

Four more Alabama churches burned following week of blazes ruled arson

Jay Reeves
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BOLIGEE, Ala. — Fires damaged or destroyed four more Baptist churches across the Alabama countryside Tuesday, less than a week after a string of five blazes that were ruled arson.

Church member Johnny Archibald said smoke was pouring from Morning Star Baptist in Boligee when he arrived around daybreak.

"They had kicked the door in," he said. "Evidently they had set the pulpit on fire and went out the front door."

Tuesday's fires took place at churches off rural roads, about 10 to 20 miles apart. They were in a cluster of three counties, about 60 miles from the Bibb County area where the five other churches were burned early Friday.

FBI acting assistant director Chip Burrus said investigators were working on the assumption that the nine fires are linked.

Authorities have no suspects or motive, Burrus said in an interview with The Associated Press in Washington, D.C.

Rich Marianos, a spokesman for the federal Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives agency,



Steve Barnette / The Associated Press

An agent from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms investigates the remains of the Morning Star Baptist church Tuesday near Boligee, Ala., after a fire destroyed the structure earlier that morning.

said more than 50 agents are now assigned to the investigation in Alabama.

"This is our No. 1 priority nationally," he said.

The fire that damaged Dancy First Baptist Church early Tuesday in Pickens County appeared to be arson, said Sheriff David Abston. He said volunteer firefighters responded to a burglar alarm that went off at 5:13 a.m.

Ragan Ingram, a spokesman for the state insurance agency that oversees fire investigations, said investigators were pursuing several leads in last week's fires, but "the leads haven't led us to a specific suspect or a motive."

Investigators got tire impressions from the mud of a dirt road in Sumter

County near Galilee Baptist, one of the churches destroyed Tuesday.

Morning Star Baptist was burned down to its foundation Tuesday, leaving only the front steps and handrail still standing. Another church was destroyed, and the other two were damaged. In the Bibb County fires, three churches were destroyed and two damaged.

Ingram said there have been 59 church fires in Alabama in the past five years, including the nine reported in the past four days, and 19 were ruled arsons.

The FBI said it is looking into whether the Bibb County fires were civil rights violations under laws covering attacks on religious property. State and federal rewards totaling \$10,000 have been offered.

The nine churches that burned included both white and black congregations.



WHERE COLUMBIA COMES TO PARTY!

THURSDAY NIGHTS:

College S.I.N. Night

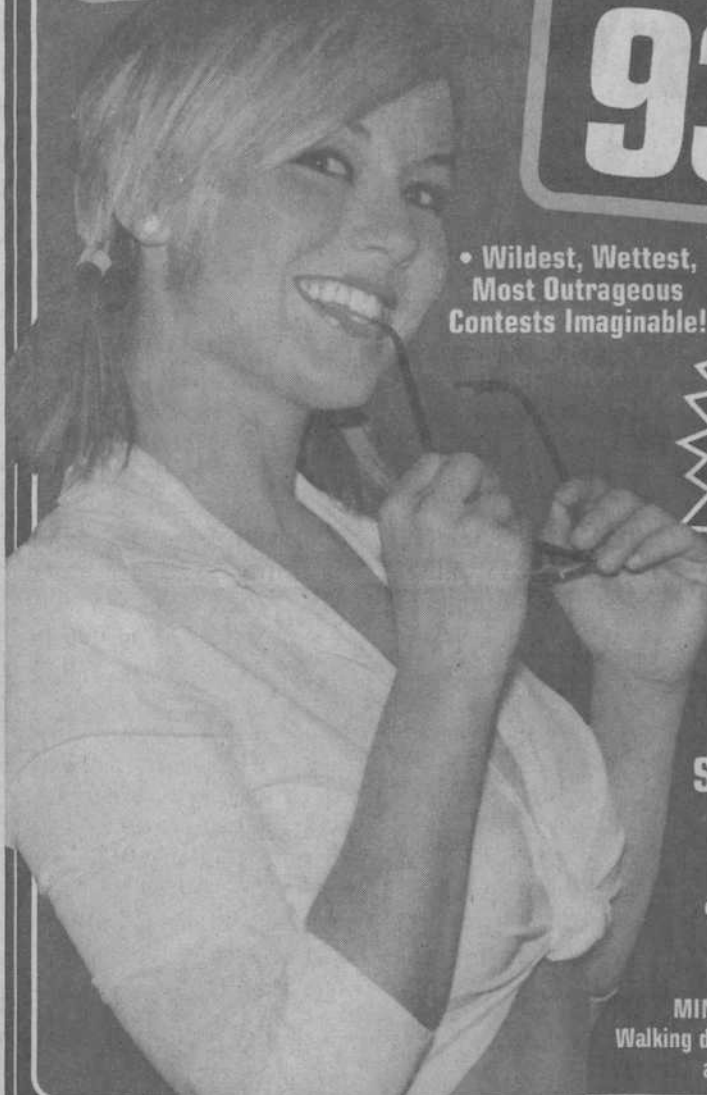
(SERVICE INDUSTRY NIGHT)

