

On Tuesday, September 6th, 2022 at about 1:39pm, I copied radio traffic from the Pierce County Communications Center giving out information on an airplane crash that just occurred on the west side of the Red Wing Regional Airport located at W7145 148th Avenue Bay City, WI in Trenton Township.

I arrived on scene at about 1:55pm, The location of the crash site was about one-half mile west of the airport tarmac in a field of grass next to a soybean field and irrigation system on airport property. I saw a white and tan airplane with heavy damage displaying aircraft registration number of N11HC. Other units on scene were Red Wing Area Ambulance Service and Ellsworth Fire Department.

I was told there were two males seat belted inside the aircraft and they were confirmed deceased. Investigator Tom Bauer started taking scene photos. With the assistance of the Ellsworth Fire Department, we used yellow tape and sectioned off the crash site including the debris field. I told Investigator Eric VanNocker we needed to get a "Crime Scene Log" started. Once it was learned the individuals in the aircraft were deceased, all of the emergency workers had exited the crash site area.

I saw Wesley C. Converse M/W, DOB: [REDACTED] Red Wing, MN 55066 [REDACTED] and Samuel D. Blue M/W, DOB: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Bay City, WI 54723 [REDACTED] at the scene of the crash. Wes said, he checked for a heartbeat on one of the victims in the airplane and didn't feel one and knew there was nothing he could do for them. Wes also said he thought there was another aircraft that had just taken off from the airport at about the same time the crash happened. Wes said he would do some checking on that for me. I gave Wes a business card for contact information. Both Wes and Sam were at the Red Wing Regional Airport Terminal and didn't hear anything over the airport radio that would indicate an aircraft in distress. At 2:07pm the Pierce County Medical Examiner Office was summoned to the scene for the two victims.

The victims were identified as, sitting on the right side of the aircraft was John Taylor Zeman M/W, DOB: [REDACTED] Rochester, MN 55906 and the victim sitting on the left side of the aircraft was Ethan Michael Smith M/W, DOB: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Rochester, MN 55906.

There was also a witness to the crash, one of the investigator Eric VanNocker had her filing out a statement form. She was identified as Jennifer M. Eis F/W DOB: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Hager City, WI 54014, [REDACTED]

At about 2:17pm, I reached out to a Federal Aviation Administration Safety Inspector Greg Thurston at [REDACTED] I orientated Greg with what I have learned so far at the aircraft crash site. Greg had taken the information and told me he would reach out to his contacts including NTSB and get everyone informed of the situation and would contact me back.

At about 2:09pm, I was contacted by the Pierce County Emergency Communications Center and they said they had the owner of the aircraft on the phone. I had him transferred to my cellphone and I spoke with Philip Joseph Conway M/W, DOB: [REDACTED] Chatfield, MN 55923, [REDACTED] I confirmed Philip was the owner of the aircraft. Philip described the aircraft as a 2012 Glasair Super II SFT fixed wing, Single Engine, two seats aircraft. Philip asked, he had heard that the airplane may have had a hard landing and asked if John and Ethan were alright? I told Philip, the plane had crashed about one-half mile west of the Red Wing Regional Airport and the two victims inside the airplane were deceased. Philip said, the plane took off from a Rochester, MN airport, John and Ethan were doing training flights and conducting "Touch and Go's" at area airports at the time of the crash.

Pierce County Medical Examiner John Worsing had arrived on scene and he advised me he couldn't do anything with the bodies unless he was cleared to do so from the NTSB.

At about 2:58pm I spoke with Mike Volker from NTSB at [REDACTED] and informed him and provided the same information as I did Greg. I had Mike on Bluetooth in my vehicle and John Worsing was standing outside my vehicle. We asked if it was possible to retrieve the bodies from the wreckage and he said yes, do what we need to, to retrieve the bodies. I told Mike we would need the help from the Ellsworth Fire Department for extrication and we would do that with minimum amount of damage to the aircraft. Mike said to photograph everything before, during and after the extrication.

At 3:09pm Mahn Funeral Home from Red Wing, MN was contacted to take the bodies from the scene to Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office for autopsies. At about 3:32pm Mahn Funeral Home arrived on scene. Investigator Tom Bauer followed the funeral home from the scene to Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office. See Investigators report for further details.

I received a phone call from "Stephanie" unknown last name from Dallas Texas [REDACTED] in regards to the signal alert coming from the down aircraft. I told her I was not able to shut it off. Stephanie asked if I could give her the latitude and longitude coordinates for the downed aircraft, which I gave to her.

