

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

Maine Powerchute Association

Newsletter

www.maine-powerchutes.org

November 2012

Winter flying – are you ready?

“Thank God, it’s finally here!” you say? Well, OK, maybe nobody actually says that, but winter flying can be exhilarating! (By the way, “exhilarating” is the word we use for an experience that feels great when it’s over). So in case you have forgotten what an ice-cream-headache feels like, or what nose-drippings do to your radio mike, or what frostbite does to your body parts, or the feeling you get after you’ve stopped rolling and your chute is coming down and the engine is still running because you can’t hit the magneto switch with your double-thick mittens, then you’re in luck – winter flying is almost here!

Annual MPA Christmas Party!

This is usually our best fly-in of the year since it’s almost never rained out, the winds are never too high, nobody crashes, the fuel is cheap, nobody gets stuck in the mud, and it usually has the highest attendance. So we’ll make this year’s event another fun afternoon, seeing old friends (who got a year older this year, surprisingly!), have a nice dinner, and watch our infamous highlight video where any screw-up we caught on tape any time during the year will be mercilessly shown.

In addition, we also have our annual MPA member meeting where we discuss what direction we want to go in the future, how we can make the world a better place, why we should really pay more taxes, and how we can save the whales. Just kidding about the last three.

So come one, come all – bring the wife, girlfriend, children, significant other, insignificant other, or anyone else (except a goat) who would enjoy the senseless aviator banter, flying stories, lots of laughs, and just the warm camaraderie of good friends. So here are the details:

Date: Sunday, December 9, 2012

Time: 3 PM to about 6 PM

Place: Capital Buffet, 208 Western Ave. Augusta, ME (right by the airport & Guard Armory)

Cost: The club picks up most of the tab – may cost a few dollars per person for drinks or tips.

Gifts: a DVD with the MPA Flying Highlights on it – worth about 39 cents, but it’s a collectors’ item that has been known to appreciate in the future to incredible heights – some have sold on the black market for as high as 59 cents.

Attendees: All current MPA members and their guests.

Other notes: Great time to pay your annual dues for 2013 – still only \$20 – bargain of the century!



Are you in the mood yet? Frozen lake, beautiful snow, flying like a bird – what could be more fun in the winter? Don’t answer that...

Procrastinators’ Club meeting

Since many of our MPA members are also members in this club, we regret to tell you that the October meeting has been again postponed to some later date. Sorry about not letting you know sooner – we meant to do it but just never got to it.

Ladies, if a man says he’ll fix it, he will. There’s no need to remind him every six months.

MPA mystery of the month

OK, this is just too good to pass up. The picture below shows one of our star members, Angelo Chirico (he's the one in the middle). Neither of the two scrumptious ladies next to him is his lovely and talented wife Sheila. Nor are they the ladies of ill repute who usually follow him wherever he goes (he always walks around with many \$20 bills sticking out of his pockets). So just who are these mystery beauties? And why does Angelo have the biggest S.E. grin on his face I've ever seen?

Since inquiring minds want to know, here are some clues. He is sitting in his PPC. Neither lady speaks English, (or any other language). The ladies are not inflatable. Angelo's shoulders are smiling more broadly than he is.



Trying to solve the mystery, we took a survey of most of our MPA members to see what their best guess at a solution is. Here are the top 10 answers:

10. Angelo is richer than he looks.
9. The girls are drugged.
8. They are his sisters.
7. They are his parole officers.
6. All women lack good judgment when they are that close to a real PPC.
5. He told them he is the Navy Seal who shot Bin Laden.
4. The girls are psychopaths doing community service instead of going to jail.
3. They are girl scouts trying to earn the "I was nice to a dirty old man" badge.
2. His nick name in high school was "The Genoa Salami."
1. The girls are blind.

Oh, and the most frequent response: "Photoshop!"

FAA rules reminder

Not that the Angelo story has anything to do with it, but just a reminder to all our members that if you own an Experimental classified aircraft (ELSA – Experimental Light Sport Aircraft), you cannot use it for a bunch of things – among them are using it for business, renting it for money, or even raising money for charity with raffles, etc. You CAN charge people for rides as long as it is only for the splitting of the actual fuel and maintenance costs. If you own a SLSA (Special Light Sport Aircraft), those things are legal, as an SLSA is NOT experimental and is factory certified.

Coming soon – How Low Can You Go?

The star student of all things FAA, Randy Autrey, is crafting an article we have all been waiting for – a definitive and authoritative explanation and clarification of altitude restrictions in a powered parachute – what's legal, what's smart, and why the two should never differ. Look for it in your next Newsletter. I don't believe Randy is a card-carrying member of the Procrastinators' Club, although I think he would give a guest speech if the meetings were not always postponed.

Finally – Bikini Basketball is here!

First thing we need to clarify – these are GIRLS in the bikinis. Second thing we can say is "It's about TIME!" - who wants to see these NBA 7 foot monsters in their baggy shorts and tattoos and weird haircuts, running (mostly jogging) up and down the courts. OK, maybe the people who actually know the game, but for the rest of us, bring on the Bikini Basketball League! Nope, this is NOT a joke – Google it. They already have about 7 teams ready to go. As their ads put it, it is a league of "Sexy athletic women from around the world."



No need to write thank you notes to the Newsletter staff – we are all about public service and to bring you the REALLY important news from around the world. Next month, see our article on the already established Lingerie Football League.

