

Maine Powerchute Association Newsletter

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

www.mainepowerchutes.com

November 2014

Season wrap-up

Well, we tried pretty hard to get to Presque Isle, which is certainly one of our most favorite venues, but after three tries we gave up. The weather just wasn't going to let us fly, and since PI is almost at the end of the world for most of our members, the \$300 - \$400 gas bill was a tad too steep for very limited flying opportunities. We can now really appreciate the many trips that our northern couple Robin and Darlene made to come down to central and southern Maine fly-ins!

However, we had a number of excellent fly-ins this year, although we did have a few that had to be cancelled due to weather. Since most of us get about 6 to 7 miles a gallon towing our rigs with the gas-guzzling big-boy trucks, the cost of travel is now a real issue keeping many of our members pretty selective about which fly-ins to attend.

During our annual meeting in December, we can discuss alternatives to a more successful fly-in program next year. Have fewer venues and make them longer? Have more of them but regionalize them better? Have a raffle? Cookie sale? Car pool? Invade Saudi Arabia? Other suggestions?

Christmas party

The event you've been eagerly waiting for all year is finally here! No, it's not Free French Fry Day at McDonalds. It's also not Ground Hog day, nor the Run-Through-The Streets-Naked festival, nor the

ever popular Guilt-free Pornography Exposition.

Give up??? OK - it's our infamous MPA Annual Christmas Party and Membership Annual Meeting! Yes, it's finally here! OK, OK - I know you'd rather have free french fries - maybe Santa will bring you some...



WHAT!!! You're NOT going to the Christmas party???

The event will take place On Sunday, December 7th in Augusta - same

place as last year. The restaurant is Great Wall Buffet and the address is 1 Anthony Drive, Augusta. It is right off I-95 - like within a couple of hundred yards from it - take Exit 112 if coming from the North, or 112-B if you're coming from the south of Augusta on I-95.

The party starts at 3 PM. Due to the astute handling of our funds by our lovely and talented Treasurer, Bonnie, we have enough funds to cover most of the cost for the dinner and the room. I think we pay for drinks only, and maybe chip in a few bucks for tips. However If you're bringing all

your relatives, Bonnie will make you pay for the ones who annoy her.

As noted previously, this is a "family" event - bring kids, spouse, significant other, insignificant other, sweet old grandpa (nothing too senile however - we have enough of those in the club already). However, if you have too many kids/spouses/grandpas - leave the noisy ones home. By the way, if one of your teenagers has recently been in deep trouble (with the law or school or home), you can bring him/her as punishment. Unbelievably, for them it's super BORING!

Oh yes - I almost forgot - you can use this as a "I'm taking you out, Dear" event so you can point to it when she says "You never take me anywhere!" You can quickly come back with "Oh, yeah? Oh yeah? How about last December 7th?"

Here's the general agenda for the event:

** 3:00 - Arrive, chit chat, catch up with old friends, meet the new guys, tell war stories, etc.

** 3:30 to about 4:30 - dinner, Chinese buffet style, usually very good selections. Don't eat for a couple of days before.

** 4:30 to about 5:00 - annual membership meeting - catch up on all the club stuff, open to suggestions about anything (it has to be anatomically possible), review finances, etc.

** 5:00 to about 5:30 - more coffee and dessert, then showing of this year's annual highlight video. See the past ones from our web site to get an idea of what those are about. Highly artistic. Makes you want to fly again (or give up flying). See www.maine-powerchutes.com, then click on "Annual Highlight Videos" on the left.

** 5:30 to 6:00 - say good-byes, pick up MPA presents (boxes of chocolate - NO, you can't refuse those!), and then we get kicked out of the place at 6:00 sharp.

I'd be unstoppable if not for law enforcement and physics.

Another true story

I recently went to one of my weekly Husbands' Marriage seminars, where my old friend (and idol) Giuseppe Lazagna told us he was approaching his 50th wedding anniversary. The group leader asked him to take a few minutes share some insight into how he had managed to stay married to the same woman for all these years.

Giuseppe was a little shy at first, but then he opened up. "Wella," he said, "I've tried to treat her nicea, spenda da money on her, but besta of all is, I tooka her to Italy for our 25th anniversary."

