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# Gulfport flight instructor aboard downed Cessna named

BY ANITA LEE  
[calee@sunherald.com](mailto:calee@sunherald.com)

Professional pilot Taylor Dickey, 30, made a big impact before her life ended Monday, when the Cessna Skyhawk she was aboard plunged into Lake Pontchartrain.

She had worked since June 2024 as a contract flight instructor with Apollo Flight Training and Aircraft Manage-



Taylor Dickey

ment, based at Million Air terminal at the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport. Dickey and her young student, who has not been officially identified, flew out of Gulfport at 5:43 p.m. Monday, according to FlightAware Aviation Co.

The Lakefront Airport in New

Orleans, where they were headed, lost track of the Cessna about 4 miles north of the airport. A search for the plane was suspended Wednesday afternoon.

It is unclear whether Dickey or the student was piloting the plane because they trade seats during training flights. The student, a Navy Seabee, also had built up a considerable number of hours, said Mark Carastro, Apollo's owner.

Dickey moved to Biloxi to go to work as a contractor at Apollo in June 2024. Her parents also relocated from North Carolina to Biloxi, said Dickey's friend and fellow pilot Alice Furr of Ocean Springs.

**TAYLOR DICKEY, PARENTS SHARED STRONG FAITH**

Both Dickey and her parents, Randy and Peggy Dickey, shared her strong Christian faith, said Apollo owner Michael

Carastro, who verified her identity with their permission. Her parents were too grief-stricken to speak Friday. But Randy Dickey, who is also a pilot, sent a text message that he said Carastro could share:

"We know that God is good, even when we have to walk through the valley. Taylor loved flying. She loved seeing God's beauty flying over the ocean and

SEE DICKEY, 4A

## K-9 credited with locating plane in Lake Pontchartrain

BY ANITA LEE  
[calee@sunherald.com](mailto:calee@sunherald.com)

A K-9 named Ensey located the area where the United Cajun Navy found the fuselage on Saturday from a Cessna 172 that plunged Monday evening into Lake Pontchartrain, said the organization's vice president, Brian Trascher of New Orleans.

The trained cadaver dog, with handler Crystal Fields of nonprofit Team Texas K9s, alerted a search crew to the area. Cadaver dogs can detect human remains in the water through odors that float to the surface.

"The dog will almost try to jump in the water," Trascher said. "That's where they anchored and put the diver in."

A United Cajun Navy diver reached the fuselage Saturday afternoon, Trascher said. The diver did not find the remains of flight instructor Taylor Dickey of Biloxi and private pilot David Michael Jahn of Gulfport in the cockpit seats, but Trascher believes they might be further back in the fuselage.

"I'm convinced if we hadn't had Ensey," Trascher said, "we wouldn't have found the wreckage."



Handler Crystal Fields and K-9 Ensey of Team Texas K9s, which volunteered to help the United Cajun Navy with the Cessna search.

**CESSNA CRASH SITE TURNED OVER TO NTSB, FAA**

The site has been turned over to the National Transportation Safety Board and Federal Aviation Administration, which are

investigating the crash. The NTSB said that a salvage company arranged by the plane's insurer will retrieve the wreckage.

"Once the plane is recovered,

our investigators will move it to a secure facility for further evaluation," Sarah Taylor Sulick, an NTSB public affairs specialist, said in an email.

Recovery operations will

resume only after rough weather clears, Michael Carastro said.

Carastro's company, Apollo

SEE K-9, 4A

## Expectant father was aboard downed Cessna

BY ANITA LEE  
[calee@sunherald.com](mailto:calee@sunherald.com)

The 30-year-old private pilot presumed dead aboard a Cessna Skyhawk that plunged into Lake Pontchartrain was an expectant father and Navy officer stationed in Gulfport.

The U.S. Navy has confirmed the identity of Lt. David Michael Jahn with permission from his family. The U.S. Coast Guard on Wednesday afternoon suspended a search for Jahn and the flight instructor aboard the plane, Taylor Dickey, who was also 30 years old.

Recovery operations continued, with the United Cajun Navy posting Saturday evening on Facebook that it had located "a large part of the aircraft."

The post said that sonar teams, divers and Team Texas K9 units worked to pinpoint the site.

Jahn and Dickey were on a training flight from Gulfport to New Orleans in a single-engine Cessna from Apollo Flight Training and Aircraft Management. The Lakefront Airport in New Orleans reported losing communication Monday evening with the Cessna when the



David Michael Jahn

SEE JAHN, 4A

# Spillways keep Louisiana dry at Mississippi's expense

BY MIKE SMITH  
[NewOrleansAdvocate.com](http://NewOrleansAdvocate.com)

Beside the murky waters off Pass Christian, shrimp boats docked in the distance, David Gautier is worried about a threat many miles away that he cannot control.

Gautier, 64, runs a seafood business on the waterfront of this historic town along the Mississippi Gulf Coast. But his concern has less to do with his home state than with neighboring Louisiana — or, more precisely, the flow of the water from the mighty river that runs through it.

"We don't control that Mississippi River," says the owner of Gautier's At The Harbor. He adds later: "If it's not managed correctly, it can be catastrophic."

Gautier went years without oysters and only recently began to emerge from that hit to his business. The reason? They

were killed off in 2019, the result of high Mississippi River water diverted through the Bonnet Carré Spillway near New Orleans.

The freshwater and nutrient pollution that eventually inundated the Mississippi Sound wreaked havoc on the region's ecosystem and tourism industry. It is a dilemma that is only expected to worsen in the decades ahead due to projections showing more extreme weather, and its implications range far beyond the Mississippi Coast.

A series of giant safety valves along the Mississippi River have

helped protect the New Orleans area from catastrophic flooding for nearly a century. But now there's a problem — several of them, in fact, and they're converging all at once.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast's protests over the use of one of those valves, the Bonnet Carré Spillway, have grown louder and led to lawsuits, particularly after record openings in 2019. The Morganza Spillway on the opposite side of the river has rarely been used, but opening it more frequently draws concern from

SEE SPILLWAYS, 5A



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