

Action!



Teaching the Word.
Reaching the World!

Volume 74, Number 1

January 2010



BAD or GOOD NEWS?

By John Reese

I took this photo recently in Papua New Guinea, and tell more about it on page 2. Is this PNG report bad news or good news? The photo might suggest bad news. But knowing this paper's long history, you'd guess good news—and you'd be right! *Action!* abounds with fantastic stories that circle the globe, exciting stories, inspiring stories—and they're all true!

Now, you may prefer bad news. If so, you have an endless supply from TV, Internet, papers and water-cooler gossip. OK, so your company can no longer afford a water-cooler. Which just makes the point: "Decline" is a key word in economics, morals, politics, education and religion. As I write, the headlines include



cop killings, a golfer's problems, nuclear weapons, global warming, bickering stars.... But those could appear in any time frame. Travels cause me to miss

newscasts for long periods. When they resume, nothing seems to have changed. The "news" is more of the same, confirming what we already know: "The whole world is under the control of the evil one" (1 John 5:19).

The Bible emphasizes a better perspective. "Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things" (Philippians 4:8). For Christians who look, there are plenty of reasons for bright hope. For churches of Christ, examples of effective outreach abound. Where is your mind dwelling, on positives that build up or negatives that wear down?

World Bible School ranks as an outstanding leader in the category of positive news. I recently appeared on a panel with the well-known statistician Flavil Yeakley who said that more people have been won to the Lord through

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WBS

IS...

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GOOD News in PNG



By John Reese

Not so long ago, Papua New Guinea held undiscovered worlds in its mountain jungles and isolated islands. Of its 800 different language groups, some were notorious as headhunters and cannibals. I took page 1's photo at the Canoe and Kundu Festival in Alotau, Milne Bay Province, PNG, which coincided with the World Bible School campaign in that town.

Papua New Guinea is one of just three nations in the world served by BRM (Business Reply Mail) whereby students return their answers free of charge. Their return postage is covered by local World Bible School programs that choose to participate. Art Ford is WBS' point man for setting up the new BRM service in PNG. Art is a former missionary to PNG, who has served as president of Great Lakes Christian College, and now preaches in Hamilton, Ontario. He established the WBS Service Center in Lae, where Inok Mingo facilitates mail flow, assisted by Canadian missionary



At the Festival booth, another visitor enrolls for WBS, watched by Beth Reese.

Ruth Zimmerman. Art spent much of September 2009 in PNG placing ads, assisting the Service Center, and involving local churches and preachers, especially at the nation-wide Evangelists' Workshop.

In November 2009, my wife and I, along with Scott Ferguson and Chuck and Bobbye Wilson, joined the local Alotau churches and the Canadian/U.S. mission team for a WBS campaign. The Canoe and Kundu Festival drew top dignitaries and large crowds from the area, from other districts and many islands. (The Province boasts 600 islands of which some 160 are inhabited.) The event was ideal for learning the cultures and sharing the Good News. Local Christians set up a booth for their local products and for offering Tawala song books, Bibles and WBS lessons. Many signed up at the booth, and many more received BRM postcards for enrolling, totaling some 500 immediate names with more to arrive.

The members and the missionaries—Leslie and Loopie Williams, Marcus (our son) and Diane Reese and Craig (Art's son) and Jeri Ford—are well-respected, which led to great opportunities. Festival organizers offered their main building for two nights of "Crusade" immediately after the Festival, and facilitated a public announcement. The Festival's P.A. system was made available at a reasonable rate, making my preaching audible even to boat people still camped by the beach. (The rain on the first evening of preaching also kept some from sailing home on schedule.) At the same time, Chuck Wilson, an elder and WBS

teacher from Austin, preached to large crowds inland at a palm oil estate. We also held classes to strengthen the Christians, both men and women. They were refreshed and also revitalized their local WBS programs in which members not only recruit but also do the grading, teaching and follow up.

