

If it's in the Newsletter, it must be true...

# Maine Powerchute Association

## Newsletter

[www.mainepowerchutes.org](http://www.mainepowerchutes.org)

March 2011

# Spring is just around the corner!

### Maine Aviation Forum

This event is held annually at the Knox County airport (OK, it is actually at the Owl's Head Transportation Museum) and it brings together most of the aviation groups in Maine, such as the various EAA chapters, the ACE camp people, aircraft manufacturers, the FAA representatives (from the Portland FSDO). And of course, the only organized powered parachute group in the state, us!

The event is an excellent opportunity to make friends with other aviation enthusiasts and aviation groups, as well as to learn from them regarding the flying world in our state. The program consists of each of the groups putting on a 5 to 10 minute presentation describing their activities. Last year, a few of the groups got so enthused about their activities that they went on and on for like 50 minutes, by which time everybody was having visions of a hatchet protruding from the



Last of the winter flying - some of us spend too much time being on thin ice as it is - don't need to add to it!

speaker's forehead. So this year, there was a "5 minutes each" limit, which made it much better - thanks, Duke Tomlin (the organizer)!

The MPA had Jerry Sukeforth, Randy Autrey, and John Gobel in attendance. We put together a nice Powerpoint presentation, and Randy spoke about the club activities, our fly-ins, and our safety programs. John spoke about the powered parachute flight demonstration team, the Chuting Eagles. We had several video clips about powered parachutes and about the demo

team's shows, proving beyond a doubt to all the doubters in the audience that these things DO actually fly! Jerry spoke about the horrible things ethanol does to your engine, but it was too close to lunch to really scare people.

One of the more interesting presentations covered the activities of one group trying to bring ethanol-free gas into the state, and to

also legislatively ban the ethanol in gas. Everybody liked that idea! Another group talked about the activities underway to get rid of the stupid airplane tax in Maine, which by now is the only state that still has it.

**MPA humor**

Two guys were discussing popular family trends on sex, marriage, and family values. Stu said, "I didn't sleep with my wife before we got married, did you?" Leroy replied, "I'm not sure - what was her maiden name?"

A doctor was examining a woman who had been rushed to the emergency room after a car accident. He took the husband aside and said, "I don't like the looks of your wife at all." "Me neither, doc," said the husband, "but she's a great cook and really good with the kids."

**Upcoming events**

On Saturday, March. 19th, the Wiscasset airport is once again hosting their annual chili cook-off and safety seminar (not in that order). We usually try to get some flying in at that event, so we'll give it a shot again this year to give all those general aviation pilots something different to look at. Thanks to David and Kerrith Stapp of Oceanpoint Aviation for hosting this event.

We generally park towards the far end of the runway past the last hangars on the tarmac (after going through the gate, make a right and continue to the end). We can take off from mid field from that point in either direction. We generally try to be there no later than 9:00 so we can fly before it gets busy. Keep your radio on 122.8 to talk to any other traffic in the area.

On the weekend of April 16th, we will be having our first non-winter fly-in of the year at Knox County airport, courtesy of the local flying club there (and Wes Daggett). We usually get a nice turnout since it's central to many of our members, and this year there's some talk of a breakfast hosted by the flying club in the club house for all us crazy open cockpit flyers.

This airport is used by some commercial air traffic, so make sure you get a briefing from

one of the old timers there (wait a minute - all we have are old-timers!) about the runway we need to use and some other local rules so we don't scare the locals and so we don't get sucked into some jet intake port. Radio is 123.05.

A fun thing to do from Knox County is to buzz Jerry's house (about 7 miles) and drop ink-filled water balloons on his white driveway. He acts like he's mad, but he really thinks it's funny!

**Winter flying**

The last winter flying get-together at Sebago Lake & Watchic Lake probably WAS the last winter fly-in, as the lakes were getting pretty soft. We all had skis on, and definitely did not want to slow down when doing a touch & go. Still had some ice shacks on the lakes and still had a few snowmobiles driving by, so the ice was hard enough to fly safely in most spots as long as we avoided what seemed like and probably was open water spots. Walking out to the take-off spots was a little disconcerting as your feet kept going through the crust dry and coming out wet!

