

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: CEN24LA144 (N8438B, Piper PA-28-236 Airplane) - Witness Statement
Date: Tuesday, April 16, 2024 07:31:14
Attachments: [Witness.docx](#)

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Mr. Hodges,
Attached is a document with the answers to your questions.
Cindy

From: Michael Hodges [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, April 12, 2024 6:17 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: CEN24LA144 (N8438B, Piper PA-28-236 Airplane) - Witness Statement

Hi Cindy,

Thank you for your time today on the telephone.

This is regarding the accident with N8438B (Piper PA-28-236 airplane), that occurred in Muncie, Indiana, on 04/01/2024, about 1027 local time.

I understand that you and your husband Lambert were out walking on a public trail and were injured by the airplane. I hope you both have a quick recovery.

I have some questions please. When able, feel free to respond back to me via email.

1. Can you please tell me what happened when you and your husband were out walking on the public trail?
2. Prior to the airplane impacting the ground, did you hear any abnormal engine noises such as coughing or sputtering noises?
3. Did you speak with the pilot after the accident? If so, did he say anything to you or your husband about what happened?
4. What is the name of the public trail you and your husband were walking on at the time?
5. Can you please provide me a summary of what injuries you and your husband sustained from the airplane?

Thank you for your help and have a good weekend.

Mike

Mike J. Hodges, MS
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“Don’t let yesterday use up too much of today.” – Will Rogers

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TO: Michael Hodges, NTSB

RE: Accident with N8438B (Piper airplane), occurring in Muncie, IN on April 1, 2024, about 10:27 am local

1. Can you please tell me what happened when you and your husband were out walking on the public trail?

Cindy's report: we entered the Greenway just south of Riggin Rd. Soon I heard an airplane somewhere in the northeast, but due to intense fog above (but not at ground level) it was not visible until it banked south of us (for a very brief sighting) and circled clockwise back to the airport. It was not in our viewpoint then, but there were normal indications of an expected landing. But it didn't, and I heard more acceleration sounds as it continued north, then a period of quiet. *(Be it known that, as the following thought only occurred the next day, I cannot swear to the accuracy it was this particular plane - but I recalled hearing the plane approach the airport to land, hearing 2 sputters, and then normal engines sounds. I commented out loud "that doesn't sound good". This would have been on the first circling attempted approach. My husband cannot confirm this comment.)* By this time we had crossed Riggin Rd and were several feet in walking northwest on the trail. Once again there was a plane we could track by sound, counterclockwise from north to west and coming south, but once again no sight possible. Then really loud as it was visible, approaching above tree level. This obviously happened fast. It did not remain level. I briefly saw it approach toward trees at a 10-11 o'clock position relative to trail as I immediately turned south in hopes of protection. I heard the crash, felt a very hot wind tumble me into the ditch. I saw fire and climbed out. No parts of the plane impacted me. People arrived.

Lambert's report: We were walking along the Cardinal Greenway between Riggin Road and Shaffer Road approximately ½-mile west of Muncie/Delaware County Airport runways. We were walking in a north-westerly direction (think clockface from 6 o'clock toward 12 o'clock). Visibility at the 12, 1, 2, and 3 o'clock sections was poor from a low fluffy white cloud. It was not foggy on the ground. I could hear the roar of the plane's engine but could not see it. I sensed it as being much lower (too low) to the ground compared to planes I usually see this distance from runways. Then suddenly, the plane appeared from clouds at 11 o'clock, curved to the 10 o'clock position, crossed the Cardinal Greenway and crashed at the 4 o'clock position. This event happened in front of me. The plane then burst into flames. I am uncertain if the pilot could see his location or was aware of his altitude in relation to the runways.

2. Prior to the airplane impacting the ground, did you hear any abnormal engine noises such as coughing or sputtering noises?

Cindy's report: there were no unusual engine sounds in the minute or so prior to hearing the plane approach in its second circling toward airport and seeing it just before crashing into the trees.

Lambert's report: I do not recall hearing any abnormal engine noises. I did hear a loud roar from the engine, however.

3. Did you speak with the pilot after the accident?

We did not speak to the pilot.

4. What is the name of the public trail you and your husband were walking on at the time?

The Cardinal Greenway: It is in the Rails-To-Trails system, an abandoned railroad bed that has been paved for biking, running, and walking. It runs through Muncie, Indiana.

5. Can you please provide me a summary of what injuries you and your husband sustained from the airplane?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]