Oh yes, the picture on page 1... that's Luke in the shark jaws. He looks like bad news. In fact, he freely gave me permission for photos and helped his entire cultural party have access to WBS. The good news is the welcome and receptivity of PNG. Help us to reach many more like Luke. Ruth Zimmerman recently lost support, and has returned for a while to Canada. Her mission work and her assistance to WBS is vital, and we encourage you to help her return to PNG. For that matter, if you want a very productive mission work, consider supporting the WBS Service Center as a key to reaching thousands throughout PNG. Tinani! ("Thanks" In Tawala) in advance for your prayers  and participation.



John Reese uses a canoe model while preaching at the Festival house.



WBS is...Sherri Hays

Sherri Hays works in the WBS home office at Cedar Park, Texas. She tracks WBS student recruiting results. She receives some 300,000 new students each year, as a result of advertising and referral overflows, and



Some of the WBS staff:
Sherri, Sheryl and Mickie

passes them on to teachers and congregations who request them. She prepares information packages, helps new programs to start and assists progress for existing programs.

Besides assigning thousands of students to teachers, she is an active WBS teacher in her own right. Like most teachers, she has never been happy with long lags in receiving reply mail from her students. So she now writes to each student, "If you use email, you can reduce the time delay by sending your answers to me by email. Also, feel free to email me at any time." Many students are just as anxious to speed the process, and they find a way to email their answers to Sherri. Obviously, not all students have that ability, but a surprising number do.

Sherri's personal students are located in England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Greece, Crete, Italy, Russia, Denmark, Ukraine, Morocco, Qatar, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Egypt, Oman, Madagascar, Australia, Congo, South Africa, Papua New Guinea, American Samoa, U. A. Emirates, New Zealand, Falkland Islands, Canada, Aruba, Tonga, Tahiti, Bahamas, Venezuela, St. Thomas, St. Vincent, Cook Islands, Japan and the United States.



Sherri Hays
at a Little Rock
workshop

Sherri said, "It is so humbling and rewarding to share the Gospel around the world! I have met some incredible people. I now have some of my best friendships with my new brothers and sisters in Christ with whom I have studied. This has been such a blessing in my life."



Above & Beyond
by Kevin Rhodes

Our little corner of the world.

See this satellite photo? That's our cul de sac—Banbridge Trail, Austin, Texas. See the flags? They represent where our neighbors are from. Our house sports the American flag. Above us is the flag from China, then Samoa and France. Germany, Mexico, and Lebanon are down the street, just out of the picture. And our next-door neighbor, Jae, is from Iran. Isn't that cool?! We have seven nations represented right in our own back yard!



We at WBS get excited about the world's flags. Especially when they represent individual souls that are studying our interactive Bible lessons. They're doing so in *every nation on earth*. Now, isn't that cool?! Thanks be to God, He continues to bless us with people eager to learn more about the Bible...to increase their knowledge of God...to participate with God's people, His church, in their community...to put on Jesus Christ in baptism, washing their sins away. God also continually blesses us with loving individuals and churches who give to help us teach even more. In every corner of the world. Thanks be to God!

Action!

EDITOR John Reese

Action! (ISSN 8750-1333) USPS 004380 is published bi-monthly by the non-profit ministry of World Bible School. WBS is a world-wide network of Christians teaching the Gospel with correspondence courses, both printed and over the Internet.



Teaching the Word. Reaching the World!

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Cedar Park, Texas 78613 USA
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Material Orders only: 877-393-0211
Email: info@worldbibleschool.net
Ministry site: www.worldbibleschool.net
Student site: www.wbschool.org

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
Action! World Bible School
P.O. Box 2169 · Cedar Park, Texas 78630
Periodicals Postage Paid at Cedar Park, Texas,
and at additional mailing offices.

