



SURVIVAL FACTORS ATTACHMENT

Passenger Interview Transcripts

Highland, IL

HWY23MH015

(38 pages)

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*

GREYHOUND BUS CRASH NEAR HIGHLAND,
ILLINOIS ON JULY 26, 2023

Accident No.: HWY23FH015

*
*

* * * * *

Interview of: BARBARA BRACKETT
Bus Passenger

via telephone

Monday,
August 28, 2023

APPEARANCES:

RONALD KAMINSKI, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

MARILYNN FRANGELLA, Operator

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Barbara Brackett:

By Mr. Kaminski

5

I N T E R V I E W

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

MS. FRANGELLA: -- Frangella (ph.). I'm giving you a call. I have Barbara Brackett on the phone to take the recorded statement today?

MR. KAMINSKI: Yes. Thanks for calling me.

MS. FRANGELLA: Hi.

MR. KAMINSKI: Good morning.

MS. FRANGELLA: Sure. Good morning. Barbara, can you hear us?

MS. BRACKETT: Yes, I can.

MS. FRANGELLA: Okay.

MS. BRACKETT: Good morning.

MS. FRANGELLA: Perfect.

MR. KAMINSKI: Good morning, Barbara.

MS. BRACKETT: Good morning.

MR. KAMINSKI: So --

MS. BRACKETT: You can call me Barbie, please.

MR. KAMINSKI: Barbie? Okay. So, why don't we just start off? I'm going to ask permission. I'd like to record this, and I would ask --

MS. BRACKETT: Okay.

MR. KAMINSKI: -- each of you to spell your name, first and last name.

MS. FRANGELLA: My first name is Marilyn, M-A-R-I-L-Y-N-N. Last name is Frangella, F-R-A-N-G-E-L-L-A. And you have my

1 permission to record Ms. Brackett's statement.

2 MR. KAMINSKI: Thank you.

3 MS. BRACKETT: And my name is Barbara, B-A-R-B-A-R-A,
4 Brackett, B-R-A-C-K-E-T-T. You have my permission, yes.

5 MR. KAMINSKI: Great. Thank you.

6 INTERVIEW OF BARBARA BRACKETT

7 BY MR. KAMINSKI:

8 Q. And, Barbie, what is your date of birth?

9 A. [REDACTED]

10 Q. Okay. And what I'd like to do is, just start off and tell me
11 about your trip, where you started, where you sat, and anything
12 else you can remember.

13 A. Okay. Well, I started out in Fort Wayne, Indiana. I
14 originally had been put on a bus in the morning, but they had
15 changed the times, and I didn't get the email. So, I got
16 rescheduled onto the bus at -- I believe I left at like 8 o'clock
17 at night from Ft. Wayne, Indiana, and I believe it was a Barons
18 bus. And then, we got to Indianapolis, Indiana roughly 10:35,
19 10:45 at night and had to -- the Greyhound bus I was checked in
20 was supposed to leave Indiana at 11:25, and we started boarding
21 about 11:05, and I was one of the first people that was in line,
22 so I got on maybe like the third person back. And when I got on,
23 I originally had sat down like five rows behind the bus driver by
24 the window, but a lady came on, and she said I was in her assigned
25 seat, so I got up and moved. And then, in my assigned seat was

1 another lady, but I asked if I could sit on the other side behind
2 the driver, because I have a sore hip, and so it's easier for me
3 to be on that side.

4 Q. Okay.

5 A. And the bus driver said I could as long as the bus didn't
6 fill up.

7 Q. Right.

8 A. And so, I ended up sitting in row 2A right by the window
9 behind the driver.

10 Q. Okay. And so, there was --

11 A. I was supposed to be in 3D.

12 Q. Okay. And so, was there someone in front of you or behind
13 you, do you recall?

14 A. No. The first two seats on either side were like cordoned
15 off or whatever so you couldn't sit in them. The bus driver had
16 his, I'm assuming it was his bag, in the seat that was right in
17 front of me.

18 Q. Okay. So, you were in 2A. You were right next to the
19 window, then?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. Okay. And you said there was a woman across from you in like
22 2C or D?

23 A. In 3D, B, was, she was a young Hispanic woman, and in 2D was
24 an older gentleman, Hispanic gentleman.

25 Q. Okay. And would you recall, was there anyone --

1 A. And he would have been --

2 Q. Go ahead.

3 A. Go ahead.

4 Q. No --

5 A. He would have been in 2D, because he was right by the window,
6 as well, on the passenger side.

7 Q. Okay. And do you recall, was there anyone behind you?

8 A. There was somebody behind me, but I don't remember what they
9 looked like or anything. I can't remember who was sitting right
10 behind me. I believe it was a black man.

