

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

# Maine Powerchute Association

## Newsletter

March 2014

[www.mainepowerchutes.com](http://www.mainepowerchutes.com)

### Annual MPA Christmas party

Wow! It's March already? It seems like only yesterday that we had our annual Christmas party, which was attended by a record number of our loyal MPA members. We had our usual superb Chinese buffet, our so called "annual membership meeting" (which once again luckily followed none of the parliamentary protocols and procedures), our dubiously delightful annual highlight video, our Treasurer's Report by our lovely and talented and highly efficient treasurer Bonnie, the open bar, the Victoria's Secret fashion show, and the raffle of a candy-apple red Ferrari 599 BTB - just a typical MPA Christmas party (see pictures below). One of our long-time members, Mike Keene actually won the Ferrari raffle, but the rules specified that you had to be present for the drawing, and he stepped out to the men's room just then. Sorry, Mike.

Flying is definitely not bicycle riding. If you stay away from flying for even 3 or 4 months, your skills (and therefore your safety) will have been significantly degraded. A lot of our military spending tax dollars go towards proficiency flying by our military pilots just for that reason - it is easy to lose the necessary procedural as well as motor skills. The boys (and now girls) who fly those serious military stuff have to have a check ride if they haven't flown for 60 days!

OK, on a complexity scale, where a Blackhawk helicopter is a 10, and an Apache is a 12, and a B2 bomber is a 15, our powered parachutes are a negative 100. Nevertheless, the principle is the same - stay away from the controls for too long, and you're dangerous when you get back on them.



*Pictures from our Christmas party - open bar, fashion show, raffled Ferrari. See you there next year?*

*Judging by the frying pan that just flew by my head, I did something wrong. I can't wait to find out what it was.*

### Proficiency flying

Flying is a complex skill, and unfortunately, has a rather short shelf life.

If you learn to ride a bicycle at age 6, and you don't ride one for the next 55 years, for some reason when you do get on it again at age 60 or so, you can still do it, and do it probably better than at age 6.

We have all experienced this to one degree or another - the first flight after a long winter lay-off is, well, it just feels weird. You're not quite sure if you've checked everything, not sure if your take-off sequence is correct, and just have a little extra set of anxiety creeping in as you buckle your seat belt (Wait - did I buckle my seat belt???) and start the engine (Why won't it start? - oh, OK, mags need to be on!).

I experienced this recently after that long November-December pause when it's too yucky and cold to fly with wheels, and not frozen enough for skis. By January, when the lakes were solid and had snow on

them, I finally got the skis on the plane and got my winter gear out of moth balls (do people still use moth balls???) - and did my first winter flight, I had all those hesitations. Experience helps a great deal - experience is knowing that your skills have diminished and compensating for them with caution.

So here are some tips for getting back in the air after a long lay-off and not making a mistake that could be either expensive or painful, or both.

- Checklist! This is the most important safety item (after your brain) and one which very few of us actually use. But this is the best time to have one - it not only works, but gives you that feeling of security that yes, I did all the pre-flight stuff that I had to do and won't have to try and buckle my seatbelt at 500 feet later on.

- Nothing hairy! Find a long runway - not one from which you can just make it - save that for later in the year when you're comfortable again. With plenty of space ahead of you for take-off, you can double check your steering lines, end cells, cross winds, etc. on your take-off run and only give it full power when all looks right.

- Bore some holes in the sky! Sounds sort of useless, but you'd be surprised how valuable it is. Just being up in the air again, with no maneuvers to perform, just flying along and making some gentle turns gets you comfortable again. Then land, and do it again a little later - you'll definitely be a lot more comfortable and confident the second time. You've seen the Blue Angels before their show - they just fly around for a least half an hour just boring holes in the sky. They do this not only to get familiar with the airport and vicinity, but also to relax and to refresh the muscle memory just before performing their highly complex set of maneuvers.

