

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

# Maine Parachute Association

## Newsletter

August 2019

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

### Next events

It's here! Our annual Adventure Trip is all set for the week starting August 9<sup>th</sup> and running through the following weekend.

We'll start at Ft. Kent as we did last year. This year however, the area is celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, so there will be all sorts of fun events scheduled, including a parade in which we may participate by doing a fly-by. It's rumored that one of our esteemed local members, George D. is also one of the founders of the town and will be giving a speech about what it was like there 150 years ago.

From Ft. Kent, we'll be traveling (flying?) to Presque Isle to spend a few days there. We always have a good time at P.I. with its wonderful fields and scenery – good flying!

After that if we still have enough energy we'll travel (fly?) to either Patten or Deblois to spend the remaining of the week. We'll decide once the group takes a vote.

After the Adventure trip, we only have two flying events scheduled for the year. On Aug. 30<sup>th</sup> weekend (Labor day weekend), we'll be at Berlin (Milan) airport – a new venue for us. Then on to Plymouth, NH on weekend of Sep. 20<sup>th</sup> (Columbus day weekend) to wrap up the flying year.

Of course, we'll still have our annual Christmas party in Augusta, scheduled for Saturday, Dec. 7<sup>th</sup>. Put that on your calendar now – last opportunity to hang out with your MPA friends for the next four or five months.

### Experience

We use that term sort of loosely and often. And the older you get, the more you come to realize why it's so important.

Experience is important in all you activities, from home projects to your job activities, in your relationships, and pretty much in every day living. Why?

I bet that if you look back to the you of 5, 10 20 years ago in any activity or situation you encounter, you will say that “Yes, I'm much better at it than I was before.” Some of that is just practice, but more of it is experience.

Much more so than in other activities in your life, experience in flying is critical. Yep, often it's a life and death situation. So let's do this scientifically – what exactly are we talking about?

A good way to look at it is simply being aware of what COULD happen as a result of your actions or inactions.

For example, a rookie pilot probably won't be aware of the importance of packing your chute the same way every time. He/she will become very aware of that when prior to takeoff on a beautiful flying day with friends eagerly waiting, he/she has to abort the flight because of tangled and crossed lines that take maybe an hour to figure out and undo.

Or example two – beginners will often land on a strip and drop the chute about where they landed, making landing and taxiing quite challenging for



*Another wonderful Paul Cyr picture of very impressive formation flying by our MPA members in P.I.*

those coming in behind. After a while, maybe after some guidance from others or maybe from being subjected to that challenging landing themselves, they gain the experience of taxiing out of the way so as to not block the landing area for others.

So let's do this by the numbers.

Step 1 – Be aware of what COULD happen

Step 2 – Assess the likelihood of that event happening.

Step 3 - Assign a risk factor to it, i.e. how likely is that to happen.

Step 4 – Take (or plan to take) whatever mitigating actions to reduce that risk to near zero (it will probably never be at zero).

Here's a quick practical application of these steps.

1. Checking the oil level in your 582 reservoir, you notice it's about half way. What could happen? It gets too low and engine will seize.
2. What's the likelihood of that event taking place? I would have to be in the air for about an hour and a half for that.
3. What is the risk if it does happen? Bad stuff – forced landing, engine rebuild, etc.
4. What do I do to reduce that risk? Well, I can fill up the oil reservoir, or since I know I'm only going to fly for half on hour, the risk is reduced to near zero by either action.

### Tips from experienced pilots



Alvar

Here are some small tips that will make you a better and safer pilot. Not necessarily the way you were taught, but techniques that have been proven to work over the years.

#### Engine warm-up.

The 582 Rotax engines usually require about 5 minutes of warm-up to have the thermostat open and thereby avoid cold engine seizures. But that five minutes can seem like a long time since you're ready and eager to get flying. Also, it is annoying to others who are not going flying to listen to your engine – “Will you stop that horrible noise already?”