11 Q. Okay. Would they have been directly behind you, or in the
12 aisle seat?

13 A. You know, I'm not really sure, because --

14 Q. Okay.

15 A. The bus didn't really fill up, so basically, we all had like
16 our own little section to sit in, you know, so nobody was really
17 sitting by each other that I can remember --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- at least not from -- in row four on the passenger side,
20 there was a man, and (indiscernible) were sitting together, and I
21 believe they were related to the girl that was in 3D. But other
22 than that, I didn't see -- I know, in like 5A was a Hispanic
23 woman. She's the one that had me move because I was in her spot.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. Other than that, I don't know where anybody else was sitting,

1 really.

2 Q. Okay. So, now that we've got the seating, why don't you
3 continue? Once you got seated, why don't you tell me about the
4 rest of the trip?

5 A. Well, when we got seated, he had said that, you know, there
6 was a lot of construction and a lot of traffic, and so if any of
7 us had any questions, that he wanted us to talk to him right then,
8 because he didn't want us to bug him while he was driving. And
9 nobody had no questions, and we started off on our way. And then,
10 I couldn't get my phone to connect to the Wi-Fi, and so I put my
11 phone in my bag. And I was laying with my feet toward the window,
12 and I had my head like on the armrest out towards the aisle, and I
13 was like watching out the driver's window, you know, at the signs
14 and stuff while we were moving along.

15 Q. Right.

16 A. And I'd seen a sign that said Terre Haute, and I sat up,
17 because I didn't know that we were going to be going through that
18 part of Indiana, and unfortunately, my son had been in prison
19 there, and I was just trying to see if I could see the prison from
20 the road. So, I sat up and was watching, you know what I mean?

21 Q. Sure. Yeah.

22 A. And I wanted to ask the bus driver about if I would be able
23 to see the prison from the road, but I didn't want to bug him,
24 because, like I said, there was a lot of spots where there was the
25 orange cone things all over the place, you know, and he was having

1 to drive through narrow strips, and --

2 Q. Right.

3 A. So, I just sat there watching for a little while, and at
4 one point, I did notice, you know, that like he kept hitting those
5 bumps on the side of the road --

6 Q. The rumble strips?

7 A. -- and --

8 Q. Yeah.

9 A. -- I was -- yes, yes. And I was like thinking in my head,
10 because at this point, there wasn't a lot of construction or
11 traffic, and I was thinking, you know, well, maybe the wind's
12 blowing, you know, and I don't know how hard it is to drive a bus,
13 you know. But I did notice that he kept hitting those. And then,
14 we were driving along, and the last thing, I'd seen a sign, one of
15 those green signs on the side of the road, and it said, Illinois,
16 1 mile. And then, I kind of leaned back over against the window,
17 and I was just watching out the window. And then, I must have
18 fell asleep. And the next thing I know, I wake up, and I'm like
19 on the floor in between the two seats, and my forehead is like --
20 skin's hanging over my eye, and --

21 Q. Take your time.

22 A. Sorry.

23 Q. That's okay. I understand it's traumatic.

24 A. And I just didn't know what happened. I was so confused.

25 Q. Sure.

1 A. And then, I had -- because I had a blanket that I was covered
2 up with. I had that, and I had it on my (indiscernible) where I
3 was bleeding. And I was trying to feel around for my bag, because
4 my phone, and my wallet, and everything was in it, you know?

5 Q. Yeah.

6 A. And my glasses were gone, so I couldn't really see, you know.
7 And then, somebody was yelling at me, lady, lady, you've got to
8 get out of the bus. There's smoke. The bus is on fire. And so,
9 I climbed across, and I guess I climbed out a big giant hole, and
10 somebody helped me out. And then, we went, and -- I went and sat
11 in the grass while they were helping other people.

12 Q. Okay.

13 A. Then --

14 Q. Go ahead.

15 A. -- I was -- like I said, though, without my glasses, I mean,
16 I'm not totally blind, but -- I was looking, and, I mean, I
17 thought that we'd come around a corner and maybe traffic had got
18 backed up, because from where I was sitting, the way the road
19 looked, it looked like there was just truck, after truck, after
20 truck with their lights on. And I didn't realize at the time,
21 though, that that was the on ramp for the rest area.

22 Q. Right.

23 A. I thought that was the road, and that we'd come around a
24 corner, and traffic had been backed up, and we'd just smashed into
25 something.

1 Q. Okay.

2 A. I didn't realize that the road went the other way, because
3 the way it looked, it looked like it was just a bunch of trucks
4 stopped.

