

Gulf states 'in ashes' from Mexican volcano

United Press International
NEW ORLEANS — A cloud of volcanic ash that last week coated cities in Texas and Louisiana hovered over the Gulf of Mexico Thursday, reducing aircraft visibilities and posing a threat to people with respiratory problems.

The ash will remain in the air as long as prevailing weather systems continue to push it northward from a burping volcano in Mexico (in El Chichonal, southwest of Mexico City), said National Weather Service forecaster David Barnes.

"It's fairly evident we have a good deal of the ash over the middle and western Gulf and in much of Louisiana at this time," Barnes said.

"As long as this volcano spews

this ash out, with this season where we go into a prevailing southerly flow, the central and west Gulf states have a potential for ash to be blown into the area."

Barnes would not comment on the density of the cloud or whether it posed a threat to health.

The ash would irritate anyone with respiratory problems, said American Lung Association Louisiana spokesman Ben Fontaine.

"Any kind of particulate that's in the air is going to cause a respiratory irritation to those people who have a chronic lung disease," he said. "It just depends on how heavy the concentrations are."

Reports of lung ailments caused by the ash probably will surface in the next 72 hours, Fontaine said.

Spokesmen for an offshore helicopter leasing service and Texaco Inc. said the ash had not limited their flights.

"We have people flying out in the Gulf now and visibility out there is five to seven miles," said Pat Sims with Helicopter Charter Inc.

A pilot had reported the cloud at 4,000 to 8,000 feet, Barnes said, but he added it probably would move downward and could reach the earth's surface.

Gulf states will continue to be bothered by the ash as long as the volcano remains active.



Dreaming a dream of Casino

staff photo by John Ryan

Niles Holmes, right, a senior animal science major from Arlington, and Travis Stice, a sophomore petroleum engineering major from Midland, encourage ticket sales for tonight's Casino, sponsored by the Residence Halls Association. Casino, Aggeland's version of Las Vegas, kicks off

Parents' Weekend by providing the setting to gamble against Lady Luck without the risk. Tickets are still available for \$3 today at tables set up across campus. Tickets at the door of Casino the Memorial Student Center will sell for \$4 tonight.

The Delta company giveth, Uncle Sam taketh away

United Press International
TYLER — Employees of the Delta Drilling Co. are finding that what the company giveth, the government taketh away — as much as half.

Last March, Delta rewarded 87 longtime employees for their loyalty by dividing \$53 million among the workers on the basis of years of service and salary.

The average bonus was \$612,000, but the workers agreed to take 70 percent of the bonanza in stock, valued at \$17.50 per share in March 1981.

Since then, Delta stock has plummeted more than 60 percent, to less than \$7 per share, but the Internal Revenue Ser-

vice is more interested in gains than in losses.

The IRS views the workers' windfall as ordinary income and because few of the Delta employees had the means to take advantage of loopholes, they owe taxes on the securities they received a year ago, regardless of their worth now.

"As the price of the stock began to erode, their tax liability did not," said Robert L. Hampton, Delta's manager of investor relations. For Homer Stokes, 27, that means a tax bill of as much as \$178,000 on the \$840,000 bonus he received.

Others faced even larger tax bills.

Herman Smith, 59, met his tax obligation by selling three-quarters of his stock before it plunged and sent the IRS a

\$300,000 check to supplement the \$200,000 withheld for taxes on the \$971,000 windfall he received.

Bus driver stabs man during fight, returns to work

United Press International
HOUSTON — Passengers on a Metro bus are used to delays. So, when a bus driver left his vehicle to chase a passenger who hit him, the riders patiently waited for their driver to return.

Lee A. Kellough, 33, who has been fired from the Metropolitan Transit Authority, pleaded guilty Wednesday to charges of aggravated assault. He was placed on probation for three years and ordered to pay \$2,000 to his victim.

Prosecutor Elaine Bratton said Kellough last January had passed a side street where Roy

Robinson Jr., 25, was waiting for the bus.

Robinson said when the bus failed to stop, he hitched a ride in a car to the next bus stop and got on the bus. Robinson berated Kellough for passing him by and then the two began arguing. Kellough said Robinson struck him and he chased the passenger down the street. Kellough said he then stabbed Robinson.

Police said Kellough was back behind the wheel driving his busload of passengers to their destinations when they arrested him.

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