

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

Maine Powerchute Association

Newsletter

February 2013

www.maine-powerchutes.org

Annual dues are due

Continuing our tradition of being the bargain of the century, the Maine Powerchute Association's annual club membership is still only \$20! However, it is due in January, and if our highly efficient and super organized Treasurer Bonnie Davis Micue does not get your check (or cash, or gold bullion, or wampum, or your first-born child if he/she is NOT a teen-ager!) in the next two weeks, she will black list you. Oh NO!!!

So here's the downside of being black listed by the MPA. Besides not knowing about all the wonderful stuff we do as a club, and not getting your trashy Newsletter, you will be reported to the Obama administration. They will check your green card, will send a surveillance drone over your house, and will start sending you welfare checks since you obviously deserve it as you cannot pay your \$20.

Oh, and here's some more bad news. You will be marked as a "very smart" person by the government. As such, you will start receiving magazines like "Quantum Physics Monthly," "Brain Surgery Quarterly," "Advanced Rocket Science Journal," and worst of all, the "FAA Regulations."

And if all that is still not enough, they'll send Hillary to have a chat with you.

So to avoid the trauma that is sure to be caused by the dreaded MPA Black List stigma, send your \$20 to Bonnie Micue, P.O. Box 13, Warren, ME 04864.

MPA Christmas Party follow up

We had a record turn-out for this year's Christmas party with about 35 attendees (not counting the party crashers – see picture!). We had lots of fun, had our year-end MPA membership meeting, had an excellent buffet dinner, had a stripper (dressed as one of the naughty elves) jump out of the cake – oh wait – never mind, that was another party!

We also showed on the big screen our annual collection of video highlights for the year, with no punches pulled. Keeping up with technology, most of the video this year was recorded in high definition, however the projector on which we showed it was not capable of HD projection, so guess what – back to regular resolution for the show.

Again keeping up with technology, we have a link on our MPA website (www.maine-powerchutes.com) to the entire highlight video – it's right near the top in our "Here's the latest" box.

Several of our members made some good suggestions regarding how to make our fun little group even more fun (also some other suggestions that turned out to be anatomically impossible). As a result of the good suggestions, we will be updating our CONTACT list on our website to make it current and to only have the people on there who want to be listed. Also, we will be sending our Newsletter electronically after this one to most people who have an e-mail account listed with us.



The usual annoying party crashers we have at most of our MPA events. We don't know how to stop them – please help!

We also had our year-end general membership meeting where Bonnie presented her financial

report. Yes, once again, due to her superb stewardship of our pennies, we're still in the black after paying for most of the party. The government should take lessons from her!

We discussed our adventure trip from last August, which was certainly one of better ones, and solicited ideas for the next trip. Also had some suggestions for some new venues for our regular fly-in schedule – we will certainly check those out. Randy, our FAA Safety Team rep spoke about some of the current regulations and about safety in general.

A good time was had by all, so thanks to all our attendees, their lovely families, and to all our members for creating a friendly, supportive, easy-going, and fun group that is our M.P.A.!

Just when I was getting used to yesterday, along came today.

2013 Fly-in schedule

OK, here comes the annual whining – most fly-in groups do not have their schedule for the year prepared yet – they think flying is only for the summer! So we, the diligent, prepared, and on-time group that we are want to publish it so we can build our lives around it. But, it's in the works, and will be out about the end of February and in the March Newsletter. Promise. Again, we're open to suggestions for new venues, and for the annual Adventure Trip in August!

First fly-in event of the year

Get the skis ready – here's our first organized MPA event of the year. **Saturday, February 9th** at the Brunswick airport. Our intrepid and highly skilled A&P, Scott Royal has arranged for us to stay in his huge hangar when we're not flying, (well, it's not really his if you want to be picky, but he has access to it), so we can stay warm, cook hot dogs, drink hot chocolate and eat French fries until we're sick.

Some of the airport is plowed, so we can fly off of it with wheels if you like, and some is snow covered

so we can use our skis. With skis, we can do touch and go-s or land on the many (frozen) lakes in the area – probably not a good idea with wheels if there is any snow on the lake ice.



This picture should either get you in the mood for winter flying, or should make you get another blanket and curl up on your couch by the fireplace!

So we hope to see you out there – most of us will probably get there early Saturday, although some of more brave members may stay there Friday night in campers.

E-mail or hard copy?

With the price of color cartridges, paper, and mailings rising, and our dues staying the same forever, we want to reduce the current number of about 45 Newsletters we send out to zero if we can, and e-mail it to our members instead. It is not only cheaper, it is much faster! The Newsletter is also put on the MPA website usually a week after the mailings (we have successfully fought off the many lawsuits from

the angry public that wants it on the website at the same time as the mailings).

So, unless you e-mail me (gobelj@gmail.com) or call me (207-852-7300) to insist that you want a hard copy, we will be sending it electronically. Since we do NOT have everybody's e-mail address, please send that to me or to Bonnie (273-2016), or call either of us with your e-mail address.

By the way, we have removed the copyright restrictions so you can print out the Newsletter yourself. We apologize for this, since I know many of you used the printed copy to line your bird cage, or to wrap any fish you caught, or as toilet paper in an emergency, so I'm sure some of you will miss the hard copy.

How Low Can You Go?

