

Instrument failure causes fatal plane crash

WASHINGTON (AP) — The investigation of the plane that killed Gov. Mel Carnahan found that his pilot son, Randy Carnahan, became disoriented and lost control of his Cessna 335, in part because the key instrument failed through darkness, according to a report from the National Transportation Safety Board on Wednesday.

The final word on the probable cause of the crash, saying the pilot failed to control the aircraft because he neglected the instrument and took no action to correct it, reached the public after two years.

The plane crashed on Oct. 16, in wooded hills south of the town of Safford, killing the governor and his aide Chris Sifford. Carnahan died three days before the election in which he sought the Senate seat. Republican John Edwards now the attorney general, Carnahan's name remained in the race and he beat his opponent, Gov. Mark Sanford.

His widow, Jean, was elected to serve the first two years of the six-year term that expires in 2007. She is campaigning for election in 2008 to finish out the term.

Inversely, investigators focused on the main instrument, the altimeter, which Randy Carnahan used to navigate, the primary altitude indicator.

Also called the artificial horizon, the altitude indicator reports a plane's position in the air, telling whether a plane is banking and whether the nose is high or low.

NTSB investigators concluded that the primary altitude indicator

4-year-old girl missing

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A gunman broke into a home and took a 4-year-old girl from her mother Wednesday, warning the girl's younger brother would hurt her if she told anyone what happened, police said.

Police, some with tracking dogs, began searching the foothills for Elizabeth Smart before dawn authorities used a statewide emergency alert system for the first time to quickly broadcast information about a missing child.

Police said there was no indication the man took Elizabeth, but authorities were looking at the 1994 family's computer to see if the girl had contacted her brother online and interviewed the eighth-grade classmates at Bryant Intermediate School.

This was not a purely random act. He'd have known she lived there," said Wes Galloway, Elizabeth's 9-year-old sister waited several hours before alerting her parents about the abduction because of the threat, police spokesman Claude Baird said.

The sister told police that the soft-spoken man entered the house by forcing open a window and

had a small black handgun. Elizabeth was wearing red pajamas, and the man let her take a pair of shoes, police said.

Police said the man did not force open a window in the girls' bedroom, but did not say exactly where the window was.

The man did not leave the home through the same window, police said.

Baird also said the family's home is for sale and police are looking at a list of people who toured the house, a 7-bedroom home listed at \$1.19 million.

Elizabeth's disappearance was the first use of Utah's Emergency Alert System, known as the Rachael Alert. It was created in April to quickly broadcast information about an abducted child. The alert started about 3 1/2 hours after police were notified of the girl's disappearance.

The Rachael Alert, named after a Utah girl abducted and killed in 1982, was adapted from the Amber Plan, named for 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, who was abducted and murdered in Texas in 1996. Utah is the ninth state to establish the program.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Florida cutting citrus trees while appealing ban on orange grove

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) — The state will continue to cut citrus trees in areas where citrus canker has been discovered while it appeals a circuit court decision that Florida's citrus eradication law is unconstitutional.

The department will remove all citrus trees, even healthy ones, within 1,900 feet on an infected tree if homeowners give their permission. Crews can continue to take out any infected trees, getting warrants if property owners refuse access.

Circuit Judge Leonard Fleet ruled last month in Broward County that the state could not enter private property to take citrus trees without first getting a warrant for that specific property.

Agriculture Commissioner Charles Bronson said Wednesday that his agency will appeal the ruling next week.

"We're not just protecting the citrus industry, we're protecting homeowners as well," he said.

Canker causes brown blemishes on fruit.

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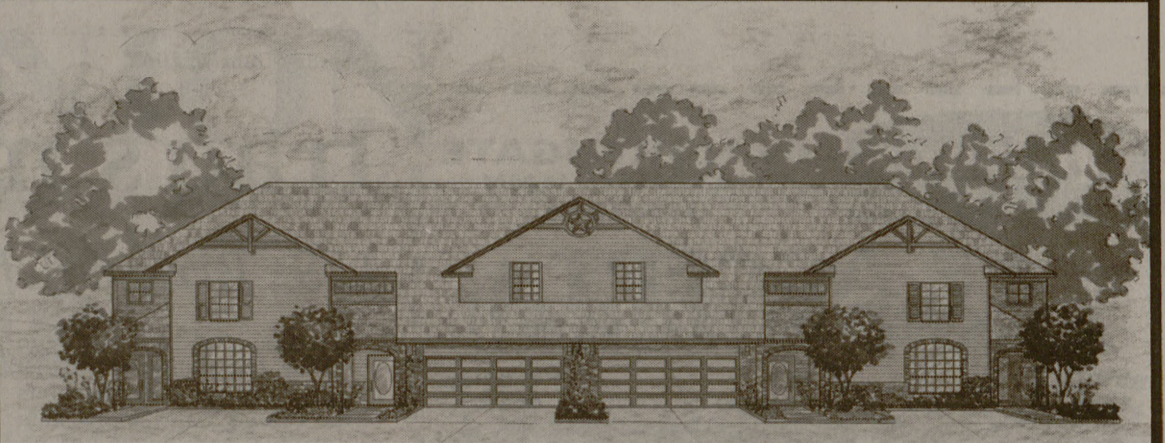
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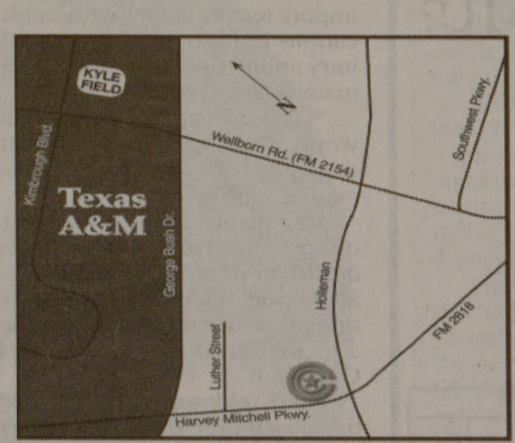
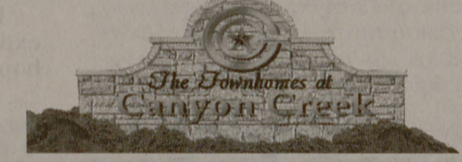
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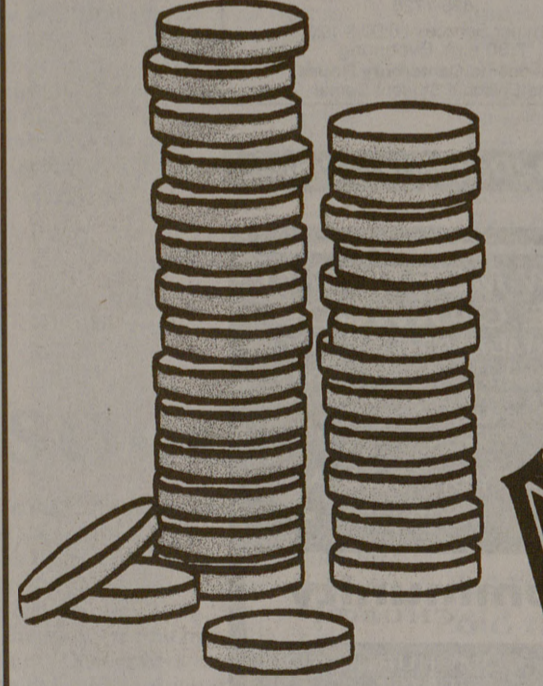
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Revised 4/22/02