

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

Maine Powerchute Association

Newsletter

www.mainepowerchutes.org

November 2011

Ready for Christmas party?

A Quick Look Back at 2011

Not that it's over yet, since we still have a few non-ski flying days left, but looking back, we had many good times and many good flying opportunities this past year.

We had a number of new members, and a number of new pilots who soloed a powered parachute for the first time. We had a number of our members get new planes, trading up (or down, depending on your perspective), and we had a few who had to unbend a few tubes (since they seem to warp sitting in the garage).

Our membership seemed to accept the new reality brought on by a series of new FAA rules regarding the Sport Pilot licensing and rules for two seater aircraft. Once it became apparent that the FAA always wins, and that gee, playing by the new rules really isn't that difficult, and that maybe they even make sense since it's nice to fly in the same skies with people who follow the same rules that you do.

We didn't have any reportable accidents within our membership, although we did have an engine out, land-in-the-woods, break-an-ankle incident while our FAA Examiner was giving a check ride to a new pilot wanna-be from Connecticut. More on that later.

Following the standard set by our intrepid Jerry Sukeforth (who holds the gold medal for pimped-out aircraft), a number of our members added super strobe lights (yes, with 18 patterns of flashing in 3 colors!) to their aircraft. Better yet, a number of us (with the numbers growing every day) attached an aviation smoke device so we can just throw a switch and real air-show quality smoke follows you (at the cost of about \$7 a minute for the smoke oil). Yes, it's stupid, but it is very cool!!!

Our adventure trip was not up to our usual standards of adventure, since a series of events caused some cancellations by the usual crowds who participate in that trip. However, it was enjoyable as usual, and it did set the bar pretty low so our trip for 2012 will definitely be better! More on that later also.



No – he's not on fire – Jeff showing off the latest MPA toy...

On the less than positive side the price of gas, and therefore the price of getting to some of our more remote fly-ins was a deterrent to participation in as many events as most of would have liked. Hauling our trailers, it can cost \$300 or more for many of us for the weekend just for fuel, so our members, being frugal Yankees had to skip some of them.

Our Chuting Eagles PPC flight demonstration team performed at a number of air shows and fly-ins again this year – and yes, we got to fly with the Blue

Angels again. The group definitely fulfilled its mission of promoting our sport and promoting the responsible way our club conducts itself and enjoys the flying of these great machines.

So, another good year for the Maine Powerchute Association. Had some great flying, met some new friends, kept our old ones, nobody got hurt, had a lot of laughs, and lastly, everybody got a year older and maybe even a year smarter!

Words of wisdom

This is a reprint of a piece from last January's Newsletter, but since as noted above, we all got a year older since then, (yes, so far this is the oldest you've ever been!), these words of senior wisdom seemed worthy of repetition.

"It's frustrating when you know all the answers but nobody bothers to ask you the questions."

"When you fall down, you wonder what else you can do while you're down there."

"Time is a great healer but a lousy beautician."

"Wisdom comes with age, but sometimes age comes alone."

"Middle age is when you choose your cereal for the fiber and not the toy..."



Nice early morning shot by Mike C. – Hey – what a great idea - the make-up mirror doubles as a chute-checker device!

2012 Fly-in Schedule

We usually start putting together the year's events around January and wrap it up by February, and we'll try to do the same again for 2012. Of course, some of the organizers of the events are not as diligent as we are, so we have to take some guesses at dates, but we've gotten pretty good at it.

In addition to our regular flying schedule, we also do several winter fly-ins which may or may not make it into our published schedule, so check our

web site frequently. We keep that up to date (pretty much).

By the way, speaking of the web site (which is now www.mainepowerchutes.com as well as .org) get in the habit of checking it before heading out to any of our events, as any changes or cancellations will be noted on there at least a day before. We're committed this coming year to not cancel any events because of bad forecasts, as we often regretted cancellations in the past. Of course, things change...

More ponderings...

Do not argue with an idiot. He will drag you down to his level and beat you with experience.

The last thing I want to do is hurt you. But it's still on my list.