5 Q. Right.

6 A. I mean, you know, I was trying to look around, you know, and
7 they started people out and setting them by me. And so, I was
8 holding that little Spanish girl's hand. And then, there was
9 another lady that, she must have been further in the back behind
10 me, because she was holding my hand, and she was on the phone
11 calling her family or something. And then, you know, a few, I
12 don't know, five -- it didn't take very long for the ambulance
13 people to get there, I didn't think, but -- and then, they were
14 taking me to the hospital.

15 Q. Okay. And what hospital did you end up going to? Was that
16 Anderson or St. Joseph's?

17 A. I went in Highland out to St. Joseph's.

18 Q. Okay. Okay.

19 A. I was like one of the first people they got to take out of
20 there. I guess I was a code yellow, whatever that means. But
21 because I would walk, and I was able they got me loaded up like
22 right away.

23 Q. Okay. So, what types of injuries did you sustain, then? Did
24 you have a cut, you said, to your face?

25 A. Yeah, my eye, right above my eyeball, from my eyelid all the

1 way up into my forehead was ripped open to the bone.

2 Q. And which eye would that have been? Which side, left or
3 right?

4 A. My left side.

5 Q. Okay.

6 A. And then, I had a big (indiscernible) on my left leg right
7 above my knee on the back side, and I had lots of other like cuts.
8 The bottom of my feet were cut open from where I crawled out of
9 the wreckage. My arm, my right arm, my forearm, I guess my bicep
10 area, had a big giant black knot and bruise from where --
11 apparently, when I flew up and hit the seat in front of me, which
12 is what cut open my eye, my arm hit the other side, which stopped
13 me from being thrown right up into the front of the bus.

14 Q. Okay. And so, when you said you landed between the seats,
15 you were in the same row that you were seated in, though, do you
16 think?

17 A. Yes.

18 Q. Okay. And do you --

19 A. And then, I don't remember any of the wreck, other than
20 waking up right then, so I assume I was thrown up into the seat in
21 front of me, which is what cut my eye open, because I hit the
22 corner of it. But my arm stopped me from getting thrown into the
23 front of the bus in the middle. You know what I'm saying?

24 Q. Yes, yeah. That's good. So, do you recall that the bus
25 driver, when you all got on in Indianapolis, did he make any kind

1 of safety briefing, speech, anything about wearing your seatbelts?

2 A. No, he did not.

3 Q. Okay. Did you happen to notice the seatbelts?

4 A. I did notice the seatbelts, but I'd never -- I mean, all the
5 years I've been on a bus, that was the first time I'd ever really
6 seen them on a bus, but I've never worn them.

7 Q. Okay. And so, did you notice anybody else on the bus wearing
8 their seatbelts?

9 A. No, I did not, not one single person, sir.

10 Q. Okay.

11 A. People were laying down sleeping. It was late at night, you
12 know what I'm saying? And --

13 Q. Yes.

14 A. -- like I said, we all basically got our own two little
15 seats, so we actually had like enough space to try to get some
16 rest.

17 Q. Right. So, did you have your legs across the seat next to
18 you, then, or did you have them out on the floor in front of you?

19 A. No, I sat up and leaned up against the window, so my feet
20 were on the floor in front of me.

21 Q. Okay. And --

22 A. And I was leaning up against the window.

23 Q. And you mentioned that you felt the driver hit those rumble
24 strips. Was it several times, or just -- do you recall how many
25 times he hit the rumble strips?

1 A. No, I can't say I recall exactly how many times, but I did
2 notice that. And like I said, this is in between the sign that
3 said Terre Haute, the big green sign (indiscernible) Terra Haute,
4 and then --

5 Q. Uh-huh.

6 A. -- the next green one, which would have been 1 mile
7 (indiscernible).

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. I noticed at least five or six times that he'd done that.
10 And at one point, he was also driving down the middle of the road,
11 you know what I mean, in between the two lanes like with the
12 center strip going down the middle part.

13 Q. Yeah, yeah. Okay.

14 A. And I was thinking, you know, like I said, I was like, I
15 don't know how hard it is to drive a bus. I don't know if there's
16 wind. But at that point in time, there wasn't a bunch of
17 construction cones and stuff, so --

18 Q. Right. Did he seem to be -- how was his travel speed? Could
19 you tell? Did he seem to be -- was he passing cars? Were cars
20 passing him?

21 A. I mean, until that point, everything seemed normal, you know
22 what I'm saying? The only other time I noticed him hitting those
23 rumble strips was when we were going in between when they had all
24 the orange cones, you know, so the space was like limited.