So do this instead. Start your engine, run it for a minute or less so that it responds to the throttle smoothly. Then start a slow taxi to your take-off

area, preferably along the runway that you'll be using.

You accomplish two important tasks by doing this. First, you allow the engine to warm up while you're saving time by getting to your destination sooner. Second, you're checking the runway that you'll be using for any foreign objects, pot holes, twigs, and any other obstruction that you'd rather find now than when you're rolling for takeoff.

And if you still need time to finish your warm-up, you can do it while your machine is already in position, ready for the next step of laying out your chute.



*Thanks to our newest (honorary) member Rhonda for so nicely demonstrating what happens when you drink too much wine – you'll do dumb things like putting your legs up on the table in public!*

#### Chute drop.

Unless you have direct head wind as you taxi off the runway after a flight, your chute may not drop nicely behind you no matter how hard you pull on your steering lines. We've all had the experience of having it fall way off to the side, or in front of you, or over you.

So try this. As you're taxiing to your intended stop point with your chute overhead, goose the engine so the carriage lunges ahead of the chute just an instant before you shut off your mags and kill the engine. That move will put the chute well behind you, increasing your odds of having it fall behind you, even in less than good headwind conditions.

#### Hand propping.

Just we're on a the same page, hand propping does NOT mean using your manual starter if your battery is dead. It means grapping the prop itself and giving it a serious yank to get it started. Used to be the standard way to start a lot of old airplanes.

Luckily, we don't do that – at least I've never seen it or heard of anyone doing that. But it can be done – there's even an FAA document on it (FAA-H-8083-

3A) which specifies that you must have two people doing it – one inside holding the brakes and the throttle.

But here’s the bad part – if your mags are on, you or anyone else turning the prop can actually start your engine. Most likely not, but it can happen, which will greatly surprise you, as well as the people who are used to you having two hands.

So NEVER turn your prop unless you’re absolutely sure the mags are OFF. And make sure anybody else who may be admiring you during your pre-flight does not touch your prop until you’ve double checked that your mags are definitely in the off position.

Fuel management.

As we all know, running out of gas while flying is ALWAYS the pilot’s fault. Therefore knowing how much fuel you have left is obviously critical. And if you decide you may not have enough fuel to get to your intended target, you need to land at the best and nearest and most suitable non-target place you can find.

Our fuel gauges are somewhat primitive, and not good enough to bet your life on it. So you need backup systems. Such as knowing how much fuel you had at takeoff, how long you’ve been running the engine, and what your usual burn-rate is. The best method of course is a visual method, where you can see a sight tube showing your fuel level.

Personal experience. Coming back from an hour flight, I thought I smelled gas. Looked backed toward the gas tank, I saw a steady spray of gas coming from somewhere back there. Luckily, I was close enough to the home airfield to make it back OK with much less gas left than I should have had. The problem was the rubber grommet connecting the fuel line to the tank was so dry that it stopped making a positive seal. I check my grommets every year now. If I can move it easily, I replace it.

Just wondering...

Would a fly without wings be called a walk?

What do you do when you see an endangered animal eating an endangered plant?

If the police arrest a mute, do they still tell him he has the right to remain silent?

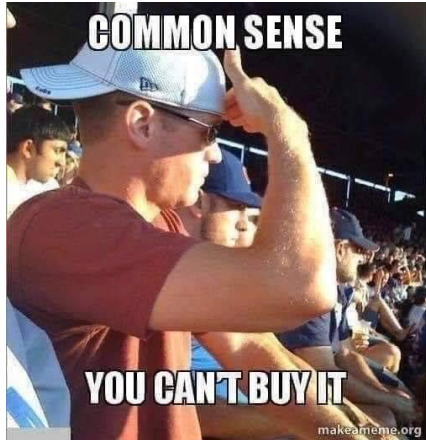
Why is it called "after dark" ....when it really is "after light"?

