

Dallas pastor missing for week Family awaits identification of body found in burned car

DALLAS (AP) — Police have not identified the badly burned body, but said it was found in the trunk of a car often driven by a Dallas pastor who has been missing nearly a week.

Friends and relatives of the Rev. Daryl McNealy, 31, an associate pastor at the Greater El Bethel Baptist Church in the city's Oak Cliff section, are bracing for the worst.

The burned-out car was found late Friday night. Police said dental records will be checked in an effort to identify the body.

Officials classified the case as a homicide but would not disclose the cause of death.

Nira McNealy, the pastor's sister, said about 200 friends and family gathered Saturday at the McNealy family home to pray.

The family is mystified about his disappearance, she said.

"It's been frustrating and painful the last few days, just not knowing," she said. "Everybody knows something is wrong."

The car, which had first been sighted in a wooded area of Oak Cliff on Wednesday, was reported burning about 11:15 p.m. Friday.

Firefighters found the body in the trunk after extinguishing the blaze.

Family members said they were not alarmed when they did not see McNealy Tuesday or during the day on Wednesday.

But when he missed the family's Thanksgiving dinner Wednesday night, they knew something was wrong.

"We realized that none of us had talked to him," McNealy said. "The red flag kind of came up. We knew something was wrong."

The family reported him missing to police on Thursday after he failed to show up for a church service on Thursday.

"It is not in his character for us to go days without seeing him or hearing from him," the sister said. "We're a close family and we try to keep up with each other."

Foundation created to help people unfairly harmed by judicial process

DALLAS (AP) — Most of Joyce Ann Brown's bitter feelings are gone now, and she can even afford to cherish the portion of that remains.

"I think God left a little bit of bitterness within me," she said. "Not toward anyone in particular, but toward the system."

Brown walked out of prison 10 years ago this month after a state appeals court overturned her conviction in a deadly armed robbery.

A decade later, the fire that burns inside Brown fuels her desire to help others she believes are harmed by the judicial process.

"Man maliciously prosecuted me and put me in prison," she said, "but God took the opportunity to cleanse me ... I see myself as a better person."

In 1990, Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price gave her a job, paying her out of his own pocket when he could not immediately find a place for her on the county payroll.

She made the most of her opportunity, climbing the ladder from doing office work to become Price's chief assistant.

Brown, 52, left her post in August so she could take full-time control of the nonprofit agency she founded in 1990, Mothers (Fathers) for the Advancement of Social Systems Inc.

The move fulfilled a pledge she made to use her freedom to help others.

"I made a conscious decision that I needed to come here full time," she said. "I had to make a decision. That decision is I stepped out on faith."

"I think God left a little bit of bitterness within me. Not toward anyone in particular, but toward the system."

— Joyce Ann Brown
founder of Mothers (Fathers) for the Advancement of Social Systems Inc.

The agency helps former prison inmates find jobs and get acclimated to society. It also uses her well-recognized name to focus attention on people wronged by the justice system. But it was not until now that she decided to dedicate all her time to running the four-person operation.

The organization's office is filled with reminders of Brown's life and those who helped renew it.

The most prominent is a poster-sized photo of Price, wearing a stern expression. Others include a smiling

Jenny Jones, among the television talk-show hosts to whom Brown has told her story.

That story dates to 1980, when Brown and another woman, Rene Michelle Taylor of Denver, were arrested on charges of robbing a North Dallas fur store in which owner Rubin Danziger was shot to death as his wife watched.

Taylor's fingerprints were found on the getaway car, and she later admitted to the killing. Although there was no evidence that Brown and Taylor knew each other, the car had been rented to a Joyce Ann Brown of Denver.

Brown of Denver was tracked down in her hometown and admitted loaning the car to Taylor. Meanwhile, a police officer remembered a Joyce Ann Brown in Dallas who had some brushes with the law. Coincidentally, she was employed in a fur store.

Despite the lack of physical evidence linking Brown of Dallas to the crime, she was found guilty of being an accomplice, largely because of the testimony of Danziger's wife and a jail cellmate who said Brown admitted her participation.