25 Q. Yes.

1 A. So, I thought maybe he was (indiscernible) that because the
2 bus is big, and -- up until that other point. And then, like I
3 said, I just, you know, I noticed he was doing it a lot when there
4 wasn't that stuff, and I was just like, well, maybe the wind's
5 blowing, or, you know, I don't know.

6 Q. Right, right. Okay. Anything else you feel that I didn't
7 ask that you feel would be of interest?

8 A. I mean, like I said, the way that I was confused when I came
9 out of the wreck, you know, on looking at all them trucks parked
10 on the road like that, how I thought that was the road, you know,
11 after we got hurt, I mean, I was thinking in my head, well, maybe
12 he came around the corner, and the way all them trucks were going,
13 you know, maybe he thought the road curved a little bit, and so
14 that he got over, you know?

15 Q. Right.

16 A. And then, I was like, well, I don't know, you know. Because
17 like I said, I thought we just crashed into the back of one. I
18 didn't realize -- because I was confused, because I thought that
19 the way the trucks were on the on ramp going to the rest area, I
20 thought that was the way the road went.

21 Q. Sure. Yeah. That would make -- I can understand --

22 A. So --

23 Q. -- that, sure. Okay.

24 A. You understand what I'm saying, right?

25 Q. Yes, absolutely, yeah.

- 1 A. Okay.
- 2 Q. Yeah, because I've seen --
- 3 A. Yes. Well --
- 4 Q. -- the photos, and I've seen --
- 5 A. -- I mean, other than that --
- 6 Q. Yeah. I've seen the photos after --
- 7 A. -- when --
- 8 Q. -- and I can see how you could think that.
- 9 A. (Indiscernible).
- 10 Q. Okay. Well --
- 11 A. But I mean, (indiscernible) the bus went, I mean, it was just
12 a big giant hole when --
- 13 Q. Yeah. There was --
- 14 A. -- they were getting me out of the hole.
- 15 Q. Yeah. Yeah, there's about six rows of seats thrown out.
16 That's a big hole. That's about --
- 17 A. Yeah.
- 18 Q. I think it was around 24, 25 foot by 6 foot high. So, yeah,
19 it was a large opening there. And you said that's where --
- 20 A. Yeah. See, and I didn't even realize at that time, you know,
21 because it didn't even dawn on me the seats were gone, you know
22 what I'm saying?
- 23 Q. Yes.
- 24 A. Because we just had to climb out over the rubble, but --
25 yeah, it was definitely quite traumatizing.

1 Q. Yes.

2 A. And because I was asleep, and then woke up to just, you know,
3 like disaster, and --

4 Q. Yes, yeah.

5 A. Yeah, I still have a hard time at night sleeping.

6 Q. Okay. Well, I'm sorry to hear that, but I do appreciate the
7 time of talking with us and giving us a statement, telling us.
8 You gave me some good description of -- because I'm still trying
9 to put together the seating chart, so you've done a great job of
10 helping me put some people in their places. And one other thing I
11 forgot to ask is, can I get -- I hate to ask a woman this. I need
12 to get your approximate height and weight.

13 A. I am [REDACTED] and I weigh [REDACTED] pounds.

14 MR. KAMINSKI: Okay. Okay. So, that should -- Marilyn,
15 that'll conclude our interview here.

16 MS. FRAGELLA: Okay.

17 MR. KAMINSKI: I want to thank you very much for taking the
18 time and have Barbie give me a call back. And we're done. It's
19 10:51 a.m. on Monday, August 28.

20 (Whereupon, at 10:51 a.m., the interview was concluded.)

21

22

23

24

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

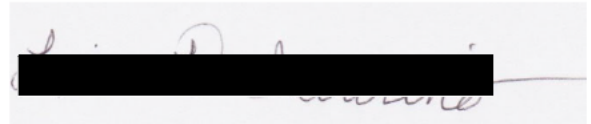
IN THE MATTER OF: GREYHOUND BUS CRASH NEAR HIGHLAND,
ILLINOIS ON JULY 26, 2023
Interview of Barbara Brackett

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY23FH015

PLACE: via telephone

DATE: August 28, 2023

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.



Lisa D. Sevarino
Transcriber

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

* * * * *

Investigation of:

*
*
*
*
*

GREYHOUND BUS CRASH NEAR HIGHLAND,
ILLINOIS ON JULY 26, 2023

Accident No.: HWY23FH015

* * * * *

Interview of: JOSEPH CRUSINBERY
Bus Passenger

via telephone

Monday,
August 14, 2023

APPEARANCES:

RONALD KAMINSKI, Investigator
National Transportation Safety Board

I N D E X

ITEM

PAGE

Interview of Joseph Crusinbery:

By Mr. Kaminski

4

I N T E R V I E W

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

MR. CRUSINBERY: Hello.