The group leader said "Giuseppe, you're truly an inspiration to us all. What are you planning for your 50th wedding anniversary?"

Giuseppe replied, "Wella, I think I gonna go to Italy and pick her up."

Procrastinators' Club

We're having a membership drive this month. Qualifications are pretty straight forward - you must be able to put off until tomorrow anything you can do today. Previous membership drives yielded so many applicants that we had to turn them all away. Obviously, people who take the time to apply by the deadline would not qualify.

You never appreciate what you have until it's gone. Toilet paper is a good example.



Some of the spectacular entertainment planned for our Christmas party- the North Korean Men's Chorus performing a medley of Christmas carols.

New member

Wow! Another pilot who's not very particular and will therefore join us! Welcome to Fred Haines and his lovely wife Diane to our group - Fred just received his Student license, and will be gathering hours toward his Sport Pilot certificate.



Three new applicants to the MPA. We're not sure if they'd fit in - they seem too clean cut to be comfortable with us.

A heart-warming Christmas story

A little girl was sitting on her grandfather's lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she said "Grandpa, did God make you?" Yes, sweetheart," he answered, "God made me a long time ago." She said "Grandpa, did God make me too?" "Yes, indeed, honey," he said, "God made you just a little while ago. Feeling her face again, she observed, "God's getting better at it, isn't he?"

103 follies

So we're all on the same page, the 103 rule refers to the Federal Aviation Rule 103 (technically CFR14, Part 103), which specifies the rules for flying single seat ultralight aircraft. The essence of it is that if the aircraft meets certain qualifications, you don't need any kind of licensing to fly it.

Here are most of the aircraft qualifications:

- * single seat
- * weighs less than 254 pounds
- * recreation or sport purposes only
- * fuel capacity 5 gallons or less
- * does not have an airworthiness certificate

As for the pilots flying them, here's the rule:

"Operators of ultralight vehicles are not required to meet any aeronautical knowledge, age, or experience requirements to operate those vehicles or to have airman or medical certificates."



To encourage more on-line shopping, here's the new uniform for the UPS delivery staff. I love Christmas!

As most of you know, many of us are not fans of the 103 rule, but since the EAA and the FAA seem to strongly support it, it is here to stay. The only simple reason we're opposed to it in its current format is the "aeronautical knowledge" provision. Here's why.

The 103 pilots share the same airspace as all the other PPC pilots (as well as fixed wing big-boy planes, etc.) Yet the 103 pilots don't have to know ANY of the rules which the rest of us follow. This

is my favorite analogy of the situation:

"My 8 year old daughter can drive her little gas-powered four wheeler like a champ. She has the skills and the good judgment to operate it around the farm safely. Would I ask her to drive it down to the store to pick up a carton of milk?"

Of course not. She doesn't know the rules of the road. Doesn't know what a yield sign means, what a red light is, which side of the road to be on, what the lines on the road mean, etc. Similarly, some 103 pilots, although skilled at flying, they do not know the rules of the air, so they violate airport approach rules, traffic patterns, airspace limits, etc.

When these violations get reported, or an accident or incident results, we all get blamed as those *"damn cowboys who don't follow the rules."* Furthermore, often the FAA has to investigate the event, and again, we're all suspects.

So, what we'd like to see is leaving the rule as is, but insert a 2 or 3 hour training requirement so they can learn the rules of the road - everybody would be better off and we'd all be safer and more welcomed by the rest of the aviation community.

So, back to the main topic. Flying under the 103 provisions is not a free ride - you still have rules to follow. Here are some excerpts from the 103 rules:

- * to fly during the period 30 minutes before sunrise or 30 minutes after sunset, you must have anti-collision lights.
- * you must yield right-of-way to ALL other aircraft
- * you can't fly in restricted or prohibited areas designated on sectional maps, or in airspace temporarily closed by NOTAMs.
- * "No person may operate an ultralight vehicle over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open air assembly of persons . "

The last point is the one most often violated by the 103 pilots, and the one that can get us into the most trouble. It's pretty clear - read it again. So boys, let's learn all the rules of the road, play by them, and we can happily continue flying under the 103 umbrella.

Hard work pays off in the long run. Laziness pays off immediately.

*Back by popular demand.
The End. The End.*