- Elevate Caution! Whatever caution you use during your normal flying, double it for the first flight. Check your engine gauges and other instruments frequently while flying (that should take about 5 seconds...). Keep a good distance above the trees and rivers! Check your fuel - there might be a leak after your fuel lines sat dry for 6 months, and your normal two hours of flight time on a tank might only be 30 minutes now. Simply remind yourself - I am a rookie on this flight. I'll become the ace stud flier that I am on my second or even third flight. But not NOW - not on this one.

### Dues

Just a gentle reminder - your \$20 is still due on Jan.1. Our financial treasurer wizard Bonnie has no mercy for delinquents - horrible things will happen to you if you're late. For example, in addition to not getting this Newsletter (yes, you wiseasses, that's a BAD thing!) you will be a marked man at fly-ins (marked with a white X spray painted on your back), and your credit rating will be so low that people won't sell you anything even if you pay cash!

*A guy walked into a crowded bar, waving his model 1957 Colt .45 caliber pistol with a 6 shot clip, and yelled, "Who in here has been screwing my wife?" A voice from the back of the bar yelled back, "You need more ammo."*

### More gentle reminders

Biennials - it's much easier than before, but it is still due every two years before you can fly legally. The written portion can be done on-line - the flying portion is done with a CFI who is rated in your aircraft. Simple, cheap, and not time consuming!

Aircraft registration - if you have an "N" numbered aircraft, you probably received a notice from the FAA. This is a new procedure whereby your registration is NOT forever like it used to be - it's only good for 3 years. If you ignore the notice and fail to send in your \$5 renewal fee, your number is retired and can be re-

issued to someone else. There is some complex procedure for getting it back once your registration expired, but trust me, you do not want to deal with the FAA to reinstate your registration once it's gone. They will not be happy, and needless to say, you won't be either.

Odyssey batteries - many if not most of us have the

super duper glass batteries that are supposed to take all the vibrations of our machines and the inverted flight and other wild maneuvers in which we engage. Many of us have been frustrated by the battery dying after a couple of years, instead of the 5 or 6 we'd get with other batteries. Randy had enough of this and contacted the manufacturer, who gave him the full story of how to take care of these so they DO last the 7 years they promised. He is writing a primer on the subject which will be on our web site. The short version is that you have to charge them to a much higher state than normal batteries - more to follow from Randy.



*Picture of things to come soon - enough smoke to turn the leaves brown!*

***Nothing sucks more than that moment during an argument when you realize you're wrong.***

**2014 Fly-in schedule**

Well, we finally finished it after consulting with all the impacted sites and individuals - it is on the web site and attached to this Newsletter via email.

We divided Maine into 4 regions - North, East, Central, and Southwest, and scheduled events in all four. We scheduled them so no one region would have their events too close together, and so you won't have to make some long trips back to back - it gives you enough time between events so you can get a second job to pay for the gas for your long trips.

We have one open date - May 10th weekend - let me know if you have any suggestions or have a new venue where we haven't flown before.

Our next event is the annual Safety seminar and chili cook-off sponsored by the Wiscasset folks on Saturday, March 15th at 10:00 AM. We usually don't fly at this event, but there are many interesting aviation type people there, and we usually have many of our MPA members attend. Mostly for the free donuts and coffee, but once they're there, they always learn something valuable.

We also have two pig-roast events scheduled - one at Bar Harbor and one at Bowdoinham. This is a new activity for our fly-ins, so here's how it works.

Gobel is responsible for bringing the pig. Early Saturday morning, we have 6 of our strongest guys tackle the pig and hold him down until our morning breath in his snout causes him to commit suicide. In the meanwhile, the women-folk work on getting a charcoal fire started. We cut the pig in half, throw away the non-edible parts (if any), put the rest over the fire, and take turns fishing the pig out of the fire since we didn't tie him to the spit correctly. Around dinner time, we look at our masterpiece and all go out to McDonalds for dinner.

OK, we have an alternate way which may be less gruesome - it's a surprise, however.

