

From: [Gloria Turner](#)
To: [eyewitnessreport](#)
Subject: Plane crash in Baldwin County Alabama on July 28.
Date: Thursday, July 30, 2020 12:49:58 PM

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To Investigator/s:

I am unsure if what I heard on Tuesday evening was the plane in question but the timing and location are certainly indicative. Obviously I also have no idea if it is relevant. My home address is [REDACTED] Robertsdale, Al. 36567.

On the evening of the 28th I was walking in my back yard between 1830 to 1900. I can not pinpoint the time any closer. It was extremely cloudy and vertical visibility was very low. I heard a small airplane in close proximity flying very low. Then it seemed to 'dive' as the engine was making the same sound as when crop dusters dive and one is very close. I tried to get a glimpse of the plane, because I had never heard one this close to my house, but the cloud cover was just too thick. It recovered and then flew away and I returned inside my home.

Please forgive my ignorance if this is unnecessary detail. My only wish is to help you determine the cause of the crash if at all possible.

My name is Gloria Turner and my phone number is [REDACTED] should you care to clarify anything I have said.

Thank you

Record of Telephone Conversation

Name: Mike Bevis, Pilot's brother in law
Address: Lake Placid, FL
Phone: [REDACTED]
Date: 7/30/2020. 12:05 pm CDT
Description: Knowledge of pilot Tim Rhodes, N3156W

Mike Bevis is pilot Tim Rhodes' brother-in-law. He and his wife along with other family members had been staying at the Gulf Shores house with pilot Tim Rhodes and his wife. Tim and his wife arrived on Sunday and planned to stay until Tuesday only. The rest of the family planned to stay for the week. Tim owns the house and shares it with his family.

Mr. Bevis knew Tim had a meeting in Florence on Wednesday morning concerning some property he was going to rent to Dollar General. The property had been empty and he was closing some contracts to rent the property. Mr. Bevis is not associated with Tim Rhodes' business and has a construction business of his own in Lake Placid, FL where he lives.

Mr. Bevis stated that Tim Rhodes went to the airport on Tuesday 7/28/2020 around 2 or 3:00 pm to see about getting fuel and preparing the airplane for the flight to Florence. He returned to the house sometime later and packed up to leave. Tim Rhodes was using his phone to check weather and was getting information about the flight. He decided that they should go and Tim and his wife left for the airport. Around 6:00 pm or so, Tim called Mike and said they were not sure they were leaving and wanted to know if there was enough food if they came back to the house in time for dinner. Mike told him, yes, come back. Then, about 15 or 20 minutes later, Tim called Mike back and said they had a window and were leaving after all.

Mr. Bevis did not know anything about the accident until Darren called him later that night and asked if he had heard from Tim at all.

Mr. Bevis stated that many members of the family had flown with Tim Rhodes before. He considered him to be a cautious and very careful pilot.

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Nina A. McBride
Aviation Safety Inspector, OPS
AL/NW Florida FSDO, AFG-600-BHM-FSDO-09
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Record of Telephone Conversation

Name: Charles Lawrence (Chuck) Barrett, CFI #3199832 exp 9/30/2020
Address: Florence, AL
Phone: [REDACTED]
Date: 7/29/2020. 12:12 pm CDT
Description: Knowledge of pilot Tim Rhodes, N3156W

Mr. Barrett has known Tim Rhodes for a while. He instructed him for his Private Pilot certificate in 2002. He gave him his complex airplane checkout in 2014. He also gave him his flight review in 2017 and then again in 2019. Except for the complex checkout in 2014, Mr. Barrett does not have any record or recollection of flying with Tim Rhodes after he received his Private Pilot certificate and before the 2014 complex airplane checkout which was done in N3156W.

Mr. Barrett's records show the exact date of Tim Rhodes's last flight review with him was 7/8/2019. At that time, Tim Rhodes told Chuck Barrett that he was a bit rusty and had not flown a lot lately. Chuck Barret confirmed this and said Tim Rhodes was safe but was a bit slower doing things. Mr. Rhodes did not lack ability but it was apparent that he had not been flying regularly. Mr. Barrett said the flight review consisted of 2.0 hours of ground time (1.0 hour before the flight and 1.0 hour after the flight) and then 1.5 hours of flight time.

Mr. Barrett confirmed that there was new equipment in the Bonanza when he conducted the flight review in 2019. The equipment was installed a few months prior to the flight review and may explain why Mr. Rhodes had not been flying much since the airplane had been in the avionics shop. The steam gauges were replaced with an artificial horizon and Mr. Barrett described what sounded like a small Garmin G5 PFD and HSI. There was also a Garmin autopilot and Garmin nav/comm installed.

Mr. Barrett stated that they spent a lot of the time reviewing the new equipment and he made Mr. Rhodes use the autopilot. Mr. Barrett said that Mr. Rhodes knew how to use the autopilot and seemed to have a good understanding of the equipment in the airplane when they completed the flight review. Mr. Barrett spent some time emphasizing the importance of using the checklist. Mr. Rhodes had a tendency to do things from memory. Mr. Barrett emphasized that it was ok to do that but Mr. Rhodes should go through the checklist to make sure he completed every item. Mr. Barrett wanted Mr. Rhodes "to confirm everything was done using the checklist."

