



## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

**Stephen Stein**  
**Aviation Accident Investigator**  
**National Transportation Safety Board**  
**Office of Aviation Safety – Western Pacific Region**

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**NTSB Accident Number: WPR20FA031**  
**Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N310PD; Grumman AA-5B**  
**Accident Location: Jackpot, Nevada**  
**Accident Date: November 22, 2019**

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Note: The following interview was documented by the Investigator –In-Charge (IIC), Stephen Stein.

### Interview #1 Summary

#### **Craig Frisby**

Friend of Accident Pilot and Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic (with inspection authority) of  
Accident Airplane

Interview Date & Time; February 2, 2021, 1600 PT

According to Mr. Frisby, the pilot had a personal fuel tank in his airplane hangar that he used to refuel his airplane and likely topped off the fuel tanks before they flew down to Jackpot, Nevada on the day of the accident. He spoke to the pilot's wife in the late afternoon on the day of the accident at the departure airport, where both he and the accident pilot are based. This conversation took place in the late afternoon about 1545. During this conversation the pilot's wife reported that they had planned to return in the evening that same night.

Mr. Frisby stated that the pilot frequently flew into Jackpot, Nevada with his wife, probably once every 2-3 months to see a show and have dinner. The mechanic regularly saw the pilot and inspected his airplane. Most of the pilot's flights were during daylight hours. Prior to the accident the pilot had told his wife that he wanted to become more night proficient and had recently started flying at night when the accident occurred. The mechanic stated that Jackpot

Airport is very dark at night and had been personally warned by a friend of flying out of Jackpot at night.

The pilot experienced a stroke in 2018 or 2019 that he didn't tell him about, but about one month later he observed that the pilot's speech was labored and his motor skills were slightly impaired. However, the pilot's motor skills and speech improved and the mechanic didn't notice any impairment issues when he saw the pilot last, a few days prior to the accident.

The mechanic reported that he flew with the accident pilot frequently in other Grummans and never saw him apply full nose down trim before takeoff. In his experience, with full nose down trim applied, the feedback forces would have been very heavy. The airplane was equipped with a slot indicator that showed trim position with a takeoff position marked "TO" near the middle.



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### Interview #1 Summary

**James Candeletti**  
Grumman Tiger (AA-5B) Airframe and Powerplant Mechanic

Interview Date & Time; February 8, 2021, 0933PT

Mr. Candeletti reported that he works exclusively on Grumman Tigers and Grumman Cheetah airplanes in New Jersey. He recalled experiencing an issue where he took off with the elevator trim inadvertently in the full nose up position, which required significant force to hold the airplane at the selected pitch attitude. Mr. Candeletti stated that he assumes the force would be similar in the full nose down trim position.



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### Interview #1 Summary

**Josh Schroeder**  
Son-in-law to Accident Pilot

Interview Date & Time; October 10, 2020, 1422 PT

Mr. Schroeder stated that he is not a pilot, but frequently flew with the accident pilot, about 10 times per year. He had been flying with the accident pilot for the previous 20 years. Most of the flights were about 2 hrs, during daylight hours (none were at night) and many were to Jackpot, Nevada. He recalled that in the summertime Jackpot wouldn't get dark until about 9:45pm, so they would leave for Jackpot in the evening about 6:00pm and return before dusk. In the last couple of years the accident pilot was flying more in the dark. The accident pilot had been flying for about 40 years, but hadn't flown at night for several years until recently.

During takeoffs from Jackpot, the accident pilot would review the surrounding hazards with Mr. Schroeder, pointing out the 200 ft tall plateau beyond the departure end of runway 15, which was not visible at night. Mr. Schroeder noted that the accident pilot was likely concerned about the plateau because the airplane's rate of climb wasn't great. The accident airplane would lift off the runway about midfield each time and they would immediately turn left when departing runway 15 each time.



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### Interview #1 Summary

**Travis Gaved**  
Witness to Accident

Interview Date; December 15, 2019

The witness stated that he was located at his residence adjacent to Jackpot Airport/Hayden Field (06U), Jackpot, Nevada, at the time of the accident. He observed the airplane lift off from runway 15 and subsequently turn to the left. In his experience watching airplanes depart from this airport, the airplane was at an unusually low altitude when it began the left turn. The witness then looked away while the airplane was turning and immediately heard a loud explosion. He then looked back in the direction of the airport and observed a fire.