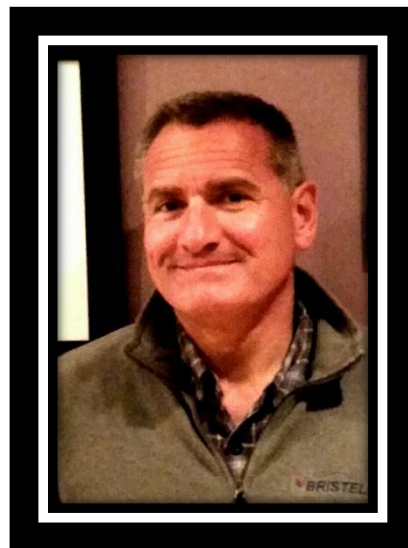


In the Spotlight—

John Rathmell

Owner, Sport Flying USA Services



Tell us a little about yourself.

I guess I'm a kind of Renaissance man who grew up on a farm with an intense interest in travel. I was lucky enough to get selected to become an Air Force combat pilot and later an airline pilot. My wife of 23 years, Sarah, and I love traveling with family and have shared our wanderlust with our kids. As an entrepreneur, importer of aircraft, and aircraft broker we get to mix our love of travel with work. We settled in Lancaster because of its central location to various airports.

How did you get involved in aviation?

My grandfather was an aviator and used to fly Gene Kelly, the dancer from Singing in the Rain fame. My dad was an Air Force crew member and I grew up hearing their stories of far-off travel. My mother told me I could have anything I wanted for my 12th birthday.....as long as it's a book! So, I chose "Anyone Can Fly, by Jules Bergman. I read it cover to cover the night I got it and was hooked for life.



Give us a bit of history of your business

Nine years ago the local light sport aircraft (LSA) sales and training operation was started by John and Judy Calla, Paul White, and Dave Spozanza. After meeting with John, as friendly competitors, we agreed we were more help to each other than hindrance, and began to cooperate on various aircraft and projects. When John and Paul decided to retire I stepped forward into the management role for the flight school once called Liberty Sport Aviation. We developed a strong LSA maintenance operation with the help and leadership of my business partner Rich Maisano here on the field at Lancaster. Rich handles the director of maintenance duties and I handle the sales. We split the test flying and delivering chores since we both love to fly.

What services does your company provide?

At Sport Flying USA Services we import and sell Bristell Aircraft, and provide aircraft sales brokerage services. We provide flight training in light sport aircraft, and provide maintenance, sales and support for other models of Light Sport and GA aircraft.

Anything new and exciting on the horizon you would like to tell us about?

There is always something exciting. We are planning an open house to introduce our Aircraft Share Program. It's a way for pilots to become an owner without the hassle of management of the plane. Kind of like a time share.



We also have a busy show calendar with 3 big shows in

Florida between Nov and April; Oshkosh of course and several AOPA events throughout the year. However, we are planning more social events here at KLNS around the Bristell brand. We'd really like to revive the flying traditions institutionalized through the Lancaster Aero Club. Including customer events, fly ins, competitions, and the like.

One of the events we'd like to cram into our busy show calendar is a Bristell cup race (open to any type aircraft, call for details on how that can work) and later in the season a Chili Cook Off and fly in event. We developed a transition course and a safety program for transitioning pilots with our friends and partners at thelandingdoctor.com. Check out the Bristells with the newest and latest in avionics, great performance, and superior fit and finish. These Bristells are amazing.

Any final thoughts to share?

We love the supportive friendly culture and cooperative family feel of the KLNS team from the board, right to the daily staff in the field, as well as our neighbors here at Lancaster Airport. We at Bristell and Sport Flying USA Services would encourage anyone who's reading this who's perhaps a lapsed aviator or misses the airport (You know who you are!!) to come back out, stop in, grab a cup of coffee and visit. In short, come back out and get involved. We miss you.