

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

# Maine Powerchute Association

## Newsletter

[www.maine-powerchutes.org](http://www.maine-powerchutes.org)

February 2012

### Winter flying in full swing

Well, full swing is probably more wishful thinking than reality, since most of our lakes are not frozen enough to safely fly off them. However, doing some touch-and-go activity without slowing down is fun, as long as there are some snowmobile tracks somewhere on the lake.

Some of our boys have been out flying off either smaller, shallower lakes or from snow covered fields, so we are officially in the winter flying mode. If you're interested, call John Gobel to get information about getting skis if you don't have them – Jeff Heacock, Scott Royal, and Mike Caruso are experts at ski construction by now, so they can give you plenty of advice. They may start out by asking you if you are sane – just say “yes,” regardless of your true sanity status.



*Wow! Skis and smoke – it just doesn't get any better than this! (Mike C. photo)*

Anyway, we have lots of fun out there, even though most of the flights are fairly short as we usually end before the ice-cream-headache sets in too badly. The scenery is beautiful, lift is great, and with skis, there are opportunities to land almost anywhere. It's also fun to leave ski marks in the snow from a touch-and-go. The fishermen scratch their head as they try to figure out how those marks could have gotten there and how they just disappeared...

We have three MPA winter fly-ins scheduled – see if you can make them! In addition, of course, impromptu events can be held any time. So here's the current schedule:

**February 18-19:** Annual fishing derby on Sebago Lake – we're invited for fly-bys, hang-outs, show-offs, etc. They plow a runway for us. Weather is iffy at this point, however...

**Feb. 24-25:** Annual winter festival at Bethel – for this, you don't need skis (although it's better with them), as the runway is well cleared so wheels are fine. Lots of town folk waving with all five fingers, and truly beautiful mountain scenery. We can fly over Sugarloaf ski area also.

**March 3-4:** Moosehead Lake, Kelly's Landing motel/restaurant in Greenville. Great venue, lots of fun. Reserve rooms at Kelly's Landing now, or at any of several nearby motels (unless you're a real man, and sleep in your camper). From the restaurant, we can watch the whole bay and all the flying while eating french fries and drinking hot chocolate.

### Lessons learned

Two of our members had some incidents in the last couple of months, so as usual, we are all better pilots because of the experiences they had and from which we can all learn as well.

The first incident involved taking off with an elliptical chute from a grass field, with generally low winds and a passenger aboard. From the best we can reconstruct the event, a cross wind gust from passing a structure un-centered the chute, so giving it full power at that time caused a roll-over on the ground. No one was injured, but fixing the damage to the chute and the airframe costs somewhere around \$3,000. We all need to show lots of respect for our planes and don't take any takeoff for granted, pay

attention, and make damn sure you have everything correct before full power is applied.

The second incident did cause a minor injury when the pilot could not clear a tree and ended up on top of it, suspended by the chute. Not too much damage to the chute or the plane. Misjudging the wind (and therefore the amount of distance needed to clear an obstacle) was probably the culprit. We all need to remember about rotors – wind blowing into an obstacle (tree lines, mountains, buildings, etc) will cause downward rotors on the other side of it. So if you're flying towards or near an obstacle with decent winds blowing, do not put yourself in a position where the downdraft will keep you from climbing normally.

### **Christmas party – just lovely!**

We had one of best turn-outs yet for this annual event, with over 20 of our MPAers attending. Lots of laughs, lots of food and drink, and most importantly, lots of catching up with old friends, filled with war stories, of course. Also had our general membership meeting, covering all the crucial issues we faced during the past year (I can't think of any right now, but I'm sure there were some...). Lastly, we showed our annual MPA Highlight video on the big screen, with lots of 1960s music for all our old folks (old is relative, of course). Due to the superb stewardship of our superb treasurer Bonnie, we had enough money left over to pay for most of the event.

We also gave out our official 2012 MPA T-shirt (see picture) for all the members who were present. We have more of them for the rest of the membership for \$15, since we had to buy more. We'll have them at all out fly-ins, so you can become one of the elite (the 1% in the U.S. who have this shirt!!!). We also have extra copies of the Highlight DVD, so call John Gobel and he'll send you one for free. Just remember – you get what you pay for!



