

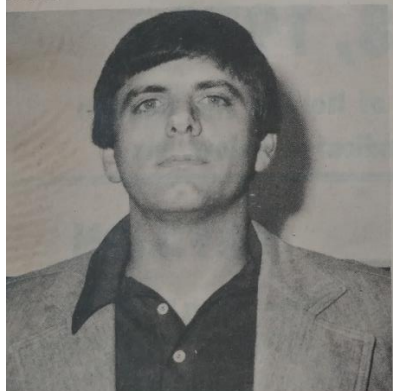
## Plane Down on Smith Farm

A North Central Airlines Convair, on its way to Detroit, came down in a cornfield just East of 25th Street in Pavilion Township. The cornfield is owned by Chuck Smith proprietor of the Gamble Store in Vicksburg. The farm, which consists of 120 acres is located between Bishop and Milham roads and is located about a mile and a half from the end of the runway.

According to reports, the plane, flight 801, lost power in one engine shortly after takeoff and came down in a heavy fog, missing two houses, a barn and ending up about 50 yards from a dense woods. Mr. and Mrs. Smith have a house and barn on the property and there is another two story house nearby which belongs to their family.

"I heard what sounded like an engine struggling," said Mrs. Smith. "Then the noise abruptly stopped and I didn't hear anything else. The only clue I had that something was wrong was the dog barking. The next thing I knew people were walking out of the cornfield toward the house."

Vicksburg ambulance personnel were called to the scene and Anna Brown, Mary Decker, Lee Richey and Arnold Kohler responded. "The call came in here about 7:20," Lee Richey said. There was no need for Vicksburg to transport anyone, as only six people were taken by ambulance to the hospital.



Dee Smith

It was learned that the co-pilot, John McFarland of Chicago, suffered a broken back, and one other passenger Gerald Auerbach of Kalamazoo was admitted with a broken pelvis. All of the other injuries were minor bumps, cuts and bruises.

Those not taken to the hospital were transported by cab to the airport by cab. One of those not seriously injured was Andy Jauregui, a salesman at Simpson Paper Company in Vicksburg. He suffered a cut on his hand. Jauregui was on his way to Boston; he later turned home.

Pavilion Supervisor Vliek said he hasn't been informed of any equipment needed by the township. He did say the township would have to supply fire equipment at the crash site as long as it's needed. It is understood that fire

right engine had also quit. There was very little panic because it happened so fast. I saw a wardress outside the plane afterward and she was urging me to get away from the aircraft quickly. I think they were it was going to blow up. You could smell the fuel here. "There was no warning before we hit, we didn't even have put our heads down." Jauregui was seated in the front left seat. When the plane he got out through a hole in the roof of the fuselage. The front door was smashed and couldn't be used, but the rear door was open. Most people got out through the back door windows. Outside he made his way to a little yellow house across

A mother and small baby were among the first to arrive at the Smith's home. "The baby had a bump on its head but it was all right."

**CONGRESSIONAL**  
**STATE**  
 Governor,  
 Participating Therein, Candidates

## PLANE CRASH IN PAVILION TOWNSHIP

July 28, 1978. In thick fog a North Central Airline passenger plane lost power and crashed into a cornfield owned by the Smith family. The accident happened soon after take off on a flight headed to Detroit. The field was just off 25<sup>th</sup> St.

According to witnesses, the Smith's were unaware a plane had crashed until people started walking out of the cornfield. There were multiple injuries, but no fatalities. Apparently the pilot never flew a plane again.

The incident made national news on that day. Smith family descendants still retain pieces of the wreckage and vivid memories about that day in 1978.

