



# Hangar 13 News

Formerly The Gremlin Gazette  
Newsletter of the

Chattahoochee Valley EAA Chapter 677  
Columbus, Georgia  
since 1979



Rachel is studying Aviation Science and Management at Middle Georgia State University.

Read more at [YE Pursues CFI Certificate](#)

She completed her first Young Eagle flight with Ken Sines on 9/28/13

## Rachel Checks In

Okay! This semester has been crazy, I'm stressing to get through it. I'm currently taking US history and World Lit for my core and Aviation Law, Aviation Safety, and Instrument Ground school for my major classes.

I've flown 5 cross countries so far, all to Milledgeville and 2 of them were solo. I have about 34 or so hours. I have a review flight tomorrow and then my stage 2 check at some point, whenever I can schedule it. Then I'm hoping to fly one of my long cross countries to Albany, then Columbus, back to Eastman. I think I have another one after that and then I'll take my end of course check and then to my check ride. I had to switch instructors because my first one left for another job. That and the weather has put me behind in my flying a lot but I'm getting there. I love my new instructor but for some reason, pretty much all of my flight's with him haven't been that good so I'm pretty sure he thinks I can't land a plane well.

On my first solo cross country, my first landing was so good, I didn't even realize I had touched the ground until I noticed my nose wheel settle onto the ground. I'm pretty sure he didn't believe me when I told him it was that good but it's okay ha-ha. As far as pictures go, I don't have much to give you there. I do have one I took while I was soloing (I was at cruise, don't worry). I was wearing my grandfather's squadron scarf that he wore when he was in the air force.

That's pretty much all that's happening with me, I'm just trying to get through the semester with as little stress as possible but it hasn't worked out too well so far. I only have a month left though, hopefully I can get my private before then but we'll see how it goes!

Rachel





## President's desk

I'm so excited with the 20th anniversary of the Thunder in the Valley Air Show coming up next week. The show has always been our chapter's "can't miss" event of the year. If you haven't already signed up for a position, please contact me straightaway.

Our long time Young Eagle and Air Academy Scholarship recipient gets page one in this issue. Rachel was introduced to flight by Ken Sines several years ago and has been a valued member of our chapter since.

Membership Coordinator Ernie Kelly interviewed Jack Phillabaum for our Member Spotlight this month. Jack has quite the interesting story to tell. In the interview, Jack mentioned our chapter was recommended to him by a gentleman in North Carolina, long time EAA member Hank Balch. Jack and Hank were members of the North End Gang in Hendersonville.



Several years ago I had come across Hank's name, but the only mention was in a newsletter in the late 80s where he was listed as the chapter 677 Treasurer/Secretary. Turns out he also served as our chapter president around 1990.

The President of EAA Chapter 1016 shared the sad news that Hank passed away days ago on March 21, 2017. He was born Henry Joseph "Hank" Balch Jr in 1942. He served as an Electronics Warfare Officer (EWO) and later a navigator on the B-52 Stratofortress, retiring as a LTC. He also made a career at Pratt & Whitney as an engineer. He spent his retirement years raising Llamas with his wife Vickie.

Jack shared that Vickie crafted the chapter banner hanging in our conference room.

If you have historical information, memories or artifacts about our chapter, please consider sharing with the group.



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# Member Spotlight

## Member Profile: Jack Phillabaum



Compared to some of our members, Jack Phillabaum is relatively new – he joined us in 2013. But Jack brings a wealth of experience that has added to the group in very positive ways, chief among which is that he is one of only two active members who owns and flies a homebuilt aircraft – which is the “E” in EAA. (EAA = Experimental Aircraft Association. Get it? If not, see Gary Brossett for your beating...)

Jack returned to Columbus from EAA 1016 in Asheville to be closer to his family in 2013. It wasn't a new place to him; he had lived here for 17 years, working as a Nurse Anesthetist with Anesthesia Associates. How he got to Columbus, then to Asheville, and back again is a great story.

