

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

www.mainepowerchutes.org

November 2013

Annual MPA Christmas party

OK, you can admit it – you’ve had so many Christmases that the thrill is gone, especially since you found out the truth about Santa a few years ago. So the only thing that gets you through this season is our annual Christmas party – luckily, it’s just around the corner.

By now, you should have of course reserved the date of December 8th, a Sunday as usual (it’s been on the web site for only the last 10 months!). Starts at 3:00 - have dinner (or late lunch whichever you like) around 3:30, our annual meeting and story telling time around 4:30, then our long-awaited highlight video around 5:00. We say our good byes around 5:30, and the bouncers throw us out by 6:00 sharp.

The restaurant this year is called Great Wall Buffet at 1 Anthony Avenue in Augusta – it’s only a mile or so off I-95 near the Civic Center (Exit 112B from the south, Exit 112 from the north). It is a classier joint than what we had in the past – since we all got a year older and therefore classier ourselves, it’s only right that we upgrade. It’s still not up to the restaurant standards of one of our most lively members, Angelo, (owner of Angelo’s on Main in Hartford) but he refuses to relocate to Maine. Yep, that’s the Angelo featured in the Nov. ’12 Newsletter.

Biennial Flight Review news

As we all know, the word “biennial” is the Latin word for “ache in the backside region.” It is also the Greek word for “I feel puke about to happen.”

However, in English, it means “every two years,” and for all of us professional aviators (just a slight stretch there), it means taking the BFR (Biennial Flight Review) every two years to stay legal with our Sport Pilot license. Every licensed pilot in the U.S. has to do this, so don’t feel like the FAA is picking on you.

The BFR consists of one hour ground school training and one hour flight training, both administered by a CFI who is rated in the aircraft that you’ll be flying. The objective is to make sure



While awful tempting, doing a touch and go on the sand bar can easily turn into a touch and stay.

that people who don’t get to fly much, or those who fly in isolation still remember the rules of the sky, know how to be safe, and can show mastery of the aircraft. You cannot “fail” the review, although the CFI can determine

that you don’t know squat and that you’re a menace to the aviation society, and therefore will not sign you off. In that case, you need some more training and then can take the review again.

So here’s the good news. The system is now live! The one hour ground portion can now be done on line at your own computer (or your kids’ computer?) at your leisure, and can be done 5 minutes at a time or all at once. At the end, you’ll print out a certificate which you then take to your reviewing CFI and all you’ll have to do then is take him for a ride and do a few maneuvers to show your mastery

of that quirky PPC of yours. If you bring him back in one piece without any noticeable whitening of his hair or bleeding from his nose, you're all done!

The web site for this wonderful feature is www.WingsRealityEdu.com – the price is \$29.95. Of course, the fee you pay for the BFR to your CFI will be less since he doesn't have to suffer through an hour of frustration watching you searching the remote recesses of your mind where you stored all that aviation knowledge eons ago, and you don't have to be all uptight and get stage fright while the CFI is waiting for an answer of any kind from you. Definitely a win-win situation!



A preview of winter flying to get you in the mood. See – you don't need no stinkin' plowed runways!

Scotty update

No, this is not the Scotty from Star Trek, but our one and only Scott Royal who is the only A&P mechanic in the MPA, and who does our annual aircraft inspections at VERY reasonable rates. His job was scheduled to take him far away from us to another country (Wisconsin, I think), but his career plans have changed and he will be staying where he is for the foreseeable future. Good news for us for several reasons – in addition to continuing the annuals, he will be the lead instructor in the 16 hour maintenance course we'll be offering this summer. We will also continue to enjoy his attendance at many of our fly-ins, and continue to have him as an all around great MPA member and friend. Oh yeah – it's really fun flying with him too!



By the way, congratulations to Scott for TOTALLY rebuilding and actually flying a 67 year old wreck that looks new today – I think it was (and now is) a 1946 Luscombe tail dragger.

Missing Newsletters

It has been brought to the attention of the many staff members of our Circulation Department that some of you have not received a Newsletter for several months. We immediately alerted the many staff members of the Research and Fraud Department to investigate this injustice, and after some help from the NSA and the FBI and the CIA and the local Brownie troop from the Girl Scouts of America, here's what they consider are the possible reasons for the missing items.

- you finally came to your senses and stopped looking for and reading this stuff
- your wife has hidden them from you since some of the girlie pictures look better than she does
- your on-line filter finally started working and moved the Newsletters to Trash or Junk Mail folders
- MPA groupies captured all copies off the Internet before they got disseminated
- The Creative Staff Department went insane and started writing good stuff, so the Quality Control Department staff had to stop the publishing
- The editor-in-chief is a lazy S.O.B.
- The dog ate every copy since April, and just recently went berserk and had to be put down – tried blaming it on rabies, but the truth will surface eventually.

