



Human Performance Attachment

Narratives and Transcripts of Investigative Interviews

Oakland, IA

HWY18MH003

(33 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

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Investigation of: *

SCHOOL BUS FIRE NEAR OAKLAND, IOWA, * Accident No.: HWY18MH003
DECEMBER 12, 2017 *

* * * * *

Interview of: KATHLEEN HENDRICKS

Friday,
December 15, 2017

APPEARANCES:

DENNIS COLLINS, Senior Human Performance Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

SHERYL HARLEY, Survival Factors Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

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I N T E R V I E W

1
2 MR. COLLINS: Today is Friday, December 15th. This is Dennis
3 Collins with the NTSB doing an investigative interview for the
4 Oakland, Iowa, investigation.

5 Ma'am, if you could identify yourself.

6 MS. HENDRICKS: My name is Kathleen Hendricks.

7 MR. COLLINS: And what would be the best way to contact you
8 if I had a question in the future?

9 MS. HENDRICKS: [REDACTED]

10 MR. COLLINS: Okay. And we're talking to Ms. Hendricks
11 because her husband was the driver of the bus involved.

1 INTERVIEW OF KATHLEEN HENDRICKS

2 BY MR. COLLINS:

3 Q. And, Ms. Hendricks, would you just tell me about your husband
4 and his work as a bus driver for the school district? Just in
5 general, general things about him, and how he enjoyed his job, how
6 he got into driving for the school district.

7 A. He liked driving the bus, I know that. He's been driving for
8 20 years, I believe, for the school system.

9 Q. Okay.

10 A. Approximately. He drove for athletic, or for -- what do you
11 call it? Athletic events for a lot of years too.

12 Q. How did he get into that line of work?

13 A. Well, before he retired, he drove for a rock and sand company
14 in California. He drove those big trucks with the big trailers
15 that are attached to the truck all over California. He did that
16 for -- how many years?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 30 years.

18 MS. HENDRICKS: 30 years.

19 BY MR. COLLINS:

20 Q. And, I guess, as a colleague of mine says, he failed
21 retirement?

22 A. I guess, yeah.

23 Q. And you said he really enjoyed, he really enjoyed his job?

24 A. Yeah. Most days.

25 Q. Okay. In general, do you know -- let's talk about that

1 particular bus. In general, did he say anything to you about any
2 issues he was having with that bus?

3 A. No. I never heard anything.

4 Q. And it's our understanding from the school district, and you
5 may or may not know, that was his regular bus. He usually drove
6 the same bus?

7 A. Yeah.

8 Q. Okay. On Tuesday -- actually, let's back up. Let's go back
9 to Saturday. Do you know what time he woke up Saturday morning?

10 And I didn't say this before. It's okay to say I don't know.
11 There aren't any wrong answers in this. We're just looking for
12 information, and if it's not there, it's not there.

13 A. Yeah.

14 Q. If it is there, we just need to know it.

15 A. I have to think what we were -- I don't remember what we did
16 Saturday.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Saturday was the wrestling tournament.

18 MS. HENDRICKS: Oh, yeah. So we went up to -- yeah. So --
19 well, he didn't get up, he probably didn't get -- I -- he probably
20 didn't get up till between 8 and 9 Saturday.

21 BY MR. COLLINS:

22 Q. Okay. And just in general, what did you guys do that day?

23 A. Then we went to the wrestling tournament at the high school.

24 Q. Okay. And when was the tournament running from? What times
25 was that?

1 A. It started at 10 --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You guys probably left about 3 maybe.

3 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah.

4 BY MR. COLLINS:

5 Q. Okay. And do you remember what you did after that?

6 A. Yeah, we came home. Had my granddaughter that's 5 with us.
7 She came home with us, didn't she? And she stayed all night with
8 us, yeah.

9 Q. Okay. Do you know what time he went to bed Saturday night?

10 A. I want to say between 10 and 11.

11 Q. Okay. And then Sunday morning, what time would he have
12 gotten up?

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's when we went to Lincoln.

14 MS. HENDRICKS: Huh?

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That's when we went to Lincoln. So he
16 would have gotten up fairly early.