If work is so terrific, why do they have to pay you to do it?

Can vegetarians eat animal crackers?

Where do forest rangers go to “get away from it all?”

Does the little mermaid wear an algebra?  
(this takes a minute)



Event wrap-up

Patten – due to a combination of questionable weather and a low probable attendance, we had to cancel our planned fly-in at Patten. Maybe next year – we really like that event, and always had great time in the past there.

Fryeburg – a wonderful weekend this year again at Fryeburg. We got lucky with nice weather in spite of some less than ideal forecast, and had about 6 chutes up in the air most of the sessions. The FBO there (Dave C.) goes out of his way to make sure we have all the facilities we need, and generally warmly welcomes us.

Bowdoinham – another one of our favorite venues. We didn’t have the usual crowd there this year (see next article) but still had 5 or 6 chutes in the air most of the time. Unfortunately, the field was unusually wet for this time of year due to some recent heavy rains, and we left some serious gouges in the grass that couldn’t be just “walked” out. Sorry Mark (although Mark said “No problem – I have a roller”) – not sure if he’ll invite us back next year. :->

Bar Harbor – another cancellation – only two people indicated they’d be able to attend, so we called it off. Too bad, as we always had a good there in the past, and for most of us, it was the only time in the year when we can get a two or three pound lobster all to ourselves.



Guess who kept everyone awake last night?

**Future of the MPA**

For the last 15 years or so, our current model for MPA events has been to schedule 10 or 12 events for the year, geographically dispersed more or less equally throughout the year. That model did not work this year, as several of our events had to be cancelled to due very low anticipated attendance.

I sent out an email to all our members soliciting suggestions to improve that situation, and received many good ideas. So based on those, here are some changes we're proposing for the remainder of this year, and for next year.

So instead of scheduling 10 or 12 events, we'll schedule only 5 or 6, again keeping it geographically dispersed as much as reasonable. This way, we can maximize our fairly short flying season by allowing people to plan their vacations and other work and family obligations a little better, and still enjoy the camaraderie of group flying that we all enjoy.

In the past, the social aspects of our get-togethers has been almost as much part of our events as the flying, so we want to keep it like that as much as possible. Having more attendees, of course, goes a long way towards that goal.



In the past, we had a "core" venue slate of 7 or 8 locations, but in the future, we'll alternate our venues. In other words, we'll do Presque Isle one year, and do Patten the next, or do Fryeburg one year and Bar Harbor the next, and so on, although we may keep on or two events as

the "core." Good discussion for our annual Christmas party.

We made some changes to our schedule for the remainder of this year – see our informative and always up-to-date and politically incorrect website <http://www.mainpowerchutes.com> for the new dates and places.

Of course, the real problem is not enough of us are retired! So work on that boys!

**More bits of wisdom**

The main reason that Santa is so jolly is because he knows where all the bad girls live.

I went to a bookstore and asked the saleswoman, "where's the self-help section?" She said if she told me, it would defeat the purpose.

82.7% of all statistics are made up on the spot.

99% of lawyers give the rest a bad name.

When wearing a bikini, women reveal 90% of their body. Men are so polite they only look at the covered parts.

**Aviation history**

The first parachute was invented in 1783 by a Frenchman named Louis-Sébastien Lenormand. However, he didn't test it until 2 years later when he jumped from a hot air balloon. Prior to that, he did some tests using dogs as the passengers in it. It's rumored that since the French always hated the English, he only used English bulldogs in his experiments. Which may explain the current breed's pushed in nose.



During World War I, the observers in hydrogen balloons used parachutes to bail out when enemy fighter shot them down, which happened quite often. Pilots however were not issued parachutes, the reason being it was presumed that it would be used to jump out when they came under fire.

**Doctors in a court room**

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30.

ATTORNEY: And was he dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

**The End**

Quite a skill, walking in those shoes. We always appreciate athleticism.