MR. KAMINSKI: Hello. Can I speak to Mr. Joseph Crusinbery,
please?

MR. CRUSINBERY: Yes. Is this Instructor Kaminski?

MR. KAMINSKI: Yes.

MR. CRUSINBERY: All right. How are you doing, sir.

MR. KAMINSKI: Good, sir. Hey, I appreciate you taking time.
Do you have a couple of minutes to talk to me?

MR. CRUSINBERY: Yes, sir. Always.

MR. KAMINSKI: Okay. Do you mind if I record our
conversation? I'm going to have it transcribed.

MR. CRUSINBERY: Yes, it's perfectly fine.

MR. KAMINSKI: Okay, great.

INTERVIEW OF JOSEPH CRUSINBERY

BY MR. KAMINSKI:

Q. So, let's spell -- your first name is Joseph?

A. Correct, J-O-S-E-P-H.

Q. Okay, and how do you spell your last name?

A. C-R-U-S-I-N-B-E-R-Y.

Q. B-E-R-Y. Okay.

A. Yes.

Q. And what's your date of birth?

A. [REDACTED].

Q. [REDACTED] Okay. And, Mr. Crusinbery, am I

1 pronouncing your name right?

2 A. Yes, instructor.

3 Q. Okay. And do you recall where you were seated in the bus?

4 A. A little less than midway. I think, row six.

5 Q. On the driver's side?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. And was it an aisle seat or window seat?

8 A. Aisle seat. I was seated next to a -- her name was
9 Brandy Hinesucker (ph.), I believe was her name. That wasn't my
10 original seat. My original seat was three bravo, but she had
11 asked me to move back with her because she felt more comfortable
12 with someone sitting there.

13 Q. Oh, okay, so, and you were in the aisle; and then, her name
14 was -- I'm sorry, I know you gave it to me. The person next to
15 you when you moved in row six? Was it Dawn?

16 A. Hello?

17 Q. Yes, sir. Can you hear me?

18 A. Oh, yes, sir. I'm sorry.

19 Q. Okay.

20 A. (Indiscernible).

21 Q. So, you were seated, you said, in row six in the aisle seat
22 on the driver's side, and you were seated next to who?

23 A. Brandy Hinesucker.

24 Q. Brandy -- okay. And so, at the time of the crash, you guys
25 were sitting next to each other?

1 A. Correct.

2 Q. Okay. And after the crash, where did you end up? Do you
3 recall?

4 A. Same seat, because I looked up from where I was sitting,
5 because I heard the -- what are those things called? The
6 emergency (indiscernible) or whatever they're called,
7 (indiscernible). You know what I'm talking about?

8 Q. Okay.

9 A. Anyway, I looked up, and the driver was, well, almost
10 (indiscernible) from like his shoulder, elbow, and up to his
11 wrist, but he wasn't trying to correct the path of the bus
12 whatsoever, not turning the steering wheel. And then, I heard the
13 other tires, you know, hit those rumblers [sic]. And I looked up,
14 and I saw the tractor trailer, the back of it, a white one, coming
15 towards us. And I immediately was like, okay, we're going to hit.
16 So, I looked over at Brandy. She was laid out on the window now
17 with her head on the window. So, I pulled her down, and we hit.
18 So, I stayed in my original seat. But that's what happened right
19 there --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- at that point.

22 Q. And then, how about Brandy? Did she remain seated next to
23 you, or did she fly out of the seat? Do you know?

24 A. She remained in the seat. I really didn't too much, because
25 once I knew we were going to hit, I pulled her, you know, off the

1 window, and I just kind of -- I didn't tuck my head under. I just
2 kind of braced on the next seat in front of me.

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. (Indiscernible), but she was right next to me when everything
5 stopped.

6 Q. Okay.

7 A. She was still seated there.

8 Q. Now, did any of you wear your seatbelts, do you know? Do you
9 recall?

10 A. No.

11 Q. Okay. Do you recall when you -- where did you get on the
12 bus? Was that in Indianapolis?

13 A. Yes, it was.

14 Q. Okay. And do you recall, did the bus driver read any kind of
15 pre-trip safety briefing regarding the seatbelt's availability?

