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**THE LINCOLN STAR**

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# 151 killed in New Orleans crash

NEW ORLEANS (UPI) — A Pan American World Airways jet crashed and exploded in a residential area on takeoff Friday in a fierce thunderstorm, killing 140 people aboard the plane and at least six on the ground in the second worst airplane disaster in U.S. history.

"There are no survivors," said medical technician Dennis Viscusi of the 143 passengers and crew aboard Pan Am flight 73 from Miami. She said the remains of bodies were strewn around the crash site, about 2 miles from New Orleans International Airport in suburban Kenner.

At least six people were reported killed on the ground, where authorities were conducting a house-to-house search for more victims. One man said a woman and her three young children, who lived across the street from him, were cremated by the debris.

A 6-month-old girl, dubbed the "miracle baby," was found alive in the demolished living room of her home, the jet's huge wings resting only 10 yards away from her. Her mother and 4-year-old sister were among the dead.

Eight people were treated at East Jefferson Hospital in nearby Metairie, including two children listed in critical condition and a woman in serious condition.

"Everyone on the plane was killed," said George Burlage, a Federal Aviation Administration spokesman in Fort Worth, Texas. "One of our inspectors down there said they had counted 149 bodies. So some of them are on the ground."

The plane, a narrow-body Boeing 727-

200, started its trip in Miami and was en route to Las Vegas and San Diego via New Orleans. A spokesman for the Federal Aviation Administration said the crash occurred at 4:11 p.m. CDT, 20 minutes after takeoff.

"There are bodies everywhere," said UPI photographer Jerry Lodrigus. "They still have bodies in the seats of the wreckage."

A reporter at the scene said: "It is a disaster area. It is like a tornado went through there. Reporters say they don't see how anyone could have survived a crash like that."

"We have information from the FAA, which has been in there, and there don't appear to be any survivors from the plane," said Al Sella, director of Fire and Emergency Services for Jefferson Parish.

Duhon said the casualties that might be on the ground, Sella added. "We are just marshaling our forces to go in and see."

He said: "We had to handle the fire situation first. It's possible we could still have a lot of a problem because there's still quite a bit of fuel around."

The plane filled its tanks before taking off, Sella said. A Boeing 727-200 has 8,000 gallons of jet fuel.

At the crash site, which covered several residential blocks, little was left except the burning remains of houses and cars, crumpled and piled atop one another.

The crash was the worst since 273 people died on May 25, 1978, when an American Airlines DC-10 went down shortly after takeoff at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport. All 273 aboard that plane were killed and three others died on the ground.

The scene Friday resembled a war-bombing zone, with several houses on fire and other homes demolished. The windows of houses were blown out by the force of the crash and bricks fell through the air. White-hot aircraft parts littered the neighborhood.

For blocks, the air was hazy with white and black smoke billowing hundreds of feet in the air.

"We were just sitting right there in the yard and all of a sudden I heard this great big explosion," said Eddie Seifert, 11.

"It sounded like it skipped about three times," said auto mechanic Billy Lee. Civil Defense officials issued an urgent appeal for volunteers to help at emergency command centers, to clear the debris and help look for bodies. At least 150 emergency workers were at the site.

Another reporter at the scene quoted witnesses as saying: "The plane just dropped out of the sky."

Shortly after the crash, authorities ordered the airport temporarily closed and planes were warned to veer away from airspace above the crash site.

Stranded families of the victims were secluded in the Pan American VIP lounge on the second floor of the airport, where Red Cross nurses and social workers comforted them.

Meanwhile, a morgue was established inside a huge three-story hotel. An Airlines hangar half a mile west of the main terminal.

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Stuffed animal sits amid wreckage of home destroyed when plane went down.

## News Digest

### Caddy smashed by train

HELENA, Ark. (AP) — A freight train slammed into a Cadillac at a gravel road crossing Friday, killing a woman, six of her grandchildren and a neighbor. One child survived.