17 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah. He probably was up, yeah, between 8
18 and 9.

19 BY MR. COLLINS:

20 Q. Okay. And you went to Lincoln that day?

21 A. I didn't. Denton and him went to Lincoln.

22 MR. COLLINS: You and your grandfather did. Okay. And how
23 long were you -- when did you leave to head out to Lincoln?

24 GRANDSON: We left around 10:30.

25 MS. HENDRICKS: No. You left later.

1 GRANDSON: No, we left at 11:30.

2 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah.

3 GRANDSON: We went to church for the first half of it.

4 MR. COLLINS: Okay. And how long were you in Lincoln?

5 GRANDSON: We probably were there till like 3 or 4.

6 MR. COLLINS: And then came back home?

7 GRANDSON: And then came back.

8 MR. COLLINS: Okay. Anything unusual happen in Lincoln? And
9 I'm asking here did he have -- did your grandfather have anything
10 -- say anything about not feeling well or did he hurt himself any
11 way?

12 GRANDSON: (No audible response.)

13 BY MR. COLLINS:

14 Q. Okay. And then, Ms. Hendricks, what time would you say he
15 went to bed Sunday evening?

16 A. Between 9 and 10 probably.

17 Q. Okay. And Monday, did he drive Monday?

18 A. (No audible response.)

19 Q. So what time would he have gotten up?

20 A. He usually gets up around 4:30, 4:30 and 5.

21 Q. Okay. And do you know what time he usually leaves the house
22 to go get the bus and start?

23 A. About 6:15, 6:20.

24 Q. Okay. And on Monday, in particular, between the morning set
25 of routes, what does he usually do? Does he come back home?

1 A. Yeah. He might hang out at the bus barn for a while.

2 Q. I met several of the drivers and Nick, and I can see that it
3 might be a draw to hang out there a little while and sit in
4 chairs, and maybe have a donut and shoot the breeze for a little
5 bit.

6 A. Yeah. Sometimes I never know when he was going to come home
7 because he's hanging out at the bus barn. So --

8 Q. Do you remember when he came home on Monday?

9 A. Yeah. He came home by 9 or so because we go to a Bible study
10 at 10:00 at church.

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. And he was home.

13 Q. And you did that on Monday?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. You went to the Bible study? And how long does that run?

16 A. Hour.

17 Q. Hour. And then what did you do after that?

18 A. Came home, had lunch. He was here until it was time to go
19 drive his bus again, and he leaves about quarter till 3 to go
20 drive the bus in the afternoon.

21 Q. Okay. And he's -- and when does he return home usually from
22 that?

23 A. Usually after 5 normally.

24 Q. And do you recall if that was -- it was about normal on
25 Monday?

1 A. Um-hum.

2 Q. Okay.

3 A. On Monday night he had a city council meeting

4 Q. Oh, he did. Okay. And how late did that keep him out and
5 about?

6 A. It wasn't late. It was between 8 and 9 he got home.

7 Q. And do you know what time he went to bed?

8 A. Between 8 and 9.

9 Q. Got home, went to bed. Okay. And on Tuesday, the day of the
10 crash, his day would have looked a lot like Monday? About the
11 same time getting up, the same --

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. Okay. On Monday after driving the bus, did he mention
14 anything unusual happening that day particularly with the bus?

15 A. Uh-uh.

16 Q. Okay. In general, would you say that he usually slept pretty
17 well? If he got the sleep he was looking to get, he would be
18 refreshed in the morning?

19 A. Somewhat, but he -- he was scheduled to have back surgery
20 yesterday because --

21 Q. Okay.

22 A. So lately he's been having a hard time getting comfortable in
23 bed because he has to lay a certain way for his -- because of his
24 back.

25 Q. I can understand that. Do you know what he did to his back

1 or was it -- did he do something or was this an issue that had
2 been going on?

3 A. It's a degenerated --

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Disk.

5 MS. HENDRICKS: Disk.

6 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

7 MS. HENDRICKS: Disk was -- he had surgery in January of this
8 year where they put bars in, and put some things to raise the
9 disk.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because they were rubbing on each
11 other. Right?