16 A. No.

17 Q. You don't recall him --

18 A. Yeah.

19 Q. -- giving any kind of safety pre-trip briefing at all in --

20 A. I --

21 Q. -- Indianapolis?

22 A. No, I don't recall him doing that. He may have, or he may
23 not have, but I don't really recall.

24 Q. But you --

25 A. I was in --

1 Q. -- said you started out --

2 (Crosstalk)

3 Q. -- the trip in the third row, correct?

4 A. Say again?

5 Q. You said you started out the trip in the third row?

6 A. Negative. I started in the same seat that I had ended up
7 in --

8 Q. Oh.

9 A. -- which was next to Brandy. My original assigned seat on
10 the ticket was three delta, I believe, or something like that.

11 Q. Oh, okay. Got it. I didn't realize they did that, they
12 assigned the seats. Okay.

13 A. Yes. I have the ticket, if you want me to email it to you.

14 Q. No, that's --

15 A. But I --

16 Q. Sir, no. I'll get back to you if we need that. So --

17 A. Okay.

18 Q. Okay. So, what brought it to your attention that you looked
19 up, and you saw the driver, he wasn't trying to correct? Did you
20 hear the rumble strips?

21 A. Yes. I had -- well, on my -- off and on, you know, you'd
22 hear him hit those rumble strips, and he's correct over, you know,
23 and whatnot. (Indiscernible) sleep somewhere around midnight, I'd
24 say. I woke up when I heard the rumbler strips. And I looked up,
25 like I said, and I saw he wasn't trying to correct, and I saw the

1 tractor trailer. I heard the other tires hit the rumblers, saw
2 the tractor trailer, and knew we were going to hit, pulled Brandy
3 down. We hit. The seat came forward. The one in front of me
4 came forward, hit me in the head --

5 Q. What do you mean --

6 A. -- and I was waiting --

7 Q. -- the seat in front of you went forward? Is that because
8 you were bracing, or --

9 A. Kind of bracing, but not really, because they taught you in
10 the military that, you know, if you stiffen up, you're going to
11 get hurt, so --

12 Q. Sure.

13 A. -- let loose and wait for what was inevitably going to
14 happen.

15 Q. Sure, sure.

16 A. So, we made impact, and it was like -- have you seen on the
17 movies where subway trains go by people, and it's just a blur?

18 Q. Yeah.

19 A. Well, literally, next to me opened up, and it's a blur of
20 things going by. And when we stopped, Brandy was next to me. I
21 got her off the bus --

22 Q. How did you --

23 A. -- and --

24 Q. -- guys get off the bus?

25 A. -- turned -- say again?

1 Q. How did you guys get off the bus?

2 A. There was a huge, gaping hole right next to me --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- literally like a half a foot from me.

5 Q. So that you both went out the opening on the side of the bus?

6 A. Correct.

7 Q. And then, from there, what did you guys do? Just stand
8 around, sit around, wait for --

9 A. Negative.

10 Q. -- to respond?

11 A. I took her up the field, because the vessel's on fire. There
12 was smoke. I don't know if it was on fire, but there was smoke.
13 So, I took her out to the field about 300 yards back. I came back
14 to the bus, and I pulled a couple more people, or helped them off,
15 when I was inside the bus. And then, there was another gentleman
16 there. I believe he was Arabic, or Iraqi, or somewhere from the
17 Middle East.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And he stood right there on the ground right next to the bus
20 while I, you know, helped people, carried people off. Yeah. And
21 then, once I carried a few off, one of them needed help. I
22 believe her name was Dewanda (ph.).

23 Q. Yeah, there was a Dewanda, yes, yeah.

24 A. Helped her out of a window. So did a black gentleman, helped
25 me with her, we helped each other, out the window. She was the

1 one that was pregnant, I found out later. Came back to the bus.
2 (Indiscernible) and crew member showed up on scene. I was talking
3 with them while I was inside the bus still, trying to get them
4 inside the bus to get other people out, because there were people
5 that were trapped. The guy, Buford (ph.), was sitting one seat
6 behind us and across the aisle, the passenger side that opened up.

7 Q. Yeah.

8 A. I remember him saying, well, screaming to me, it burns, it
9 burns, was he was grabbing his face. And then, I tried to get to
10 him, but I couldn't. He was pinned under stuff. I couldn't move
11 anything. But helped a few more females off. And then, there was
12 another male that was underneath the rubble in the aisleway that
13 was pinned under there. I couldn't get him out.

14 Q. Okay. And the gentleman you said that was pinned and said it
15 was burning, did he end up -- what did you say? Was that Buford?

