PJB 4-7-03

Barrington native found his calling in cockpit

A service will be held tomorrow for copilot Eric Jacobson, who died Friday in Leominster, Mass., along with five passengers.

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PROVIDENCE (AP) — When Eric Jacobson eased aircraft into the skies, his wife, Natasha, often sat beside him, his copilot in the couple's dual dream of becoming commercial airline pilots.

But their intertwined hopes ended Friday when the plane Eric Jacobson was copiloting crashed into a Leominster, Mass., sheet metal shop, killing Jacobson and five passengers.

Natasha Jacobson, 26, who married Eric a year ago, said the crash has made her terrified of piloting a plane, but she would not be deterred from getting behind the controls again.

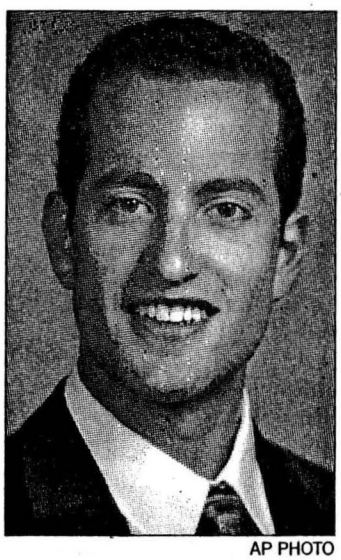
"He would not let me give up," she said. "And if I gave up, I think that would hurt him. He would never let me give up."

The plane crash also killed New York real estate developer and philanthropist Anthony Fisher, his wife Anne, two interior designers who were renovating the developer's Martha's Vineyard vacation home, and the pilot. The Fisher's 13-year-old daughter was the sole survivor.

At Barrington High School, Eric Jacobson was a math whiz who was also a tiptop athlete, competing on the swim team. He preferred social activities to schoolwork, but wowed teachers and classmates nonetheless.

"His brain could work faster than a calculator," said his father, Jeffrey Jacobson, 59, of Seekonk, Mass.

Eric Jacobson dashed from one interest to another, and he attended three different colleges. He eventually graduated as a top physical education student at the State University of New York at Cortland, then attended the University of Massachusetts at Amherst for postgraduate studies in biomechanics.



AP PHOTO

ERIC JACOBSON

Eric Jacobson's love of travel led him to jobs that allowed him to see the edges of the earth. He backpacked through Europe and went scuba diving in the Caribbean. He worked on the social staff of a cruise line and as a flight attendant for Northwest Airlines. He met Natasha in Amsterdam.

Close friend Patrick Little, 30, of Bristol, said Jacobson's all-over-the-map approach was admirable.

"Eric did more in 30 years than I'll do in my whole life," Little said. "He fit more into 30 years than most of us will do in a lifetime."

He eventually found his calling in the cockpit of a plane.

"He never found anything that he really loved doing until he started flying," Jeffrey Jacobson said.

His pursuit of a commercial pilot license took him to Texas and Arizona for training. And he had moved back to New England about a year ago to do Boston air traffic reports for General Aviation Services, Natasha Jacobson said. He also worked on private jets at an airfield in Bedford, Mass.

On Friday, Eric Jacobson was trying to earn more hours as a copilot on a multi-engine plane.

The Jacobsons will hold a small service tomorrow in Shalom Memorial Chapel in Cranston.

Barrington

The funeral service for **ERIC KEITH JACOBSON**, 30, of Tremont Street, Peabody, Mass., formerly of Barrington, a pilot who died in an airplane crash Friday in Leominster, Mass., will be held tomorrow at noon in Shalom Memorial Chapel, 1100 New London Ave., Cranston.

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He was the husband of Natasha (Rosario) Jacobson. Born in Providence, a son of Dr. Jeffrey and Rozanne (Butcher) Jacobson, both of Seekonk, he had lived in Barrington most of his life before moving to Peabody a year ago.

Mr. Jacobson was a flight attendant for Northwest Air Lines and had worked on Holland America cruise ships. He had been a pilot for three years, and was working toward obtaining a commercial pilot's license.

He was a graduate of Barrington High School, Class of 1990, attended SUNY Binghamton and graduated from SUNY Cortland, Class of 1994. He was a member of Temple Habonim, in Barrington, and the B'rith Youth Organization.

He was a certified scuba instructor. He was a member of the Barrington high school swim team, drama club and chorus, and was an avid soccer player.

His passion was world traveling.

Besides his wife and parents, he leaves a brother, Dr. Seth Jacobson of Rochester, N.Y.; a sister, Mindy White of East Providence; his paternal grandmother, Rose (Sherman) Jacobson of Providence; his maternal grandmother, Charlotte (Rothman) Butcher of Atlantic City, N.J.; and two nieces and a nephew.

Burial will be in Lincoln Park Cemetery, Warwick.

JACOBSON, Eric Keith

April 4, 2003. Residence, Tremont St., Peabody, MA, formerly of Barrington. Beloved husband of Natasha (Rosario) Jacobson. Devoted son of Dr. Jeffrey and Rozanne (Butcher) Jacobson of Seekonk. Dear brother of Dr. Seth Jacobson of Rochester, NY and Mindy White of East Providence. Loving grandson of Rose Jacobson of Providence and the late Dr. Leo Jacobson, Charlotte Butcher of Atlantic City, NJ and the late Philip Butcher. Adored Uncle of 2 nieces and a nephew. Funeral services will be held Tuesday at Noon in SHALOM MEMORIAL CHAPEL, 1100 New London Ave., Cranston. In lieu of flowers contributions in his memory may be made to Angel Flight Northeast, Lawrence Airport Terminal Building, 492 Sutton St., North Andover, MA 01845. Family Shiva will be observed at the home of his parents Dr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Jacobson, 171 Elm St., Seekonk, Tuesday 7-9, Wednesday and Thursday 2-4 and 7-9 P.M.