12 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah. I could show --

13 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

14 MS. HENDRICKS: Actually, and then the one above where they
15 did it --

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Pinched.

17 MS. HENDRICKS: -- it came down and pinched.

18 BY MR. COLLINS:

19 Q. Okay. So they did -- he had had a problem, they went and
20 fixed in January, and as a result or somehow after that, now the
21 problem has moved up so we have to go in and fix it again.

22 A. Yeah, that --

23 Q. I do understand. I did something, grabbed something with my
24 left arm 10 years ago working a case, and twisted my neck, and
25 they ended up having to do the same sort of thing, just higher up.

1 And I understand -- it was my arm, but I couldn't move my arm into
2 a comfortable position. So I imagine he had trouble. It's not
3 good when you get in there. So --

4 A. Yeah.

5 Q. I'm sorry that he had to go through that.

6 Okay. Was he taking any medication for the back or for any
7 other reason?

8 A. He was not on any pain medication because he was going to
9 have surgery. So only thing he took was Tylenol.

10 Q. Okay. How long had he been not on any pain medication?

11 A. Since December 7th.

12 Q. Okay. So since the 7th. Okay. Was he taking any
13 prescription medication for anything else?

14 A. Yeah.

15 Q. Do you know what those were by any chance?

16 A. I can show you the paper. Don't ask me what they're for
17 though because I --

18 Q. Okay. I promise I won't.

19 A. I'll give you these. So they actually put --

20 Q. And I have actual cards. If you don't want to -- I have a
21 photocopy. I'm happy to give you one of those too. I don't need
22 to be stingy.

23 A. This is -- I think these are all on that --

24 Q. Instead of just either writing them down or reading them out
25 loud, would you mind if we just took a picture of this?

1 A. Sure.

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I can give you a photo. She made a
3 copy of it too.

4 MR. COLLINS: That would be, that would be great too, if you
5 wouldn't mind.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I wouldn't.

7 MR. COLLINS: And what we'll do is -- it's rare for us to
8 find, but we do make -- we do look at medications people are
9 taking because some of them can affect your ability to drive.
10 Again, the majority of our cases, that's to tell the armchair
11 quarterbacks, no, that wasn't an issue. But it is one of the
12 things we look at. We have a doctor on board, and he'll just take
13 a quick look and -- or she; we have two -- will take a quick look
14 and just let me know, no, that's -- I don't even need to know
15 what's going on, but they'll take a look, say, no, that medication
16 does this and it doesn't worry about driving or, yeah, it might.
17 But we'll dig into that.

18 MS. HENDRICKS: And, you know, and I'm not sure if he -- some
19 of these they had him stop taking, too, because of his --

20 BY MR. COLLINS:

21 Q. Because of the --

22 A. -- surgery.

23 Q. -- procedure?

24 A. Yeah.

25 Q. Okay. And you said -- was the only over-the-counter thing he

1 took, that would be Tylenol, you said, and that was for pain.

2 A. He took vitamins but --

3 Q. Vitamins, okay. And how was he -- do you know, in general
4 how would you describe how he was feeling Monday, Tuesday? Was he
5 feeling okay or was -- had he -- did he have a cold? Was he
6 having any short-term health issues? I think Iowa has gotten to
7 me. My voice is getting husky and I keep coughing. So --

8 A. Yeah. He had a little allergy. He had a little coughing,
9 but nothing real bad.

10 Q. It didn't seem bad to you? Okay.

11 Going back to sleep. Did he ever have any problems falling
12 asleep, waking up, that sort of thing?

13 A. He could fall asleep real easy.

14 Q. Would he do it almost too easily or was it just if nothing
15 else was going on he could relax enough that he'd take a little
16 nap?

17 A. Yeah, he would.

18 Q. Okay. Do you know if he -- would he wake up frequently
19 during the nights or would he generally kind of sleep straight
20 through if he was asleep?

