



# Metro/EL OBSERVADOR

## Accidentes aéreos en Colombia y México dejan 32 muertos

San Cristóbal de las Casas/Bogotá (AP/Efe) - Un avión se estrelló en una zona remota del estado de Chiapas, en el sur de México y sus 19 ocupantes murieron, confirmaron ayer las autoridades.

Los restos del avión fueron hallados en una cañada, de muy difícil acceso. Se confirmó que no hubo sobrevivientes, informó la empresa Aero-Caribe en un comunicado de prensa. Hay cuatro niños entre los fallecidos. Además murieron 13 pasajeros adultos y dos pilotos. José Ferroso, gerente de la oficina matriz de la empresa AeroCaribe, que realiza vuelos mayormente en el sureste del país, dijo que todos a excepción de dos de los pasajeros eran mexicanos, según se cree.

De acuerdo a la lista de pasajeros, dos niños, Anthony y Christopher McDade, habían puesto en la lista a su padre, un estadounidense, quien aparentemente no iba en el vuelo. Sin embargo, las nacionalidades de los niños no se dieron a conocer de inmediato.

El avión es un bimotor Jetstream-32 de turbo propulsión, hecho por la compañía British Aerospace. No hubo informes inmediatos sobre la causa del accidente ocurrido en un área remota e incommunicada del noroeste estado de Chiapas, unos 60 kilómetros al sur de Villahermosa.

Sin embargo, el piloto reportó malas condiciones de clima diez minutos antes de perder el contacto con la torre de control. El último mensaje del piloto fue que él se desviaba levemente de la ruta debido a mal clima, dijo Gerardo Bracamontes, gerente regional de Aero-Caribe en la capital estatal de Chiapas, Tuxtla Gutiérrez.

En Colombia  
Por otro lado, trece personas murieron y siete resultaron heridas ayer al precipitarse a tierra un avión dos minutos después de despegar del aeropuerto colombiano de Villavicencio, en el centro del país.

El accidente se produjo dos minutos después de que el aparato, un avión de transporte mixto de carga y pasajeros, despegara del aeropuerto local con destino a Mitú, la capital del departamento selvático del Vaupés, en la frontera este con Brasil.

La aeronave era un bimotor del tipo DC-4 que cayó y se incendió a un kilómetro de la pista, luego de que perdiera uno de los motores. Cuatro tripulantes y 16 pasajeros, entre ellos cinco policías y un soldado, habían abordado el avión, propiedad de la empresa regional Coral, que presta servicio mixto de transporte a territorios selváticos de Colombia.

Los cuatro tripulantes figuran entre los muertos, junto con un policía y la esposa de uno de los tripulantes, precisaron las autoridades de Villavicencio, distante unos 120 kilómetros al sur de Bogotá.

## Maribel Gomez and Friends of Honduras

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Maribel Gomez survived Hurricane Fifi in 1974, when she was ten years old. That experience was a vivid memory when Hurricane Mitch struck Honduras in October 1998. She knew she had to help the people recover and rebuild their lives.

In 1974, Maribel, her mother and younger brother and sister lived in the small village of San Luis La 6 - the number designated the banana plantation. Her mother had a small store. It was raining hard when her mother left early that morning to open the store for business. Maribel awakened about 6 am. To the roar of the storm and saw that water was rising rapidly on the floor of the house. She had the foresight to grab the money and gather her brother and sister and head for the community center. She saw her mother wading through shoulder deep water holding high her most prized possession, her bicycle. Villagers climbed into trees and onto roofs to escape the flood, but there was no rescue. They had to survive as best they could. Maribel's family was fortunate. Her uncle sent a helicopter to rescue her family. They got away from the flood but did not escape the illnesses that followed. Maribel was very sick for two months with typhoid and dysentery. Her brother and sister had milder cases. The village was destroyed as was the banana plantation. The government eventually moved everyone to another area, but many did not survive. Maribel remembers, "I cried and cried. So many of my friends died from the illnesses that followed the storm." There was no medical care available for them.