I received a phone call from an unknown male with a heavy Australian accent from a phone number of [REDACTED] from some operations center, which appeared to be from Sacramento, CA, he was going to be reaching out to the aircraft that left the Red Wing Regional Airport at about the time the crash to see if they would have seen or heard anything before the crash and he would get back to me as soon as he learned something.

I contacted the Pierce County Communications Center to have them make calls to off duty deputies to assist in sitting on the crash site overnight until the FAA and NTSB could get on scene to investigate the incident in the morning. All units cleared from the scene. I was on scene at the crash site until 6:05pm when I was relieved by Deputy John Harris. Deputy Harris was then relieved by Sergeant Zach Thurber at 11:40pm. I then

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returned to the crash site and relieved Sgt. Thurber at 5:52am on Wednesday, September 7th, 2022. FAA Representative Greg Thurston arrived on scene at 8:35am and NTSB Representative Ralph Hicks arrived on scene at 8:59am. I cleared from the scene at about 9:40am.

Herman Kreig, Lieutenant

Report No. 2 Entered: 09/08/2022 12:34 By Officer: 00010503 Vannocker, Eric

Subject: Supplement

PIERCE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT
SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT

Report Date: 09/06/2022

CASE # 2022-11122

Inv. Eric Van Nocker

Summary

On September 6, 2022 at approximately 13:39 hrs. I, Investigator Eric Van Nocker with the Pierce County Sheriff's Office responded to the area of the Red Wing Airport, W7145 148th Ave in the Town of Isabelle for a report of a plane that had crashed.

Upon my arrival I met with the Assistant Chief from Red Wing Fire Department. He told me there were two subjects in the plane and they were both deceased. He said the injuries were not life sustaining. He said they checked for a pulse on both subjects but didn't disturbed the scene.

Scene

I walked over to the plane which was a single prop 2012 Glasair Super II SFT. The plane was heavily damaged. I observed two deceased males in the cockpit of the plane. Both subjects had their harnesses on. Ellsworth Fire Department taped off the area and a crime scene log was started.

Witness Statement

I met with Jennifer M. Eis d/o/b [REDACTED] I was advised by Inv. Bauer who interviewed Jennifer that she was a witness to the crash. I spoke to Jennifer who said she didn't see the crash but heard it. She saw the dust and came over to the crash scene to see what happened. Jennifer was given a witness statement form to fill out.

Identifications

I was advised by Lt. Kreig that he spoke to the owner of the plane Philip Joseph Conway d/o/b [REDACTED] Philip said the two people who were flying his plane were John Taylor Zeman d/o/b [REDACTED] and an Ethan Smith. Both John and Ethan were from Rochester, MN. I was advised by Inv. Koch that there were two flight bags behind the seats in the

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plane. Once the deceased were removed I checked the bags for identification. I was able to find a wallet with a MN driver's license for Ethan Michael Smith d/o/b [REDACTED]

Notifications

I made contact with the Pierce County Dispatch Center and requested they look up next of kin for both John and Ethan. Once they were located I requested they send a TTY to Rochester, MN Police Department to make notification to both families. I spoke with Officer Venteicher with Rochester Police Department. I gave him information he needed to make notification to Ashley Marie Zeman [REDACTED] and Peter Richard Smith d/o/b [REDACTED]. I also requested he find out which one had body tattoos so the medical examiner could determine who was who.

NTSB and FAA

On September 7, 2022 at approximately 7:15 hrs. I arrived back on scene and met with Lt. Kreig. At about 9:00 hrs NTSB Investigator Ralph Hicks and FAA Inspector Greg Thurston. I assisted both of them as requested.

Contact with Jeffrey Michael Zeman

I took a phone call from John's father Jeffrey Michael Zeman d/o/b [REDACTED]. Jeffrey requested info on what had happened. He also requested that he be the first point of contact for John's wife Ashely.

Later in the day Jeffrey called back wondering if we located John's cell phone. I told him a cell phone was located. I was not sure if it was John's phone or Ethan's phone. Jeffrey was advised the phone was given to Ralph Hicks from the NTSB along with other personal items.

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I cleared the scene at 13:26 hrs.

Investigator Eric Van Nocker

Source

On Tuesday, September 6, 2022, I was monitoring radio traffic and heard the Pierce County Communications Center dispatch deputies to the Red Wing Airport for a plane that crashed in a field to the west of the airport. I responded emergent to the scene.