21 A. No. He's had to wake up to go to the bathroom a lot.

22 Q. Okay. Couple times a night?

23 A. (No audible response.)

24 Q. Okay. Other than his back, did he have any other health
25 issues? And the allergies that day. Were there any other health

1 concerns for him?

2 A. No. Not that I know of, you know.

3 Q. Okay.

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He just had a history and physical,
5 right?

6 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah. He had his physical on the 7th for his
7 surgery.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: For his surgery, so --

9 BY MR. COLLINS:

10 Q. Okay. Do you guys have a family doctor you prefer to go to?

11 A. He goes to Dr. Johannes.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Is the doctor's name.

14 Q. Okay. And the doctor that was going to do the back surgery?

15 A. Dr. Music.

16 Q. Music. Okay. His vision, in general how do you think he
17 would describe his vision?

18 A. Good. He had cataract surgery last year, and so he never had
19 to wear glasses after that. He only wore glasses just to read
20 close up. Otherwise, he didn't wear his glasses anymore.

21 Q. And the surgery helped him? The surgery for cataracts helped
22 him?

23 A. Yeah.

24 Q. Good. How about his hearing? Other than my wife always
25 telling me I have selective hearing, I can't hear her, would he

1 describe his -- how would he describe his hearing?

2 A. He had trouble hearing some.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He had the TV pretty loud.

4 BY MR. COLLINS:

5 Q. But that was it? He didn't think he needed to seek anything
6 like a hearing aid or use any -- normal conversations he could do
7 okay?

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. I think in normal conversations
9 he was fine.

10 MS. HENDRICKS: He would tell me what --

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He would always just turn the TV up
12 because she'd be making a racket in the kitchen, I think.

13 MS. HENDRICKS: And he would tell me, look at me when you're
14 talking to me.

15 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

16 MS. HENDRICKS: And I don't speak loud sometimes.

17 MR. COLLINS: I don't know that I blame you for that. I have
18 to tell my children to do that. One of them loves to talk to me
19 when he's facing the other way, and I just can't hear him when he
20 does that. All the sound's going that way, son, turn around.

21 But --

22 BY MR. COLLINS:

23 Q. Okay. Did your husband drink alcohol?

24 A. No.

25 Q. Never? Okay.

1 A. He did 20, back 20 some years ago, but he --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: 25 years ago.

3 MS. HENDRICKS: 25 years ago, he stopped and never took
4 another drink.

5 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Drinking and smoking.

7 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah.

8 MR. COLLINS: And he smoked 25 years ago, but hasn't since
9 then, too?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

11 BY MR. COLLINS:

12 Q. Okay. This one always makes people laugh. We've talked
13 about alcohol. We've talked about prescription drugs. We've
14 talked about over-the-counter drugs. There's one more class of
15 drugs. It's the kind that are illegal. Did he --

16 A. (No audible response.)

17 Q. No. Okay. I wouldn't have guess so, but I'm supposed to
18 ask, so I did.

19 When he went out to drive the bus, did he take his cell phone
20 with him?

21 A. Um-hum.

22 Q. Do you know if the school district had any policies on
23 whether or not he could use it while he was driving?

24 A. I'm sure -- no, I'm sure he wasn't supposed to be using it.

25 Q. And generally speaking, he wouldn't use it while he was

1 driving?

2 A. If they -- you know, they have the things on the bus, they
3 can call in if they need something.

4 Q. The radios?

5 A. Yeah, so they don't use their phones normally.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. They use their radios.

8 Q. And to the best of your knowledge, he didn't report any
9 problems with the bus Monday or Tuesday?

10 A. Not that I know of.

11 Q. Had he ever mentioned having any issues with that particular
12 driveway, that particular stop?

13 A. Uh-uh.

14 Q. Okay. Had he had any issues with any of the students on the
15 bus or in particular the student that he was picking up at that
16 stop?