Mr. Barrett characterized Mr. Rhodes as not being a risk taker. Mr. Rhodes always said that if he could not get somewhere VFR, then he would not go. He never seemed to want to get his instrument rating because he also said he only goes VFR everywhere. Mr. Barrett was very surprised that Mr. Rhodes had taken off from Gulf Shores with the kind of weather that was going on at the time. It had also been raining in North Alabama a lot that afternoon and evening. Mr. Barrett again said he was very surprised to hear Mr. Rhodes had taken off. Mr. Barrett stated that Mr. Rhodes was the last person he would have ever thought to do that, to fly in weather like that.

Mr. Barrett spoke to Darren Rhodes, the pilot's son early on Wednesday 7/29/2020. Darren Rhodes told Mr. Barrett that the last time he talked to his father, Tim Rhodes, was around 3:00 pm on Tuesday. During the call, Tim Rhodes had told Darren that they were going to stay in Gulf Shores until Wednesday because of the weather. Mr. Barrett gave me Darren Rhodes' phone number.

Mr. Barrett added that Mr. Rhodes also owns a CE-172. Mr. Rhodes keeps it on his farm near Florence, AL and uses it to fly from his farm. At least he used to and Mr. Barrett thought he still had it.

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Record of Telephone Conversation

Name: Carol Ann Wiley, Customer Service Representative
Address: Gulf Air Center, KJKA
Phone: [REDACTED] Gulf Air Center [REDACTED] cell
Date: 7/29/2020 9:00 am CDT
Description: BE-33, N3156W Pilot Timothy Rhodes

Carol Ann Wiley was working at the customer service counter at Gulf Air Center on July 28, 2020. Pilot Tim Rhodes and his wife came in around 4:30 or 5 pm. When they first came in, it was raining pretty hard and you could not see very far across the ramp. When it let up, they loaded the plane. Mr. Rhodes mentioned that they were leaving that day because the weather was supposed to be worse the next day. He and his wife sat in the lobby for an hour or so waiting for the weather to clear. It was raining fairly steadily. Mr. Rhodes kept checking the weather both in the flight planning room and on the TV screen by the counter. The TV has Flight Aware displayed and you can see the radar on the screen. Mr. Rhodes kept checking the radar.

At one point they unloaded the plane and it seemed like they weren't going to go but then a little while later they loaded up again and decided to leave. Mr. Rhodes said it looked clear enough to pick his way. Ms Wiley noticed that Mr. Rhodes and his wife were talking to one another as they were sitting on the couch but she could not hear what they said.

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[REDACTED]

Record of Telephone Conversation

Name: Tim Newman, Lineman
Address: Gulf Air Center, KJKA
Phone: [REDACTED] Gulf Air Center
Date: 7/29/2020 8:20 am CDT
Description: BE-33, N3156W Pilot Timothy Rhodes

Tim Newman was working the line at Gulf Air Center on 7/28/2020. He did not have any personal contact with pilot Tim Rhodes but saw him during the early evening. Around 6:30 pm he saw him sitting in his plane, Bonanza N3156W. He had been sitting there for a few minutes. It was raining steadily. When the rain let up a little, he saw him taxi out. The weather seemed a little clearer and the visibility improved but it was still pretty hazy and cloudy. Looking east from the FBO Tim Newman could not see the trees clearly. He did not see the plane takeoff or did not see him in the air because he was over at the fuel farm filling one of the fuel trucks.

Tim Newman said that it began to rain steadily around 4:30 pm -5 pm and continued to rain until 8:30 or 9:00 pm when he left work. There were breaks in the rain but it rained pretty much off and on the whole time after 4:30 pm. It was cloudy too and the clouds stuck around the whole time. There was no break in the overcast really.

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AL/NW Florida FSDO, AFG-600-BHM-FSDO-09
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Record of Telephone Conversation

Name: Darren Rhodes, son of pilot Tim Rhodes
Address: Florence, AL
Phone: [REDACTED]
Date: 7/30/2020. 10:07 am CDT
Description: Knowledge of pilot Tim Rhodes, N3156W

Darren Rhodes is pilot Timothy Rhodes' son. Darren stated that he had spoken on the phone to Tim Rhodes on Tuesday 7/28/2020 at about 3:00 pm. At that time Tim Rhodes said that "they", probably meaning himself and his wife, were probably going to go back to Florence on Wednesday morning or maybe even Thursday because of the weather. That was the last time he talked to his father. He did not know he had taken off until someone he knows in Gulf Shores called him and said that he thinks his father's plane went down after he left Gulf Shores. Darren did not know his father had taken off on Tuesday. He really thought he was staying in Gulf Shores until Wednesday or probably Thursday.

Darren spoke to his uncle, Mike Bevis who had been at the house in Gulf Shores with Tim. Darren said that Tim had talked to Mike at 6:20 pm on Tuesday from the airport and told Mike that they were coming back to the house because the weather was not good. Mike told Darren that Tim called him again at 6:30 pm on Tuesday and told him that there was a break in the weather and that they were going to leave after all.

Darren understood that Tim Rhodes had a business meeting in Florence on Wednesday. Tim Rhodes has a rental property business. The house they were staying in Gulf Shores was Tim's house.

Darren Rhodes gave me his uncle Mike Bevis' phone number.

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