youth on Wednesday nights called "Time Out." He says he regrets having to give up some of his areas of service at the church, "but I have to take care of my family." Andrews and his wife, Kay, have three children, Bridget, 22, Katie, 21, and Will, 14.

Andrew's 6-foot-tall, 165-pound son plays linebacker and tight end for an area high school. "I've worked with Will and taught him some football. But it's much more important to me that I teach him about Jesus Christ, because my Lord gave me much more than football ever did."

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(BP) photo available upon request from the Louisiana Baptist Message, newsjournal of the Louisiana Baptist Convention

Louisiana cable system  
adds ACTS network

By Gary W. Griffith

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METAIRIE, La. (BP)--Louisiana's largest cable system with a potential viewership of more than a quarter million people has added the American Christian Television System in Jefferson Parish, two state ACTS leaders announced.

The ACTS network began airing on channel 47 of Cox Cable Jefferson Parish Inc., Dec. 2, said Harrison McCoy, former chairman of the ACTS Committee for the Baptist Association of Greater New Orleans. He also is pastor of Parkview Baptist Church in Metairie and now president of the Greater New Orleans ACTS Board in Jefferson Parish.

ACTS' presence in Jefferson Parish is "important because Southern Baptists in New Orleans have suffered with an identity crisis for many years and struggled with their perception in the predominately Roman Catholic area," McCoy said. "We have an opportunity to make a statement to enhance greatly our identity in the community."

However, McCoy noted his regret ACTS still is not on cable in the bordering New Orleans city limits or Orleans Parish, which is an ongoing challenge for ACTS promoters in the Greater New Orleans area.

A number of Louisiana Baptist groups and individuals have worked for more than five years to get a "Baptist witness" to New Orleans residents via television. But past efforts have failed, including one group's plans for a low-power television station, McCoy said.

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About 15 months ago, the ACTS Committee for BAGNO was formed and McCoy "reluctantly" agreed to chair the group. He said it was his understanding not much was expected of the committee because of the refusal of area cable managers to assign a channel for ACTS. "But the Lord began to work and things began to happen," McCoy said.

A new cable manager gave the ACTS group a hearing and set down two criteria: ACTS programming should have "local flavor" and reflect a "broad base of the Protestant religious community in Jefferson Parish," McCoy said. The new manager, Bill Geppert, later joined First Baptist Church of Kenner.

McCoy said the ACTS Committee met the criteria for local programming by linking with the Religious and Educational Access Channel production group, which is owned by the New Orleans Federation of Churches. The ACTS group met the requirement for broad-based participation of Jefferson Parish's Protestant community by establishing an ecumenical ACTS board, with eight members chosen by BAGNO and seven chosen by the Federation.

The cable system in Jefferson Parish boasts 116,000 subscribers and a potential viewership of more than 300,000, said R. Chip Turner, state ACTS president and convention communications director.

"This will show people in New Orleans what ACTS is all about. Until you see it, you really can't know what it's all about," Turner said.

A \$10,000 grant was given through funds from the Georgia Barnette Offering for State Missions to help purchase \$45,000 in equipment for the Jefferson Parish ACTS ministry. Some of the other funds came from a BAGNO gift of \$10,000, a \$5,000 gift from First Baptist Church of New Orleans and a \$5,000 gift from the New Orleans Federation of Churches.

Promotion of ACTS is important because it is an evangelistic tool that produces results each month, Turner said. An ACTS report for November showed Louisiana tied with Texas for the No. 2 spot in telephone calls for evangelistic counseling or prayer in response to the ACTS programs "Invitation to Life" and "The Baptist Hour."

"Don't take ACTS for granted," Turner stressed. "It is reaching people."