17 A. No. She was one of his favorites.

18 Q. I had the chance to talk to -- oh, I'm sorry. I've met so
19 many people, I lose names. But the gentleman substitute driver up
20 at the bus barn yesterday, and he said -- first he had very nice
21 things to say about your husband, but he also said the same thing,
22 that when they drove those routes, the drivers got to know the
23 kids, the kids got to know all the drivers, and everybody, you
24 know, were close in that way. Which in my kids' school district,
25 yeah, that doesn't happen. It's much bigger and much drivers,

1 so --

2 A. Yeah, and when the kids would see Donnie, the kids, little
3 kids that drive his bus, they would call, waving him or holler at
4 him. So --

5 MR. COLLINS: Sheryl, I'm sure I'm forgetting something, but
6 I'll stop. And if you have a few questions, I will think real
7 hard about all the things I've forgotten to ask.

8 BY MS. HARLEY:

9 Q. Just one question. Bob Wright, who is Mr. Wright? Is he a
10 neighbor of yours?

11 A. Bob Wright?

12 Q. Yeah.

13 A. I don't know that name.

14 Q. All right. One of the reasons I'm asking is someone that --
15 someone was talking, and I'm just trying to figure out who he is.
16 He actually may be a neighbor of the little girl's, but they had
17 actually spoken with a neighbor. And so I was just wondering if
18 it was your neighbor or if it was their neighbor. So --

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I don't even know that name. I mean,
20 we pretty much know everyone here and I don't --

21 MS. HARLEY: Yeah.

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: That name doesn't sound familiar at
23 all.

24 MS. HARLEY: It's probably their neighbor that --

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: But even, even out there we would

1 know. I mean, we know -- we just pretty much know everyone here.
2 So that name doesn't sound -- I mean there's Wrights out there,
3 but I don't know Bob.

4 MS. HENDRICKS: I don't know a Bob Wright.

5 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know Marion and Donna and --

6 MS. HARLEY: Do you know Mr. Cooper?

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

8 MS. HARLEY: Yeah, okay. All right. Mr. Cooper was the one
9 that was saying a lot of very nice things.

10 MS. HENDRICKS: He's a very nice guy.

11 MS. HARLEY: Yeah. I guess he was a very good friend. So he
12 had a lot of really nice things to say.

13 BY MS. HARLEY:

14 Q. So I understand that yesterday he was supposed to have this
15 surgery. I know that he was having some discomfort because of
16 this disk. Did it require him to actually need something to help
17 him walk? Did he walk with a cane?

18 A. If he had to walk very far.

19 Q. Yeah. Okay. But if he was walking around the house, he
20 wouldn't need a cane?

21 A. No.

22 Q. No. Okay. Did he use a walker by any chance?

23 A. When he walked a long way.

24 Q. A long time. Or a long way.

25 A. And he could sit a long time, but he couldn't stand a long

1 time.

2 Q. Okay. So it was more like for his weight bearing issues if
3 he was standing up?

4 A. Yeah. But when he was sitting it was okay. He always said
5 the bus seat was comfortable.

6 Q. Oh, okay.

7 Q. So if he was walking around, and he's walking for a long time
8 and he didn't have his cane or his -- or the walker, would he have
9 trouble walking? Would he sometimes -- would he lose his balance?

10 A. (No audible response.)

11 Q. And all of this is actually because of the back?

12 A. Um-hum.

13 Q. Okay. All right. How long ago did that start with this new
14 issue with the back started?

15 A. I'm guessing it's been going on 3 or 4 months.

16 Q. Three or 4 months?

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, I think something like that.

18 MS. HENDRICKS: And it just got, it just got worse.

19 GRANDSON: Back surgery is what really messed him up.

20 MS. HENDRICKS: Well, he was --

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He was real good there for --

22 GRANDSON: He said it was better but he said that that's what
23 made it worse.

24 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah.

25 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He was good. I mean, he walked --

1 gosh, he came home from the hospital after his last back surgery
2 and went to her volley ball game. I mean, he was feeling pretty
3 good for quite a long time, and then -- and then I think it took a
4 while to get back in to Dr. Music to have him finally figure out
5 what was going on with the -- with why it was almost reverting
6 from --

7 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah.

