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Flagler County spokesman Carl Laundrie said a single-engine Yak-52 plane broke from an aerobatics formation and fell to the ground Saturday afternoon, killing 58-year-old Bill Walker.

It wasn't immediately clear what caused the crash at the Wings Over Flagler Fly-In. The Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board are investigating.

"Wild Bill" Walker was a well-known businessman, developer, long-time pilot and member of the Red Thunder Air Show Team. A

steady stream of well-wishes have been posted on that group's Facebook page and Walker's son, Daniel, thanked everyone for their thoughts and prayers.

"We all lost a great friend, Father, and co-pilot," he said. "Dad was so happy in life and loved flying more than anything in the whole world. Life is full of risks but it wouldn't be a fully lived life without taking a few to do what you love, I know he believed that, too."

Updates will be posted in Monday's Herald-Citizen.

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 27 March 2011

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Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 28 March 2011

William Edward "Bill" Walker Obt.

COOKEVILLE -- Memorial services for William Edward "Bill" Walker, 58, of Cookeville, will be held at 1 p.m. on Saturday, April 2, at Cookeville First United Methodist Church.

Mr. Walker died suddenly Saturday afternoon, March 26, 2011, when his plane crashed while flying in the Wings over Flagler Air Show in Flagler Beach, Fla.



He was born June 17, 1952, in Monterey to James Edward (Jim) Walker of Monterey and Charlotte Allred Walker of Cookeville.

Mr. Walker was a member of Cookeville First United Methodist Church. He was also a member and past chairman of the Upper Cumberland Regional Airport Board.

He was a graduate of Cookeville High School and Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro. Mr. Walker was owner of Walker Investment Company in Cookeville and worked to establish Region Air, the current Fixed Based Operation for the Upper Cumberland Regional Airport and Livingston Municipal Airport. He was an accomplished

pilot and a founding member of the Red Thunder Air Show Team.

In addition to his parents, his family includes his wife, Joyce Dennis Walker; a daughter, Bonnie Kate Walker; two sons, Eric Walker and Daniel Walker; two stepsons, Eddie and wife Calina Gaw and Jason Gaw, all of Cookeville; two sisters and brothers-in-law, Jane and Al Enochs of Cookeville and Amy and John Scholz of Charleston, S.C.; and his stepmother, Edie Walker of Monterey.

Memorial donations may be made to The Bill Walker Endowment Fund at Tennessee Tech University, P.O. Box 5111, Cookeville, TN 38505.

Revs. Max Mayo and Drew Shelley will officiate at the services.

Hooper-Huddleston & Horner Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements, (931) 526-6111.

You may share your thoughts and memories at www.hhhfunerals.com.

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 31 March 2011

AIRPORT TO HONOR BILL WALKER WITH PLAQUE

by Liz Engel Clark

SPARTA -- A memorial plaque will be dedicated at the Upper Cumberland Regional Airport to commemorate a long-time pilot who died recently while performing stunts at a Florida airshow.

The airport's board, gathering briefly for the first time since Bill Walker's death on March 26, made mention of his impact on the aviation community for the official meeting minutes, but decided to dedicate a more permanent memento of his presence at the facility he frequented often.

A plaque, they said, would be a good way to honor him.

"He was a pilot 30 years out here. I can't think of very many folks that I've heard about that have contributed as much to this airport and the aviation community as he did," said airport manager Jim Kmet. "I think it's very appropriate."

The plaque will be purchased by the airport board -- other pilots and community members will also be able to contribute to the cause if willing. The memorial will be similar to another that hangs just inside the main

lobby entrance at the airport, a plaque dedicated to Grady Allison, another man who had a passion for flying. Allison passed away in 1998 after an extended bout with cancer.

Walker, meanwhile, served as the past chairman of the Upper Cumberland Regional Airport board, and he worked to establish Region Air, the current fixed based operator there. He was also the founding member of the Red Thunder Air Show Team.

Walker died when his plane crashed at the Wings Over Flagler Fly-In. The accident was being investigated by the Federal Aviation Administration and National Transportation Safety Board. Memorial services for Walker were held in Cookeville on Saturday.

"He was a huge part of this airport," airport board member and pilot committee chair Will Roberson said. "A plaque in his honor and memory here at the airport would be a nice thing."

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 7 April 2011

FLORIDA AIRSHOW, AVIATION SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF LOCAL PILOT

by Amye Wright

COOKEVILLE -- The skilled aerobatics team Red Thunder will be heading to Florida this weekend.

But, they'll be making the trip without one of their own.

In 2011, exactly one year ago Saturday, local pilot and Red Thunder team member William "Wild Bill" Walker was killed when his plane suddenly broke from formation and fell to the ground at the Wings Over Flagler event -- the same event Red Thunder will be returning to this weekend.

Robert Langford, a Red Thunder pilot, says the remaining group members -- minus one other teammate who is caring for a sick relative -- will be returning to the 2012 event to remember their fallen friend and show their support for a scholarship in Walker's honor.

"Saturday will be the one year anniversary of that and so, at approximately that same time, we're going to do the Missing Man (formation)," Langford said.

"So ... we're going back to do that in memory of Bill," he added.

"The event's dedicated to him."

Walker, a pilot with more than 30 years of experience, had a passion for flying.

Through the scholarships in his honor, those with a passion for aviation will get a chance to follow their dreams.

Langford said a certain amount of money from the event will benefit the scholarship funds.

Last year, the first two \$1,000 Wings Over Flagler William "Wild Bill" Walker Scholarships were awarded -- raising aviation awareness, preserving aviation history, educating, and providing teens with an opportunity to follow their aviation dreams.

The Wings Over Flagler is held annually at the Flagler County Airport in Palm Coast, Florida.

Herald-Citizen, Cookeville, TN: 24 March 2012

*See other stories about Putnam Co. TN at: <http://www.ajlambert.com>