*The official MPA T-Shirt – front and back. How could you live without one?*

### **Puzzles of the universe**

*Is there ever a day that mattresses are not on sale?*

*Why is it that whenever you attempt to catch something that's falling off the table you always manage to knock something else over?*

*How come you never hear father-in-law jokes?*

*Why did Kamikaze pilots wear helmets?*

### **Jerry's gold medal at risk**

Jerry Sukeforth has been the undisputed champ for having the most pimped-out plane for many years now. He had light, sirens, loudspeakers, cup holders, decals, tattoos, mud flaps, etc. However, his reign is under some serious threats from a number of our members.

Just like Kodak, Polaroid, Quiznos, Yahoo, and others (who are now bankrupt), Jerry has failed to keep up with new technology and a changing world! So now the young gun slingers are challenging the old king with aviation smoke, 18 pattern strobe lights, 110 pattern color changing light strips, metal flake sparkle paint, and frame and helmet mounted HD video cameras. And a fox tail. And a partridge in a pear tree.

### **Dues again!**

Our membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. Bonnie collected our bargain-basement annual dues of \$20 from everybody at the Christmas party, so those of you who did not attend, send your check or \$20 in unmarked bills to Bonnie Davis Micue, P.O.Box 13, Warren, ME 04864. And again, don't ask what you get for your money – there are so many benefits, we couldn't possibly list them here. Or anywhere else, for that matter.

### A very erotic story

*A successful rancher died and left everything to his devoted wife. She was a very good-looking woman and determined to keep the ranch, but knew very little about ranching, so she decided to place an ad in the newspaper for a ranch hand.*

*Two cowboys applied for the job. One was gay and the other a drunk.*

*She thought long and hard about it, and when no one else applied she decided to hire the gay guy, figuring it would be safer to have him around the house than the drunk.*

*The gay guy proved to be a hard worker who put in long hours every day and knew a lot about ranching. For weeks, the two of them worked, and the ranch was doing very well.*

*Then one day, the rancher's widow said to the hired hand, "You have done a really good job, and the ranch looks great. You should go into town and kick up your heels." The hired hand readily agreed and went into town one Saturday night.*

*One o'clock came, however, and he didn't return.*

*Two o'clock and no hired hand.*

*Finally the ranch hand returned around two-thirty, and upon entering the room, he found the rancher's widow sitting by the fireplace with a glass of wine, waiting for him. She quietly called him over to her.*

*"Unbutton my blouse and take it off," she said.*

*Trembling, he did as she directed. "Now take off my boots."*

*He did as she asked, ever so slowly.. "Now take off my socks."*

*He removed each gently and placed them neatly by her boots.*

*"Now take off my skirt."*

*He slowly unbuttoned it, constantly watching her eyes in the fire light.*

*"Now take off my bra..." Again, with trembling hands, he did as he was told and dropped it to the floor.*

*Then she looked at him and said, "If you ever wear my clothes into town again, you're fired."*

### Fly-in schedule

We start the long and difficult process of contacting all our prospective fly-in events and nailing down the dates about this time of year, and hopefully get it compiled and published in the March Newsletter. The MPA-only events are pretty easy, but where we are visitors to other fly-ins, we have to try to get them to nail down their dates. But we always prevail, so stand by for another year full of fun events and good flying!

We do not have any specifics for our annual adventure trip, so we're open to suggestions. Also, if you have any ideas for any new events, or for modifying existing events, let us know! Oh, by the way, every year we get the suggestion to have our MPA cheerleaders (see pictures) attend ALL of our fly-ins, and not only the ones you can't make. We'll try, but no promises...

### Weather report from Florida

Courtesy of Robin and Darlene from Key West, Florida – 76 degrees, light breeze, no clouds. Almost like Maine.

