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On June 28, 2023, Ms. Denise Jones, the student pilot rated passenger, was interviewed at the University of Arkansas Medical Sciences Hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas. Ms. Jones consented to the interview with her family present. The following is a summary of the in-person interview:

(1) Please state the events as you recall them:

Ms. Denise Jones stated that her father, Mr. Daniel Jones, recently purchased the accident airplane, a Cessna 177 Cardinal, from a gentleman in Phoenix, Arizona. The airplane was repositioned, by an unknown third party, to Las Cruces, New Mexico, to have a new interior installed. On Saturday, June 24, 2023, the airplane maintenance was completed several days behind schedule due to part availability issues. On June 25, 2023, Ms. Jones and her father departed Louisville, Kentucky, at 0430 eastern daylight time (EDT), and flew via commercial airline to Dallas, Texas, and then to El Paso, Texas. At the El Paso airport, they met John, an employee of the interior repair shop who drove them to Las Cruces, New Mexico. Ms. Jones and her father had lunch with a friend after an initial visit at Las Cruces International Airport (LRU), Las Cruces, New Mexico.

After their lunch, Ms. Jones and her father both completed a full preflight inspection because the Cessna 177 airplane was new to both individuals. In the early afternoon, about 1330 mountain daylight time (MDT), they departed LRU enroute to Avenger Field Airport (SWW), Sweetwater, Texas. During the initial takeoff phase, Mrs. Jones elected to abort the takeoff because the engine made a "weird sound." Ms. Jones stated that the second takeoff the "didn't feel good" but her father stated that it was likely due to the higher density altitude (about 3,000 ft) versus the lower density altitudes (700 ft) typical at the airports near their hometown in Kentucky. The rest of the takeoff and climb proceeded normally, and they climbed to cruising altitude.

Ms. Jones stated that the flight from LRU to SWW took about 3.5 to 4 hours and they landed at SWW about 1730 central daylight time (CDT). They were on the ground for about an hour. Ms. Jones stated that the airplane's fuel tanks were completely topped off by her father. She estimated that the airplane had about 5 hours of fuel before they departed SWW toward Memorial Field Airport

(HOT), Hot Springs, Arkansas. Ms. Jones remarked that the fuel tanks were "as full as her father could get them." She also stated that upon departure from LRU, both fuel tank gauges indicated "full." However, despite being flown with the fuel selector set to both, after the flight from LRU to SWW the right fuel gauge indicated "empty" and the left fuel gauge indicated about "3/4" tank remaining.

Before they departed SWW, they were concerned about completing the flight after sunset but chose to continue the flight to HOT as planned. While enroute the cruise altitude was about 7,500 ft msl with brief climbs and descents to avoid clouds and mountains along their route-of-flight. The engine speed was set to 2,300 rpm. They attempted to lean the fuel mixture for best economy, but the engine would begin "stumbling" when the mixture control was pulled 1.5 to 2 inches aft of full rich.

While enroute they received updated weather via the onboard ADS-B device. The NEXRAD weather radar indicated that the weather was not moving as originally forecasted, west to east, and was instead rapidly moving to the south and negatively affected the weather at HOT. Despite being close to HOT, Mr. Jones chose to turn around and divert to the nearest airport to the south, which was J Lynn Helms Sevier County Airport (DEQ), De Queen, Arkansas.

During the downwind and base legs into DEQ, Ms. Jones stated that the full application of carburetor heat made a "metal grinding sound." Upon hearing the sound, Mr. Jones chose to go around and make another traffic pattern circuit which without using carburetor heat, which resulted in an uneventful full stop landing.

After landing at DEQ, the airplane was parked outside on the ramp. The right fuel gauge indicated "empty" and the left fuel gauge indicated "1/4" tank remaining. After they exited through the airport gates, they made multiple failed attempts to procure local transportation to town. They walked for about an hour before Ms. Jones called the local non-emergency police telephone number and requested to be picked up. The call to the non-emergency police number was because there was no other available means of transportation (i.e. local bus, Uber, Lyft, or taxi service).

After they were picked up and driven into town, Ms. Jones and her father located a hotel for the night. The following morning, Monday, June 26, 2023, about 0700 CDT, they departed the hotel and located a good Samaritan at a gas station near their hotel who agreed to drive them to the airport.

Ms. Jones stated that after they arrived at the airport her father asked her to go to the fuel farm while he repositioned the airplane. Mr. Jones started the engine and taxied the airplane to the fuel farm where he attempted to fuel the

airplane with 100LL fuel. However, despite using his credit card, the self-serve fuel system did not dispense fuel and, as such, Mr. Jones concluded that there was no fuel available.

Ms. Jones stated that her father subsequently decided that the airplane had enough fuel for the flight from DEQ to HOT. The exact amount of fuel remaining on the airplane, as determined by Mr. Jones, was not verbalized to Ms. Jones. However, Ms. Jones stated that if her father was content with the amount of fuel remaining, then she was also satisfied with it. Ms. Jones further noted that before they departed DEQ, the right fuel gauge still indicated "empty" and the left fuel gauge indicated "1/4" tank remaining.

Ms. Jones stated that after departure they chose to climb as high as possible to conserve fuel. The flight ended up at about 6,000 ft msl as their final cruise altitude. During the approach to HOT, Mr. Jones transmitted on the common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) that the airplane was "low on fuel" and they would proceed straight to the airport.