Anyway, a number of us got to try out some reconstructed and some home-made skis this winter, and we're glad to report they all performed as expected, with the tips pointing UP for the whole flight AND for the landings. Jeff Heacock and Mike Caruso tested their home made rigs with specs copied from the commercially made units, Scott Royal made one of fiberglass from scratch, and John Gobel took his set made for skinny tires and modified them fit his new fat tires.



**A public service announcement:**  
Easter is Coming!

Well, we didn't really have great weather for winter PPC flying this year, but we did enough to make us appreciate summer even more!

***“If you see a bomb squad technician running, try to keep up with him.”***

### **Club dues**

Just a reminder that we changed our membership year to run from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31, so if you haven't paid for 2011, send your hard-earned \$20 to Bonnie Micue. That way, you won't miss out on a single Newsletter (horrors!) and more importantly, you won't miss out on the MPA club discounts on instruction, annual inspections, and biennial flight checks. You'll also get to participate in our Top Gun contest, and get to vote in the annual Miss MPA contest, which this year will be the Miss Nude MPA contest (I was opposed to that, but was voted down...). By the way, it's open to FEMALES only - a couple of you inquired about entering.

### **Because I'm a man...**

*...I can purchase basic groceries like beer, milk, or bread. Don't ask me to find exotic items like cumin or tofu. For all I know, these are the same thing.*

*...there is no need to ask me what I'm thinking about. The answer is always sex, cars, sex, sports, or sex. I have to make up something else when you ask, so don't ask.*

*...I think what you're wearing is fine. What you were wearing 5 minutes ago was also fine. Either pair of shoes is fine. Your hair is fine. You look fine. Can we go now?*

*...if I lock my keys in the car, I will fiddle with a coat hanger long after hypothermia has set in. Calling AAA is not an option. I will win.*

### **MPA Adventure Trip**



One of the many highlights of our flying year is the annual Adventure Trip, where we all take a week off and go to places we haven't flown before (mostly), and where we get to take some exciting cross country trips. We don't have a trip planned yet, so we're open to all sorts of suggestions (again, leave out those suggestions that are anatomically impossible to perform). The dates are from August 13th through August

20th. You're welcome to join us for the whole trip, or just parts of it depending on your schedule (or on your relationship with your wife - how long does she want you out of the house?). By the way, it's a family event - bring wife, girlfriend, child, dog, goat, and pig (in case we run low on food...).

### **FAA happenings**

Powered parachutes are, of course, now classified as Light Sport Aircraft, and as far as the FAA is concerned, they're real airplanes with "N" numbers and rules and rights. However, by many of the old time aviators as well as by some FAA (non-light-sport) staff, light sport aircraft are considered a nuisance.



Testing out the newly modified skis - yep, still pointing up!

Why? Well, they have a significantly higher percentage of fatal accidents, many of the people flying them don't follow the rules of the sky like "real" pilots do, and some are just cowboys who don't have an understanding of the consequences of their actions.

As you know, each geographic region in the country has a FSDO (Flight Standards District Office), which is responsible for aircraft certifications, safety, instructors, examiners, and a bunch of other stuff. We are fortunate that our FSDO (in Portland) works very closely with us and supports us with their safety programs and in many other ways. We, on the other hand have worked very cooperatively with them as well, primarily through the efforts of Randy Autrey who is our FAA Safety Team representative (FAAST team). We definitely



want to maintain such good relations, so that's why we often harp on following the FAA rules, getting your Sport Pilot license, doing your biennials, annual inspections, and in general following the rules of aviation like every other licensed pilot does.

However, the FAA is still a government agency, and therefore does some things we consider weird. For example, a new rule says that CFIs (Certified Flight Instructors) can only instruct in a Special Light Sport Aircraft (SLSA) whereas before, they could teach in an Experimental Light Sport Aircraft (ELSA). They can get a waiver, but the FAA has not issued any at this point.

Another new rule is that Examiners now have to travel to Oklahoma City to get re-certified every year, whereas before, the FAA rep would come to them. That added another \$1,200 or so to their expense, so at this point, there are now only two light sport Examiners on the whole east coast - Peter Wallace in Florida, and John Gobel in Maine.