### Grading may be dropped

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Reagan administration said on Friday it plans to eliminate part of a tire grading system that once was hailed as a major breakthrough for helping consumers choose the best tires for their money. That rule requires manufacturers to display treadwear information on all tires that are sold.

### Volcano victim found

KELSO, Wash. (UPI) — Volcanophobes' combing crews have discovered the body of another victim of the devastating 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens, Columbia County authorities report.

The body, found Thursday on the 3,000-foot level of Spirit Mountain near the base of Mount St. Helens, was identified as Paul Fred Schmidt, a free-lance photographer from Silverton, Ore.

### Sinkhole filled in

GAINESVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Workers poured concrete Friday into a parking lot sinkhole that swallowed a car, hoping to plug the hole and keep it from undermining a two-story apartment building. Experts said the car may have provided a temporary plug.

### And on Sunday...

Sunday Journal and Star Washington bureau reporter David Lynch files Nebraska news on how conservative and liberal organizations rate the voting records of the state's congressional delegation. *Parade* Magazine's Sunday story on a Viet Cong officer who says U.S. POWs are still being held already has been quoted widely this week, but you'll get the whole story on your doornstep this weekend.

Losing your vision late in life is a traumatic experience, but some Nebraskans gathered in Lincoln this week to learn to deal with it.

### Partly cloudy, fair

LINCOLN: Partly cloudy Saturday with a 20 percent chance of morning thundershowers. Not as warm with a high in the low to mid 80s. Low Saturday night 60 to 65. Sunny Sunday with a high in the mid to upper 80s. (Weather digest, Page 17)

### Today's Chuckle

When some people promise to be on time, it carries a lot of weight.

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## Guatney moved to facility outside state

By Mike Goff

Star Staff Writer

William "Freight Train" Guatney's three-year stay in Nebraska's state prison ended Friday.

The man, who once was a suspect in 13 killings, is longer to be held in the security ward of the Lincoln Regional Center and faces no criminal charges.

The 40-year-old liberal livestock handler, who last August was declared mentally incapable of caring for his own basic needs, Thursday was moved to a care facility "somewhere outside Nebraska," he attorney, Lancaster County Public Defender Dennis Keefe, confirmed Friday.

Keefe previously has said he would not rest his case until Guatney was placed in the least restrictive environment.

Keefe and Lancaster County Attorney Mike Heavren both refused to disclose the location of the facility, but Heavren indicated it was one that Guatney and Keefe both found acceptable and one that the county attorney's office approved.

Heavren said an agreement was reached with the director of the facility that the Lancaster County Mental Health Board will be notified of any change in Guatney's condition that might result in a recommendation for his release and the board then will arrange for it.

Records that Keefe tracked indi-



William Guatney

in state custody 3 years

cate Guatney had been hospitalized at least 46 times since he was diagnosed in 1967 as having organic brain syndrome — a deterioration of the brain caused by chemical imbalances.

Guatney, whose IQ borders on retardation, said his first love has always been "Sweet Lucy" — cheap wine.

Because the three years he's spent in various jails or in the security ward of the Lincoln Regional Center since his arrest Aug. 18, 1979, Guatney said many of the statements he gave authorities were lies.

He said he told police in Illinois that he was an Army hero, who served with Gen. George Patton in Africa — in fact, he was in the U.S. Army less than 60 days.

He said he did confess to killing a boy in Topeka, Kan., but that statement came after nearly 20 straight hours of interrogation and "by that time I would have said I killed FDR" (Franklin Delano Roosevelt).

Keefe's investigation showed Guatney was hospitalized in an other state at the time of the Kan. slaying he once was charged with.

Guatney said he remembers being called a killer by judges and once with a ball point pen in hand, he contemplated slaying it onto his

ear to try to kill himself.

"They said I was a killer and was going to die in the electric chair, but I never killed those boys. I have never killed anybody," he said.

One of the many psychiatrists who examined Guatney said in 1979 that Guatney "repeatedly denies what he is charged with, but indicates his intent to plead guilty."