This issue comes up quite frequently with powered parachutes – “Am I breaking some FAA regs by flying treetop level or by following a river at 10 feet?” Probably not – here's the long awaited article by Randy Autrey regarding this topic.



As a disclaimer, this is my opinion and everyone needs to read Sec. 91.119 and adhere to the FAR guidelines. So here is the extract of 91.119 FAR which states:



More MPA artistry with a superb Paul Cyr photo. Can't really tell if it's aviation smoke or the engine is on fire...

Minimum safe altitudes: General.

Except when necessary for takeoff or landing, no person may operate an aircraft below the following altitudes:

(a) **Anywhere.** An altitude allowing, if a power unit fails, an emergency landing without undue hazard to persons or property on the surface.

(b) **Over congested areas.** Over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open air assembly of persons, an altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet of the aircraft.

(c) **Over other than congested areas.** An altitude of 500 feet above the surface, except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In those cases, the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.

(d) **Helicopters, powered parachutes, and weight-shift-control aircraft.** If the operation is conducted without hazard to persons or property on the surface--

(2) A powered parachute or weight-shift-control aircraft may be operated at less than the minimums prescribed in paragraph (c) of this section.]

We love section 2, which states that powered parachutes can go below 500 ft. However it does not give us permission to annoy anyone. We must watch for sensitive areas. (you know the crotchety old crab who keeps calling the FAA). That means stay away from known hot spots. One person can ruin a good thing for all of us. Be aware of your surrounding areas and try to play nice.

Don't buzz sporting events, county fairs, parades, etc. Remember the famous Six Chuter candy drop that landed that pilot in hot water. Bottom line is to use common sense, don't offend the locals, check to

see if there any known "hot spots" where you should not fly. Make peace and have fun!

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight because by then, your body and your fat are really good friends.

Welcome new members

We usually don't get too many new members during the winter time, as sensible people stay inside and play with mama and the kids. Without questioning their sanity however, we do want to welcome three new members – Phil Cyr from the Presque Isle area, Walt Hendron from Farmingdale, and Robert Van Valzah from Richmond, New Hampshire. Phil has soloed last fall, and is getting ready to get his proficiency check ride this spring for his license, and Walt and Robert are still taking lessons.



Yep, we're really pushing this winter flying stuff. Notice the happy smile frozen on the pilot's face!

OK, let's cut to the chase – don't you guys have anything better to do with \$20? For that money, you could have bought 4 Penthouse magazines, or 2 pizzas, or 40 pairs of underwear (I haven't bought one in ages – are they still about 50 cents each? – used of course – that's all I buy...). Well, it's too late – you've joined, so we hope to see you all at some or all of our events, and hope that you enjoy our sport as much as the rest of us do. Welcome!



Safety corner

We've all heard about that fatal accident at Knox County airport (generally one of our first fly-ins every year), where a Cessna on his take-off roll hit a service truck crossing the runway. Obviously that was an avoidable accident – better communications, lights, extra caution, etc. could have prevented that.

The lesson for us from that tragic accident is simple – look both ways before crossing a runway! Then look again. Then look again. Then cross it quickly. We often do fly at airports where there is very little traffic, so we tend to get careless, but please don't! When colliding with a GA aircraft doing 70 to 90

MPH on the runway, we don't have chance in a PPC, In a car or a truck, the same.

Those of us with military flying experience know that the runway is **sacred!** Unauthorized incursion onto a runway can get you court-martialed, or can result in losing your wings. This is so drilled into your head that even 20 or 30 years later, you still hesitate to even step onto a runway, never mind driving on it.

So although no one will rip your wings off your shirt in the MPA, crossing a runway is still a dangerous business. Do it quickly and with caution, and when flying our machines, get off the runway as quickly as you can. It's a dangerous place out there!

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.



What started out as just fun practicing the secret MPA handshake, turned serious when Kevin smeared superglue on his hand.

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

Congratulations section

In our never-ending quest to elevate this Newsletter out of the lower bowels of a sewage treatment plant, we are continuing this feature again this month and recognize significant achievements by some of our members. Since it's pretty slim pickings, we are once again pretty liberal with what we consider "achievements."

Congratulations to Scott Royal and Jeff Heacock for getting their FAA PRIVATE license! A lot of hard work goes into achieving that goal, so nice going! Of course, you now will have to get

and maintain your FAA physical, so no more drinking, eating potato chips, and doing those things that would make you go blind eventually!

Congratulations to Walt Hendron, who was fanatical enough about powered parachuting to buy a big, big PPC and camper and all the trimmings without ever having had a flight in a PPC! We all hope you don't freak out and/or throw up on your first flight! But if you do throw up, I hope it's Randy who is giving you the intro ride.

Congratulations to our newest pilot-to-be Dagny Gobel, who at the age of only one month managed to single-handedly lower the average age of the MPA membership by 2 years!

Winter flying decision, decisions...

We face this all the time. Do I get all bundled up and go out to fly with my buddies even though it's 10 degrees outside, or do I listen to her and stay inside?



Well, what's it going to be, big boy???

I'm supposed to respect my elders, but it's getting harder and harder to find one now.

The big finish

I woke up this morning at 8, and could smell something was wrong. I got downstairs and found the wife face down on the kitchen floor, not breathing! I panicked. I didn't know what to do. Then I remembered McDonald's serves breakfast until 11:30.

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