16 A. Yes. I believe that was his name. He was going to Arizona.
17 He --

18 Q. Right.

19 A. -- had trouble reading his itinerary.

20 Q. So, he ended up passing away in the crash, correct?

21 A. He did?

22 Q. Yeah. I'm just saying, do you know if he did?

23 A. I don't know. I'm not trying to follow up on it.

24 (Indiscernible).

25 Q. Sure, sure. I understand. I don't mean to be bringing up --

- 1 A. No, you're --
- 2 Q. -- you know, traumatic events for you, as well. I don't want
3 to do that.
- 4 A. Oh, you're good. It has to happen, right?
- 5 Q. Excuse me?
- 6 A. It has to happen for the investigation.
- 7 Q. Yeah, unfortunately. So, let me just go over kind of what we
8 talked about here. So, you were driving, so you fell asleep
9 around midnight, you think, and you did hear a couple of rumble
10 strips through the night. And then, the last time you heard the
11 is what kind of woke you up; and then, you looked, and you noticed
12 the driver wasn't making any attempt to steer away from the --
13 steer back, I guess, away from the edge of the roadway, correct?
- 14 A. Correct.
- 15 Q. And then, the next thing you see is the impact?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. And then, that's --
- 18 A. (Indiscernible).
- 19 Q. Right before the impact, you went and grabbed Brandy next to
20 her and kind of pulled her down away from the window, correct?
- 21 A. Correct.
- 22 Q. Okay. And then, afterwards, you both remained in your seats;
23 and then, you both went out of the opening on the passenger side.
24 You went out to the field. You came back to help other people.
25 How many people would you say -- you jumped back in the bus,

1 correct?

2 A. Yes, I did.

3 Q. Okay, and how did you get back into the bus?

4 A. Same way I exited.

5 Q. Okay, out the side, out the opening side?

6 A. Yeah.

7 Q. Okay. And how many people would you say you pulled out of
8 the bus? You mentioned a black gentleman, another woman,
9 Dewanda --

10 A. Two Hispanic females; one older lady that had medicine in a
11 blue bag. She was sitting right behind us. Like, around, say,
12 six, maybe, maybe.

13 Q. Well, you said you thought you were in row six. Because you
14 mentioned the guy who was Mr. Buford was a row behind you and all
15 the way next to the window, or what was left of the side and the
16 window there, correct?

17 A. Yes, one or two rows behind --

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. -- I believe, yes.

20 Q. Okay. And so, there was a woman that was directly behind
21 you, or behind Brandy?

22 A. Behind Brandy. Sorry. Window seat.

23 Q. Okay.

24 A. Behind Brandy.

25 Q. Okay. Now, do you recall anybody that was -- do you remember

1 that person's name behind Brandy?

2 A. No, she only spoke Spanish --

3 Q. Okay.

4 A. -- so I (indiscernible) to her in Spanish. I didn't get her
5 name.

6 Q. So, the Spanish one behind Brandy. Okay.

7 A. Correct.

8 Q. And how about anybody directly in front of you?

9 A. No, not to my recollection.

10 Q. Okay. And how about anybody on the right side? Do you
11 remember, other than that guy who was Buford that was a row or two
12 behind you off to the right in a window seat? Was there anybody
13 up towards the first three or four rows you recall?

14 A. Yeah, there were a couple, but I don't know what side they
15 were on.

16 Q. Okay.

17 A. I know one was a black gentleman, and then another one was a
18 Hispanic gentleman, and I don't know what side they were on,
19 though, but --

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. -- I remember, when we loaded, they were putting luggage on
22 the top rack up in the first couple of seats.

23 Q. Okay. And were you treated at a hospital, or did you get
24 treated on scene?

25 A. I got treated at a hospital, St. Joseph in Highland --

- 1 Q. Okay.
- 2 A. -- Illinois.
- 3 Q. And so, you were transported there. Do you recall what
4 ambulance or what fire department took you there?
- 5 A. It was the ambulance. I'm not sure which one. There's
6 two gentlemen, stockier guys. One had a tattoo on his forearm,
7 on, I believe it was his left forearm.
- 8 Q. Okay.
- 9 A. (Indiscernible) tattoo --
- 10 Q. So, you --
- 11 (Crosstalk)
- 12 Q. -- you were the only one in the ambulance that was
13 transported, or did you have someone else in there with you?
- 14 A. I also went with Dewanda.
- 15 Q. Okay. So, you and Dewanda went. Okay. And what types of
16 injuries did you sustain?
- 17 A. I have a broken C6 in my spine, contusions, and a concussion,
18 is what they diagnosed me with.
- 19 Q. Okay. And contusions are where?
- 20 A. All over my body, bruises all over --
- 21 Q. Okay.
- 22 A. -- literally.
- 23 Q. So, you --
- 24 A. I have a picture --
- 25 Q. -- do have a fractured C6, you said? Cervical spine?

