



Adam M. Gerhardt
Senior Aviation Accident Investigator
Office of Aviation Safety, Eastern Region

Date: 8/18/2023
Subject: ERA23FA340
Contact: Landon Maxwell (Nearby Witness)

The individual noted above provided the following information via a telephone call. The below contents are a summary of what was reported:

- He was near Kelly Road a mile or so away from the accident site. He was pressure washing and heard a "boom boom boom."
- He looked up and saw that the airplane's wings had separated from the airplane and pieces of debris, including the wings, were falling separate from the fuselage. He said the fuselage looked to be spinning, almost in a flat spin. He saw no fire or smoke. The airplane then descended below the tree line and that was the last he observed.

#END#



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Contact: Detective Roxanne Bourbonniere (St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office)

The individual noted above provided the following information via a written report. The report contained witness summaries. The below contents are a summary of what was reported:

Betty Jones

Fort Pierce, FL 34945

**Called 911. Stated she heard what she believed to be a plane engine and then the plane engine cut off like the engine died. She observed the plane spiraling down and then nosedive into the shed. The wings had already separated when she saw the plane. She observed the landing gear falling separately after the plane had already crashed into the building. Did not see smoke or fire.*

Mercy Cintron

Fort Pierce, FL 34945

**Was outside in her yard when she heard a noise "like a plane coming down" (putt-putt). She followed the plane until it came down. Did not see debris falling.*

Jose Santana

Fort Pierce, FL 34945

*1st on scene. Stated he was headed to lunch when he observed the shed damaged and saw a neighbor running across. He drove to the shed and accessed the plane through the shed and camper. Stated he could hear screaming and made contact with Merizalde. He located him under debris, hanging upside down. He asked for his name and Merizalde told him his name was Steve. He asked if anybody else was in the plane and where he was coming from and Merizalde replied he did not know. He asked if he any medical history and he stated no and complained of leg pain. Santana did not observe the crash, did not hear any noise prior and did not observe smoke or fire.

Bethann Nevius

Fort Pierce, FL 34945

*Called 911. Was second on scene. Stated she was inside her home in her living when she heard a "big boom", like something had exploded. She went outside and saw debris in the air and stated the debris looked like the sides of the plane. She looked towards the shed and saw it damaged but was unaware it was a plane crash until she arrived at the shed. She ran towards the shed, she and Santana entered the shed and camper and began to yell for anyone. They heard someone moaning and began to remove debris and located Merizalde. He was asked for his name and he said "Steven". They asked his last name and if there was anyone else in the plane and he said he did not know.

Jacob Ramierz

Jacob stated he looked to the area and observed what he described as pieces of paper falling from the sky but did not see the plane. He later stated he believed it to be thin pieces of metal. Upon his arrival at the scene, he offered assistance and the use of his AED. He observed Santana, Nevius and law enforcement on scene and left. He did not hear any noises prior and did not see any smoke.

Angelino Barron (speaks Spanish)

Clewiston, FL 33440

*(Jacob Ramirez translated). Stated he was working at a job site and was walking in the direction of the crash when he observed the plane. He stated he saw the plane coming down and observed what he believed to be the wings of the plane behind or on top of the plane. The wings were already separated from the plane and later fell to the ground. He described the plane as spinning or swirling as it fell from the sky. He described the swirling as the plane being vertical, in an uncontrolled spin and came straight down. He observed debris

falling from the sky. He did not hear a noise prior or see smoke. From the time he saw the plane and did not see the plane, it was three to four seconds.

*Leila Ippolito
Fort Pierce, FL 34982*

**Was driving south on Sneed Rd from Orange Ave. Reported seeing the plane spinning slowly before nose diving behind the tree line. Described as the plane spinning slowly on its belly before nosediving straight down. No noises heard prior and did not see smoke or fire. After the plane disappeared behind the trees, she saw debris falling. Provided a short video of the debris falling.*

#END#