



John H. Reed, chairman of the National Transportation Safety Board, inspects tail of the plane with the emblem on Southern Airways aircraft still visible

# Victims' Relatives, Friends Gather On Campus

By BILL SOUTHERLAND  
They had come together in the old auditorium from all walks of life, but the burden they carried in their hearts this Sunday was common to each of the 400 or so.  
For these were the parents, the close relatives and the friends of those who met death instantly Saturday night when a DC-9 jetliner chartered by Marshall University crashed and exploded just short of Tri-State Airport.  
Acting Marshall President Dr. Donald N. Dedmon, weary from a night of consoling grieving parents and shock-dazed students, met with those who knew the victims Sunday morning in the auditorium of Old Main. His audience outnumbered the seats.  
"Your grief is shared by all of us," the survivors were told in words that flowed soft-

ly, as though in respect for the football team members, the coaches and the fans from the Huntington community whose bodies were still being recovered from the scene.  
Their eyes red from the strain of a night of sorrow and some uncertainty, the parents were anxious about the recovery and their chances of claiming the bodies soon.  
But by late Sunday morning "only a very few" positive identifications had been accomplished, Dr. Dedmon assured them. He urged those who had been close to the victims not to go to the crash scene or a temporary morgue in an airport hanger until called for identification purposes.  
As the survivors are needed, they will be contacted by the university or by officials at the morgue. Special telephone numbers were

arranged at the university to allow relatives to call for information.  
And, "while it is little comfort," Dr. Dedmon added, "the next two days will be set aside for official mourning at the university. We have suspended classes for Monday and Tuesday to make available faculty members who might render assistance to you."  
Dr. Dedmon said his personal grief was "unspeakable," and it really wasn't words the survivors had come to hear. Perhaps coming together took their minds off the loss momentarily.  
They listened intently to Dr. Dedmon as he assured them every effort was being made to recover the victims and to assist the survivors.  
"One can adjust to the horrors of the

scene, for it happened almost instantly," Dr. Dedmon confessed. "But the prospect of discussing it with you . . . and the continuing grief made one of the most heart-rending experiences I've ever known."  
His voice wavered a bit, and then the parents were asked to confer with university officials in the auditorium to determine which faculty members would be assigned to help them in Huntington while they awaited word from the morgue.  
The university continued late Sunday to reach personally each of the relatives of the students and staff members who were on the aircraft. If they were located far from Huntington, the survivors were being advised to remain in the comfort of their own homes until a definite identification had been made.

Dr. Dedmon had been one of the first to ask the Southern employees for "whatever we can do to help," offering to assist in arranging travel to Huntington for persons in other cities or in contacting distant friends.  
Earlier, Dr. Dedmon issued late Saturday night a formal statement of grief on behalf of the university:  
"Our university community is indescribably shocked at this tragedy. My heart goes out to the relatives and loved ones of the players, staff and fans. I went to the scene of the tragedy. I wanted to see for myself that everything that could be done was being done."  
"I saw no survivors or evidence of survivors, I went to Cabell-Huntington Hospital, to talk to relatives and friends. I felt so helpless. I wished desperately that I could do something to lessen the grief and pain."  
"My staff has been at work to confirm, precisely who was on the plane, and to communicate with next of kin."

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Relatives and friends of persons on fatal flight as they waited in vain at Tri-State Airport for news on survivors

## Marshall Basketball Season Will Open As Planned

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the basketball season "otherwise we'll just have to play it by ear." He missed the trip, he said, to go fishing.  
"I hadn't had a full weekend at home in Williamson with my family in a long while," he said. "This looked like my only chance for another long while with basketball coming up. So, I took it."  
Hagen bowed to superstition for not being aboard the plane. The trip began on Friday the 13th. Taking note of that, he drove both ways.  
Following the conclusion of two days of mourning Tuesday, the athletic department, the athletic board and the administration expect to begin consolidating moves towards

keeping the athletic program in operation until the pain of Saturday subsides.  
Meanwhile, the first formal breakdown of the squad losses in the crash were compiled by Coach Dawson. These showed that the player losses number 11 sophomores, 14 juniors and 10 seniors.  
Quirks of fate prevented two varsity players from making the trip. Ed Carter, a sophomore tackle from Wichita Falls, Texas, was attending the funeral of his father. Richard Taglang, a junior defensive back from Bethlehem, Pa., missed the team bus Friday.  
Injuries kept four other varsity players home. These are: Felix Jordan, sophomore defensive back from Cincinnati; Nate

Ruffin, junior defensive back from Quincy, Fla.; Frank James, junior linebacker from Barboursville; Greg Finn, junior defensive end from Boston, Mass.; and Pete Naputano, junior center from Altoona, Pa.  
Ruffin, sole survivor now of the crack freshman team that entered Marshall in 1969, has been out since the second game of the season. He is suffering from calcium deposits in his right bicep and faces surgery.  
Besides these, seven others survive their teammates—Mike Swartley, a junior center from Steelton, Pa.; Wes Hickman, a junior center from Overland Park, Kansas; and Jon Calvin, a red shirted offensive tackle from Oryoga Falls, Ohio.  
The other red shirts with three years of eligibility are Joe Dilensky, Skip Graul, M. J. McRoberts, and Blanton Prater.