According to Ms. Jones, her father chose to proceed straight to the airport instead of trying to make a 45° entry into the traffic pattern. The engine suddenly lost power shortly after Mr. Jones transmitted on the CTAF that the airplane was "low on fuel." Mr. Jones then made a mayday call over the CTAF while Ms. Jones, who was a student pilot, trimmed the airplane to full nose-up.

Ms. Jones stated that they were unable to restore engine power using an emergency engine restart procedure that she referred to as a "Reverse L". She stated they lost sight of the airport as the airplane descended over the lake. There were several houses and trees surrounding the lake, so Mr. Jones opted to attempt a forced water landing.

Ms. Jones stated that her father flew the airplane toward the lake to avoid the trees and houses. However, while above the lake, the airplane "stalled" as it descended through tree top height. The aerodynamic stall resulted in the airplane nose dropping almost straight down.

Ms. Jones stated that the airplane immediately started to sink after it impacted the lake. She recalled remaining conscious but unable to see anything in the murky green lake water. Believing that she would drown, she instinctively unfastened her seat belt and swam to the surface. Upon reaching the surface she immediately began screaming for help. Ms. Jones recalled seeing several witnesses along the lakeshore and looking through house windows. One individual rushed to the bank of the lake and attempted to use a long pole to reach Ms. Jones in the lake water. Ms. Jones turned onto her back to float while she yelled for her father. Ms. Jones stated that other bystanders did not

provide additional aid to either her or her father but appeared to be using phones to capture videos or were looking through their house windows.

During this time, she saw that the airplane was fully underwater except for the vertical stabilizer and that her father was nowhere to be seen. She also stated that no one attempted to rescue her father and instead stood around watching her and the airplane in the lake. Ms. Jones stated that it "felt like an eternity" for emergency medical services (EMS) personnel to arrive onsite. The EMS personnel then jumped into the water and used a "lily pad" that a local resident provided to float her out of the water.

(2) Which seat did you occupy?

Ms. Jones, a student pilot, stated that she occupied the right front seat while her father occupied the left front seat. She further confirmed that she was not qualified to operate the airplane as pilot-in-command. Ms. Jones also stated that she left her logbook at home. She only flew the airplane for brief periods during cruise flight. Both front seats had lap seatbelts with no shoulder harness.

(3) How did the engine start before the flight?

Ms. Jones commented that the engine start was normal except for the starting procedure which was different to what they were used to. They primed the engine before starting the engine. However, Ms. Jones stated that in the Cessna 177 her father did a "fuel dump" during every engine start. Ms. Jones described this procedure as starting the engine with the carburetor heat off, mixture full forward, and the throttle at idle. During start when the engine kicks you proceed to pump the throttle to "dump fuel" into the engine to complete the start. Ms. Jones also stated that they only needed between two and three pumps of the primer before each start and that the engine never backfired during start up.

(4) Do you recall the fuel consumption rate during cruise?

Ms. Jones stated that she did not recall the fuel consumption rate but stated their cruise speed was between 120 and 130 knots.

(5) Did the fuel caps on the tanks seem normal? Were they loose or old?

Ms. Jones stated that she never was on top of the airplane wings and, as such, she did not know the condition of the fuel caps.

(6) What experience do you and your father have in airplanes?

Ms. Jones stated that her father had more than 10 years of flight experience in Cessna 172 airplanes before he purchased the Cessna 177 Cardinal.

Ms. Jones stated that her flight experience was in Cessna 172 and Piper Warrior airplanes.

Ms. Jones confirmed that the Cessna 177 airplane was new to Mr. Jones and her and that their first flight in a Cessna 177 was when they picked up the accident airplane in Las Cruces, New Mexico.

(7) Please explain again the issue with the mixture control?

Ms. Jones restated that the engine began "stumbling" when the mixture control was leaned more than 1.5 to 2 inches aft of the full rich position.

(8) Was the primer able to be stowed and locked?

Ms. Jones stated that the primer was fully stowed and locked after each use.

(9) Did you have a carburetor temperature gauge and if so, what did it indicate?

Ms. Jones stated that as a student pilot she was not familiar with a carburetor temperature gauge, nor could she recall if the airplane was equipped with a carburetor temperature gauge.

(10) Did you notice if your father was responsive after impact?

Ms. Jones stated that due to the murky lake water she was unable to locate her father and that she had focused on trying to reach the surface to prevent herself from drowning.

Ms. Jones does not recall opening any doors to exit the airplane but does remember unfastening her own seatbelt and swimming straight up to the surface. Her father's seatbelt was also just a lap belt. Ms. Jones noted that her father was "alert and in control" while he flew the airplane until impact. Ms. Jones stated that they both were aware of the impending impact and, as such, they braced themselves before the airplane impacted the lake.

(11) Please explain the emergency engine out procedure again.

Ms. Jones stated that they did a "reverse L" emergency restart flow to attempt to restart the engine. This includes ensuring the primer was properly stowed and locked, placing the magnetos to both, carburetor heat on, throttle full forward, mixture full forward, and fuel selector on both.

Ms. Jones also stated that she adjusted the pitch trim to full nose-up while her father pitched the airplane for 70 knots.

Ms. Jones stated that they attempted to complete effective emergency procedures after the loss of engine power but also acknowledged they both were nervous. Ms. Jones believed that the loss of engine power was a serious and possibly impossible situation to resolve due to the airplane's low altitude and location. Additionally, there was no suitable terrain to ensure a safe landing.

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