

Fla. Pastor Faces Felony After Threats to Burn Qurans on 9/11

Anti-Islam pastor **Terry Jones** was arrested on a felony charge in Florida on Wednesday, police said, after announcing plans to burn nearly 3,000 copies of the Quran on a barbecue grill.

Jones was towing the grill and the kerosene-soaked Muslim holy books in the back of his pickup truck to a park in Mulberry, Fla., according to follower Stephanie Sapp, whose husband, Marvin Wayne Sapp Jr., was also arrested.

Sapp said Jones's group, Stand Up America Now, had earlier announced plans on Facebook to torch the Korans on the anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2011, attacks on the U.S. The Quran is the most sacred religious text in the Muslim religion.

Jones and Sapp Jr. were each charged with unlawful conveyance of fuel—a felony, Polk County Sheriff Grady Judd said in a statement. Jones was also charged with a misdemeanor of openly carrying a firearm.

Judd said in the statement that his detectives had repeatedly warned Jones that while he was welcome in Mulberry, he would be arrested if he broke the law.

Sapp said she and her husband, Jones, and four others drove to Mulberry in three vehicles. They made a stop near the park at a fast food restaurant.

When the group drove back on the road, several unmarked cars pulled them over, she said. Jones and her husband were taken into custody.

Police “informed them that it is illegal to have a grill with

kerosene in it in any way behind a vehicle traveling down the highway,” Sapp said.

She said Jones’s group brought 2,998 Qurans, one for each of the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks. She said that in burning the holy books, they sought to raise awareness of “the dangers of Islam.”

“We had the Qurans inside the grill and we had prepared them by soaking with kerosene, just like you would if you had charcoal on a grill and poured lighter fluid on it,” Sapp said.

Jones, who heads a small evangelical Christian church in Gainesville, Fla., first drew attention to himself in 2010 when he threatened to burn a Quran on Sept. 11 that year.

Media attention to Jones’s plans sparked a fury and violent protests from Muslims in the Middle East. Jones was talked out of those plans but has since made similar threats.

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