Arrival

Upon my arrival Investigator Van Nocker and I were the first deputies on scene. Red Wing EMS were already on scene. I observed what was later identified as a 2012 Glasair Super II SFT crashed in a sand and grassy area next to a soy bean field. I asked if the patients were in the plane or if they got them out and I was advised that two subjects were located inside the plane and were both deceased.

Jennifer Eis

I had observed a lone female standing nearby and she was later identified as Jennifer Eis. I asked Jennifer if she had seen the crash and she said she lives just south of here and was on her patio talking with her roommate. She said they heard a loud crash and observed a big puff of smoke. She said she had her roommate Bruce call 911 and she went to go and see what happened. Jennifer said she went onto the field drive and located the crashed airplane. She said she saw someone on a golf cart and waved them over to where she was. Jennifer said the man on the golf cart went up to the airplane and came back and said it did not look good. She said she then called 911. Jennifer did complete a statement as to what she had seen and did.

Photos of scene and extrication

I retrieved my camera from my squad and began taking photos of the crash and debris field. Once the medical examiner arrived we were informed by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) that we could remove the two victims from the plane. Ellsworth Fire was on scene and assisted in removing the two victims from the plane. I took 360 photos after the cockpit top was removed. I then took 360 photos after the first victim was removed. I once again took 360 photos of the plane after the second victim was removed. I took photos of both victims after they were removed from the plane.

Transport to Ramsey County Medical Examiner's Office (RCMEO)

Mahn Funeral Services from Red Wing arrived and transported both victims to the RCMEO. I followed them the entire way and custody was turned over to the RCMEO.

I was advised that the NTSB and FAA would be at the scene around 7:30 AM tomorrow.

Assist NTSB and FAA

Greg Thurston from the FAA arrived at approximately 8:30 AM. I informed him that I had my photos from yesterday available for him to review if he wished and he did. At approximately 9 AM Ralph Hicks from the NTSB arrived along with Phil Conway the owner of the plane. I provided Ralph with a copy of my photos. I assisted both Ralph and Greg as needed at the scene. Wentworth Aircraft from Crystal Minnesota arrived to recover and remove the plane. Ralph advised he was leaving the scene and that we no longer needed to remain there as the Wentworth crew will pick up the debris and remove the plane. I cleared at 1:26 PM on September 7, 2022.

Investigator Thomas Bauer

Activity:

On September 6, 2022 at approximately 1:39 p.m., I was on routine patrol for the Pierce County Sheriff's Office when dispatch advised me to respond toward the area of the Red Wing Airport in Isabelle Township for an aviation accident. Dispatch advised the caller stated there was a small what appeared two person plane that crash in a field west of the runway off 747th Street. I requested a helicopter be started while en route. Dispatch later advised the caller believed the two occupants were most likely deceased. Prior to arrival on scene Investigator VanNocker advised dispatch that per Red Wing Fire there were two deceased individuals.

I arrived on scene where I observed a small aircraft that appeared to be facing eastbound in a field. I was requested by Investigator VanNocker to take video footage of the scene. I walked around with my department issued body camera videoing the accident scene. Shortly after that I cleared to respond to other pending calls. A short time later I arrived back on scene where I assisted Lt. Kreig in locating names of the possible deceased. I also kept a scene log until I cleared at which time the log was turned over to Lt. Kreig. Body camera footage will be downloaded.

Rick Huneke, Deputy

PIERCE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT STATEMENT FORM

CURRENT DATE: 9-6-FULL NAME: Jennifer M. Eis

DATE OF BIRTH: [REDACTED]

ADDRESS: [REDACTED]

Hager City, WI.

PHONE NUMBER: [REDACTED]

54014

~~My phone is broken~~

My roommate (Bruce) + I were sitting on our back patio talking when we heard a crash sound, looked out in the field + saw a big puff of smoke right afterwards. He told me to call 911 but i said my service hasn't been working so he called 911 on his phone. I told him i was going on my scooter to see if i could find it. When i got to the dirt road by the green building, I saw a man starting to walk in the grass by the road. I asked him if he heard the crash sound or saw the smoke. He said his wife did + was in her car driving around looking for it. I said i'll look too + asked how sandy it was. He said it was very sandy. So i said i'll try to stay on the grassy parts. As i got closer to the crash + seen how bad it was, I looked around to see if anyone else was around. I saw a man in a golf cart + waved him over. I said i don't want to look. He looked, came back + said it doesn't look good. I called 911 + talked to a lady shortly. I told her I saw 2 trucks here about the crash, ~~then~~ I saw 3 trucks heading our way, told her that + she told me the ambulance was on the way.