



## Record of Conversation

**Fabian Salazar**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**National Transportation Safety Board**  
**Investigator in Charge**

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**NTSB Accident Number: WPR20LA238**  
**Aircraft Registration & Make/Model: N7677C / Piper PA 32-300R**  
**Accident Location: West Jordan, Utah.**  
**Accident Date: July 25, 2020**

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**Veda Shepherd**  
**12-year-old daughter of the second adult female passenger**  
**Passenger**  
**October 5, 2020, 1630 MDT**

During a Zoom meeting, with her attorney present, Ms. Shepherd stated that they were going on a flight to the Grand Canyon and that it was everyone's idea to go there. She stated that when they got into the airplane, she and her mom were in the back. She was on the right and her mom was on the left. In front of her was the male toddler, and in front of her mom was the female infant. In front of the infant [on the left side] was the pilot and in front of the toddler [right side] was the pilot's wife. She said that she thought both the infant and the toddler were in child restraints.

She said the pilot told them "there might be a little wind but nothing to crazy." When she put her headphones on, they did not work so she did not use them. She said that she was putting in her headphones, looking out of the right window, and listening in on the conversation. She said that the pilot was pulling a lever that made the wing go down and up. She said the first time he tried it, it would not move, and it was stiff, and then he tried it again and it started to move. She said that they were on the ground during this time. She said her mom asked if that was "going to be a problem", and the pilot said, "well its working fine now". She said that they lifted off and they were fine, and they were flying in the air and everything seemed to be working normal, and she was listening to music in her headphones looking out the window. She said that she noticed there was some turbulence. She said they dropped down and she noticed the cabin was shaking, but she "was just spaced out" and was staring out the window. She said that her mom tapped her on the shoulder and pointed to the cockpit and said, "you need to put your head down." She said

that she put her head in her lap and did not remember going down, but she did remember crashing. She said that there was a lot of impact, and it was a harsh land, really intense. She said the whole airplane was smoky and there was a smell, and it was really hot. She said the crash was loud, like gunshots.

She said that she heard really loud screaming, but it wasn't the wife of the pilot. She guessed it was the lady whose house they had hit. She stated that at his time, she was "kind of upside down" and her weight was on the seatbelt, and it was hard to remove it. She recalled removing the seatbelt and crawling behind the pilot's seat. The toddler was crying, and she saw a lot of people standing around. She said that she could not get out and she was yelling for help. She saw the wife of the pilot unstrapping the toddler. She remembered someone pulling her out by the arm. Someone walked her under a tree. She said someone from the medical field helped her and then being taken to the hospital in an ambulance.

The interviewer asked her about when the pilot was moving the lever that made the wings go up and down. He asked her where the lever was located, and she said that it was black, and it was in between Lee's seat and Rebecca's seat. Her description matched the location of the "Johnson Lever" for the flaps. When asked what made him pull the lever, she said that she did not know, but thought it was when he was just checking everything to make sure it was good.

When asked about the time when it got bumpy, before her mom told her to put her head down, did it look like the pilot was having difficulty, she said that the pilot looked like he was "pulling all these things and going like that." When the IIC described the location and gave a general description of the throttle quadrant and asked it that was where the pilot was working with, she said "I think so yeah. It looked like he was flipping things."

When asked about putting her head down, she said that she put her head down so that she would not get injured, and she knew that the safest thing to do is brace yourself.

When asked about the feel of the bumps, she said that it felt really bumpy, but it wasn't bumpy when they were going down. She remembered just falling.

When asked about the sound, she said that it was "really loud, chaotic and loud." She said the crash sounded like nails on the chalkboard, or metal on cement.

When asked about the sound of the engine on the takeoff. She described the sound of the propeller being normal. When asked about the sound of the motor that turns the propeller, she said when they were in the air it sounded a little bit funny.

When asked about things that she saw about the time that her mom told her to put her head down, and asked what the wife of the husband was doing, she said that the wife was kind of panicking, and "she put her hand like that" [places her hand up as if holding to the glare shield]

The IIC asked her when things started to not feel normal. She said that she remembered it was not long after the got airborne, maybe two to three minutes and they started to get a lot of

turbulence and then a few seconds after that they started to go down. When asked about the turbulence, she agreed that it was not bumpy before the turbulence and after the turbulence, it was bumpy till the accident.

When asked if she had flown with the pilot before, she said that she did fly with the pilot in a red airplane before. It was totally fine, and everything was normal.

When asked if she recalled anything that I did not ask. She talked about her time at the hospital. She stated that there was a certain weight limit for the airplane. She said the pilot had to ask everyone their weight and they weighed everything and made sure the bags were just a few pounds. She also stated that she thought her weight was 140 pounds.

The attorney asked her about, after the takeoff, did she hear a sort of buzzer that was not from the engine. She said “yeah, probably when they lifted off the ground. There was an off and on buzzing until they hit the ground.”