8 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- where he had been, so -- but as
9 soon as he got in, they scheduled the surgery, and it didn't take
10 long for him to figure it out and --

11 BY MS. HARLEY:

12 Q. Did he -- in addition to the pain, was there any kind of
13 numbness as far as his legs were concerned?

14 A. He never said it.

15 MS. HARLEY: Okay. All right. Okay.

16 BY MR. COLLINS:

17 Q. I understand that he would have used the cane and the walker
18 for long distance walking. Sitting was okay. The transition from
19 sitting to standing, and I'm asking specifically whatever happened
20 on the bus happened, would his back have given him any trouble
21 trying to get out of the seat and get out of bus or -- to the best
22 of your knowledge, or no or how would the problems he was having
23 affected that?

24 (Coughing) And I apologize. It's the -- either I'm allergic
25 to Iowa or --

1 A. Where's your home?

2 Q. Virginia.

3 A. Oh.

4 Q. Unfortunately, I have to work in D.C., but I live in
5 Virginia. But --

6 A. He wouldn't have -- he wouldn't -- well, in a emergency case
7 he probably would have moved fast, but normally he wouldn't move
8 real fast getting --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It would have taken him a little bit
10 longer to get steady on his feet, I think, I mean, than you or I.

11 MS. HENDRICKS: But the bus seat sits higher, so it's easier
12 to -- you know, it wasn't -- he didn't have to come up and down.

13 MS. HARLEY: Got it.

14 BY MR. COLLINS:

15 Q. So he, you don't -- you think, just based on observing him
16 and the problems he was having, that he would've been able to get
17 out of the bus seat pretty well? It might have taken him a few --
18 little bit more time, but there was nothing in the back problems
19 he's having that would've prevented him from getting out --

20 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He didn't --

21 MR. COLLINS: -- or moving if he needed to?

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: He didn't miss any -- I mean, he would
23 do everything. I mean, he didn't miss anything. So I think if he
24 would've been in that kind of -- I mean, he just, he would have
25 stayed home. You know what I mean? Like he didn't not go to the

1 bus; he didn't not go to my kids' activities; he didn't not go to
2 city council meetings; he did not not go to church. Like he --
3 you know, and usually when you're in pain, you don't want to do
4 those things. And, you know, he was --

5 MS. HENDRICKS: He would hurry in with his walker thing and
6 sit down.

7 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. As soon as he was sitting, he
8 was --

9 MR. COLLINS: He was fine?

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. He was good to go. So he
11 was --

12 BY MR. COLLINS:

13 Q. And this route that he was driving on Tuesday, that was his
14 regular route, and he had been driving that route for how long?

15 A. A lot of years.

16 Q. A lot of years. Okay.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It changed every once -- but he always
18 went that direction. You know, obviously, the kids graduate and
19 move and, you know, those kind of things, but that was the way he
20 had always gone. I mean, I think as long as I can remember he --

21 MS. HENDRICKS: He always went --

22 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- had gone that way.

23 MS. HENDRICKS: He always went east of Oakland on his route.

24 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

25 BY MS. HARLEY:

1 Q. Would he take his cane or walker with him when he was on the
2 bus?

3 A. He didn't take it.

4 Q. He didn't?

5 A. He might have took his cane. I don't know.

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just from getting from his truck to
7 the bus or whatever, but --

8 MS. HARLEY: Yeah, but really he wouldn't --

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because he never really got up, you
10 know.

11 MS. HARLEY: Right.

12 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: You sit there, you open the door, they
13 get on and they get off.

14 GRANDSON: And as well the girl was there to make sure they
15 sat down and --

16 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah.

17 MS. HARLEY: He had a -- I'm sorry. He has an aide on the
18 bus?

19 GRANDSON: No, the first, the first pickup girl.

20 MS. HARLEY: Oh. Okay.

21 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, Megan. Megan, she -- yeah, she
22 was real good about making sure everybody was on and off at their
23 stops and --

24 MR. COLLINS: By any chance -- and this is just a random
25 question we haven't been able to get an answer to yet. Do you

1 know where on the bus Megan normally would have sat?

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Up front, right?