Information eventually was revealed that the cellmate, Martha Bruce, was a convicted perjurer, and that prosecutors had failed to provide that information to defense lawyers.

San Antonio police reporting robberies by unskilled thieves

SAN ANTONIO (AP) — Authorities believe the city's newest bank robber is more brazen than bright.

A man in his 30s wearing a baseball cap and sunglasses entered a Bank One branch on Saturday. Appearing to brandish a gun, he demanded cash from three tellers and fled with a bag of money.

Police found a toy gun in a nearby grocery parking lot, and they believe that was the robber's weapon.

While Saturday's robber is free, so far, authorities cite a list of inept local bank robbers who haven't been so fortunate.

Gerald Wayne Atkinson, a drifter from Illinois, was convicted last month of unarmed robbery and attempted robbery in San Antonio and sentenced to 57 months in jail.

Police said Atkinson walked into a bank in March and handed a receptionist a holdup note.

The startled employee apologized, saying she did not handle money. Atkinson snatched back his demand note and hurried out the door.

Atkinson showed up at a nearby bank a few hours later, waited in line and handed a teller his letter — a polite note, ending with "Thank you."

He walked away with cash but was quickly captured by officers still investigating his botched first job.

Karlton Halbert may be San Antonio's oldest serial robber, embarking on a 15-month crime spree at age 69.

The retired insurance agent was arrested in 1995 after trying to spend \$300 in bills that had been tainted red by an exploding dye pack.

Officers who searched Halbert's home found a hold-up note, more marked money and a wig that helped witnesses identify him.

"It wasn't very smart, that's for sure," the now 75-year-old grandfather of 10 told the *San Antonio Express-News*. He was released in May from a Fort Worth jail after serving a four-year sentence for unarmed bank robbery.

Hollywood sometimes portrays bank robbers as brilliant thieves who precisely carry out complicated schemes to outwit bankers and police. Experts said reality is much different — that many robbers act impulsively and are often unarmed.

"Usually it's just an opportunity that presents itself — people just wanting some quick money," said Lt. Michael Akeroyd of the San Antonio police department's bank robbery unit. "They may be temporarily unemployed, trying to impress a girlfriend or strung out on drugs."

Federal authorities say they solve more than 60 percent of U.S. bank robberies. San Antonio officials say they make arrests in more than 65 percent of cases. This year, authorities have made arrests in 10 of Bexar County's 21 bank robberies.

Bank robberies have dropped 5.8 percent over the last three years nationally, to 7,584 in 1998, but they are increasing in Bexar County, from 18 in 1997 and 16 last year to the 21 since January, according to county records.

Mexican farmers protest NAFTA, imports

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Hundreds of nationalists from the dusty northern plains rode their horses into Mexico City yesterday; this time it was not Pancho Villa but a group protesting farm policy, agricultural imports and the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Repeating Villa's famous feat — almost 85 years to the day after the mustachioed rebel leader rode into the capital in December 1914 during the Mexican Revolution — the group, El Barzon, rode 52 days over 1,000 miles (2,000 kms) from the border city of Ciudad Juarez to Mexico City.

The 200 riders, accompanied by thousands of supporters, passed out fliers protesting the poverty and undercapitalization of the nation's farms, and accusing the government of allowing in cheap foreign imports of grain and fruit.

"Did you know that even after the Mexican Revolution, 30 million people live in poverty on Mexican farms?" one banner carried on the march read.

Oscar Chacon, a Ciudad Juarez native wearing a wide-brimmed straw hat and sitting astride a bay mare, said the trade pact between the United States, Canada and Mexico was largely responsible for the farmers' problems.

"We've got boxes of apples piled up unsold in Chihuahua," Chacon said. "Why are they letting in apples from the United States?"

El Barzon — which stages militant protests on behalf of farmers and debtors forced into insolvency by high interest rates — is demanding a renegotiation of NAFTA to provide greater protection for Mexican farmers.

The procession included dozens of used U.S. cars and trucks that the Mexican government has not allowed to be legally imported, despite the fact U.S. vehicles are much cheaper than any available in Mexico.

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