**As I near retirement, I start to wonder...**

- *If the world was a logical place, men would be the ones riding sidesaddle.*
- *They told me I was gullible... and I believed them.*
- *What is a "free" gift? Aren't all gifts free?*
- *I used to be indecisive. Now I'm not sure.*
- *The cost of living hasn't affected its popularity.*
- *Is it my imagination, or do buffalo wings taste like chicken?*

**Hey! What are the odds?**



The odds are pretty good that you can fly illegally in a powered parachute and never get caught and never have an accident and never get in trouble with the LAW. It's really a dumb bet, though. If you do have an incident, the FAA will investigate and take action. If you get asked for your license at an airport and are not legal, the FAA will take action.

So what are the actions? Simple - you have violated a federal law, and the FAA will turn your case over to the Justice Department who will prosecute you. Most likely you'll lose your aircraft, and will be heavily fined. Yep, it's really a dumb bet.

**EAA membership**

There are several technical and financial reasons why the MPA does not become an EAA chapter - we looked into that several times. However, EAA membership is a GREAT asset - they do a ton of incredible things for light sport aircraft and for sport pilots. You can call them with practically any aviation related question, and they'll have the right answer. They represent our interests with the FAA, so it makes great sense to support them by becoming a member. Most of us in the MPA are already members, so join the group!

**Look before you head out!**

Sometimes an event will have to be postponed or cancelled because of weather or some other reason. We try hard not to cancel events, but if the weather looks shaky, check our web site or call Jerry Sukeforth or John Gobel to get the latest information before you head out on a trip.

**Reminder**

Your aircraft registration WILL expire this year! You must renew it when you get your letter of expiration notification from the FAA - do NOT throw it away. The bad part is if you don't do it now, you'll go through hell re-registering it. The good part is that it only takes a few minutes to do it on-line and it cost \$5.00 and is good for 3 years.

**Disclaimer**

Any descriptions in this Newsletter that seem to be real or any advice that appears to be factual is purely an accident.

Credits - Mike Caruso for the winter flying photos.



**The End**  
(Once again, the best part of the Newsletter)

# ***2011 Fly-in Schedule***

Dates are Saturdays unless otherwise noted – most of us get there Friday afternoon and stay through Sunday

Feb 5	South Pond – Warren
Feb 25-27	Sebago Lake Fishing Derby – PPC flyby
Mar 5	Greenville, ME (Kelley’s Landing restaurant)
Mar 19	Wiscasset A/P (Safety Seminar & Chili Cook-Off)
Mar 29 - Apr 3	Sun ’n Fun (Lakeland, FL)
April 16	Knox County A/P
May 21	Bowdoinham (Merrymeeting A/P)
Jun 4	Brunswick A/P First Fly-in (stay at Bowdoinham)
Jun 11 - 12	Portland Aviation Expo (Chuting Eagles perform)
Jun 25	Hampden (J. Williams field) & <b><u>MPA meeting</u></b>
Jul 2-4	Farmington 4th of July Big Event (Industry, ME)
Jul 8 - 10	Yankee Fly-in (Greenland, NH)
Jul 16	MPA Top Gun (TBA) & <b><u>MPA meeting</u></b>
Jul 25 - 31	EAA Air Adventure (Oshkosh, WI)
Aug 6	Norridgewock, ME (Central Maine A/P)
Aug 6	Mainely Sport Planes Fly-in (Patten, ME)
Aug 13 - 20	Annual MPA Adventure Trip (details TBA)
Aug 19 - 21	Lewiston Balloon Festival (from Twitchell's A/P)
Aug 26 - 28	Brunswick Air Show (Chuting Eagles perform)
Aug 27	Bowman (Livermore, ME)
Sep 6 - 11	Seaplane fly-in (Greenville, ME)
Sep 10	Presque Isle (Cyr Field)
Sep 24	Bingham (Gadabout Gaddis) & <b><u>MPA meeting</u></b>
Oct 1	Wiscasset Fly-in (Wiscasset A/P)
Oct 15	Bethel, ME Fly-in (Bethel A/P)
Oct 29	Old Town A/P
Dec 11	MPA Christmas Party & <b><u>MPA annual meeting</u></b> (Bangor)