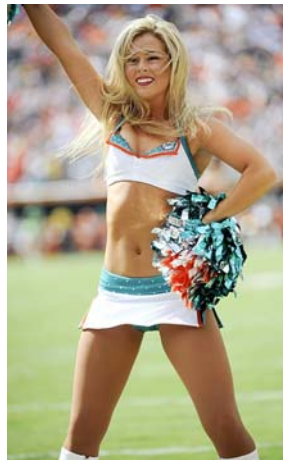
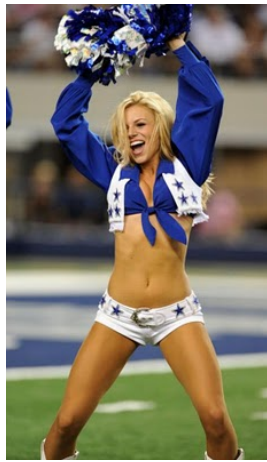
### Safety



*Aviation artistry from Mike C. – we'll be using it as the MPA recruiting poster!*

In flying any aircraft, the absolutely most important component of the event is being able to control your machine – to have it go exactly where you want it. In our PPCs, most of that is accomplished with the steering lines (through the foot pedals).

It is therefore VERY important that the steering lines are not obstructed in any way, and that they in fact control the direction of the aircraft. You need to make absolutely sure **BEFORE** you are airborne that you have a working, unobstructed set of steering lines. This is accomplished by pumping both pedals as soon as you give it power for your take-off roll. If you do not have clear travel, simply cut the throttle back and stop to fix whatever was wrong. You are still on the ground, so you have no problems. If you discover a steering line issue in the air, you have **a lot** of problems!



*Just three of the NFL cheerleaders who left their teams to become MPA cheerleaders*

**Last minute reminders**

- There will be several Safety Seminars given by the FAA FSDO (Flight Standards District Office) over the year. Attending these gives you credit in your FAA records, and will help you if you ever screw up and need to deal with the FAA. Also, they will make you a better pilot!

- Your Sport Pilot license must be accompanied by a current biennial flight review, given by a CFI (Certified Flight Instructor) or a DPE (Designated Pilot Examiner). We have one of each in our club (Randy Autrey and John Gobel) so make sure you get that no later than two years from the time of your last review.
- Your aircraft must be inspected annually by a A&P mechanic (or by you if you passed the FAA approved course). Again, we have an A&P in our club (Scott Royal) who does the inspection for a very reasonable fee.
- Pay your dues to Bonnie – why would you want to miss out on this trashy Newsletter? Besides, by maintaining your membership, you can brag to everybody that you have friends in low places.

Steering lines travel through and around many potential snags on their way to the corner of your chute. There have been numerous occasions where pilots have had a steering line stuck, and they had to try to un-snag it in the air. You may have to be pretty lucky to accomplish that.

Get in the habit of doing this quick pedal pump two or three times as soon as you give it throttle and you feel the chute inflate. It not only ensures you have steering during your flight, it also helps to inflate your chute quicker!

Our CFI-s teach this technique to all new students, and our FFA Examiner looks for that on check rides and on biennial flight reviews.

**Rain or shine**

Or wind or clouds or thunderstorms or pestilence or hail or pandemic plague, we will still have our fly-ins this year. Over the last couple of years, we cancelled some of our events in anticipation of bad weather, and almost always, there were good opportunities for flying. So, except for like 100% certainty of no flying opportunities (and maybe a comeback of the Bubonic plague), we will march ahead. Why do I have the feeling that I may be the only one there sometime?

**More puzzles of the universe**

*Why do we press harder on a remote control when we know the batteries are getting weak?*

*Why do they use sterilized needles for lethal injections?*

*Why doesn't Tarzan have a beard?*

*Whose cruel idea was it to put an "s" in the word "lisp?"*

**Closing thought**

*The statistics on sanity say that one out of every four persons is suffering from some sort of mental illness. Think of your three best friends. If they're OK, then it's you.*

**Disclaimer**

This Newsletter was not approved by any of the Republican candidates. In addition, as of this date, no government agency has been formed to protect the reader from its content. However, that may be different by next month.



**The End**

(once again, the highlight of the Newsletter)