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Atchison Airshow Airplane Crashes; Two Killed

■ Photo credit: Atchison County Sheriff's Office

**(KAIR)--The plane that crashed Sunday morning is believed to have been the same one flown in Saturday night's aerobatics show that accompanied Atchison's Amelia Earhart festival.**

**Atchison County Sheriff Jack Laurie says the plane, believed to be the 1944 Roth American P-51D Mustang used in the show, was piloted by 64-year-old Vlado Lench. The Bluff Ridge, Illinois pilot, who helmed the plane during the air show, was killed in the wreck.**

**Also killed was his passenger, 34-year-old Bethany Root, of Atchison. She served as the General Manager at Atchison's Amelia Earhart Airport.**

**Laurie says the plane, named "Baby Duck," took off from airport around 10:00 Sunday morning and crashed around 10:15 in the area of 234th and Ness Road, near Cummings.**

**The cause of the crash is not immediately known.**

**According to the report from the Kansas Highway Patrol, the plane was traveling southeast, 5 miles south of the airport, when it turned around and then dove towards the ground, where it collided, at 3618 Ness Road.**

**The FAA will conduct the investigation.**

**Atchison City Manager Trey Cocking Sunday afternoon issued a statement to MSC News regarding the tragic crash. "Our thoughts and prayers go out to their families and friends. Bethany was making a big difference at the airport and the City Commission and myself are very saddened by her sudden death."**

**The Atchison County Sheriff's Office, the Kansas Highway Patrol, Atchison County EMS and the Atchison County Rescue Unit all assisted at the scene of the fatal crash.**

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