

N7337D - NTSB #: CEN22LA121 / ATQA [REDACTED]

14 February 2022 - 34°49'51" N 91°59'44"W

15 FEB 2022:

- Notified by FLM of accident assignment ~ 0710 CST.
 - Pilot: **Jay Everett Smith**
 - [REDACTED] Private Pilot / Airplane Single Engine Land (ASEL)
 - [REDACTED] Lonoke, AR 72086
 - [REDACTED]
 - Aircraft: **N7337D**
 - 1957 Piper "Tri Pacer" PA-22-150
 - S/N 22-5126
 - Lycoming O-320
- Arrived at accident scene ~ 0845 CST and met by **Lt Lynn Sheppard** of Lonoke County Sheriff's Office. TEL [REDACTED]
 - Lt Sheppard indicated that they had someone monitoring the scene continuously since it was discovered.
 - Lt Sheppard stated that the wife [Gina Smith] of the pilot [Jay Everett Smith] had been on scene earlier in the morning [REDACTED]
 - Lt Sheppard stated that the Office of Emergency Management [OEM] had been on the scene in the beginning to "safe" the aircraft. They were unable to access and disconnect the battery due to the damage; the battery had since "died" overnight as evidenced by an interior light going out.
 - Lt Sheppard presented some documents that had been removed from the aircraft:
 - Aircraft Airworthiness Certificate
 - Envelope marked "Aircraft Registration Piper PA-22-150" that contained an out-of-date insurance policy, but no aircraft registration.
 - Lt Sheppard presented some documents generated by the Sheriff's Department:
 - Incident Report – Case Number 202202589 [1 page]
 - Complaint Card dated 2/15/2022. [4 pages]
 - Lt Shepard presented a CD containing 64 photos taken by the officer on duty [identify not provided] at the time of the accident.
 - Lt Sheppard presented the keys to the aircraft, and attempted to present the pilot's cell phone. I refused the cell phone.
- Surveyed the scene:
 - **Aircraft located ~.85 miles west of Furlow, AR ~ 560 yards south off of US HWY 294, ~ 150 feet inside of a densely wooded area. [34°49'51" N 91°59'44"W]**
 - The aircraft appeared to have clipped the top of a large tree and came to rest in an approximately 45 degree nose-down attitude within 100 feet of the impacted tree.
 - The aircraft wreckage was all contained within a very small area [~ 100 ft by 50 ft].
 - The aircraft sustained substantial damage:
 - Both wings
 - Elevators
 - Front Landing Gear
 - Engine / Engine Firewall
 - Aircraft Hour Meter: 2429.8
 - Fuel Selector "Off" – [OEM had been on scene of accident and "safed" the aircraft]

- Fuel Quantity – Empty [Fuel tanks had been ruptured during accident][significant odor present, and confirmed by Sheriff's Department][Did NOT smell like AV Gas ... distinctly smelled like automotive fuel]
 - "Yellow" staining present around fuel tank sump areas on underside of both wings.
 - Incomplete access to engine compartment due to the position of the aircraft, but initial "top only" look did not indicate any irregularities.
 - Initial inspection of propeller appears to indicate it was not rotating at time of impact.
- Contacted Alex Lemishko [NTSB] [~0930] and provided initial information. He provided the NTSB Accident Number [CEN22LA121] and the name of the NTSB IIC [Tim Sorensen]
- **Tim Sorensen [NTSB IIC]** [REDACTED] contacted me ~0940 and we discussed basics. I indicated that I'd taken photos and would forward initial information soonest.
- Contacted **Gina Smith [Aircraft Owner / Pilot's Wife]** [REDACTED] ~ 1000. [REDACTED] I indicated to her that I would send an email requesting additional information and documentation for the investigation. She provided her email: [REDACTED]
- Contacted **Russell Jackson** [REDACTED] ~1045 who conducted most recent Annual Inspection of aircraft. Arranged to meet with him after 1200.
- Arrived at [REDACTED] **Lonoke AR [Jackson Aviation][Russell Jackson]** ~1230 CS and discussed his knowledge of the aircraft. He presented a copy of the logbook entry he provided to the owner following the inspection. He indicated that the aircraft appeared to not have been well maintained / inspected previously. The major issues he noted were:
 - The aircraft appeared to have been operated using regular automotive gas. He indicated that he had to change fuel lines that were in extremely poor condition.
 - The muffler was replaced and it was severely corroded / ruptured and could have possibly been the original.
 - He indicated that the brakes were inoperative when it arrived for the inspection, and that the owner joked that he'd have to relearn how to land the aircraft now.
 - He indicated that the spark plugs were extremely dirty when he removed them for inspection, much dirtier than they would have been if they'd been properly cleaned on the previous inspection.
 - He indicated that when the aircraft arrived, the idle was very low. When he mentioned this to Mr. Smith and said he would have to adjust it back within range, he stated that he had adjusted it down himself. [NOTE: Mr. Smith is not hold a mechanics certificate.] He advised Mr. Smith that he shouldn't do that as it could cause the engine to shut down when the throttle is retarded.
 - I noted that the annual was signed off on 01 FEB 2022 with an aircraft tach time of 2429.0, and that the aircraft tach meter currently reads 2429.8, indicating the aircraft had flown for a total of .8 hours since the annual.
 - Mr. Jackson stated that he and his wife had gone for a walk on 14 FEB 2022 at ~1715 CST and saw the aircraft taking off. He said he never heard him return.
- Contacted by Gina Smith asking for husband's cell phone. I directed her to Lt Sheppard.

16 FEB 2022:

- Received phone call from **Don Adamson [92nd West Aviation Inc]** [REDACTED] [REDACTED] ~ 0830 CST asking for permission to move the aircraft to his facility on Country Air Estates [REDACTED] Lonoke, AR 72086]. I indicated there were no issues, but that I needed to be on-scene. He indicated it would be at least an hour before he arrived on scene. He asked if I was in contact with the property owner, and I advised that I had not.
- Contacted Tim Sorensen to inform him of the aircraft relocation. He indicated he had no issues with its removal. Provided him contact information for Gina Smith and Russell Jackson. He indicated that, if Don Adamson has no connection with the aircraft, that he would like to arrange for an engine examination. He also requested copies of the aircraft records for at least the last 2 years.
- Arrived at the accident site ~1030 CST, with Don Adamson and crew arriving ~1055 CST. While surveying the situation, the land owners arrived and offered their assistance. They were able to cut down several trees and some brush to facilitate the aircraft's extraction. The aircraft was removed and transported via trailer to [REDACTED] Lonoke, AR 72086. I discussed the possibility of Mr. Adamson performing an engine examination, to which he agreed that he could. I informed him that Tim Sorensen [NTSB IIC] would contact him to solidify the agreement, and once that was complete, we could arrange a date/time for me to provide the over-the-shoulder observation. Departed at ~1430 CST.
- Contacted Gina Smith via email [REDACTED] with request for:
 - Statement from Mr. Smith;
 - Aircraft Maintenance Records;
 - Aircraft Registration Information; and
 - Mr. Smith's Pilot Training Qualification Information