



## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Accident Number: CEN18LA245, Ashland, Ohio

Event Description: Balony Kubicek SPOL SRO BB30Z free balloon with airborne heater, N717FN, fatal accident after landing and before deflation on June 29, 2018

Interview with: Vincent Yerace, Air Safety Inspector, Federal Aviation Administration, Cleveland, Ohio, Flight Standards District Office.

Date: June 30, 2018

Mr. Yerace responded to the scene the evening of June 29, 2018. He spoke with the student pilot, Mr. Michael Miller, [REDACTED] who told him that the purpose of the flight was to fly sponsors. He'd taken off and flown the balloon under Mr. John Moran's [REDACTED] supervision. It was a short flight that originated from the Freer field, where the event took place, and ended in an open field north of Ashland. On landing, a nearby neighbor came out to help with stabilizing the balloon on the ground. They were out in a field and needed to get the balloon close to the road so they could recover it. They walked it close to the road, set the basket down, and prepared to deflate the envelope. Mr. Miller said he got out of the basket and took hold of the crown line so as to control the top of the balloon as they deflated it and laid the envelope down on the ground. As they were in the process of doing this, the wind picked up. Mr. Moran was in the front of the balloon holding the vent line and the two sponsor passengers were crouched down in the basket. As the wind increased, the envelope acted like a sail and pulled the balloon forward, tipping the basket down. Mr. Moran fell and hit his head on the burners. A few moments later, he went unconscious. Mr. Miller was an emergency medical technician and mentioned that Mr. Moran may have gone into cardiac arrest. He ran back to the basket, noted Mr. Moran had no pulse and began performing CPR. He continued until rescue personnel arrived. Mr. Moran was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced deceased.

Mr. Yerace said Mr. Moran was diagnosed with colon cancer a few months earlier and was taking a blood thinner. The pilot had 40 hours in the balloon. The balloon had recently undergone an annual inspection. It had 40 total hours prior to the accident flight.

Mr. Yerace inspected the balloon and its systems. He identified no anomalies.

Taken by:

[REDACTED]

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