Missions across the Map

Reports from Sylvester A. Imogoh

Editor's note: *A number of evangelists, including Monday John Akpakpan and Sylvester Imogoh, send reports that ought to make every Action! We include these, not because they are unusual, but because they share typical labors, trials and triumphs.*



Sylvester A. Imogoh

We traveled to Otuo in Northern Edo State. The road was a "nightmare." When we arrived, we were as brown with dust as brown can be. Plus, we had many bumps on jagged rock outcrops as we meandered the rough terrain. It was much later as we took the van to baptize the four that we realized how much damage was done to the van's bottom plate. All the engine oil had leaked out. Another challenge we faced was with the scarcity and price of fuel.

Yet the exercise was very profitable. The local preacher Moses Amaize and his son Daniel guided us to the streets for house-to-house preaching. We were armed with tracts, WBS fliers and our Bibles as we navigated the narrow streets.

Gone are the days when we had many enthusiastic debaters of God's word who were eager to hear how they could possibly be wrong in their religious beliefs.

Today, many are becoming lukewarm in their attitudes toward the Gospel. Entertainment is taking the place of Bible study in many churches. But rather than being discouraged, this is an added reason why we must preach the Word with urgency. There are still people willing to listen.



Sylvester A. Imogoh and M. J. Akpakpan

But as someone involved in extensive and consistent campaigns over the past 25 years, I clearly see the shift in receptivity.

After many hours under the scorching sun today, four were ready. We took them to a nearby creek, and John immersed them into Christ. As they came from the water, one of the girls said, "If I had the means, tomorrow, I would do a 'thanksgiving' [payment] at church."

So many have been in religious slavery; we know of religious leaders who deny baptism because the prospects cannot pay for baptism. So today, the true Gospel of Christ liberated these four young people. They went home rejoicing. We especially thank Jim McPeak and the Orangevale church in California [who provided literature and travel help].

[We also made a trip to] Apex, a privately-owned school along the Abuja expressway. It is not large, but it is prestigious. WBS students there study with Ruth Orr and also with Joan Ranferoe and Carol Wright of Derby, Kansas. Sixtus Okpokpo, a preacher who teaches in that school, set up the appointment. We were delayed by a competition between Apex and two other schools. We used the spare time to go to Ibillokhai school. We met the principal and concluded plans for a WBS seminar at that school.

Back at Apex we talked to the students in their dining hall. The timing affected turnout, but most of the WBS students were present along with all boarding students. We had a good audience who listened and asked questions. The long day and the terribly bad road were tiring. But we are

always grateful for these opportunities to work together with you, our American brethren [following up on your  students].

Searching for Synonyms

By Kevin Rhodes

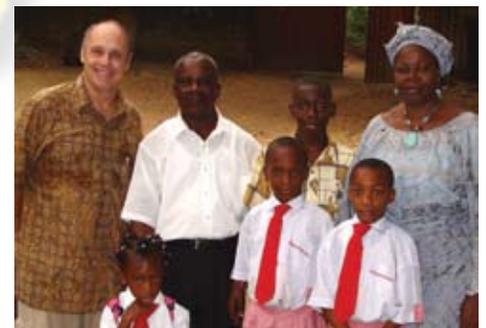
Nigerian Christians are active evangelists, eager to partner with World Bible School in sharing the Good News of Jesus. Veteran Monday John Akpakpan leads a team in conducting follow up campaigns with WBS



M. J. Akpakpan

students, and youth and leadership seminars in four southern Nigerian states. One of his quarterly report summarizes efforts in 40 villages and towns, resulting in some 355 baptisms.

The report, on homemade WBS letterhead, uses every phrase possible to describe the conversions: "baptized"; "put on Christ"; "the Lord added"; "precious souls converted"; "added to the church"; "accepted Christ in baptism"; etc. Apparently hoping to avoid constant repetition, page two of the report declares: "The WBS seminar at Akpet Central bagged three souls for Christ (emphasis ours)."



John Reese with Akpakpan family





Over the ten year period through 2008, Monday John has documented 25,455 baptisms as the result of WBS-related efforts in this region alone.