Light travels faster than sound. This is why some people appear bright until you hear them speak.

We never really grow up, we only learn how to act in public.

A bus station is where a bus stops. A train station is where a train stops. On my desk, I have a work station.

Women will never be equal to men until they can walk down the street with a bald head and a beer gut, and still think they are sexy.

You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.

Our famous end-of year Christmas party

Our annual big MPA family Christmas party is on Sunday, December 11th at 3:00 PM to about 6 PM. It is at the same place we've had it for the last two years – the Oriental Jade in Bangor (in the Bangor Mall). The location is fairly central for most of our members, and the facility and the food are very good for an event like ours.

We also use a portion of this occasion for our general membership meeting, where we can discuss things we want to keep doing, things we want to stop doing, and new things we'd like to try in the coming year.

The cost for the event is generally a few dollars per person, as the club treasury (under the very capable management of our superb Treasurer Bonnie Davis Micue) picks up most of the tab.

So bring the wife, kids, girlfriends, and the family goat and goldfish – it's a great opportunity to do some hangar flying, meet old friends, get to know some of our new members, have a great buffet meal, and of course, watch our annual MPA highlight video projected on the BIG screen!

The theme for the video this year is "show no mercy," meaning if we have any video evidence of you screwing up, it will be on there. Unfortunately, we're getting so good that we have not found any serious screw-ups so far in going through hours and hours of raw footage video, so we may have to make up some stuff. By the way, all attendees get a copy of the DVD for your archives – I'm told that some of our members have a copy of our highlights for the last ten years!

As an extra added attraction, we have a special surprise gift for all MPA members who attend. That's all the clues we can give. OK, one more. You don't have to feed it.

Dinner

Wife: Do you want dinner, dear?

Husband: YES, honey – what are my choices?

Wife: Yes or No.

Hate that silence!

We had an incident that ended up with a fairly serious injury to the pilot. Richard R, a pilot from Connecticut who has been flying for several years under a student license from our New Hampshire CFI friend Carroll Werren completed his written test and the necessary 10 hours of dual instruction, so he was ready for his final check ride for the Sport Pilot rating with our FAA Examiner (John Gobel) in the back seat.

Things were OK on the climb out (at Limington airfield) until about 200 feet, when the dreaded silence took over. With about a 500 pound payload on board, the climb was pretty slow, so we were too far from the airfield to turn around and too low to try a restart, so we did a very quick survey of landing options and saw a bunch of short trees that looked much better than all the big ones everywhere else. The trees got there pretty quickly, and with lots of flaring as we brushed the tree tops, we were

able to slow down quite a bit. Landing was OK, until a stump flipped the plane on its side. Richard caught his foot in the stirrup and the plane turning on its side caused the break of his ankle. The Examiner was fine, turned the plane back on its wheels, shut off all the switches in case there was a gas leak, and called for an ambulance for Richard. His instructor Carroll (a former fire fighter) came on the scene and was very helpful in dealing with the rescue teams, the police and with the subsequent accident reporting process.

It appears that the engine failure was most likely caused by an inadvertent shut off of the mags. Richard had modified the location of the switches so he could shut them off quicker by placing them on the ground steering rod – unfortunately, that location made it more subject to accidental shut offs. Since then, they were put back in their original position.

While any accident is unfortunate, the student did a good job after the engine stoppage – he flew the plane first. If we had more altitude, a restart would have been in order. So the lesson learned (or really reinforced) is to first fly the plane, look for your best landing option, diagnose the problem if there's time, and attempt a restart if there is still time.



PPC groupies warming up for crashing our Christmas party. Regrettably, it happens every year.

Richard has recently recovered and been released for flying, so he will be doing the check ride over. However, we'll be flying somewhere with a lot of fields, just in case...

Truth in Marriage

A newly married man asked his wife, 'Would you have married me if my father hadn't left me a fortune?'

'Honey,' the woman replied sweetly, 'I'd have married you, no matter who left you a fortune!'

It's that time again – dues!