When Hurricane Mitch struck Honduras, Maribel's first thought was of Hurricane Fifi: "I remembered how it felt." She knew she had to do what she could to help.

Maribel Gomez left Honduras for the United States in April 1984 because she had been targeted as a leader of the teachers union. She had participated in a protest against the government which involved teachers from all parts of the country. Their complaints addressed distressing work conditions, low pay and the long hours teaching two sets of students - one school full in the morning, another one in the afternoon, with an average class of 60 students. When Hurricane Mitch struck Honduras, Maribel pulled Friends of Honduras together by reaching out to people in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Many wanted to help the people who had suffered so much from the destructive storm.

Organizing Friends of Honduras was a natural step. When she was growing up, she would look out for people who needed help and give them items from her mother's store - without permission, of course.

The organization has been working in the village of La Guacamaya to build two room, concrete block houses for the families whose homes were destroyed. Friends of Honduras buys the land and puts in a vegetable garden for the family. The cost for land and supplies is between \$1,500 and \$2,000. With no electricity or other source of power, volunteers from the U.S. work together with the community. The Hondurans and the Americans, working together, are able to exchange cultures and languages and build relationships.

La Guacamaya means a special place for saving special treasures. There are many burial mounds near there, sacred cemeteries built by the Mayan people about 500 years ago. Today's 750 residents of La Guacamaya are proud of their town and the importance of the sacred mounds. Most are descended from the original people.

Maribel returned from her third visit to La Guacamaya at the end of January 2000. They were able to complete four more

houses. To date Friends of Honduras has built a total of 24 houses for 24 families. Twelve other families waiting for houses have a community vegetable garden to use. About forty more houses are needed to assure safe shelter for each family. Plans are underway to see that everyone will have water and electricity. There is one well for the community with six pumps located around the village from which people draw water and carry it home. The village has a grant for materials to pipe water to each house with volunteer labor. Most of the families will not be able to pay the one-time fee of 500 lempiras, approximately \$40, so Friends of Honduras hopes to help. Friends of Honduras is developing ways for the families to establish a reliable source of income for self sufficiency. Maribel met with a group of women in January to plan making crafts for sale. Currently seeking a grant to purchase a machine for making concrete blocks which will lower the cost of building the houses, the men would also be able to make blocks to market in neighboring communities.

La Victoria de La Guacamaya is a small village 10 kilometers up the mountainside from La Guacamaya, a part of that community with an additional 500 people. The residents have small coffee farms around their homes, usually two or three kilometers from the closest neighbor. Most of the coffee trees and houses were destroyed by devastating landslides, which also destroyed the community center. With the coffee plants that are left the residents are trying to continue growing and selling coffee. The road down the mountain is now destroyed; selling their coffee means carrying what they can on horseback to where they can take a bus to the city. After this long journey, there is little profit. They are organizing and planning to solve their problems: rebuild the community center so they can meet and work together, have church services, hold community events and store the coffee. Building a road that a truck could negotiate would be important for their success.

Before Mitch occurred, Maribel was busy with her family and had returned to visit Honduras only once in the previous ten years. When the hurricane hit it was "like a wake up call," she says. "Always, I had wanted to do something in my country and help the people who live in such misery. Mitch made me decide to do what I had wanted to do now and not push the thought away... It is like a light inside me that makes me do this. "I decided to get organized and organize people to do something. With the help of many people, I built a network to get it done. I wanted to see that each family would have a house. I wanted to see that the family could move in the house and live there. Now I feel I am doing what I really want to do: Helping people become self sufficient."

Friends of Honduras is a non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible, and, with nonpaid staff, almost all of the money received goes to the community in Honduras.

For information, call Maribel Gomez at 282-8526 or email her at maribelgomez1@hotmail.com

## Looking for a home



Se necesitan padres temporales de crianza o padres adoptivos. Si está interesado en adoptar o cuidar a uno de estos niños, llame a Judy Orellana al teléfono 503/731-3147, ext. 2247.