Five Baptized In Philippines

By Sammy Sinco

We rejoice to report the baptism of five young men: Jolland, Gerald, Jefferson, John and Genesis (“Genz”). All have been studying WBS lessons and were invited to attend the WBS-Aklan Mission Workshop. This is the second workshop they have attended. After a lecture on “Family of God” series they decided to be baptized for the forgiveness of their sins. They join others who were immersed into Christ earlier in connection with World Bible School lessons. Aklan Mission Workshops



Note the WBS shirts.

celebrated the eighth year of the Lord’s church in Kalibo Aklan.

I myself was a product of WBS in 1988, and I continue to believe in WBS. It really helps to sow the seed of the Kingdom very effectively.

Special thanks go to Brian Bishop, the J.V. Houston church and the WBS group in Baguio City for sending materials, flyers, booklets, promotional paraphernalia, song books, etc., which make our seed sowing easier and harvesting good for the Lord. We are “confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1:6)

Editor’s note: Brian, who is missions deacon at Jersey Village church of Christ,



Sammy Sinco with teens

wrote, “Sammy and his wife Janel have done a phenomenal job [for] the Gospel in the province of Aklan.... After he visited here in October 2008, we ordered a load of WBS lessons, which we stuffed into Balikbayan boxes, along with other materials, and sent to the Philippines. When he received the boxes, he wasted no time at all in distributing the lessons, eventually setting up studies which resulted in baptisms. I praise our Lord for using such humble soldiers of Christ as Sammy and Janel for His work.”



In Loving Honor of Alice Bradshaw

By Tom King

Alice began studying with 25 World Bible School students in 1988, and since that time she has been continuously involved with WBS. During the

1990s she recruited additional teachers and other workers to join her, and the WBS Team at Singing Oaks church of Christ in Denton, TX has grown to over 40 members.

Alice served as the WBS coordinator for almost 20 years. She maintained an office in her home that was devoted exclusively to WBS work. Then she spearheaded the effort to have a WBS work area in the church building, and has devoted untold hours to her beloved students. She saw the number of students she had touched grow from the original 25 to over 100,000.

While health issues have forced Alice to reduce her role in the WBS Team, she continues to be involved with the efforts of the group as they share the Gospel. All the WBS



workers at Singing Oaks consider Alice to be a pioneer who showed us the way that we could be involved in the Great Commission of Jesus.



BAD or Good News? from page 1 _____

WBS than through any other method in our time. My international experiences confirm that statement. In fact, no other group has anything like WBS, mainly because “the priesthood of every believer” inspires some 10,000 volunteers who reach about 2,000,000 correspondence students, now confirmed to be in every nation. That kind of impact—including an astounding impact in America—makes for a host of great stories that encourage and motivate us all.

There may be a misconception that *Action!* is just for WBS volunteers. True, there are essential communications with teachers and coordinators. But there is also so much more that is of common interest and encouragement to all members. Indeed, it would be hard to find news for churches of Christ that is more uplifting and impactful.

Some have written that bundles of *Action!* accumulate without being read, which may relate to Americans feeling overloaded with print materials and stuffed mailboxes. That overload, however, seldom has to do with spiritually refreshing news. The solution is not to remove the little that is spiritual and positive. Rather, leaders can accentuate and highlight our positive papers. They can hand *Action!* to members as they enter the building, or place it in the pew and publically encourage members to benefit from its good news. My suggestion is that you order a bundle that lets each regular family get an issue, and that your leaders and WBS teachers receive their own at their respective home addresses. Some help on the cost is always welcome.

We all can use the encouragement right now. Such affirming news is a key to “provoking love and good works” (Hebrews 10:24). We pledge to pack each attractive issue with exciting news, positive examples and practical ways to extend outreach locally and internationally. Please do your part to read, support and spread the blessing of *Action!*—it’s all about Good News!



Tips for Teachers!