NASA's robot, Curiosity, landed on Mars. Early pictures show no sign of ESPN, beer, or porn. This makes it clear that men are NOT from Mars.

More Sport news

Since we don't fly that much in the winter (yes, especially since many of our members are closet wussies and don't fly at all!), we bring you more of the really important happenings in the wonderful world of sports. This piece is on ice hockey.

As we all know, in between the three periods of hockey (why do they have three periods anyway – what's wrong with two or four like the rest of the world?) they have to clean the ice. They use these huge ice cleaning machines called Zambonis. Not very sexy. Not very "green" either, using tons of hot water and fuel and emitting pollution. And for the fans, it's BORING! Since this is America, home of innovation, some NHL teams have overcome all the problems by using human ice cleaners. The pictures below explain everything.

and your wife will say "I told you not to take that road, you dumbass" in that special whiny voice reserved for such occasions. So if your risk fails, you'll be late and subject yourself to the unpleasant critique of Aunt Bertha in addition to the dose you already received from your wife. Not great, but you're used to it so it's not a big deal – it's worth taking the risk.

However, when it comes to flying, "risk" takes on a different meaning. The downside of the risk is almost certainly something bad – damage to the aircraft (equals big dollars), damage to yourself (pain, incapacitation, missed work, permanent injury) or possibly death. So what's the upside? Usually just an adrenaline rush. OK, and usually the secret admiration of your male friends that you did something ballsy (females almost always think it's just stupid – they just don't get it!). And lastly, you gain experience, which is very valuable.



Zamboni. Boring!!!



The new, green, non-boring, innovative Zambonis. Any questions?

Safety corner

Taking risks – we do it every day. Driving is a risk – look at all the crazies out there! Taking a plane or a train or a boat is a risk – again, look in the news at some of people driving those things! Kissing a girl is a risk – her mouth could be full of influenza germs! Kissing a guy is even worse – you could get punched in the face!

Yes, our little powered parachutes are probably not as risky as those other things, but we still take plenty of risks. A "risk" means that when you do something, it could either succeed or fail. And in an aircraft, the "fail" could mean that you're dead.

The trick is to minimize the risk so the downside is very manageable and the upside remains the same. So in a PPC (or in any aircraft), you train yourself to have a way out, have an escape route from almost any situation. Have a field in sight, have a road in sight while flying. Have a cutoff point when taking off from a short field – if I'm not flying by that point, I'm cutting the engine. If you're flying close to another PPC, communicate! A mid-air collision is very ugly and almost always fatal for both. When flying low (over trees or over water), think about which way you'd go if the engine quit.

For example, taking a shortcut while driving to Aunt Bertha's house for Thanksgiving on a road that you think may get you there quicker is a risk. The benefit is that you get there earlier, and you can start drinking sooner. The risk is that you'll get lost

The best role models for managing risks are Hollywood stunt men. They take what appear to be awful risks, but they have planned out each step meticulously, and always have an escape route. This way, they can do another stunt another day.

Our aircraft are very forgiving, and we can walk away from almost all engine failures. And yes, we have reliable engines that we trust. But many of them have quit over the years, and there's no reason to think yours won't do so in the future. And while we like taking risks, and we hold in high regard those who do it well, make sure you have a way out! Plan ahead! You can be gutsy and smart at the same time, and if you are, you can continue to be the stud that we all know you are!

It's funny when my wife gives me the "silent treatment." She thinks it is punishment.

More safety tips

From Jerry, our superstar mechanic (among other superstar things he does) has a few winter tips for us in case you're man enough to do some winter flying.

To prevent your throttle line from freezing up inside it's sheath, move the throttle frequently while you're flying. Snow you may have picked up on take-off, or the moisture in the air may freeze once you're airborne and the frequent RPM changes can help in preventing this.

If you're storing your plane for an extended time (like all winter), empty the carb bowl by either removing it and dumping the content (don't forget to put it back), or by running the engine until it's dry. The risk in NOT doing that is that gasoline sitting in the bowl will leave a gunky residue and clog up jets when running again. Alternatively, you can start the engine every week or two and run it for 5 to 10 minutes to move the gas around.

Add Stabil gas stabilizer to your tank – it is great stuff for keeping the gas fresh. Run the engine until the stuff is spread throughout your fuel system. This does NOT mean that you should leave it in the bowl – dump it as explained above.

That's it from Jerry for now – except for the following words of wisdom:

If your wife ever asks you "If I were to arrange a threesome for your birthday, which one of my friends would you pick to join in?" – never give two names.

NOTE: Any questions about the Christmas party, check our web site or call one of the numbers below:

www.mainepowerchutes.com or
www.mainepowerchutes.org

call 207-852-7300 (John) or 207-691-3800 (Jerry)

NOTE #2: OK, here's the real answer to our mystery of the month. The fly-in which Angelo attended held a raffle where everybody won the right NOT to go up in a PPC, except two people. Those are the two.



Aerial artistry at its finest. Who says pilots are brutes with no culture? Well, OK, everybody does, but this proves them wrong.

Disclaimer

No animal or human brain cells were used in the creation of this Newsletter. Anything that sounded remotely intelligent was a total accident and the MPA management takes no responsibility for it (or for anything else, for that matter).

The End



OK, so how do you get into jeans that tight? Don't respond with the usual guy talk about "Buy her dinner first; or get her drunk; or pay her" or other nonsense – I really mean how do you put those on???