

At Destin, FL, we were planning to continue our flight to KATL. We discussed that Ya-Myletha would be the pilot-in-command for this leg. We estimated our flight time to be 1 hour 47 minutes. We proceeded to fuel the aircraft and I had the right tank topped off and added 10 gallons to the left tank. The total fuel on board was 38.0 gallons as measured by a fuel stick on the left tank and visual inspection on the right tank. After fueling, we departed Destin, FL approximately 2130 EST for our planned flight to KATL. We departed under VFR and requested flight following. Once we were in Atlanta's airspace we were in contact with Atlanta ATC and I swapped the fuel selector from the left fuel tank to the right fuel tank. We were cruising at 3,500 and they requested we climb to 4,500. Shortly thereafter, the engine began to sputter and then it abruptly ceased.

As Ya-Myletha was the pilot-in-command, I assumed radio duties and declared an engine failure. I followed the checklist and attempted a restart without success. The controller directed us to the nearest airport, but realizing we wouldn't reach it, advised us to look for a road. Despite spotting a well-lit neighborhood, we refrained from attempting a landing to avoid endangering lives and property. Anticipating a descent into the trees, we decided to land in a forested area. I maintained consciousness throughout the landing, and once all motion ceased I noticed Ya-Myletha had lost consciousness. I awakened her and urged that we make a swift exit before the aircraft potentially caught fire because there was a strong odor of fuel present. Although we emerged from the aircraft with some severe injuries, our shoulder harnesses likely prevented this accident from being fatal.

Ms. Chloe Veal



Official Statement of Ya'Myletha White

The following is the sequence of events, as I remember them, that occurred on 10/10/2023:

N55162 is a Piper Cherokee 128-140. The capacity is 50 gallons of fuel (48 usable). The fuel consumption is 10 gallons of fuel per hour.

Chloe Veal and I Ya'Myletha White were on a time building flight in N55162. She took off from Olive Branch Airport (KOLV), I flew enroute and she landed at Waynesboro Municipal Airport (2R0). I topped off fuel by adding approximately 30 gallons of 100LL fuel at \$4.89 per gallon (\$147.04). She took off from 2R0 I flew enroute and she landed at Destin Executive Airport (KDTS).

Before departing KDTS, the left tank had 6 gallons of fuel and the right tank had 22.5 gallons of fuel. She purchased 5 gallons of fuel for N55162. The fuel attendant added 2.5 gallons in the right tank (he was unable to add more due to the tanks being full) and the remaining 2.5 gallons in the left tank. She indicated she was not comfortable taking off at night with that amount of fuel. I suggested to get more fuel or stop at another airport on the way to Atlanta Hartsfield International Airport (KATL). She called Atlantic Aviation via cell phone and requested 10 additional gallons of fuel, making a total of 18.5 gallons of fuel in the left tank and 25 gallons of fuel in the right tank. Total fuel on board was 43.5 gallons for take off. 10 gallons of fuel per hour for a 126 min flight (KDTS-KATL 2h 6m) = 21 gallons of fuel. (45 mins of flight = 7.5 gallons of fuel)

N55162 was cleared for takeoff on runway 14, to KATL. N55162 was told to stay at or below 1,000 feet AGL and a left turn between two land masses and head north above the bridge going north to south. She verbalized she was taking off on the left tank. She took off, made the left turn and passed positive exchange of flight controls to me at 1,000 feet AGL. The flight was uneventful with Visual flight rules (VFR) Flight Following. At some point during the flight, Center told N55162 to climb from 3,500 feet to 4,500 feet indicated altitude. Sterile cockpit was established about 20-30 miles from KATL to ensure no radio calls were missed. Shortly after that, the engine sputtered and the propeller stopped. She immediately declared an engine failure over the radio with Center. She attempted to restart the engine. I continued to fly, in order to not get fixated on engine failure. I asked for the nearest airport. Center gave 3 options: an airport at the

12 o'clock (unknown miles), 3 o'clock (KHMP 8.6 miles), and 6 o'clock (KFFC 8 miles). When I stated that they could not make any of those, Center recommended to look for a well lit road. I saw a high traffic lit road and refused to endanger others or crash into objects such as powerlines hoping to avoid exploding. I turned to the 3 o'clock to lose the least amount of altitude. I pitched for best glide. I made a Mayday, Mayday, Mayday radio call. After the Mayday call was made I cannot remember events or statements that transpired beyond remembering that I continued to pitch for best glide and held authority of the aircraft over trees until the energy bled off and impact occurred.

(According to Veal, she repeated multiple times to me not stall the plane. She also told me that I asked her, "Do you want flight controls?" and she replied no. She stated my last words before impact were "We going down, I love you friend!" I have no memory of these encounters or statements back-and-forth.)

I was unconscious on impact until woken by her saying, "Wake up! We have to get out the plane before it explodes!" Seat belts and shoulder harnesses likely saved them from fatal injuries. She and I were sitting in the woods when she made a statement she forgot to switch tanks.

A day or two after being discharged from the hospital, aircraft accident investigator Dan Gryder, reached out to her to do an interview and assist with the investigation. I agreed to meet with Gryder as well but I now worries about how the narrative would emerge with a crash involving two black female pilots. I worry about being the scapegoat and being railroaded when I am the reason both pilots survived the crash. Instead of taking any of Dan Gryder's advice, I decided to put down the honest events, as I remembers them, into my own words.

Ya'Myletha White