Are you a doer or a defeatist? When some people run into problems, they decide that no solutions exist and they soon quit. Others approach problems with minds open to new possibilities. Especially in reaching souls, they reason that all things are possible with God. He surely offers some solutions for His mission to be accomplished. Through the years, this creative attitude has opened the way for many advances in World Bible School. Look at the example of Sherri Hays on page 3. Here are two more recent examples.



Lloyd Deal

Lloyd Deal and the Memorial Road church in Edmond, Oklahoma, have long focused their attention on Kenya and Uganda, East Africa. Concerned with the postage cost for students to return answers, Lloyd purchases stamps in both countries. His U.S. teachers apply the correct postage to return envelopes sent with lessons to students in those two nations. (For most students that is a day's wage.) What if the price of postage rises and a stamp no longer covers full postage? Lloyd simply encloses a note with the lesson telling the student to make up the difference. His experience is that students cooperate. In any case, he soon secures the correct postage again. This practice has greatly increased the percentage of returns from the

several thousand students they serve. More than a dozen churches in East Africa have been established through this program.



Kendall Balls honored at InterMission in South Africa

While visiting in South Africa in 2009, WBS President John Reese asked Ken and Judy Kendall-Ball to conduct an experiment on scanning WBS answer sheets and sending them electronically to the Kendall-Ball's teaching partners at North Main church in Weatherford, Texas. Ken and Judy recently came to America on furlough. At our Cedar Park office, they reported that scanning and transmission were working well. Turn-around times were reduced dramatically, with predictably good teaching results. This experiment, of course, is comparatively small. Many more facets need to be worked out if a large scale model is to benefit many WBS programs for entire nations. We mention this experiment, not because it is anywhere close to common use, but to exemplify the spirit that continually looks for ways to improve WBS teaching. We also include it to request your prayers for God to open the practical doors that speed His word around the world.



Christ Remembers You in His Will. Have You Remembered Him?

Elaine Bond believed in the eternal impact of World Bible School. She believed so strongly that she arranged to perpetuate her legacy well beyond her earthly years. That is why her estate included WBS. She laid up treasure in Heaven—treasure that will bless many others through her loving foresight. Will you follow her example, as she followed the example of Jesus?

In Loving Memory of W. Elaine Bond

Our dear friend and co-worker Elaine Bond passed away October 16, 2009, at age 94. Her funeral was conducted by WBS' former president R. H. "Tex" Williams. Tex and Mary Jane's association with Elaine went back to about 1985 after they joined Reuel Lemmons in working with WBS in Austin. About that time, Elaine became the coordinator for the *Action!* volunteers, and she continued in that role as long as possible. These volunteers met (and still meet) regularly to prepare each mailing of *Action!* newspapers. At first there were ten issues a year, meaning ten such mailings. Now there are six issues a year. Through decades Elaine could be counted on to gather the volunteers; only pausing when poor health interfered. Doubtless, had her health held up, she would still be rallying the troops with her life-long passion, dependability and faithfulness. She has the enduring gratitude of all of us at WBS, and all who have enjoyed *Action!* through the years. We loved her and she shall be dearly missed.

"Elaine's family requested that memorial contributions in Elaine's memory be made to World Bible School, P.O. Box 2169, Cedar Park, Texas 78630 or any charity of choice."



Elaine Bond received the WBS Globe of Gratitude.



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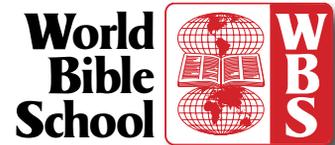
Trudy Reynolds

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They're sharing Jesus with our printed and Web-based Bible lessons.
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Help us fulfill the Great Commission.
Teach. Give. And make sure your church plans an Impact Sunday for WBS.



Teaching the World. Reaching the World!
Look for our "WBS is..." theme this year in *Action!*, *Christian Chronicle* ads, and *Impact Sunday*.

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Find out more in the March issue of *Action!*



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