**Q: How'd you get into flying and why did you pursue your PPL?**

A: I was enlisted in Japan as a medic when the Korean conflict broke out. They sent my unit to Korea to start hospitals. My hospital was an evac hospital that was shipped in crates. We uncrated it and built it – if you've ever seen M.A.S.H., you've seen something like what we built. I was there about a year and a half and saw a notice that the Army was looking for warrant officer helicopter pilots, but you had to go to Tokyo for the physical. I just wanted to go to Tokyo, so I signed up. The job also required 200 hours of private pilot time; so when I went back to the states, I started taking lessons as a corporal. Got up to 62 hours and then went to Artillery Officer Candidate School (OCS) and applied to Army Flight School. In November of 1956, I became a Second Lieutenant and Army Aviator – it was a big month. I was trained in the L-19 Bird Dog, checked out in L-20 (Dehavilland Beaver) and in the Cessna 185. Earned my rotor rating en route to Hawaii, where I flew mostly Bell 47s.

**Q: There must be some highlights from your training days. Do you remember any?**

A: Sure. I met Mary while in OCS and knew she was the girl for me. Four days after graduating from OCS, we were married in Bristol, PA – then off to Oklahoma.

**Q: How many ratings do you hold?**

A: PPL now, but have had Commercial, Helicopter Instructor and Helicopter Instrument Rating, Ground School Advanced and Basic. In all, I have somewhere over 4,000 hours. I had one tour in Viet Nam in the H-21 and then in the Huey.

**Q: So how did you end up in Columbus?**

A: I retired as a major in 1966 and took a job as a civilian contractor at Ft Rucker as a CFI, training helicopter pilots for Viet Nam – I taught IFR and Advanced Training. The job dried up, and I ended up in nursing school because I had been a medic and an anesthetist convinced me to do it. So I enrolled in nursing school in Dothan and that ended my flying days. Got a job in Columbus, where I worked until I retired in 1990 – and we moved to

## **Member Spotlight cont.**

Cashiers, NC.

### **Q: What got you back into flying?**

A: A neighbor started building an RV-6 and I helped him build it. We went to Oshkosh and it started getting to me. After we flew to Sun 'n Fun, I was pretty much ready to go. During several trips with friends, I realized I had become rusty. Cindy Carter – a local instructor with a C-152 – knocked the rust off. That was the first tricycle plane I'd ever flown. [Cindy delivered the recent AOPA Safety Foundation Seminar on Uncontrolled Fields. – EK] I owned a lot of Intel stock and sold it to buy a Mustang II kit.

### **Q: What attracted you to EAA and homebuilt aircraft?**

A: I joined EAA 1016 in Asheville as soon as I decided to order the Mustang II from Mustang Aeronautics in Troy, MI. The Asheville chapter was a “homebuilding chapter,” so I knew I'd have help. What I like about the EAA, besides the education and maybe even more so, is the friendships and camaraderie that develops.

### **Q: What drew you to EAA 677 in particular?**

A: Hank Baulch (SP?), a past-president of EAA 677 and a friend in NC, recommended this chapter. I noticed he is not on our list of past presidents, though. The green banner in our hangar was made by Hank's wife, so there's some proof he was here.

### **Q: Why did you choose a homebuilt over a certified aircraft? And why did you choose YOUR particular model?**

A: Like I said, the EAA chapter in Asheville was a homebuilding chapter. Everybody had RVs and I didn't want to be like everybody. I wanted a fast, cross-country aircraft. I ordered the Mustang II kit in January 2000. I had a nice big garage and started building as soon as it came in. Finished in April of 2005 (somewhere near Good Friday).

### **Q: What is your best memory of EAA or flying?**

A: The best memory is the huge help from the members in Asheville. On a “project weekend,” 10 to 15 members would show up to help, advise, and coach. Meetings always included skill demonstrations. We started Young Eagles later, but all in two-place aircraft. We flew YE out of Hendersonville.