The good news is that the editor-in-chief finally healed from his head surgery. Yes, it involved an entire brain transplant – no human donors were available, so the brain of a chimpanzee who got drunk and fell out of a tree was used. But anyway, the editor will have a lot more time now to devote to the timely preparation of Newsletters since his life pretty much consists of picking bugs from his fur and eating bananas.



More good news

To fly under the privileges of the Sport Pilot certificate, the medical requirement of FAA licensing is satisfied with a valid and current driver's license. However, if you have a higher rating, you need an FAA medical exam. About half of that exam is taken up with paperwork. That part can now be largely done on line before you get to your flight surgeon, saving time and money. Go to web site www.medxpress.faa.gov to get the information and to use it if it's appropriate for you.

Next year’s event schedule

Being as observant as a green apple, we finally noticed that even though we have about 40 dues-paying members, most of our fly-in events this past year were attended by a core group of 6 to 10 members who would go to nearly all the events, joined by 5 to 8 other members who would attend only the close-by events. So the MPA Research and Fraud Department did some marvelous checking and concluded that it’s very expensive to drive all over the state for the dubious pleasure of hanging out with a bunch of skuzzy guys, no matter how funny and cool they are. Therefore, most of our members pick and choose carefully how many hundreds of dollars they’re going to spend on traveling to fly-ins.



*More inspirational photos. Look at the happy face on the pilot!
Really pushing this winter flying stuff, aren’t we?*

So, given this superb discovery, we will structure our events next year with some changes. We will still have as many events or even more than this year, but we will distribute them by region so you wouldn’t have to spend so much on traveling yet still be able to attend a good number of events. So we’ll schedule several events in each region, and time them to maximize the features of the region. For example, we would not schedule a fly-in for Ft. Kent for March since those northern boys don’t stop hibernating until July. And so on and so on.

Of course, the “core” group who have either too little sense or too much time and money, well, they’ll go anywhere just to do some flying someplace other than their back yard.

Winter flying

It’s finally here – winter! Those wonderful months of frozen toes, dead batteries, ice-cream headaches, frost-bitten fingers, and those ever-sexy dripping noses! However, for those few of us who have the masochistic streaks in full bloom, we love it. Strap the skis on, and head for any of the hundred frozen lakes in Maine for some beautiful scenery and exciting flying. And as we all know, cold air provides much better lift, so you can finally take your 350 pound neighbor for a ride.

We generally schedule a couple of MPA events for the winter, although the attendance at these has become pretty skimpy over the last few years. So we’ll start a campaign soon to get the “man” back into “Real Man” and get some more of our members off the couch from their knitting to go outside, start up that plane and suffer a little just so you can say you’ve done it. Hmmm – when put it in those terms, it doesn’t make much sense. Oh well, that’s even more reason to do it.

To those of you who check behind the shower curtain for murderers... if you do find one, what is your plan?

Dues

With all the new members in our group, and with the astute and austere financial management of our lovely and talented treasurer Bonnie, we were thinking of reducing our annual dues from the \$20 that it has been forever to something lower, say \$19.99. OK, the truth is Bonnie has a lot of pennies she collected over the years and wants to get rid of them without hauling a 50 pound bag to the bank.

OK, we won’t do that – so your \$20 is still due on Jan.1. The Christmas party is the ideal time to pony up the money to Bonnie and be technically pre-paid!



That is certain to get you on to Santa’s “Nice” list, or at least improve your position for the better on his “Naughty” list.

The consequences of not paying your dues are dire. Just think – you’ll have to wait along with the unwashed millions to see the free edition of the Newsletter on the web instead of the elite emailed version that the MPA members get days and days ahead of everybody else. You’ll be the envy of all your non-MPA friends!

In addition to the dubious benefit of the Newsletter, you can join in all the fun at fly-ins and hang out with real pilots (using the loose definition of “pilots” in this case), and learn lots of stuff from each other – things to do and sometimes things not to do. Yes,

you don't have to make all the mistakes yourself – other MPA members are glad to help.

The other benefits of being a member are too numerous to mention. I don't even know where to start, so I won't. (Whew – that was easy!)

By the way, although you can still come to a fly-in if you haven't paid your dues, we will be nice to you but will make funny faces behind your back. Luckily, maturity is not one of the conditions for membership.



A viable alternative to winter PPC flying.