3 MS. HENDRICKS: I think up front.

4 MR. COLLINS: Up front?

5 GRANDSON: Yeah.

6 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

7 GRANDSON: She usually sat on the front of the bus.

8 MR. COLLINS: Knowing where everybody was helps us just kind
9 of figure out --

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Because you rode grandpa's bus, right,
11 when you came from the school to home?

12 GRANDSON: Usually rode it in the morning too.

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

14 GRANDSON: And so she usually would be sitting in the front.

15 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah. So he would --

16 MR. COLLINS: Right behind your grandfather or --

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Maybe a seat or two back, but --

18 MR. COLLINS: Okay.

19 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: -- right in the front.

20 BY MR. COLLINS:

21 Q. Okay. And as a commercial driver, the State of Iowa, the
22 school district, they required him to have that driver medical.
23 Did he pick his own doctor for that or did the school send him to
24 one? Do you if the school district --

25 A. Well, I know at one time the school picked one but --

1 Q. But you don't know if that's still the same one he's going to
2 or if he's picking his own now?

3 A. Well, he always goes to Johannes. But one time I know they
4 had -- he went to a different doctor for something for the school.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. But I don't remember.

7 Q. I apologize. I normally bring a cheat sheet with me because
8 I never remember all the questions, and I've forgotten it. So I'm
9 trying to picture it in my head, and make sure I haven't forgotten
10 anything because I do want to minimize the disruption that I'm
11 causing. I think -- and I'll also rely on my partner --

12 MS. HARLEY: All right.

13 MR. COLLINS: -- to help me remember things. But we -- you
14 were kind enough to provide some medication information. We
15 talked about his health, and he was doing fine that day, hadn't
16 reported any -- and the day before. Nothing unusual had happened.
17 He hadn't hurt himself in any way. He wasn't reporting being
18 particularly ill or not feeling well. You said just a little bit
19 of allergies going on. We covered his back, and that didn't
20 affect his -- the back issues didn't affect his driving in any
21 way, did they -- did it?

22 (No audible response.)

23 MR. COLLINS: Okay. We talked about how much rest he was
24 getting, and cell phones, which are always a big concern these
25 days, and particularly for commercial drivers. Everybody looks at

1 them a little harder, but for the rest of us too. And I think --
2 is there --

3 BY MS. HARLEY:

4 Q. I'm sorry. You said he had his cell phone with him that
5 morning?

6 A. I'm pretty sure he takes it with him, but I don't -- it's not
7 in --

8 Q. Do you know what the number is?

9 A. Yeah. It's [REDACTED]

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. It's not in the truck, that I saw. I didn't really look all
12 over the -- I didn't look in -- go out in the truck and look in
13 the side, you know.

14 GRANDSON: Okay.

15 MS. HENDRICKS: That's where it would be if he left it in his
16 truck.

17 MS. HARLEY: Oh, okay.

18 MR. COLLINS: Thank you.

19 MS. HENDRICKS: But I'm thinking he usually took it with him.

20 MS. HARLEY: He took it with him.

21 MR. COLLINS: Yeah.

22 MS. HENDRICKS: Because it was -- you know, it's part of you.

23 MR. COLLINS: Yeah. Particularly if you're a teenager these
24 days. Oh, I see that look from mom. I'm sure there's -- I've had
25 a few of those myself. I think it's surgically implanted in my

1 children's hand. They can't --

2 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's glued.

3 MR. COLLINS: -- actually let go of it. It --

4 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's glued. It's like you never --
5 (Crosstalk.)

6 MR. COLLINS: I think the only time it leaves my teenage
7 daughter, teenage son's hands are when they're forced to plug it
8 in to charge it.

9 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah, charge it up.

10 MR. COLLINS: That might be the only time.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: And that's -- and it still don't come
12 out of their --

13 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

14 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They got long cords nowadays, you
15 know.

16 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They absolutely do.

17 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Soon enough they'll be (indiscernible)
18 have to charge.

19 MS. HARLEY: Oh, no.

20 So while my partner is still thinking of some things, just to
21 let you know, you will probably get some kind of communications
22 from one of our transportation disaster assistants. These are
23 people whose job it is, is to keep you informed of what we are
24 doing.

