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Crash near NLV Airport revives residents' fears

By Timothy Pratt

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LAS VEGAS SUN

Sunday night's plane crash near North Las Vegas Airport wasn't the first in the area and neighbors fear it won't be the last. They're worried that it won't be long before someone on the ground is killed by an aircraft.

The accident has some officials again speaking of the need to restrict development near the airport and is drawing attention to a growth issue that has also caused controversy for the areas around McCarran International Airport: the compatibility of housing and airports.

About 8:30 p.m. Sunday, a small, single-engine plane cartwheeled and landed in a ditch in front of the Rancho Mesa apartments at 2881 N. Rancho Drive. The plane apparently had developed engine problems and the pilot had tried to land on the busy roadway, said Donn Walker, spokesman for the Western regional office of the Federal Aviation Administration.

The only occupant of the plane, Joseph Randall Edwards, was listed in fair condition Monday afternoon at University Medical Center, officials said.

Mardean Robinson, 50, said she was sitting on a bench having a beer with family and friends when Edwards' Beechcraft Bonanza clipped a fence about 10 feet from where she sat and flipped over into the ditch.

"I thought it was a terrorist attack, like New York City all over again," she said. "We just ran like hell."

Paul Von Rueden — who lives nearby and is president of the Northwest Area Residents Association, a group that has monitored area concerns about the airport — said that growing neighborhoods and growing numbers of flights in and out of North Las Vegas are a bad mix.

National Transportation Safety Board records available on the Internet show that 21 crashes have

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occurred since 1999 in North Las Vegas, with eight in 2002. There have been five fatalities during the same period. There also have been other aircraft mishaps related to the airport that occurred within the boundaries of the city of Las Vegas.

Some of the mishaps were at North Las Vegas Airport, but several of the crashes were in the neighborhoods around the airport.

Several examples from the National Transportation Safety Board files:

Two people on board a private plane burned to death and a third was seriously injured when their aircraft slammed into a home two miles southwest of the airport on Aug. 20, 1999.

Nine days later another private plane, a Cessna 210, crash-landed, hitting a power line and a fence in a residential area bordering the airport. The pilot sustained only minor injuries.

In May 2001 a pilot was killed while trying to make it back to North Las Vegas Airport for an emergency landing. He clipped a streetlight pole and crashed into a lot near the intersection of Michael Way and Cheyenne Avenue.

In September a helicopter was forced to make a hard landing two miles south of the airport, sustaining substantial damage.

Airport critics and advocates agree that there is no way to eliminate accidents at and around a busy airport, particularly one such as North Las Vegas, which is used mainly by private pilots, some of whom are still learning to fly.

North Las Vegas Airport also could get busier in the coming months. It had about 220,000 takeoffs last year, second only to McCarran statewide. A proposed system to train pilots how to land in bad weather could bring the total up to about 270,000 if approved in the coming months, according to a draft FAA report prepared late last year.

"Takeoffs have increased over the years and as Las Vegas and North Las Vegas grow, they will continue to go up," Debbie Millett, an airport spokeswoman, said.

But the airport, which opened in 1941, came before much of the valley's growth, and only local governments can control development, she said.

"It's one of those things where the airport was there first and the homes have been built up," Millett said.

"We want compatible use, but the city keeps approving more homes. ... We would love it if there was a safety zone with no residents around the airport, but we can't control that," she said.

Stephanie Smith, councilwoman for Ward 3, which includes the site of the crash, said she has worked hard to oppose development around the airport since she took office in 1997.

"I have always voted against high-density housing near the airport," she said. "It's not like we can shut the airport down or get rid of the houses that are already there.

"All we can do is control future development."

But Von Rueden said the airport should consider buying properties and demolishing them, just as McCarran has done.

He said he has suggested as much to North Las Vegas Airport Manager Duane Busch in a meeting between members of the association and airport officials.

"They all looked at each other as if I had spoken in favor of Iraq," he said."

"We're not in the business of real estate, but of running airports," Millett said.

She also noted that most of the accidents involving planes from North Las Vegas Airport haven't been serious.

"A lot of these ... have been the equivalent of fender benders," she said.