Another adventure

She's single...

She lives right across the street.

I can see her condo from my deck.

I watched as she came home from work this evening.

I was surprised when she walked across the street, up my driveway and knocked on my door.

I rushed down to open it. She looks at me and says:

"I just got home, and I have this strong urge to have a good time, get drunk, and make love all night long. Are you busy tonight?"

I quickly replied, "Nope, I'm free, I have no plans at all"

She said, "Great! Could you watch my dog?"

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."

New members

We're not sure if becoming a member is actually and occasion for "congratulations," – some have

suggested it's like being congratulated for being able to buy the very last ticket on the Titanic. Be that as it may, we welcome the following new members – hope you'll join us as often as possible in our many adventures.

- Rick O'Clair from Portage, ME
- Stan Farrell from Manchester, ME
- Robert Farrel from Litchfield, ME
- Aaron Shaffer from Newhampton, NH
- Amelia Erhardt (this might be joke – not sure)

Newly soloed

Your first solo flight is inevitably a memory that will last forever – some have compared it the memory of losing your virginity, but even better because you don't have regrets afterwards and you don't end up paying for it , and paying for it, and paying for it, and paying for it...

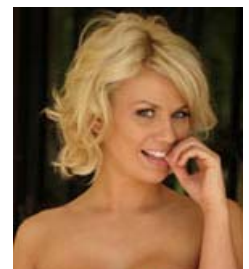
Anyway, welcome to the ranks of aviators and congratulations on this major accomplishment to following guys:

- Robert Farrell
- Stan Farrell (son)
- Rob Van Valzah
- Robbie Van Valzah (son)
- Kevin Kimball

New Sport Pilot license

A big congratulations to Mike Keene for obtaining his big boy Sport Pilot certificate – he worked very hard to learn all the stuff you have to know for the written test that is part of the process. He is the MPA Poster Boy for how commitment to a goal pays off. He is also a role model for some of our other members who are hesitating to go after the license for fear of failing the test – maybe we can recruit Mike to give motivational speeches to these boys?

Oh, we should also congratulate the woman in his life, the lovely and talented Jackie who kept giving motivational speeches to Mike alternating with threats of withholding, ah, dinner?



Other deserving notes

Congratulations to Randy Autrey who completed his maple syrup house and operation, and who held a cool MPA after-hours event in the new building. With the cost of the building and the price and quantity of the maple syrup he will produce, he will be able to sell maple syrup at only \$5,200 a gallon, and break even in only 127 years. On a more serious note, Randy is the CFI who teaches most of

our new fliers and supervises their first solo, and he certainly deserves a lot of credit for the thorough job he does with these student pilots. Also for risking life and limb by climbing into the back seat with these rookies.

I don't like making plans for the day, because then the word "premeditated" gets thrown around in the courtroom.

Attitude of safety

In any field, a professional becomes a professional by first knowing all the things that could go wrong with his endeavor, and then taking steps to mitigate those possible bad things so he can not get injured and therefore do it again. We can all remember our younger days when bad things happened to us simply because we did not know that the specific bad thing was a possibility.

So with flying, we have to do the same, but even more so since not knowing the possibilities can kill us or at least hurt us and cost us money. For example, not knowing that every now and then a steering line will get caught in the pulleys or get tangled with another line can be a really nasty surprise when it happens and you don't find out until you're up in the air without steering ability.

There are dozens and dozens of things that can go wrong in a flight, so step 1, know what *could* happen and then perform the mental checklist of "did I mitigate that possibility?" So in the example above, pushing both pedals forward a couple of times on the take-off roll verified that yes, I have steering.

The same process holds for the many other aspects of flying – weather, fuel, traffic, time of day, my health, peer pressure, experience level, winds, warm ups, checklists, and so on. Assess the possibilities, then make sure you've taken steps to make the risk manageable. And it all starts with ATTITUDE.

"I am bullet proof and nothing can come up that I can't handle" is the wrong attitude, and is one that has killed many pilots. "I've done this a hundred times so I don't need to worry about

it" is another attitude that will hurt you (or worse). Aircraft have a way to teach you humility if you live long enough – many times, things and actions that worked great yesterday for some reason don't work the same way today.

So, the right attitude is that I am a professional aviator and therefore aware of the risks, and I have taken the necessary steps to mitigate or eliminate the risks. Rules exist for a reason, and each rule has come about as a result of some incident or accident from which we learned. So follow the rules that others have paid for, and follow the rules you've set for yourself. Flying is risky, and that's one of the reasons it attracts many of us, but flying is a lot more fun if you live to fly another day. So adopt the right attitude and enjoy our wonderful sport for a long time!