### **Q: Why do you think someone should get involved in general aviation and EAA?**

A: If you have flown, or if you want to fly, it's an experience that's difficult to explain. It's something you write poetry about. The education assets of EAA are great. Fly-ins, workshops – you just learn and see so much. The education is fantastic. You can get as much as you want.

### **Q: What do you think is the most overlooked benefit of general aviation?**

A: To me, flying is a thrill. My brain energy grows; I stay much younger than if I stayed in a chair playing checkers! You can make a career out of flying if you want.

I already mentioned the camaraderie, but it's very real. There's an aviation museum in Hendersonville. They had a half T-hangar left at the north end of the airport that we made into our base ops office, and we had lunch together every Wednesday. It was just a wonderful bunch of guys. Called ourselves “The North End Gang.” I still fly up there for lunch when I can – it's only 1:45 travel time. That's what flying is all about.



Jack's pre-flight class

# Chapter Fly-Out

## A St. Patrick's Day Trip to Maule Aircraft in Moultrie, GA



Thanks to Buddy Nelms' connections and Jack Bartholet's persistence, EAA 677 was invited to tour the Maule Aircraft facilities at Spence Field (KMUL) in Moultrie, Georgia on March 17, 2017. For those who don't know, Maule builds a line of the most capable off-airport, STOL aircraft in the world. Famous for their ability to land and take off in a ridiculously limited space, Maules have been seen taking off from inside a hangar and landing on a city street in "Smoky and the Bandit." How tough are they? Oliver North bought a pair to support the anti-Sandinista Contras during the Reagan administration.

Four pilots and their aircraft made the trip:

- Jack Bartholet with Samuel Phillips and Richard Knapp
- Debbie Morris with Jeremy Casey and Brad Glass
- Ken Sines with Tommy Henegar (Tommy Handgrenade)
- Billy Massey with Tom Swilling and Ernie Kelly

Billy left 30 minutes early in N14KM, followed by Ken Sines, then Debbie, and finally Jack.

The group was welcomed by Ragunda Maule and given a tour by Brent Maule, grandson of the company founders.

It was like Christmas Day at Santa's house. Just amazing.

The tour was essentially a walk backward through the assembly of Maule aircraft. We started in the final assembly hangar and worked our way back through paint, then fabric, then jig assembly, welding, and finally, used aircraft and those awaiting repair and restoration. One of the amazing things in that hangar was the oldest Maule still in existence – the first M4 built in Moultrie that belonged to the original Mr. Maule.



We saw some beautiful aircraft for sale (used) and some REALLY beautiful new and re-furbished aircraft about to be delivered to their owners. We saw the fuselage frame for the one of the brand new MX-9 models, which is essentially a beefed up MX-7 that can carry more.

Although Maule is building planes only four days a week, the current wait is a short six months from order to delivery.

If you think you can't afford a Maule, you're wrong. There's a beautiful '88 MX-7-230 available for only \$80K and an older MX-5-180 for \$55K. That's less than some people spend on their trucks! Both would be great at KCSG and would be a thrill for Young Eagles!



## 20 Years of Thunder

EAA Chapter “Can’t Miss” Event of the Year

**April 8-9**  
**10am—5 pm**

We’re still trying to fill some positions for the show,  
so please volunteer for a shift or more. Contact [Gary Brossett](#) ASAP

Air Boss: jim Gibson

### **In the Air:**

Skip Stewart  
Big Air Insanity Free Style Motocross Team  
Chris Darnell and the Shockwave Jet Truck  
USAF F-16 and Red Tail P-51  
B-2 Stealth Bomber Flyover  
Alabama Boys  
Gary Ward in his MX2  
Matt Younkin Beech 18  
Larry Labriola L39 Albatros  
Army Aviation Sky Soldiers  
US Army Silver Wings Parachute Team  
Georgia State patrol Aviation Division

### **Displays:**

Rise Above Ret Tail Display  
Lockheed P-3 Orion  
Boeing P-8 Poseidon  
Lockheed C-130 Hercules  
Northrop F-5N  
Brits in the Valley Car Club  
Grumman C-1A Trader  
North American T-28C  
Camo Group Living History