18+ COLLEGE STUDENTS w/ID & SERVICE INDUSTRY WORKERS WELCOME!

THIS THURSDAY (2/9/06):
LADIES 21 & UP w/COLLEGE ID
FREE TIL MIDNIGHT!
MEN 21 & UP w/COLLEGE ID
FREE TIL 10 P.M.

ROCK 93.5
LIVE REMOTE
THIS THURSDAY! PLUS...

93¢ BEER SPECIAL
THURS. ONLY!



• Wildest, Wettest,
Most Outrageous
Contests Imaginable!

RUMP SHAKING CONTEST!

• CLUB RA APPRECIATES SERVICE INDUSTRY WORKERS.

• OPEN LATE!
(9:00PM-UNTIL)

MINUTES FROM USC CAMPUS!
Walking distance from the Colonial Center and USC's Greek Village.

KAPLAN TEST PREP AND ADMISSIONS

YOU'RE INVITED TO A SPECIAL PRACTICE TEST EVENT

GMAT | GRE | LSAT | MCAT | DAT | OAT | PCAT

Take a FREE practice test at this event and you'll receive a detailed score analysis and exclusive strategies to help you prepare for Test Day!

February 25th 10am

Humanities Classroom Building
USC Campus

the following tests will be offered:
LSAT, GMAT, GRE, MCAT, DAT, PCAT

ENROLL TODAY | Limited seats are available. Call 1-800-KAP-TEST or visit kaptest.com/practice.

*Test names are registered trademarks of their respective owners. ©PGA0003

Riverbend Apartments 794-2948 Fitness Center



GETS THE ADRENALINE GOING.
YOURS AND WHOEVER READS ABOUT
IT ON YOUR RESUME.



AN ARMY OF ONE.

The Army ROTC Leader's Training Course is a paid 4-week summer experience that marks the beginning of your career as an Officer, a leader of the U.S. Army.

ENROLL IN ARMY ROTC
BECOME AN ARMY OFFICER



Check out our PAID SUMMER LEADERSHIP INTERNSHIP and Officer Career Opportunities.
Contact USC Army ROTC at 803-777-6542 or ousey@gwm.sc.edu

BOOK ALL YOUR GREEK PARTIES AT



Be a VIP! Book your next Fraternity or Sorority mixer, formal or semi-formal party at Columbia's HOTTEST UPSCALE ENTERTAINMENT COMPLEX, CLUB RA. CLUB RA is the ONLY Vegas-Style club in Columbia. We feature Cyber Light Show, Plush Leather Couches, VIP Sky Boxes w/Plasma TVs, Avalon Sound System, Multi-Level Dance Floor, and much, much more! Catering service available. Call (803) 252-7625 for more information.

VISIT CLUB RA'S NEW AWESOME WEBSITE:
WWW.CLUBRACOLUMBIA.COM
EVENTS CALENDAR • VIRTUAL TOUR • WEB CAMS • GALLERIES • CLUB RA VIP

FRIDAY NIGHTS:

GLOBAL DANCE PARTY!
As we play the nation's HOTTEST BEATS.

SATURDAY NIGHTS:

GODDESSES NIGHT
DRINK SPECIALS for WOMEN all night long!

If you are under 21, it is against the law to buy alcoholic beverages. All ABC regulations enforced.



700A GERVAIS ST. DOWNTOWN IN VISTA STATION 252-7625

OPEN THURS., FRI. & SAT. 9:00PM-UNTIL • FASHIONABLE ATTIRE RECOMMENDED