Summary of summer's events

Overall, we had quite a successful flying season this year with only two weather related postponements, no accidents, and not even funny close calls which would have added some humor to our highlight video. As mentioned before, the price of traveling with campers in tow unfortunately reduced somewhat the number of our members that could make it to our many events, but we had pretty good turnout for most of our get-togethers. Anyway, as we pointed out, it's the quality of the group not the quantity.

While each event had its highlights, memorable parts and flying adventures, we'll just describe a few of the bigger events and give credit to the organizers involved.



Well, we had to have at least one warm and fuzzy picture in this stern Newsletter...

Bar Harbor – this was a new venue for us, and certainly a memorable one, primarily due to the superb hospitality of our hosts Mike Keene and Jackie. They actually arranged a lobster cook-out for the whole gang (which will NOT be repeated – it costs a fortune!).

Had some surprisingly good flying around the islands, and once you accepted the fact that going down in the water is really no worse than going down in the trees, it felt

fine. We will add this venue to our regular schedule for the future years.

W. Farmington - Kevin Oliveira arranged this July 4th extravaganza at a beautiful private grass airstrip hidden in the mountains – definitely not to be found without GPS. We had one of our largest turnouts for this long weekend, and again got to fly a lot more than we expected. The good news was that we did not get shot at by the fireworks (although that would have made a great highlight moment, darn it!)

Deblois – we have not been to Deblois for the last 4 or 5 years since it’s sort of out of the way for most of us, but for pure flying fun, the hundreds of acres of blueberry fields is one of our best venues. We timed it just right too – lots of ripe blueberries that we could pick along the edges of the fields where they do not harvest. Tough to explain the blue tongues to your kids when you got home, however. “Does flying do that to your tongue, Dad? I guess I never want to go flying then!”

Adventure trip – since we had run dry of original ideas, we pretty much repeated an adventure trip we had done before. Started out at Twitchell’s in Lewiston for the Balloon festival, then we migrated to Gorham, NH for some mountain flying adventures or the remainder of the week. Ray Godbout did most of the arrangements for that event, and he and his lovely and talented wife Denise threw a superb picnic dinner for us at the end. Some of our braver fliers made it to the top of Mt. Washington again, and even the lesser brave ones flew for breakfast to the foot of the mountain, and then made a half-assed effort to get to the top but only made it about half way up before the winds scared them. While we had lots of fun and excitement on this trip, we promise we’ll do something original this coming year.

Presque Isle – Robin Paradis and his lovely and talented wife Darlene were the hosts for this great event again this year. Presque Isle is basically several thousand square miles of forced landing area, so flying is always fun here in spite of some squirrely winds at times. Paul Cyr makes his incredible estate and flying strip available to us for the weekend which always makes this event a success – thanks Paul! And since most of us had to drive, oh, maybe a two thousand miles to get there, we gained an appreciation for what Rob & Darlene have to do every time they come to one of the fly-ins at the lower part of the state.

Bingham – Doug Sukeforth and his lovely and talented wife Rita hosted this event at their Taj Mahal of a camp on top of a mountain – another beautiful grass strip that would be hard to find without GPS. Lots of trees and hills, but some neat flying along the rivers. Nice turn-out for the event, and with the pot luck supper and the superb hospitality of Doug & Rita, a good time was had by all.

You know that tingly little feeling you get when you like someone? That’s common sense leaving your body.

Interesting coincidence

We had no incidents, accidents, or memorable close calls this year. Jerry had some health issues and plane issues so he hardly flew with us this year.

Survival tips for men: How to phrase a question to a woman.

Dangerous	Safer	Safest
What’s for dinner?	Can I help you with dinner?	Where would you like to go for dinner?
Are you wearing THAT?	You sure look good in brown!	Wow! Look at you!
What are you so worked up about?	Could we be over reacting?	Here’s my paycheck.
Should you be eating that?	You know, there are a lot of apples left...	Can I get you a piece of chocolate with that?
What did you DO all day?	I hope you didn’t overdo it today.	I always loved you in that robe!

Disclaimer

All material in this Newsletter was stolen from reliable sources, therefore the editorial staff is not responsible for anything – don’t even think of suing us. The stuff that sounds made up or ludicrous probably is. On the good side, in spite of the lies told by a certain chimp’s relatives, no animals were harmed in the production of this literary abomination, a.k.a. the MPA Newsletter.

The End

We used this picture, our usual Newsletter ending and highlight, as an opportunity to show the dangers of backing into the spinning propeller of a PPC. Be careful out there!