Since we switched our cheap \$20 annual club membership dues to a calendar basis, it is coming to the end of another year and your dues are due! So please send your hard-earned \$20 to Bonnie Davis Micue (P.O.Box 13, Warren, ME 04864).

We'll also be sending out reminders and invoices, so hopefully nobody will miss out on the joy of receiving this trashy Newsletter and the other

privileges of membership – I know you're puzzled by what those could be, so here are a few of the many thousands.

- *First-hand reports on the many stupid but cool modifications to your plane (lights, smoke, sounds, strobes, etc.)*
- *the Newsletter will continue to show soft porn regardless of the threats we receive from all the wives*
- *merciless ribbing if you're dumb enough to screw up in front of your friends*
- *actual notification if we change our minds about any of our flying events*
- *discount rates on all the unpleasant but necessary flying stuff like annuals, biennials, lessons, check rides, repairs, etc.*
- *really cheap annual Christmas party*
- *non-copyrighted jokes with which you can impress your friends (if you have any left after you tell a few of our MPA jokes)*
- *and leaving the best benefit for last, free advice on practically anything at any of our fly-ins.*

Top Gun contest

As you'll see in our highlight video at the Christmas party, the winner of our annual Top Gun competition was Kevin Oliveira for 2010, and Rob Paradis for 2011. Yes, we held the contests for both years this year, since we got rained/snowed/winded/frozen out last year and had to cancel. Anyway, congratulations to Rob and Kevin for showing superb mastery of their aircraft!

Winter flying

Yes, many of us deranged pilots actually do that. Here are the pros and cons:

For the negatives:

- *it's cold*
- *you need 40 to 50 pounds of clothes*
- *you WILL get an ice-cream headache*
- *you need to strap skis onto your landing gear*
- *your nose will be dripping (more than usual)*
- *you'll look like hell when you finally stop and take off your 40 to 50 pounds of winter gear, and the hordes of sex-crazed groupies who usually attack us when we land will be very turned off*
- *you may lose several fingers to frostbite*
- *it's cold (did I say that already?)*

For the positives.

- *it's not as bad as the North Pole in the winter*
- *the sex-crazed groupies don't look so hot either in their winter gear anyway*
- *that pretty much covers it*

There you have it – obviously a clear winner for the positives! Even if you dispute our math, you should

try it – we have a lot of fun out there. Call any of us grizzled winter veterans for advice on skis, gear, missing limbs, etc.

As usual, in addition to impromptu pick-up events at any time, we have three planned events - dates will be firmed up as we get close - check the MPA web site for up to the minute status.

Late January - in Warren, on South Pond;

Mid February - Sebago Lake fishing derby;

End of February or in early March - Moosehead Lake, staying at Kelly's Landing motel/restaurant in Greenville.

Aircraft equipment

Jeff Heacock just purchased a new Infinity with an elliptical chute (Jerry already has been flying those). The performance Jeff has been able to get from those chutes is pretty impressive – the lift capacity and the climb rate are far superior to the standard rectangular chutes that most of us fly. A number of our other members are looking to switch. Call Jeff if you want to know more about them - his number is on our web site.

Another item that some of us are adding to our aircraft is an electric fuel pump (just regular automotive type). Yes, Jerry already had one installed on his forever! Anyway, to add it is a simple process, and is an excellent backup to our fairly reliable vacuum pumps. Also helps in engine starts on cold days. Call Jerry for more information.

Donation

Father O'Malley answers the phone.

'Hello, is this Father O'Malley?'

'Yes, it is!'

'This is the IRS Can you help us?'

'Yes, I believe I can!'

'Do you know a Ted Houlihan?'

'Yes, I do!'

'Is he a member of your congregation?'

'Yes, he is!'

'Did he donate \$10,000 to the church?'

'Yes, he will'



What am I doing here?

Disclaimer

This Newsletter was market tested without using any humans with an IQ over 50. It was unanimously passed by this group, and therefore received the seal of approval from the U.S. Congress.



The End (it wouldn't be a Newsletter without it!

