

DISTRICT NEWS

District III

Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia

I think it is safe to say that all of our clubs are experiencing a lack of growth in membership as the baby boomer generation ages. We all have our opinions as to why, and, collectively, I would venture to say that all opinions are right. The same is happening across the country in many social organizations.

AMA President Rich Hanson has challenged the Executive Council and AMA to make 2025 a growth period. AMA's Marketing department and District III Associate Vice President Mark Feist have been working on tools for you and your clubs to use as guidelines to attract new members. I invite you to visit www.modelaircraft.org/ama-club-toolkit and review the suggestions that the group has put together.

I am a member of the EAA and a member of EAA Chapter 974 at the Butler County Regional Airport in Hamilton, Ohio. At a meeting in January, an instructor from a local vocational high school, Butler Tech, came to our meeting to solicit help for mentoring high school students in the building of a Van's Aircraft RV-12. I volunteered to be a mentor since I have built an experimental airplane.

Butler Tech is partnering with Tango Flight (<https://tangoflight.com>) on this project. In the partnership, the school obtains the airplane kit, engine, and avionics from Tango Flight. In turn, the students and mentors build the airplane up to the initial flight. When complete, the school can build another if it desires.

Tango Flight provided two days of training in February, and in March, we will begin the actual build. When I went to view the classroom and meet the instructors, I was asked whether I knew anything about building and flying RC models. I answered by giving them my résumé. I was asked whether I would like to help mentor in the construction of Old School Model Works (OSMW) 56s in a classroom setting. Naturally, the answer was yes, of course!

I have recruited a couple of fellow club members, Ron Mienheart and Teddy Stricker, to be mentors with me. Ron is an experienced full-scale pilot and modeler, and Teddy is a youth who can help during school hours. My local club will provide test flights and training this spring. There are 21 students with 10 kits being built as part of their aviation maintenance

Making contacts with EAA chapters and trade schools that have aviation programs is a great way to reach potential AMA members. 



(L): Training with an RV-12 vertical stabilizer.



Below: Training for the RV-12 vertical stabilizer with mentors and key students.



Two of the high school aviation students.



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