

Godfrey mayor and his wife narrowly escape possible disaster in Ft. Lauderdale

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
January 6 2017 3:41 PM



FORT LAUDERDALE - Godfrey Mayor Mike McCormick and his wife Linda McCormick were inside the Fort Lauderdale Airport moments before a gunman opened fire, killing five people and wounding at least eight.

Mike and Linda McCormick were en route to a timeshare 20 minutes from Fort Lauderdale, and landed 10 minutes earlier than expected due to a minor medical emergency on their plane. Those 10 extra minutes may have spelled the difference between a wonderful vacation and disaster for the McCormicks. Mike McCormick said he and his wife were in their car, just beginning their trip away from the airport at the time the shooting started happening.

"We're very lucky," he said. "We were gone only 10 minutes before it started happening. I attribute it to a medical emergency on the plane. It landed 10 minutes early. It came swooping in fast. We're pretty lucky, but some people are not so lucky and I feel sorry for their families."

McCormick said he was curious to see what the shooting was "all about," saying "there are some crazies out there." He said the entire incident was a "sorry situation."

"We're dealing with it," he said. "We're both very lucky. I feel bad for the people who didn't get out, even the people who weren't being shot were still in lock-down with police all over the place. It's a very sorry situation."

According to reports from the **Associated Press**, the gunman pulled a gun from a checked bag, loaded it in a bathroom and started shooting. **Broward County Commissioner Chip LaMarca** told reporters from the Associated Press by phone the shooter was a passenger on a Canadian flight. The gunman has since been identified as **Esteban Santiago-Ruiz**, 26, who had active-duty military identification on him and was born in New Jersey. He was taken into police custody alive.

Law enforcement is still investigating a motive at this time.