Our annual Adventure Trip has not yet been finalized (as usual). However, some of our less manly members (the women) think that a week is too long to hang around with a bunch of scruffy guys who just want to talk about engines and flying and other useless stuff. So we're debating breaking the trip into two parts - one with women and kids as before, and one for real men only - travel with planes only from town to town, no bathing allowed, sleep in the dirt, use the F word at least once per sentence, land wherever there's enough

space, hitch hike into town for gas (or land at a gas station), and in general only have a vague idea as to what's going to happen next. In other words, a REAL adventure. So far, we have two people signed up, but that might change once they sober up.

***The first testicular guard, the "Cup," was used in Hockey in 1874 and the first helmet was used in 1964. That means it only took 90 years for men to realize that their brain is also important.***

**Congratulations section**

We don't have any noteworthy accomplishments over the last couple of months. That hasn't stopped us before, so here are some bottom of the barrel congratulatory events.

Several of our members went to Florida to avoid the Maine winters (yes, they're wussies...), but they took their planes and had some good flights - hopefully we can include pictures and videos of these in our highlight video later in the year. Congratulations on surviving those horrible 80 degree temperatures!

Some more of our members had several flights with skis and on lakes and snow fields this winter - while we question your sanity, we do congratulate you on keeping the year-around-flying mentality going.

***A retired man went into the Job Center in Downtown Conroe, Texas, and saw a card advertising for a Gynecologist's Assistant. Interested, he went in and asked the clerk for details. The clerk pulled up the file and read, "The job entails getting the ladies ready for the gynecologist. You have to help the women out of their underwear, lay them down, and carefully wash their private regions, then apply shaving foam and gently shave off the hair, then rub in soothing oils so they're ready for the gynecologist's examination. The annual salary is \$65,000, and you'll have to go to Billings, Montana.***

***"Good grief, is that where the job is?"***

***"No sir. That is where the end of the line is right now."***

**Disclaimer**

None of the material in this Newsletter was written while under the influence of anything. Yes, that includes good taste.

***The End***



***No, that's not painted on - just a healthy diet and plenty of exercise will do that to you. OK, maybe not to you...***

# 2014 Fly-in Schedule

Dates are Saturdays unless otherwise noted – most people get there Friday afternoon and stay through Sunday.

**Items highlighted in yellow are MPA PPC-only events – no GA aircraft**

**H – Hosted by**

Feb 15	Sebago Lake Fly-over	H - J. Gobel
Mar 15	Wiscasset A/P Safety seminar & chili cook-off	
Apr 1 - 6	Sun 'n Fun (Lakeland, FL)	
Apr 19	Knox County A/P (Owls Head)	H – J. Sukeforth
May 10	Open??? Bowman??? Hampden???	
May 31	Patten	J. Gobel
Jun 14	Bar Harbor & Pig Roast	H – M. Keene
Jul 4 - 6	July 4 <sup>th</sup> Big Event – W. Farmington	H – K. Oliveira
Jul 5 - 13	Yankee Fly-in (Greenland, NH)	
Jul 19	Bowdoinham & Pig Roast	H – J. Gobel (M. Bowker)
Jul 28 – Aug 3	EAA Air Adventure (Oshkosh, WI)	
Aug 2	Deblois A/P	H – M. Keene
Aug 15 – 17	Lewiston Balloon Festival (Twitchell's)	H -K. Oliveira
Aug 16 - 23	Annual MPA adventure trip (TBA)	H – J. Gobel
Aug 23	Bowman (Livermore)	
Aug 23	Biddeford Open House	
Sep 6	Presque Isle (Cyr's field)	H – R. Paradis
Sep 20	Grennel Field, Warren	H - J. Sukeforth
Oct 4	Bingham (Gaddabout Gaddis)	H – D. Sukeforth
Oct 18	Bethel A/P	H – R. Autrey
Dec 7	MPA Christmas Party (Augusta)	H – J. Gobel

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