

# When Opportunity Knocks



The old saying “from adversity comes opportunity” rings so true. Your EAA Chapter 180 is a prime example. We, like many organizations, have had our challenges and met them. Many of our members have been active and our membership has grown.

We now have an unprecedented opportunity to realize a long-held dream to have our own facility to call home at SRQ. This has become a reality only through the support of the SRQ administrative staff and partners sharing this vision.

## **How We Got Here**

A few years ago, the Manatee Technical College announced plans to add to their career course offerings, an Aviation Maintenance program. This has led to the construction of their new facility now under construction at SRQ. A short time later SRQ announced plans for a new school with an aviation theme on airport property just east of the airport. The new Team Success Charter School is under construction and scheduled to open in the 21/22 school year. A newspaper editorial clearly recognized the SRQ Airport’s vision of the importance of youth education to fill the future needs of the local aviation work force.

We as an EAA chapter have for many years placed a strong emphasis on youth programs through our Young Eagles flights, our Teen Build project, and a Flight Scholarship. The SRQ Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol has had an even longer history with a Cadet program that emphasizes STEM subjects and introduces young people to the world of aviation. The SRQ Ladybugs Chapter of the Ninety-Nines International group of women pilots is a recent addition. They have funded aviation scholarships and have run numerous aviation education programs to expose opportunities to young people as well.

## **EAA Chapter 180 of Manasota, Inc.**

A series of meetings with all these organizations has brought everyone to the realization that we need to work as partners to succeed with the future aviation vision at SRQ. We have staunch support from Manatee Technical College, Team Success Charter School and SRQ Airport to proceed with plans for our facility. The things we have done for years are now even more important to bring the classroom to the runway. Our own facility will open the door for many more opportunities that we cannot now take advantage of due to a lack of space and a home base.

### **Where We Are Headed & You**

EAA Chapter 180 and Teen Aircraft of Manasota have teamed up with the SRQ Composite Squadron of the Civil Air Patrol and the SRQ Ladybugs Chapter of the Ninety-Nines with the support of SRQ Airport, Manatee Technical College and Team Success Charter School to proceed with fundraising for our new facility. We envision a 60' x 100' hangar and a 40' x 100' administrative building with meeting facilities and offices. EAA Chapter 180 has a Letter of Intent from SRQ for us to build on the site of the old ATC tower on the north side of the airport upon our signing a lease. Efforts to get to this point were made possible by several of our members and others who have donated their talent, time, and money to get us where we are.

Now we need you, our members primarily to be part of our vision. You can help first by your continued support as a chapter member. You can also help us kick start our fundraising effort for our proposed building. There are provisions in the IRS Tax Code that allow deductions and tax breaks to 501C3 organizations like our EAA Chapter. Part or all Required Minimum Distributions from retirement accounts can be passed tax-free directly meaning 100% of your donation can be used to help us help others with our building. I hope you will consider joining me and many others to share the benefits we have received from our love of flight with the future of aviation in the SRQ community.

*Gary Stevens*

EAA Lifetime Member 168721, Vice-President EAA Chapter 180

[Stevensgary656@gmail.com](mailto:Stevensgary656@gmail.com)

C.217-971-8447

### **Interested in contributing? Your Tax-Deductible Contribution can be sent to:**

EAA Chapter 180 of Manasota, Inc

8203 Planters Knoll Terrace

Bradenton, FL 34201

*\*Check can be made to: "EAA Chapter 180"*

*On the Note section of your check, please specify "Building Fund"*