

## Hostage kin hoping Hussein keeps word

Relatives of about 900 American hostages were waiting today for Iraq's Saddam Hussein to follow through on his promise to release all "foreign guests" in time for Christmas.

"All we can do now is live in the hope that he really is coming home," said Shirley Carroll of Augusta, Ga., whose husband is among holdouts at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait.

"It's more or less a wait-and-see game," said Elsie Lucille Hughes of Albuquerque, N.M., whose husband and son are hiding in Kuwait. "We're waiting to see ... whether it's got conditions attached to it or not."

Family and friends of American captives were elated by the Iraqi president's turnaround, but they were also wary of tricks. For those with loved ones in hiding, such a prospect was especially fearsome.

"If you take (Saddam) at face value, then they're going to be released," said attorney David McDonald Jr., whose client and friend is among those in hiding. "The question then becomes when? Is this a ploy to draw everyone out?"

Doubts aside, the promise brought new hope to families. "We've been waiting and waiting, trying and trying to get him out and hitting brick walls," said Sue Iliff, whose brother is among holdouts at the U.S. Embassy in Kuwait. "So this first ray of hope is like a gift."

Saddam called for the release of all foreign hostages in a directive to the Iraqi parliament Thursday, but did not specify a date.

"We're really emotional about this because Christmas is a big holiday with our family ... a very special time of year," Mrs. Iliff said from Stover, Mo. "But we're being careful."

Marie Butcher spoke with her son-in-law, Guy Seago, Thursday by telephone from the military installation where he has been held by Iraqi troops.

"He's packed and ready to leave. I warned him it might take some time to get out ... but he's still just so thrilled," Mrs. Butcher said from Johnson City, Tenn. "We've got all our Christmas presents wrapped and ready."

## Pilots confused at crash site

ROMULUS, Mich. (AP) — Airline pilots told investigators they had become confused while taxiing in the same runway area where two Northwest Airlines jets collided in heavy fog this week, killing eight people.

The unidentified pilots, not involved in the fatal collision, volunteered the information in interviews with the National Transportation Safety Board team looking into Monday's crash, head investigator John Lauber said Thursday.

Previous confusion among

pilots at Detroit Metropolitan Airport was reported "and not necessarily under low visibility conditions," Lauber said at a news conference held before most of the team left Detroit.

Investigators used a DC-9 jet Thursday to reconstruct the errant path taken by a Northwest DC-9 through heavy fog onto runway 3-C, where a Northwest Boeing 727 was thundering toward takeoff for Memphis, Tenn.

Lauber said reconstructing the events leading up to the crash helped investigators doc-

ument what the cockpit crew may have seen, including "all taxiway markings, runway markings, the lights, the signs."

Eight people were killed and 20 were injured when the Pittsburgh-bound DC-9, carrying 39 passengers and four crew members, apparently made two wrong turns and ended up in the path of the other jet.

Investigators have said poor visibility, inadequate runway lighting and pilot and control-tower error could have contributed to the crash.

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### In Memory

Michael Chase, member of Men Against Rape, leads a vigil Thursday to mark the one year anniversary of the deaths of 14 women students at Montreal Polytechnic School who were killed by a gunman on a shooting spree.

Photo by Eric Evans



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