

Lubbock teenagers cope after bus crash

LUBBOCK (AP) — Tearful teens leapt into the arms of their parents Monday morning telling stories of how they escaped injury and pulled others to safety after a church bus crashed in the New Mexico mountains, leaving six girls dead and 20 teens injured.

A trailer towed by a pickup truck sideswiped their bus, ripping out the windows beside them and peeling open the back of the vehicle. The crash occurred about 1:30 p.m. MDT Sunday on winding U.S. 82, about 16 miles east of Mayhill in the foothills of the Sacramento Mountains.

A man in a pickup truck behind the bus also died in the accident.

Counselors were on hand to help dozens of youngsters cope with the tragedy when they arrived home at 7:30 a.m., but most were so tired they just wanted to go home and sleep.

Teens began returning to the church Monday afternoon, seeking counseling and asking questions about other friends who were hospitalized.

Gary Walker, a Christian psychologist, spent the better part of the day helping parents and teens cope with their grief.

"There are several children that show signs of being severely traumatized," Walker said. "The goriness of seeing what happened to their friends has left them with pain that will take a long time to deal with. There were kids

that returned home with blood soaked T-shirts and it is clear that they witnessed an unimaginable tragedy."

Dustin Smith, 15, was just a few seats away from one of the girls who was killed in the accident.

"I was listening to my CD player when I heard someone scream," Smith said, as he consoled friends at the church. "Then there was this godly boom and everything went flying everywhere. We pulled a bunch of people out of the bus but you could tell right a way that some weren't going to make it."

Killed in the accident were Talitha Beeman, 16; Sara English, 15; Sara Johnson, 15; Megan Flynn, 15; Astyn Qubty, 14; and Heather Bauman, 13.

Another prayer vigil was planned for Monday night at Green Lawn Church of Christ, the church the girls attended, next to Lubbock Christian University.

The victims were among about 80 people from the Lubbock church who spent the weekend at Pine Springs Summer Camp, an isolated mountainous retreat in the Lincoln National Forest. The camp near Mayhill is 55 miles west of Artesia and 150 miles southwest of Lubbock.

Funeral services for English will be at 5 p.m. Thursday at Green Lawn Church of Christ. Other services were pending.

Exxon contests \$5.3 billion verdict to appeals court

SEATTLE (AP) — Nearly five years after an Alaskan jury awarded \$5.3 billion in punitive and compensatory damages to those hurt by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill, Exxon has yet to pay a single dollar as the case winds through the legal process.

A three-judge panel for the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals was set to hear the appeal Monday afternoon in Seattle.

A ruling is expected to take at least six months.

In 1994, a federal court jury in Anchorage unanimously awarded the largest-ever jury award to 35,000 fishermen, Native Americans, cannery workers and landowners for the damage from the spill in Prince William Sound.

Exxon immediately appealed, contending it had paid enough: \$2.2 billion for the cleanup, \$1 billion to settle state and federal civil charges and \$300 million for lost wages to 11,000 fishermen and business operators.

Exxon is contesting both the size of the punitive damages and the way the \$287 million compensatory dam-

age award was calculated.

But lawyers for the plaintiffs argue the award is appropriate considering the scope of damage.

They also argue it takes an amount as large as \$5 billion to punish a company as wealthy as Exxon.

The oil giant contends one juror was intimidated and threatened by other jurors and the court bailiff during the 1994 trial in Anchorage.

Ten years ago, Exxon Valdez skipper Joseph Hazelwood ordered the 984-foot tanker to shift position to avoid icebergs in Valdez Arm.

Hazelwood then went below to his cabin, leaving 3rd Mate Gregory Cousins in control of the vessel.

Cousins ran the vessel onto Bligh Reef just after midnight on March 24, 1989.

The resulting 11 million gallon spill, which remains the nation's worst, polluted more than 1,000 miles of Alaska shoreline, killed tens of thousands of birds and marine mammals and disrupted fishing.

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ATTENTION: UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE STUDENTS

Guides for May '99 undergraduate degree candidates will be posted on May 14. If you graduate with 60 A&M credit hours, a 2.0 cumulative GPR, and are in good standing with the university, your Aggie ring order will be accepted beginning May 14 after 9:00 a.m., providing that you have completed an audit application at the Aggie Ring Office by May 12.

Orders for May '99 undergraduate degree candidates who graduate without 60 A&M credit hours, or less than a 2.0 cumulative GPR, will be taken after the degrees are posted. These orders, as well as those for graduate students graduating in May '99, will be taken between May 24-28.

If you are an August '99 degree candidate, you may place your ring order between May 24-28, providing you have completed all of the following ring requirements as of the Spring 1999 final grades:

UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

1. Apply for your degree at Heaton Hall between May 19-24.
2. Pay your diploma fee to the Fiscal Dept. in the Pavilion.
3. Have 60 A&M credit hours with a 2.0 cumulative GPR posted on your transcript by May 24.
4. Be in good standing with the university.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

1. Complete all degree requirements by May 26, 1999.
2. Apply for your degree at the Office of Graduate Studies.
3. Pay your diploma fee to the Fiscal Dept. in the Pavilion.
4. Present a "letter of completion" to the Aggie Ring Office from the Office of Graduate Studies no later than May 27, 1999. (The letter of completion takes approximately one week. Please request one no later than May 21.)
5. Be in good standing with the university.

Rings ordered and paid for between May 24-28 will be delivered on August 12 (instead of in September), providing that you do graduate in May or August.

All undergraduate students who are not May or August degree candidates and who will complete all of the ring requirements after the Spring '99 semester final grades are posted, may order their rings beginning approximately June 1, 1999 and no later than July 1 for September delivery. The requirements are:

Undergraduate Student Requirements:

1. You must be a degree seeking student and have a total of 25 undergraduate credit hours reflected on the Texas A&M University Student Information Management System. (A passed course, which is repeated and passed, cannot count as additional credit hours.)
2. 60 undergraduate credit hours must be completed in residence (classroom hours only) at Texas A&M University if your first semester at Texas A&M University was January 1994 or thereafter, or if you do not qualify under the successful semester requirement described in the following paragraphs. Should your degree be conferred with less than 60 undergraduate resident credits, this requirement will be waived after you graduate and your degree is posted on the Student Information Management System.
3. 30 undergraduate credit hours must have been completed in residence at Texas A&M University, providing that prior to January 1, 1994, you were registered at Texas A&M University and successfully completed either a fall/spring semester or summer term (I and II or 10 weeks) as a full-time student in good standing (as defined in the University catalog).
4. 2.0 cumulative GPR at Texas A&M University.
5. You must be in good standing with the University, including no registration or transcript blocks for past due fees, loans, parking tickets, returned checks, etc.

All students either ordering on May 14-28, or June 1 through July 1, will need to visit the Aggie Ring Office in the Clayton Williams Alumni Center, Second Floor, beginning May 3 and preferably no later than May 18, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., to fill out an audit form, receive ring prices, and other order information. If you will not be in the College Station area between the above dates to place your order in person, you may request a mail order form which you can mail in. PLEASE FILL OUT YOUR AUDIT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. This will facilitate faster processing of your ring order.

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