In addition, the airport itself has had little to do with the accidents, she added.

"If you look at the accidents, at no time was it something the airport did or didn't do," she said.

That's little consolation to neighbors, however.

Johnny Austin was never convinced he was safe in the six years he lived at the Rancho Mesa apartments and moved into a new apartment on Lone Mountain Road and Simmons Street last Friday.

"We moved just in time," the 35-year-old father of four said. "We have young kids and we wouldn't want anything to happen to them."

Robinson, who was still talking about the crash with neighbors outside her house Monday evening, wondered what was next.

"This is just too close to the airport," she said.

"What's keeping them planes from falling on our houses?"

Rep't Status	Date	Location	Make / Model	Regist Number	Severity	Type of Air Carrier Operation and Carrier Name (Doing Business As)
<u>Prel</u>	2/7/03	Vernal, UT	Aerospatiale AS- 350BII	CFLHA	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	1/10/03	Salt Lake City, UT	Agusta A-109-K2	N601RX	Fatal(2)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	12/2/02	Monticello, UT	Aerospatiale AS- 350BA	N20840	Nonfatal	Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load
<u>Fact</u>	5/23/02	Moab, UT	Bell 206B-III	N191RH	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	5/18/02	Salem, UT	Bell 206L-1	N3894Q	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter Classic Helicopters, Inc.
Fact	3/26/02	Oakley, UT	Bell 206L-3	N30YB	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	12/27/01	Park City, UT	Hughes 369E	N280SP	Fatal(3)	Public Use
<u>Final</u>	12/1/01	Bryce, UT	Bell 206B	N911KH	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & din Air Service
Final	11/9/01	Ogden, UT	Agusta A119	N1	bar	Aviation Aviation
Final	7/7/00	LOGAN, UT	Bell 206L-3	N38: 1	Vorter	Aviation Aviation
<u>Final</u>	5/4/00	BLANDING, UT	Aerospatiale AS- 350B	CGP1	Who	din Air Service Aviation Aviation Viation Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load
<u>Final</u>	4/1/00	HELPER, UT	Hawkins & Powers UH-1B	N5033	* 9° 1	Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load
Final	2/11/00	WOODS CROSS, UT	Bell OH-58A+	N7UT	Fatal(2)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	1/29/00	MT PLEASANT, UT	Bell 212	N212HQ	Nonfatal	Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load

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Rep't Status	Date	Location	Make / Model	Regist Number	Severity	Type of Air Carrier Operation and Carrier Name (Doing Business As)
<u>Prel</u>	12/1/02	Panaca, NV	Bell 47G-3B-1	N48020	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	9/25/02	North Las Vegas, NV	Bell 206L-1	N601GM	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	6/14/02	North Las Vegas, NV	Robinson R-22 Beta	N7041B	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	6/8/02	Henderson, NV	Robinson R22 Beta	N7176S	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	6/6/02	NORTH LAS VEGAS, NV	Robinson R22 BETA	N7196W	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	3/29/02	North Las Vegas, NV	Robinson R22 Beta	N7040C	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	10/24/01	Laughlin, NV	McDonnell Douglas 600N	N451DL	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	1/23/01	ELY, NV	MD HELICOPTERS, INC. 369D	N8353F	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	12/14/00	NORTH LAS VEGAS, NV	Robinson R22 BETA	N7189K	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	12/7/00	HENDERSON, NV	Aerospatiale AS- 350-BA	N355NT	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	11/13/00	PARUMPH, NV	Messerschmitt- Boelkow-Blohm BO-105CBS-5	N911VH	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	8/13/00	COLD SPRINGS, NV	Bell 412	N174EH	Fatal(1)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	8/3/00	MONTELLO, NV	Bell 206L-1	N10864	Fatal(1)	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	6/10/00	WELLINGTON, NV	Sikorsky HH-3F	N500XL	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation

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Rep't Status	Date	Location	Make / Model	Regist Number	Severity	Type of Air Carrier Operation and Carrier Name (Doing Business As)
<u>Prel</u>	12/23/02	Dolan Springs, AZ	Robinson R22 Beta	N888KB	Fatal(2)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	12/16/02	PHOENIX, AZ	ANDERSON ROTORWAY EXEC 162F	N30545	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	11/15/02	Kingman, AZ	Bell 206B	N16962	Fatal(1)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	11/10/02	Kingman, AZ	Aerospatiale AS350B	N909WA	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	9/11/02	Peach Springs, AZ	Aerospatiale AS350BA	N357NT	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter HELI USA AIRWAYS INC.
<u>Prel</u>	7/27/02	Prescott, AZ	Robinson R22 Beta	N232DR	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	5/28/02	Meadview, AZ	Bell 206L-1	N1075S	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	5/13/02	Phoenix, AZ	Schweizer 269C	N577TA	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	4/14/02	Scottsdale, AZ	Schweizer 269C	N324PH	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	4/1/02	Chandler, AZ	Rotorway Exec 165F	N21901	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	8/28/01	Mesa, AZ	Bell 206-L4	N995PM	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	8/14/01	Fountain Hills, AZ	MD HELICOPTER, INC. 600N	N70457	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	8/10/01	Meadview, AZ	Eurocopter AS350-B2	N169PA	Fatal(6)	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter Papillon Grand Canyon Helicopters
<u>Prel</u>	6/21/01	Mesa, AZ	Schweizer 269C	N891CP	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	4/23/01	Willcox, AZ	Bell BHT-206-L3	N215M	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	12/22/00	WILCOX, AZ	Bell 206-L3	N288JB	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	11/15/00	MESA, AZ	Eurocopter AS 350B-	N972AE	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	10/14/00	GRAND CANYON, AZ	Bell 206L-1	N2233F	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter CLASSIC LIFEGUARD AEROMEDICAL (D.B.A. CLASSIC HELICOPTERS)
<u>Prel</u>	9/29/00	PHOENIX, AZ	Hughes TH-55A	N331SD	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
		HOOVER	Sikorsky/Orlando S-		Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter PAPILLON HELICOPTERS INC.

<u>Final</u>	9/18/00	DAM, AZ	55	N17754	: 	(D.B.A. PAPILLON GRAND CANYON HELICOPT)
<u>Final</u>	7/27/00	PHOENIX, AZ	Robinson R-22 Beta	N888KB	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	7/19/00	CAVE CREEK, AZ	Schweizer 269C	N577TA	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	5/11/00	MESA, AZ	Eurocopter AS350B2	N851HW	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	4/20/00	GREEN VALLEY, AZ	Hughes OH-6A	N61869	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	4/18/00	GRAND CANYON, AZ	Bell 206L-3	N2267N	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter (D.B.A. KENAI HELICOPTERS)
Final	4/16/00	GRAND CANYON, AZ	Bell 407	N175PA	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter PAPILLON AIRWAYS INC. (D.B.A. PAPILLON GRAND CYN HELICOPTERS)

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Rep't Status	Date	Location	Make / Model	Regist Number	Severity	Type of Air Carrier Operation and Carrier Name (Doing Business As)
<u>Prel</u>	1/4/03	Collinsville, CA	Schweizer 269C	N98TH	Fatal(1)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	12/18/02	Los Banos, CA	Schweizer 269C	N642KC	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	11/21/02	Monterey, CA	Asmus EXEC 162F	N162LC	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	11/2/02	Pollock Pines, CA	Bell 47G-2	N2616B	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	10/17/02	Hayward, CA	Schweizer 269C	N61416	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	10/3/02	RIALTO, CA	McDonnell Douglas 600N	N625SB	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	9/29/02	Bishop, CA	Eurocopter AS350- B3	N352SA	Nonfatal	Public Use
<u>Prel</u>	9/23/02	Silverado, CA	Robinson R22B	N2331	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	9/7/02	Nipton, CA	Bell 222UT	N417MA	Fatal(3)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	8/30/02	LYTLE CREEK, CA	Sikorsky S-55T	N747A	Nonfatal	Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load
<u>Prel</u>	8/24/02	OASIS, CA	Bell 47G-2	N8478H	Nonfatal	Part 137: Agricultural
<u>Prel</u>	7/30/02	Fresno, CA	Robinson R22 Beta	N4074T	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	7/15/02	Concord, CA	Schweizer 269C-1	N20256	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	7/7/02	Compton, CA	Bell 47G-2	N2483B	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	7/2/02	Chatsworth, CA	Robinson R22 BETA	N4072T	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	6/25/02	Ontario, CA	McDonnell Douglas 369E	N40NT	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	5/22/02	Mammoth Lakes, CA	Robinson R22 Beta	N7194J	Fatal(2)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	5/19/02	STOCKTON, CA	Enstrom F-28C	N51716	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prei</u>	3/28/02	Chico, CA	Bell OH-58A	N487BC	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	3/26/02	Dunsmuir, CA	Sikorsky S-61A	N318Y	Fatal(1)	Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load
Prel	3/21/02	Susanville, CA	Eurocopter AS- 350B	N1184H	Fatal(1)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	2/21/02	Glendora, CA	Robinson R22 Beta	N8045K	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation

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Prel	11/4/01	ESCONDIDO, CA	Robinson R-22 BETA	N7197Y	Fatal(2)	Part 91: General Aviation
Fact	10/22/01	Long Beach, CA	McDonnell Douglas 600N	N959SD	Incident	Public Use
<u>Final</u>	9/23/01	Carlsbad, CA	Hughes 369D	N268ST	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	9/22/01	Chico, CA	Aerospatiale AS350BA	N911NT	Fatal(1)	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	8/18/01	Vinton, CA	Aerospatiale AS 355F1	N53LH	Nonfatal	NSCH Part 135: Air Taxi & Commuter (D.B.A. Rocky Mountain Helicopters)
Final	8/11/01	Strathmore, CA	Bell 47G-4A	N4262Y	Nonfatal	Part 137: Agricultural
<u>Prel</u>	7/25/01	Los Angeles, CA	MDHI 520N	N953SD	Incident	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	7/21/01	Tracy, CA	Hughes 269C	N5015V	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	7/21/01	Los Angeles, CA	Sikorsky S-76A	N769BB	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	7/13/01	Blythe, CA	Hiller UH-12E	N9281P	Nonfatal	Part 137: Agricultural
<u>Prel</u>	7/12/01	San Francisco, CA	Bell 206B	N474SF	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	7/5/01	RIVERSIDE, CA	Bell 47D-1	N64580	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	7/2/01	Hayward, CA	Robinson R22 Beta	N4052K	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	6/29/01	Salinas, CA	Bell 206B	N2269A	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prel</u>	6/24/01	PASO ROBLES, CA	Hughes 269A	N8724F	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Final</u>	6/16/01	Mountain View, CA	Hughes 369HS	N4467V	Nonfatal	Part 133: Rotorcraft Ext. Load
<u>Final</u>	5/31/01	Buttonwillow, CA	Bell 47G-4A	N110DT	Nonfatal	Part 137: Agricultural
<u>Final</u>	5/23/01	Murietta, CA	Robinson R22B	N2352G	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
<u>Prei</u>	5/12/01	San Diego, CA	Bell 206B	N2102Z	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	4/23/01	Fortuna, CA	Robinson R22 beta	N806EH	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	3/21/01	Long Beach, CA	Robinson R22B	N8492A	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	3/18/01	Hollister, CA	Enstrom F-28C	N637H	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation

Prel	3/18/01	OJAI, CA	Schweizer 269C	N6123A	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Prel	3/17/01	Hayward, CA	Eurocopter France AS-350-B2	N996PD	Nonfatal	Public Use
<u>Final</u>	2/21/01	San Diego, CA	McDonnell Douglas 600N	N606BP	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation
Final	2/9/01	Winterhaven, CA	Bell 47-G3B1	N3084G	Nonfatal	Part 137: Agricultural
<u>Final</u>	2/7/01	Pixley, CA	Bell 47G-5	N6260C	Nonfatal	Part 137: Agricultural
Final	12/4/00	CARLSBAD, CA	Hughes 269C	N1097N	Nonfatal	Part 91: General Aviation

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