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FAA probing cause of fatal plane crash in Hills



CHARLES ARCHAMBEAU

The wreckage of the plane that crashed nose first into the garage of a Farmington Hills home.

By Mary Rodrigue
staff writer

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) is still investigating the plane crash that took the life of a pilot Sunday when his single engine craft smashed into a garage in his Farmington Hills subdivision.

Investigators have not been able to definitely say why the plane flown by David Collins, 42, plummeted to earth. Collins was killed when his Luscombe 8A caught a power line and crashed into the garage at 30107 S. Stockton Drive, just a few houses away from his own home on Ashley, northwest of Shiawassee and Middlebelt.

The accident occurred just 15 minutes after Collins departed from Spencer Field in Wixom at 6:30 p.m. Benedetta Cuzzo, who lives in the house where the accident occurred, was picking tomatoes in her backyard vegetable garden just minutes before the crash.

"I went into the house to wash my hands, and I seen it through the (kitchen) window," she said. "The wire come down, there was sparkles all over. The house was shakin'." I screamed."

The blue and white fiberglass plane crashed nose-first between her garage and a 1980 white Mercury Cougar XR7 parked in the driveway, about 50 feet behind the house.



R.S. WILSON/staff photographer

Benedetta Cuzzo explains how the plane hit her garage just minutes after she was in her yard picking tomatoes.

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Teachers strike in Walled Lake

By Phil Jerome
staff writer

For the first time in its 59 year history, there is a teacher strike in the Walled Lake School District.

Teachers started picketing early Tuesday morning instead of reporting to class as scheduled. No progress had been made in the teacher talks as of Wednesday afternoon.

School officials then announced classes for students were canceled until further notice. The district includes the western half of West Bloomfield and the northwest section of Farmington Hills.

Students were to report for the first day of school Wednesday morning.

Information on the status of negotiations and the opening of school can be obtained by calling a special hotline set up by school officials at 624-4877.

Negotiating teams for both the school board and the Walled Lake Education Association meet throughout the weekend in hopes of reaching a settlement.

WLEA president William Fox refused to rule out the possibility of a settlement as of late Monday night.

The board met in executive session for two hours Monday afternoon and then held another two-hour executive session at a board meeting Monday night.

Following the Monday night session, the board reconvened at approximately 10:15 p.m. and adopted a set of interim

work rules that defined the conditions under which teachers would work without a contract.

NEGOTIATIONS RESUMED Monday at approximately 9 p.m. and continued throughout the night.

Efforts to reach an agreement came to an end approximately 8 a.m. Tuesday when the WLEA rejected the board's offer of a 19 percent improvement in wages and fringe benefits over a two-year period, Superintendent Don Sheldon said.

WLEA members, meanwhile, refused to accept the interim work rules imposed by board and were on the picket line 6:30 a.m. Tuesday.

The teacher strike is the first in the history of the district which was incorporated in 1922 and is the oldest consolidated district in Michigan.

Teachers gained collective bargaining rights through state legislation passed in 1955.

Karen Filar, head of the WLEA negotiating team, reported that 25 items are being discussed with tentative agreement reached on 15 of them.

FILAR ALSO reported the two sides are a considerable distance apart on economic issues (wages and fringes) as well as other parts of the contract.

Filar confirmed reports that the WLEA is seeking a 17.7 percent wage increase while the board has offered an increase that ranges from 4.5 to 7 percent depending on seniority.



R.S. WILSON/staff photographer

Bruce Moore sharpens a pair of scissors.

Sharpeners job is 'shear' joy

By Craig Piechura
staff writer

Things are sharper around Farmington this week, and for that you can thank Bruce Moore.

Moore, 56, and his wife, Lillian, of Centerline are traveling scissors sharpeners. They charge \$1.50 for regular scissors, \$3 for pinkie shears.

The Moores parked their fully furnished step van in front of the Jo-Ann Fabrics store in the Farmington Downtown Center last week while they dispensed good cheer along with their service inside the store.

The stop was one of 36 stores they serve in Michigan. This week they'll be sharpening scissors for the people of Midland.

It's not the most lucrative life but the Moores thoroughly enjoy their work, stopping just short of calling it "shear" pleasure. Bruce says it takes six months to tour all the stores, but when he and his wife return they often find old friends.

"There's the Boises of Battle Creek, the Shermans of Bay City," he said. "You saw how we kid around with people here. People, by and large, are nice."

