

# In Memory of Mark

A Chock Talk special edition

## Note from the Editor

### Unexpected Departure

It's with heavy heart that we learned on March 15 of the sudden and unexpected passing of Mark Mohajeri, long-time member and treasurer of Blue Sky. Over the following days and weeks, we've heard story after story about Mark and the impact he had on this club and its members. It seemed only right to throw out the normal newsletter schedule and dedicate this issue to him.

It's our hope that this collection of stories brings a tear to your eye and a smile to your heart.

### Roger Harris:

Mark was a big believer in our work on revising the Bylaws. He and I both shared the concern that it's necessary in order to bring the club into the 21st century. We worked hard together and spent a lot of time on the phone - that was his preferred method of communication (not email). Our conversations were always productive and efficient, with very little idle chit chat... but some! He told me that he wanted to finish out this term as Treasurer this year and then step down. That didn't happen. Mark would have had a milestone birthday this year (his 70th)... that didn't happen. He wanted to be with his daughter Mary when she closed on her first house... that didn't happen. He told me that he and Denise went out for dinner every Friday night. Mark died on a Friday so even that didn't happen. What a shame and what a loss!

Blue Sky will survive without Mark, partly *because* of Mark. He left his indelible thumbprint on the financial integrity of the club and we will forever be the beneficiary of his hard work and dedication.





### Tom Halvorson:

Mark Mohajeri was an excellent pilot and diligent in all respects, including passing his instrument rating check ride on his first attempt on November 4, 2015. Besides sitting beside him through his training for 53 hours, we flew many other times together. He left nothing to chance and always exceeded expectations. He did this for our Blue Sky Club as well, providing financial guidance to the Board that help us achieve aircraft acquisitions, and upgrades to our three planes. There will never be another "Mark." I am fortunate and blessed to have been his friend and colleague.

### Ronald Joffe:

Before retiring, I operated a business in Bridgewater that had huge amounts of cash flowing in and out daily. Thanks to my accounting firm and talented office manager I became extremely diligent and proficient about keeping a close eye on the cash. Having been a Blue Sky member for 20 years I was always keeping an eye on our financial statements and on many occasions I expressed my concerns to our treasurers.

When Mark took over as treasurer, I discovered that he not only knew the "numbers business," but he was an excellent communicator. Any time I sent him an inquiry he responded promptly and in detail. Every response was followed by "call my cell if you have any other questions." On a few occasions, I had follow up questions. As busy as Mark was, he would call me and have me pull up the statement on my screen and we would discuss my concerns. His level of service to the club was extraordinary - even to members like me, who could be persistent to the point of being a pain in the ass. He never once flinched. Always there for the club.

I recall one day on the ramp when I was pre-flighting and Mark walked over to say hello with a huge smile and handshake. The conversation turned from accounting to how much we liked being part of the club. His handshake, his smile, his genuine friendship and concern were very special.

Rest in peace, Mark.





**Stan Winkler:**

I have difficulty putting into words all I feel about Mark. It was truly a pleasure knowing him and spending time with him... I miss him.

I flew with Mark every 4-6 weeks for the past few years. Our customary flights would be from 10:00 - 2:00 to an airport with a restaurant on the premises. From the moment we began our preflight inspection, it was apparent that his attention to detail in an orderly and precise fashion was the first indication of a competent and safe pilot. He



was an excellent pilot, with great stick and rudder skills. Beyond that, he had a vast understanding of the new avionics we had installed. On all flights, we would fly by hand and then employ the avionics and let "George" do it. His mastery of the avionics was instrumental in my understanding and relative competence in their use. All flights always had an instrument approach as part of our day.



One situation we had let Mark employ his cool demeanor and competence. We were on our way to Blairstown with Mark in the left seat, flying by hand. He activated the autopilot and the plane pitched up at a severe angle. He immediately hit the deactivate button and nothing changed. We both exerted forward pressure on the yokes to prevent further pitching since the controls were pushing back. Mark immediately pulled the circuit breakers and still nothing changed. We headed back to N51 and Mark, with great effort and composure, put us safely back on the ground.

His piloting excellence was second only to his character as a friend and family man. Our lunch conversations were often about family, ethics, and morality in a changing political and cultural world.

If you asked me to describe him in one word, it would be "gentleman."

## Christian Stochholm:

*[Editor's note: the following is reconstructed from notes taken during a phone conversation.]*

When I first came to the club, I was offered a chance to fly to Massachusetts for a day -- the new avionics were being installed. I happily jumped in. It was my inaugural flight with the club, and since it was club business, I assumed the club would take care of it.

Much to my surprise, there was a \$1,000 charge for the time. I was shocked! I caught Mark at the next meeting, saying "This can't be right." Mark very gently reminded me that I'd volunteered to do the flight and so I was responsible for that time. Mark was such a gentleman - he let me down *very* gently! And that began my relationship with Mark. (I paid the bill, of course, and haven't looked back since!)

Mark was helpful - very helpful. I had challenges making my payments (Zelle has limits, and between the club bill and my landlord, I'd hit it on a regular basis), and Mark was always an extremely understanding gentleman. When I'd call him up, he'd always engage me in conversation. I got to know the club from a business and operating standpoint through Mark.

This is a man that helped get me through my Instrument training – a journey that took me over 20 years. If I needed the plane, there was Mark. If I had a conflict with Mark's schedule, he was plenty happy to let me have the plane or fly with me. And the restaurants we got to go to! I played safety pilot for him; he did the same for me. He was always willing to cheer me on.

He kept us all cradled in his arms financially. I've been on many other groups and boards in my time, and I've never felt so secure as I did with Mark.

He was filling up the Skyhawk for me two days before he died. I'd left a note that I needed to get it filled. I pulled up and there's Mark on the ladder, filling it up for me.

The way this man welcomed me to this club was the warmest. He was so nice to me and so welcoming and so open. It was more than a breath of fresh air.





### Final Checkride

Do not look at my grave and cry.  
 I am not there, I'm up in the sky.  
 I've passed my final checkride.  
 And now I'm free to fly.  
 To places I've only dreamed of,  
 while flying mortals through the sky.  
 Do not grieve for me, for I'm free to fly.  
 Do not grieve for me, for I did not die.  
 I just joined the flying club in the sky.



### SAVE THE DATE

#### Spring Wash-n-Wax:

May 4, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.  
 (rain date: May 5)

**Come one, come all!**



### Next Membership Meeting

Monday, May 6, 7:30 p.m.  
 Calvary Bible Church  
 144 Readington Road

**Note: We are now meeting in Room 131 upstairs**  
**Hybrid meeting with a virtual option via Discord/CTAF**

**Presentation: TBD**

#### Fuel Prices (ranked in order of price)

- Central Jersey \$5.35
- Sky Manor \$5.65
- Solberg \$5.54 (Must use the Phillips card)

**It's your money! Spend it wisely!**