25 For example, if we put a report out or if we have any kind of

1 like a preliminary report or any kind of correspondence or if
2 there is some kind of meeting in regards to this, they will
3 contact you and let you know. You have the right to know. You
4 are family. So don't be surprised if someone else from our office
5 will be getting in touch with you.

6 MR. COLLINS: It would be the same agency, but down there
7 where it says Office of Highway Safety would be a different
8 office.

9 MS. HARLEY: It'll -- yeah. It'll say TDA or Transportation
10 Disaster Assistance.

11 GRANDSON: It wasn't in there.

12 MR. COLLINS: Thank you for checking.

13 MS. HARLEY: So -- and sometimes they call; a lot of times
14 they will also send you something in writing like a letter. And
15 it's just hi, how are you, this is who we were, and this is why
16 we're communicating with you, and we will keep you informed as
17 things go forward. All right.

18 BY MR. COLLINS:

19 Q. Do you know how tall your husband was and about how much he
20 weighed?

21 A. He's about 5'8" or 9".

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. And 170 something, I think.

24 MR. COLLINS: Okay. I think that's everything I can think
25 of. I'm still trying to picture that list in my head, but I don't

1 think there's anything else.

2 MS. HARLEY: Do you have any questions for us?

3 MR. COLLINS: And if you do at any time -- you have, you
4 clearly have my cell phone number. That or my office number both
5 will ring my cell phone if I'm not in the office, and I'm happy to
6 take a few minutes and talk to you. And like I said, that could
7 be about how we're doing with our investigation or I heard this
8 piece of news and I want somebody to confirm it. It could be
9 questions about anything. I don't know all the answers, but I
10 know a lot of people that are smarter than I am, and I can
11 certainly put you in contact with them because they know a lot of
12 answers. But I think we've covered everything we --

13 MS. HARLEY: I think so. So --

14 MR. COLLINS: Oh, there is one more thing. I thought of
15 something that's on my list.

16 BY MR. COLLINS:

17 Q. Just in, say, the past month, have there been -- other than
18 the surgery coming up, were there any big life changes? So
19 there's a new grandchild born, friend of the family passed away,
20 and sometimes I throw out there marriage and divorce. I don't
21 know that either ones of those have happened.

22 A. No. We're okay there.

23 Q. Okay. Anything like that. Because we're just looking for
24 stressors. Was there anything that might have been a stressor?

25 A. I can't think of -- we don't have any new grandchildren. We

1 don't have any new -- we didn't lose anybody.

2 Q. No more of those.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No more of those.

4 MR. COLLINS: Okay. And if and when I do actually remember
5 something, would you prefer I reached out to you? Would you
6 prefer I reached out to you? If we had any more questions in the
7 next few days.

8 MS. HENDRICKS: Well, you can call me.

9 MR. COLLINS: Okay. I won't do that unless I need to, and I
10 -- if I go back home, I'll remember the time difference.

11 MS. HENDRICKS: Yeah, okay.

12 MR. COLLINS: Although an hour's not bad. Sometimes when my
13 children forget and I'm in California, and they're getting ready
14 to go to school, so they call --

15 MS. HENDRICKS: They call you, yeah.

16 MR. COLLINS: -- 6:30 in the morning, which is --

17 MS. HENDRICKS: 4:30.

18 MR. COLLINS: Or earlier, depending on how far west they've
19 sent me. And -- hello. I love you too, son, but please don't
20 call me this early in the morning. I love you more at 8:30. But,
21 okay.

22 So that is where we will stop.

23 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

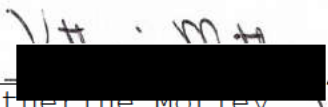
IN THE MATTER OF: SCHOOL BUS FIRE NEAR OAKLAND, IOWA,
DECEMBER 12, 2017
Interview of Kathleen Hendricks

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY18MH003

PLACE:

DATE: December 15, 2017

was held according to the record, and that this is the original,
complete, true and accurate transcript which has been transcribed
to the best of my skill and ability.


Katherine Motley
Transcriber