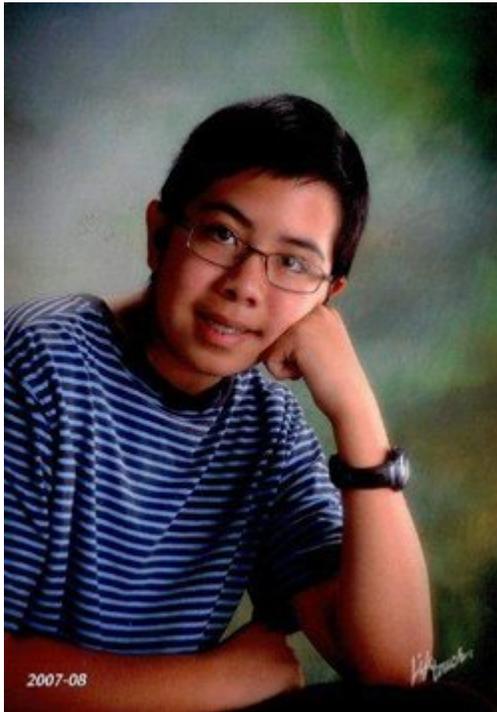


# Struggle continues for teenager injured in church-bus accident

July 16, 2009

SHREVEPORT, La. (ABP) — A teenager from Shreveport, La., continued to fight for her life in a Mississippi hospital four days after a July 12 bus crash that killed one and injured 22 passengers on their way to a church camp in Macon, Ga.

John Henson, [associate pastor](#) for emerging ministries at First Baptist Church in Shreveport, reported on Facebook that a July 16 CT scan found extensive swelling and hemorrhage to the brain of his daughter Maggie Lee, a rising seventh grader at [First Baptist Church School](#).



Funeral services for Brandon Ugarte, 14, were held in Shreveport July 15.

She remains the most critical of surviving youth and adult sponsors injured when a church bus carrying them blew a tire and rolled over near Meridian, Miss., on the way to a Passport youth camp on the campus of Mercer University.

One boy, 14-year-old [Brandon Ugarte](#), died while being airlifted to a hospital in Jackson. Hundreds [attended](#) his funeral July 15 at the Catholic church his parents attend.

Updates on Maggie Lee's condition indicate her lungs and heart are stable, but doctors continue to be concerned about intracranial pressure, a critical measure in monitoring and treatment of brain injury.

According to an informational [website](#), the average ICP in a healthy adult is in the range of 0 to 10 mmHg. Any pressure greater than 20 is abnormal and above 60 is fatal. Henson's pressure had hovered in the 30s all week before spiking into the 40s during the night of July 15.

John Henson reported midday July 16 that his daughter's ICP was in the low 20s, a plateau that doctors had hoped to reach during a critical first 72 hours after a head injury.

Elevated ICP creates a problem when fluid surrounding the brain has nowhere to go and can deform and cause further damage to the brain. Outcome is affected by both the amount and duration of pressure, but children have better recovery rates than adults.

John Henson and his wife, Jinny, both made Internet appeals July 16 for urgent prayer for their daughter. People from all over the world are responding. The [largest](#) of a number of Facebook prayer groups dedicated to the youth group had grown to nearly 8,000 members by the time this story was filed.

Meanwhile, others who suffered serious injuries continued to improve.

Teenager Chase Johnson was discharged from Rush Hospital in Meridian July 15 and headed for home.

Sarah Smith, who was originally taken to a hospital in Meridian and transferred to Jackson with neck and upper-back fractures, awaited a final consultation with her doctor before being released, possibly July 16.

Lauren Murchison had surgery July 15 in Jackson to clean out a facial bone fragment that was affecting eye movement. Earlier she underwent surgery to repair a femur broken in two places, a broken clavicle and other injuries. She was described as alert and communicative before the most recent operation.

Jason Matlack, the church's youth minister, was transferred to a private room in Meridian and expected to be transported to Shreveport by the end of the week.

Kyle Kelley, an adult chaperone on the trip who [works](#) part time for the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship of Louisiana, was also moved to a private room in Meridian. An [update](#) on the church website said he was in a good deal of pain and it would take some time for his broken bones to heal, but both he and his wife, Charlene, a member of the national CBF Coordinating Council, are in good spirits.

Another Facebook [group](#) applauded heroic efforts by a National Guard unit that happened to be following the bus when it went out of control and rolled three times before landing on its side with three passengers trapped underneath. Soldiers physically lifted the 30-passenger bus to gain access to the pinned victims and began triage credited with saving lives.

Lauderdale County Coroner Clayton Cobler [told](#) The Meridian Star that seeing dozens of people littered across eastbound lanes of Interstate 20/59 — many of them seriously injured and in shock — was one of the worst scenes he had ever worked.

*-Bob Allen is senior writer for Associated Baptist Press.*

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