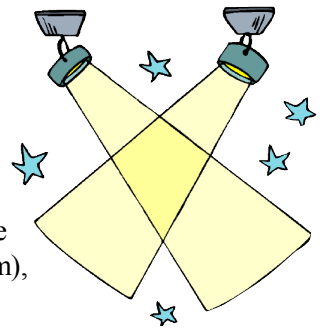


Member Spotlight



This month's Member Spotlight is on Jim and Shirley McBurney. Jim was born in Canonsburg, PA, and raised in Pleasant Hills (Pittsburgh), PA. Shirley is a Georgia native, being born in Wilkes County and living in the cities of Tignall, Rayle, and Augusta while growing up. Jim came to Georgia on a three-year paid vacation, courtesy of his rich uncle (Sam), and stayed because he found a girl here who's sweeter than any girl in Pennsylvania.

Jim and Shirley met in 1964 at the Greene Street Presbyterian Church in Augusta. They've been married 43 Years. Jim relates: "I proposed to Shirley just before leaving for a year in Vietnam, so one year of our engagement was via letters. Shirley was teaching at the time, and when report cards were due, she didn't have time to write, so she'd send me clippings from the paper. She'd write notes in the margins of the stories. I never read the stories, but I'd spend hours looking at the notes she wrote. She had (and still has) the most beautiful handwriting I've ever seen!"

Jim and Shirley have quite an extended family now. They have two children, twins, a boy, John, and a girl, Jenna. They are both 42. John is married to Michelle and they have two girls, Maggie, age 8, and Mollie, age 7. They are homeschooling both girls. They live in Augusta. Jenna is married to Frank Wall. They also live in Augusta and have two grown children, Jonathan and Ann. Jonathan lives in Augusta. Ann is married to Jamie Spivey and lives in Talmo, GA. No great-grand-kids yet!



Jim & Shirley McBurney

Jim is retired from Project Engineering at DSM Chemicals, and aviation maintenance (A&P) at Augusta Aviation, AND television station engineering at WBPI in North Augusta, SC, and WBHQ in Columbia, SC. I guess one job was not enough! Shirley taught Bible in public schools in Kentucky and Florida. In Augusta she taught Bible and elementary grades in private schools. She now spends her time with family, her Sunday School class, friends, and her garden.

Jim explains how he became interested in aviation: "When I was young, we lived in the approach path for Allegheny County Airport, which was the airline terminal for Pittsburgh before Greater Pit was built. I've watched many DC-3s and Constellations on approach or departure. My father once asked me what I wanted to be. I answered, 'a truck driver'. 'No son of mine is going to be a truck driver,' he said. 'Okay,' I said, 'How about a bus driver?' 'NO,' he replied. I thought awhile, listening to a plane overhead. 'How about an airline pilot?' 'Well, that sounds better,' he said. And the rest, as they say, is history, although I never flew airlines."



Jim (at the right) explaining something about his CH 801 to Tech Counselor Al Patton.

Jim began to be interested in homebuilding when he realized the limitations that are placed on certificated aircraft by "those-who-know-more-about-airplanes-than-we-do", and really got interested when the Lord showed him how he could serve Him and His missionaries by enabling and assisting them to build their own planes.

Jim's first flight was also his first flying lesson. This was in an Aeronca 7AC Champ when he was 18. Today Jim has around 1200 hours and is licensed in Airplane Single & Multi-Engine Land, with an Instrument rating.

Jim currently does not have an aircraft to fly, but is building a Zenith CH-801. That also happens to be his favorite aircraft, along with the Ryan Navion. His ultimate aircraft would be the Mooney Ovation3. Jim enjoys traveling and giving plane rides.

Other than spending time with Shirley, Jim enjoys flying, driving buses, mixing audio for the television ministry at his church, and repairing vehicles.

Finally, Jim wants everyone to know... I was born and raised in Yankee-land, but I'm a naturalized rebel. "The South SHALL rise again!" "I just pray it's in time."