A dollmaker came in to pick up five pair of scissors Moore had sharpened for her. Before she paid, Moore made her test every pair on pieces of scrap fabric. He said he's never had a customer complain about his work to top management, and he wants to keep it that way.

"Oh, that's going to town," said an

appreciative Martha Koteras of Farmington as she watched her old scissors slice with renewed vigor.

MOORE HAD a look of impish satisfaction on his face as he handed back the scissors. Because he felt good about his work and because somebody was interested, he passed on a few tips for buying and using scissors.

"Now, you take an average pair of scissors," Moore said. "You can throw them against the wall, and they can be repaired. You fit them one blade to another."

"You take a pair of pinks (pinkie shears), and it's another story. There are 15 teeth here, and each one has four faces. If you drop these, and they become sprung, there's no way you can repair these. All pinkie shears are not salvageable."

"You can have two sharp blades but as long as they're this far apart one might as well be in New York and the other might as well be in California."

Dull pinkie shears are repairable, he stressed. But, to avoid problems, he said, pinkie shears should never be squeezed together, just pressed down. And, when using pinkie shears, skip the first and last teeth to avoid snags.

When buying regular scissors, Moore said, pick the more expensive steel pair over cast iron.

"Look for a good finish, not one full of machine marks."

Bent steel blades can be hammered back into shape, cast-iron blades can-

Please turn to Page 4A

Grandma celebrates 100th birthday

Mary Kitz turned 100 and her friends at the Farmington Nursing Home celebrated with cake Tuesday.

Dressed in a bright smock, her hair neatly tied back with a ribbon, Mrs. Kitz didn't know what to make of all the fuss.

She liked the pretty sheet cake with blue and white frosting that said, "God Bless You, Grandma." She also liked a carnation which was presented to her.

But she wasn't impressed with the birthday greetings from Ronald Reagan, which got tossed aside after a brief glance.

Dozens of friends and staff members, who affectionately call her 'Grandma,' came to her party in the nursing home

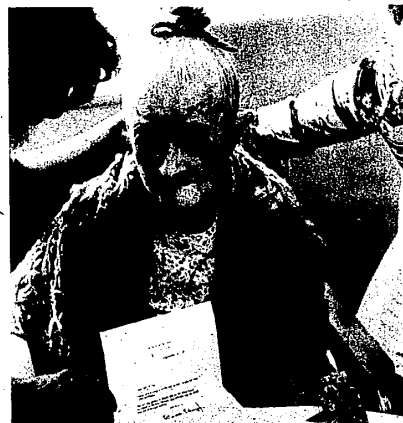
dining room.

Mrs. Kitz has lived there for 10 years — since June 1971.

"She is grandma to all of us," said Rose Morgan, activity director. The party Tuesday was her second in two days. On Labor Day Monday, 30 of her kin gathered to celebrate her birthday.

Born in Germany, Mrs. Kitz came to America when she was 17. She lived on a farm in Pennsylvania before moving to Michigan. She had four children. Her one surviving child is Frederick Jentzer of Howell.

Her three grandchildren and five great-grandchildren were among the celebrants Monday.



100-year-old Mary Kitz marked her birthday Tuesday with a party at the Farmington Nursing Home. Above, a staff worker shows her a birthday greeting from President Reagan.

C'ville in session

A contract extension agreed to by Clarenceville teachers means school is in session for 2,200 district students at least until Sept. 11.

Meanwhile, negotiations were restarted Wednesday night after they were suspended on Aug. 29. All non-financial items are "off the table and tentatively agreed upon," according to David McDowell, Clarenceville school superintendent.

Unresolved issues include class size, fringe benefits and salaries.

To date, McDowell said, there is no threat of a strike. The school district, which encompasses parts of Livonia, Farmington and Redford Township, has never had a strike in its 146-year history.

Teachers in about one-quarter of the state's 575 districts have not yet signed contracts for the new school year. In many of those districts — as in Clarenceville's case — teachers have agreed to go back to classes as negotiations continue.

Phony money surfaces

Counterfeit money was received by the Union 76 gas station, 2083 Farmington Road, last week, according to police.

Two \$5 bills with \$100 corners attached were discovered in a money bag being transported in a cash pickup to another station in Novi.

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IN THE POURING RAIN

Mrs. Simonian could not believe all the people that

came in the pouring rain to see the car!

Remember, One Call Does It All!

644-1070

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