- 1 A. Correct.
- 2 Q. Okay. And how are you doing with that?
- 3 A. It hurts to turn certain ways, but I'm managing, trying to.
- 4 Q. Okay. And were you hospitalized overnight for a couple of
5 days, or were you treated, and X-rayed and released?
- 6 A. They released me around, I want to say, 10 o'clock in the
7 morning the next day, so the same day that we went to the
8 hospital. So, (indiscernible) I was discharged.
- 9 Q. Okay. About eight hours, it lasted, because I think the
10 crash happened around 2:00, and so you got out around 10:00 in the
11 morning, then, I guess.
- 12 A. Correct.
- 13 Q. Okay. And from there, did somebody transport you to St.
14 Louis? How did you get back to St. Louis? Or --
- 15 A. Everyone was in a bus.
- 16 Q. Okay.
- 17 A. So, we all got on a bus.
- 18 Q. Okay. And so, that's when you were -- from the hospital,
19 they took you on a bus?
- 20 A. Yes, from St. Joseph Hospital to the (indiscernible) Station.
- 21 Q. Okay. So, you and Dewanda? Was there anybody else on there?
- 22 A. Brandy, and, I believe, one other gentleman. I don't
23 remember his name.
- 24 Q. Okay.
- 25 A. I know there was like four of us.

1 Q. Okay. Okay. Anything else you want to tell me that -- you
2 said you don't recall that the driver had discussed anything
3 regarding a pre-trip safety briefing when you were in Indianapolis
4 regarding seatbelt usage or anything like that?

5 A. Yeah. No, I remember he was in a foul mood, but that's about
6 it. I don't remember any safety briefing other than just, don't
7 talk. He gave a brief safety briefing, I guess it would be, but
8 the only thing I remember from it would be, don't talk to me. I
9 have enough I'm dealing with trying to stay on the road. And
10 then, kind of got to his seat.

11 Q. Oh.

12 A. Those words.

13 Q. Okay. Okay, and was that where you first loaded on, was in
14 Indianapolis, or where did you take another trip --

15 A. Transfer.

16 Q. Yeah, did you transfer?

17 A. Go ahead. Sorry.

18 Q. No, so, was that your direct route, from Indy to St. Louis,
19 or what was your route?

20 A. My route was, from Indy to St. Louis was the first stint; and
21 then, the second one was from St. Louis to Norman, Oklahoma.

22 Q. Okay.

23 A. (Indiscernible) St. Louis, but it kind of (indiscernible).

24 Q. Right. So --

25 A. But I was --

1 Q. -- so, you loaded on --

2 A. -- initially in Indianapolis, yes.

3 Q. Okay. Fair enough. So, you loaded on in Indianapolis.

4 Okay.

5 A. Yes, sir.

6 MR. KAMINSKI: Okay. Well, I appreciate you taking the time
7 to talk with me. This is my phone number. If there's any
8 questions or comments you want to add or tell me something, you
9 know, you don't remember until later, feel free to give me a call.
10 And I appreciate your time and cooperation.

11 MR. CRUSINBERY: Okay. I have one question off record, if --

12 MR. KAMINSKI: Sure.

13 MR. CRUSINBERY: -- okay. I know it's recorded, but kind
14 of -- this is personal, and I know you can't talk about ongoing
15 investigations, but were there cameras on the bus?

16 MR. KAMINSKI: Yes. There was an outdoor-facing camera, I
17 believe.

18 MR. CRUSINBERY: Excellent. All right. I appreciate it.
19 Thank you.

20 MR. KAMINSKI: Okay. I appreciate your help, sir. You get
21 better.

22 MR. CRUSINBERY: Thank you. You have a good day.

23 MR. KAMINSKI: You, too, sir. Bye-bye.

24 (Whereupon, the interview was concluded.)

25

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the attached proceeding before the
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD

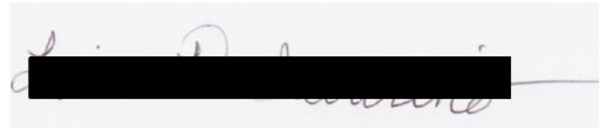
IN THE MATTER OF: GREYHOUND BUS CRASH NEAR HIGHLAND,
ILLINOIS ON JULY 26, 2023
Interview of Joseph Crusinbery

ACCIDENT NO.: HWY23FH015

PLACE: via telephone

DATE: August 14, 2023

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.



Lisa D. Sevarino
Transcriber