## Fate Caused Them To Miss The Plane

They missed the plane.  
The reasons were varied, but the fact is they did miss the plane.  
Sheer fate had Rich Taglang arriving too late to board the jetliner, already en route to North Carolina from Tri-State Airport.  
Gregory Finn had a leg injury and his third near-brush with death.  
Ed Carter had gone home for his father's funeral.  
Equipment manager John Hagan was frightened of flying on Friday the 13th when the plane left here.

Assistant Coach Red Dawson was on a scouting trip.  
At the last minute, Felix Jordan was cut from the traveling squad because of an injury.  
Wes Hickman was taken off Thursday and John Calvin had been off several weeks.  
Thirty-seven members of the Marshall University team were killed in the crash.  
Twenty-two varsity members weren't aboard. Thirty players are on the freshman squad.

Taglang called his parents in Bethlehem, Pa., to tell them he was safe. The junior sobbed, "I'm alive. Nobody else is. . . They're all dead."  
Robert M. Finn of Medfield, Mass., said his son, 20 and a junior, had two earlier brushes with death. He said the youth was injured when his car flipped over in an accident several years ago and was riding in a car while attending McCook Junior College in Nebraska last June when the driver was killed in an accident.  
The elder Finn said an operation for damaged ligaments in the player's left knee and a recent injury prevented his making the trip for Saturday's game.  
Finn said Gregory was "terribly upset and emotional" when he heard "all his buddies were gone—burned to death" and had to cut short the phone call.  
Sophomore offensive back Carter was in Wichita Falls, Tex., to attend his father's funeral.  
Hagan said he refused to fly when the team left Huntington because, "I'm superstitious about Friday the 13th. Something just told me not to go on this trip." Instead, he drove an equipment truck to and from Greenville.

## All Must Be Begun Anew

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\$150,000 for scholarship. The West Virginia Legislature gave him \$1 million for an artificial playing surface, 7,000 additional seats and new dressing rooms.  
All signs pointed to brighter days.  
"We've begun to turn our program around," Tolley said two weeks ago. "We're heading in the right direction."  
Now all must be begun anew.

## Flags To Fly At Half-Mast

Officials at the West Virginia governor's mansion said Sunday night that flags on all state offices will be flown at half-mast for "an appropriate period of time."

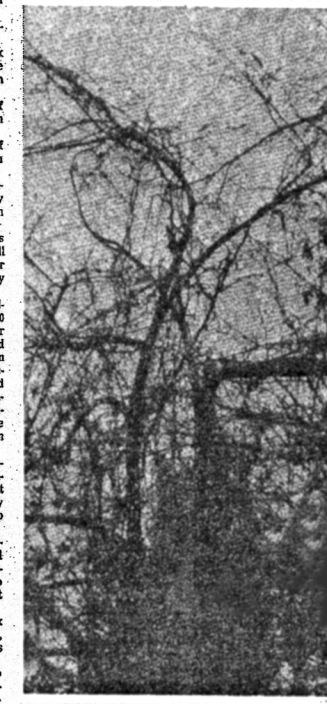
A spokesman for the governor said, however, that state offices would remain open.



National Transportation Safety Board Chairman John H. Reed recovers a flight recorder from the mass of metal and debris that a day earlier had been a twin-engine DC-9 airplane. If undamaged, the recorder could provide the top-level investigative team headed by Reed with pertinent information in 30 minutes.

## The Coach Asked Him To Go—But

The Marshall University chaplain, the Rev. Robert Scott, was asked to accompany the school's football team on the flight which ended in disaster Saturday night, but he could not go.  
Father Scott, in his first year as Marshall chaplain, said he attended all Thundering Herd home games, but his regular Saturday night mass prevented him from going on road trips.  
The plane, returning the Herd from Greenville, N. C., crashed into a wooded hillside near Tri-State Airport, only about two hours after the campus mass began.  
"The coach asked me to go," he said, "to sit on the bench with the team and give my blessing."  
The Roman Catholic chaplain came to Marshall after two years at Ohio State and 10 years at West Virginia University.



These trees are believed to be those struck by the plane as it approached for a landing at Tri-State Airport. The aircraft then crashed into a second ridge and burst into flames, killing everyone aboard.