## Pablo II pide reducción de penas

Ciudad del Vaticano (Efe) - Juan Pablo II reiteró ayer durante el ángelus la petición de un gesto de clemencia -la reducción de la pena- con los presos y pidió a las autoridades de todo el mundo la revisión del sistema carcelario, "para hacerlo respetuoso con la dignidad de la persona". Este nuevo llamamiento fue hecho ante más de 30.000 personas reunidas en la plaza de San Pedro del Vaticano para el rezo del ángelus, una hora después de que el pontífice visitara la

cárcel romana de Regina Coeli, donde celebró con varias decenas de presos el Jubileo, que es un año de reconversión.

"Pensando en la condición de los presos he pedido con ocasión del Año Santo un gesto de clemencia. He invitado a los legisladores de todo el mundo a revisar el sistema carcelario y el mismo sistema penal, en línea con una justicia redentora del culpable y no sólo reparadora del desorden causado por el crimen", dijo el pontífice.

## Oregon hosts Mexican health professionals

CONTRIBUTED STORY  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

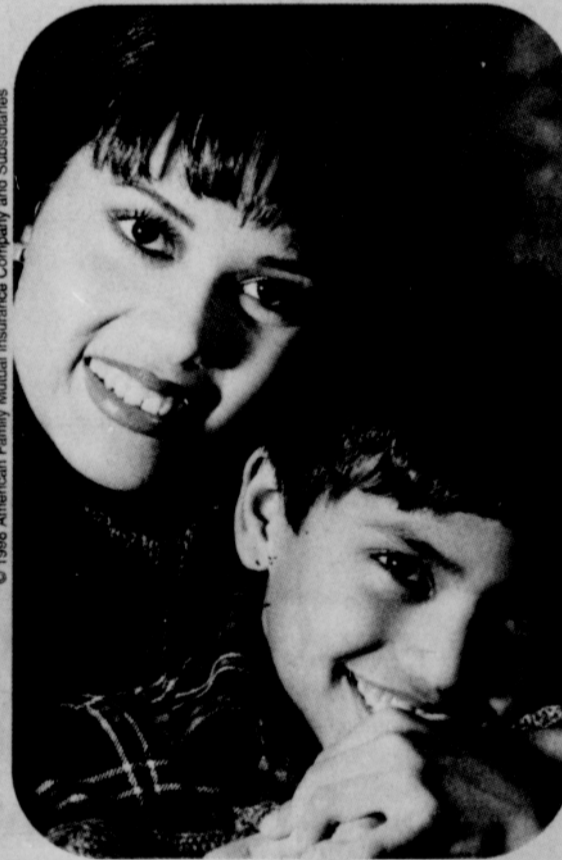
A delegation of health professionals from Oaxaca, Mexico, are visiting Oregon this month as part of a program to improve mutual understanding of the health care issues faced by people of Mexican origin who live here.

The group of 10 physicians and one nursing supervisor will visit public and private sector health organizations in the tri-county area and beyond until July 21.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about the differences and similarities in our health delivery systems and develop an ongoing dialogue between our countries," says Michael Skeels, PhD, acting administrator, Oregon Health Division. "We welcome the visit and look forward to a successful exchange program."

Dr. Rafael Aragón Kuri, Secretary of Health, State of Oaxaca, leads the delegation. The itinerary includes visits to county health departments, migrant health clinics, major hospitals and community hospitals serving rural areas. Delegates will learn about different programs, the health issues people from Mexico face and will spend time with an Oregon counterpart from his or her specialty area. They will meet with community representatives including Centro Mexicano de Oregon, El Hispanic News and the Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs.

The Oregon-Mexico Health Professionals Exchange Program is sponsored by the Mexican Center of Oregon, Clackamas Community College, University of Portland and the Department of Human Services Health Division.



Piense: Su hijo es inteligente, saludable y encabeza la lista para ir a la universidad. Le encanta la trayectoria que su carrera ha tomado. Está haciendo muchas de las cosas

que planeó y hasta otras que no había planeado. Vivir la vida en plenitud es fácil cuando tiene una familia que lo respalda. American Family Insurance. Llame ahora mismo y platique con nuestros agentes amables.

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