



NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

Eastern Region – Ashburn, Virginia

RECORD OF CONVERSATION

Who: Paul Gilbert

When: September 11, 2015

In a telephone conversation, Mr. Gilbert stated that he and Michael Apfelbaum were very good friends and flew a lot together. They both reside in Pennsylvania and had flown down to Florida in Mr. Apfelbaum's new airplane on September 4, 2015, along with Mr. Apfelbaum's wife, and her father. Mr. Gilbert said he owned a Beech A36 as well and said that Mr. Apfelbaum had recently purchased the airplane and wanted to have another pilot along since this was his first long flight in the airplane. Mr. Gilbert guessed that the pilot only had about 6 hrs of total time in the airplane before the flight. He said the flight to Florida was uneventful; the airplane flew well, and the weather was mostly visual flight rules. The airplane was equipped with a Garmin 530/430, autopilot and a flight director, which were new to the Mr. Apfelbaum. Although the flight was in VFR conditions, the Mr. Gilbert helped Mr. Apfelbaum practice loading instrument approaches into the Garmin 530 during the long flight and they even executed an approach for practice. Mr. Gilbert said the Mr. Apfelbaum had a lot of flight experience in instrument conditions in a Piper PA-28-180 airplane, but it did not have the advanced avionics or autopilot like the A36. Mr. Gilbert said Mr. Apfelbaum was getting more comfortable with the Garmin suite and autopilot by the time they got to Florida.

Mr. Gilbert said Mr. Apfelbaum dropped him off in Sarasota, Florida, and then flew to St. Petersburg, Florida, to visit their daughter. Mr. Gilbert did not plan to return to Pennsylvania with the family the following Monday, but did monitor their trip via FlightAware. Mr. Gilbert was not aware if there was any reason the family had to get home on the day of the accident.

Leah D. Read

Sr. Air Safety Investigator

National Transportation Safety Board