

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

Maine Powerchute Association

Newsletter

April 2016

www.mainepowerchutes.com

Spring has sprung!

*Spring has sprung,
The grass has ris,
I wonder where
The birdies is?*

Yes, every year on the first day of spring (March 20 or so), I climb to the top of the Capital building in Augusta and shout out this lovely poem by Henry Wadsworth Shortfellow (Longfellow's midget brother). You'd think the security guards who chase me every year would catch on to the date and get to me before I make that long stupid climb!

Anyway, the point of all this is that we are beginning another exciting flying year for our powered parachute junkies. We have finalized our schedule for the year (subject to change, of course), and have cleared the availability of the fields with the respective owners.

While we try very hard to NOT change our schedule, the weather occasionally interferes, so always check our web site (www.mainepowerchutes.com) the night before the event to make sure we're still on. By the way, if there is NO change, there won't be a notice on there.

Safety meetings

The meetings of which we speak are FAA sanctioned meetings, and many of our members make a very commendable efforts to attend them (see pictures). These 2 hour meetings are very valuable for a number of reasons:

- * You always learn some tidbit or other that makes you a safer and therefore a better pilot,
- * You get credit for the ground portion of the your biennial flight review by attending,
- * It furthers our MPA safety culture (more on that later),

* You get to hang out with not only your fellow MPA pilots but with pilots from other areas and other skills, some of whom have more flying experience than all of us combined,

* If you ever screw up (not me, you say?) to the point that the screw-up gets the attention of the FAA, your attendance counts in your favor in that it shows you're making the effort to be safe (even if you're still a klutz).

So, gentlemen (and any ladies who may be forced to read this trashy Newsletter), look on our web site for any upcoming safety meetings and get there!



Some of the safety conscious MPA members attending the Wiscasset FAA Safety Meeting and Chili Cook-off. L to R: Moe, Larry, Curly, Huey, Dewey, Louie, and Elmer Fudd

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

Last few events

Greenville - this used to be a popular venue for many years in the past as the premier winter flying event (skis, of course), so we tried to revive it, but

alas, even Moosehead Lake way up north had unflyable conditions this year. While they did have some ice, it was covered with about 5 inches of water, which ended our winter flying for the year.

Limington - this was a new addition to our calendar - we put it on as a one-day event just to get our group warm up for the year and get the rust off the



During breaks at Safety Meetings, we get some iced tea served...

planes and off our skills. We had some nice weather for the morning, and then the rains came, but we did achieve our goal of de-rusting with a nice one hour flight and a two hour breakfast.

Wiscasset - this the annual season opening FAA safety meeting and chili cook-

off - a popular event that always gets a huge turnout. Has an excellent speaker this year - an AME (Aviation Medical Examiner) with like a thousand years of experience. Presented some excellent health tips and many useful tricks to keep your medical and to stay flying safely while staying healthy.

When you check into a motel, if you check behind the shower curtain for murderers and you do find one, what's your plan?

Next events

Knox County - on weekend of April 23rd, we'll be heading to Owls Head for our first weekend outing. The local EAA chapter members there are a bunch of great guys who always welcome us (since we haven't crashed into any of their facilities yet - they might change when we do...). We usually have some beautiful flights around Rockland and the coast, and in spite of some frequent ocean breezes, we always manage to get some good flights in.

Twitchell's - a few weeks later on the weekend of May 14th, we'll be in Turner at Twitchell's airfield. This is another early venue, sometimes cold, but not for the real men of the MPA. Here also, we always manage to get some good flights in spite of its proximity to a bunch of lakes and rivers.

Expiration of credits

By the way, we spoke earlier about getting credit for the ground portion of your biennial flight review (BFR) by attending a safety meeting - remember, these credits expire after 24 months. You'll get an email notice about them when they do expire.

Public service notices

Low Self Esteem Support Group will meet Thursday at 7 PM. Please use the back door.

Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the First Presbyterian Church. Please use large double door at the side entrance.

The MPA Procrastinators Club monthly meeting has been postponed. We will be rescheduling it soon.



At break time at the Bethel safety meeting, the bathroom is a busy place, but Jerry found a way to patiently wait his turn.

Repairman course

We have revised and completed all the paperwork necessary to have the FAA approve our Repairman course with an Inspection rating. It is tentatively scheduled for the weekend of July 30th. It is a 16 hour course - two days - and when successfully completed, it will authorize you to conduct your own annual inspections on your own Experimental PPC.

The FAA will examine all our material (about 40 pages of it and about 200 Powerpoint slides). It may take them a month or more to get back to us with the results, so that's why that date is tentative.

As mentioned earlier, you will receive a new rating from the FAA - the "Light Sport Aircraft Repairman with Inspection Rating " certificate when you pass the course (must get 80% or above on the final test. We expect the cost to be somewhere between \$50 and \$100 for the course - it includes all the materials and handouts you will get.

The course is limited to 16 people (by FAA rule), as it involves quite a bit of hands-on training, using real live PPCs. The primary instructor is Scott Royal, who has all the dozens of qualifications specified by the FAA - we're lucky to have him available to do this.

Dues

Hard to believe, but some of our MPA members (also members of the Procrastinators Club) have not paid their \$20 annual dues! I'm afraid Bonnie will be calling Luigi the Slug (flies an Airwolf) to collect from you.