"The man is, in effect, asking the state to be an accomplice to his suicide through a legal maneuver. He no longer is competent to participate in his own defense and he does not abstractly understand what he is charged with and the consequences," Dr. Emmet M. Kestey of Creighton University wrote to Keefe.

District Judge Dale E. Fabrebreau agreed after hearing other psychiatric testimony that Guatney's statements "were not the product of a rational mind" and thus were not voluntary and not reliable as evidence.

When Guatney's statements appeared from evidence, then Lancaster County Attorney Ron Labors filed for a mental health commitment. After Guatney was committed Aug. 27, 1981, by the Mental Health Board, Labors withdrew two charges of first-degree murder on Sept. 2.

Guatney said he left because one of the elderly residents kept asking the others about Guatney's being there without paying, but he said he didn't like him because of that, he said.

Otherwise, a place like the home in Alliance where "I can listen to my radio would be just fine," Guatney said. "I'd stay there the rest of my life."

Labors indicated at the time that Guatney's suppression order would hamper the prosecution of Guatney for the slayings of two Lincoln boys — Jacob Sutter, 12, and Jon Sampson, 13, who did not survive from the Nebraska State Fair after their riding Aug. 30, 1975.

Keefe said the dismissal of charges was an indication that there was no evidence against his client. The statements "suppressed" primarily involved Guatney's false confession, Keefe said.

The move to a less restrictive setting isn't the first for Guatney.

Last December he was moved from the regional center to the Good Samaritan Nursing Home in Alliance, but he was returned to the regional center after walking away from the home and being found in the city's Burlington railroad yards, apparently waiting to hop a train heading out of town.

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## Group urges control of natural gas rate hikes

By Mary Kay Roth

Star Staff Writer

A citizens' group representing natural gas consumers is urging Nebraska's congressional delegation to take action to limit the price of natural gas.

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Memoirs, which serves Lincoln customers, is Northern's biggest customer and is intervening officially in FERC proceedings to limit the price of natural gas.

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nature to the FERC before changing a rate — and that the increase may be suspended for five more months — anticipating that the FERC would hold the necessary hearings within the six-month period.

But in the past few years, FERC proceedings often have not been held by the end of the six-month period, Bell explained, and the proposed rate goes into effect anyway, subject to a refund.

The law is being phased and hurting low-income customers, he said. "The money is refunded if the full rates are not approved, but that doesn't help consumers pay their monthly bills. They end up paying balloons

rates until the final decision is made."

Fremont Councman Donald "Skip" Edwards said, "I've been up in arms about this for some time." Edwards said, "This shows very clearly the greediness of them (the utilities) and that it's always at the expense of the ratepayer."

In other action, Edwards was elected coalition president. Bell was elected vice president. Randy Rydick of Fremont was elected secretary and Douglas Bullock of Blair was elected treasurer.

"Where do they get their optimism from?" he asked in an interview with UPI. He said, however, talks were continuing.

As he spoke in a basement office, Israeli shelling rattled doors and roof ceilings. The intensive fighting forced terrified civilians to seek refuge in overcrowded shelters.

United Press International  
Syria Friday refused to provide sanctuary for PLO guerrillas trapped in west Beirut, and with Israeli and Palestinian-backed forces, the PLO said it had little hope for a peace settlement.

Syria, the country mentioned as the most likely refuge for the 4,000 Palestinian guerrillas trapped in west Beirut said it will not take in the PLO.

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the homeless fighters.  
"Is so way will it accept their moving from Lebanon to Syria under these circumstances," said a government spokesman in Damascus quoted by Syria's state-run news agency SANA.

A ranking Palestinian official accused U.S. special envoy Philip Habib of trying to "re-engage" from agreements contracted and said the PLO was suspending peace talks.

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Another top PLO leader indicated his people would keep talking, but said they saw little chance of breasting an all-out invasion of west Beirut.

Abu Iyad, PLO chairman Yasser Arafat's No. 2 man, demanded repairs a settlement was at hand.

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