You know who you are. So does Luigi. Pay up now or else. No more Mr. Nice Guy. Send money to Bonnie - PO Box 13, Warren, ME 04864. You don't want to make her mad, trust me!



Scene from a rainy day at an MPA fly-in.

More tribute to Rodney Dangerfield

I went to a massage parlor. It was self-service.

If it weren't for pickpockets, I'd have no sex life at all.

My wife likes to talk to me during sex; last night she called me from a hotel.

My family was so poor that if I hadn't been born a boy, I wouldn't have had anything to play with.

I was in bed with a blind girl last night and she said that I had the biggest penis she had ever laid her hands on. I said, "You're pulling my leg."

First flight

It's that time of year again for many of our MPA guys - your first flight since last September or so. That's like 7 months or more! As we all know, proficiency in flying is a fleeting thing - it is NOT bicycle riding!

So, the first time out, there'll be butterflies. This is good. Makes you focus. What's not good is thinking you'll remember everything from last year, and will just pick up where you left off.

What is the proven method for getting back in the saddle? Take it from military pilot procedures -

those boys (and girls now) must maintain proficiency by conducting regular and frequent proficiency flights - it's a big part of their job.

If they have to have a layoff of even a month, they will go through a rigorous checklist of pre-flight, and then review the entire takeoff process and the next series of maneuvers from a separate checklist. The they will go through the whole process again without the checklist by verbalizing each phase of takeoff, leveling out, subsequent maneuvers, and the landing sequence. Once they feel comfortable that they now are again familiar with the process, then its on to the runway and full power.



So what do we do? First, use the preflight checklist to make sure you haven't forgotten anything since last year. Like cap on oil reservoir; cap on fuel tank; no loose objects; antenna up; seat belt fastened, etc. etc. etc.

Next, review in your mind the steps you're going to do on takeoff - yes, every step. Like how much



The original first flight - proficiency was an issue, since Orville hadn't flown in 32 years.

power on takeoff, where do you look for chute inflation, keep the plane centered on the runway, etc.

Once you're up, do not think you have the proficiency you had last year! Make some easy turns, easy descends and climbs, and just bore some holes in the sky. After a while, it will be comfortable again, the butterflies will be gone, and you're almost fully back in the saddle. A few more flights soon afterwards, and you're as good as you were when you left off last year (or even before?)

Politically Incorrect

The Red Cross have just knocked at our door and asked if we could help towards the floods in Pakistan. I said we would love to, but our garden hose only reaches the driveway.

My wife has been missing a week now. Police said to prepare for the worst. So, I went to the thrift shop and got all of her clothes back.

After a night of drink, drugs and wild sex, Jim woke up to find himself next to a really ugly woman.

That's when he realized he had made it home safely.

I saw a poor old lady fall over today on the ice!! At least I presume she was poor - she only had \$1.20 in her purse.

New members

We welcome one new member this month - Leo Pelletier from Newfield, ME. We're going to skip the usual "what's wrong with you - don't you have better things to do with 20 bucks" speech since Leo seems like a sensible person, although he does want to learn how to fly these machines in the next several months. Hope to see you at some of our upcoming events, Leo - and get busy on those lessons!

Adventure trip

Since our "Adventure trips" over the last several years have stopped being real adventures, the MPA Scheduling Committee (about even in power and prestige with the Federal Reserve Open Market Committee) decided to cancel it until we can come up with a REAL adventure, like our trip to Kitty Hawk, NC in 2003.

In the past, we always took a week in August to go somewhere where we haven't been before, and hopscotch across a number of unfamiliar venues. However, with not enough of the membership retired, with lots of time, the event faded. So, now, we're just going to do a long weekend and stay at one location for the entire time.

There is however a glimmer of hope for the more adventuresome - there is a project afoot from another group to fly from Georgia to Key West later in the year - more details will follow in case anyone wants to participate.

The usual reminders

A quick review - what do you need to fly legally with a Sport Pilot license?

1. Your plane must have an annual inspection, signed off by an A&P - must be within 12 months of the last one.

2. You must have had your biennial flight review (the FAA now calls it just "Flight Review") within the last 24 months. This given by a CFI - we have 3 of those in our club - see our instruction web site www.ppc-instruction.com for names and numbers.

3. You must have a current drivers license (or at least a 3rd class medical certificate)

4. You must be current before you can fly a passenger - which means at least three takeoffs and three landings within the preceding 90 days (61.57)

That's it - pretty simple.

And another usual reminder - you can get away with violating all the FAA rules until something happens - then you're screwed. Makes a lot more sense to just be a professional and do the right thing. Follow the few simple rules we fly by, and you won't piss off many people, including your fellow aviators and your friends in the club. And you'll have just as much fun playing as the rest of us do.

Weather decisions

We often agonize over the go/no go decisions before a fly-in - and often we get it wrong. We have cancelled events based on dire forecasts, only to have it be very flyable for a least a good part of the weekend.

So here are our new guidelines. We consult 5 of our "regulars" (people who attend 80% of our fly-ins - we have about 6 or 7 of those), and a vote of 3 or better prevails. Of course, you make your own decision, but the event won't be officially cancelled unless 3 of the holy group says so.

Disclaimer

No animals or plants or humans or Democrats were harmed in the construction of this Newsletter. The "Politically incorrect" section was approved by President Obama.

The End

