

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

# Maine Parachute Association Newsletter

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

February 2025

## "Wonderful Winter Flying" issue (oh yes, these things actually fly in the cold...)

### Preamble



So here's the issue. It's the middle of winter, so what news can be covered in a Newsletter for an aviation group when there's been no flying for the last few months nor will be for the next few months.

Well, my dear readers (I'm using the plural there somewhat optimistically), that hasn't stopped us before, and it's not going to this time either.

Surprisingly, there's quite a bit of material out there in the aviation world from which we can benefit even though we're in our comfortable and warm homes instead of the flight line. We'll include some of that plagiarized material here.

And just so you don't think there's been some kind of major improvement in the mind of the Newsletter editor, we'll of course also include our usual nonsense, mild humor, and pictures that celebrate women!

Enough talk, let's rock & roll!

**3 out of 2 people struggle with math.**

***My wife says I only have two faults. I don't listen, and something else.***

### A word from our Leadership

Before we get to that, here's a little introductory anecdote.

*At a funeral service, after several friends spoke highly of the deceased, one of them asked the grieving widow if he may say a word.*

*She said, "Of course."*

*He stands up and says "Plethora."*

*With tears in her eyes, she says "Thank you. That means a lot."*



So back to our leaders. As covered at our Christmas party and also in the last Newsletter, we have transitioned the leadership of our happy club into two young(er), capable, and energetic gentlemen, Ed Walsh and George Dumond.

George has the role of CEO, where he will deal with the club's strategic direction, speaking for the group, planning at a high level, managing finances, and working to grow and advance the organization.

Ed has the role of President, which involves running the day-to-day activities, dealing with personnel, managing operations, and coordinating with the various outside entities (which in our case are the field owners).



So rather than provide two separate messages for our Newsletter, they synchronized their comments into one succinct and inspirational missive. Here it is.

*“2024 was a fantastic year for flying, especially weather-wise! In addition, we had a record number of pilots attending several of our fly-in locations. We are all hoping for another great season this coming year.*

*As we prepare to kick off our flying adventures, we want to remind pilots to check their Biennial Flight Review (BFR) requirements. If you choose not to complete the ground instruction portion of your BFR, now is a great time to complete an approved FAA WINGS safety course.*

*Equally important is ensuring that your aircraft is flight-ready, including completing the required annual inspection by its prescribed date.*

*A final reminder: If you have not flown within the last 90 days, you must complete three takeoffs and landings before carrying passengers.”*



OK, so their message may not have been as inspirational as General Patton’s speech to the troops before going into battle, but give the boys time! However, it also saves me from having to repeat the usual reminders about biennials, annuals, and the rule about the three takeoffs and landings before carrying passengers. So thank you Ed and George!

Just an observation about the “three takeoffs and landings.” If you do three takeoffs, you sure as hell are going to do three landings! So the “three landings” part is sort of unnecessary – maybe I’ll write a letter to the FAA.

### **Plan continuation bias**

What does that mean?

Reminds me of a recent experience I had while siding a shabby shed that I have. Couldn’t figure how to install the last row of siding without the nails being exposed. So of course, I

asked a real construction guy – he said to use a snap lock punch. What the hell is that?

Anyway, back to the “Plan continuation bias.” It is a tendency that we all have to have a good idea of what we want to do, and then continuing with the plan even when we encounter some factors that make the plan a little less than perfect.

I know I’ve done it – we probably all have at some time or other. In life, it’s not a big deal – maybe we look back and say “I probably should have made sure my snowblower had enough gas before running out 200 yards from the garage.”



However, in aviation, it can be big deal. When you get some indication that all is not going as well it should, you say “Well, it’s probably nothing – I’ll keep going – I’m almost there, and I’ll head back to the field after.”

Dangerous! It’s a little unmanly to admit you’re making a mistake, so we continue with our perfect plan. Trudging back in the snow to get the gas can is one thing – being up in the air and pushing your luck is not healthy!

That’s what “plan continuation bias” is.

So the message is simple – don’t hesitate to change plans when there’s an indication of some malfunction, or you just get an inkling that “something is not right,” whether it’s your machine, or your gauges, or if it’s you.

***It’s a floor wax AND a dessert topping!***

### **Christmas party videos, pictures**

As you know, we compile, edit, and show our collection of videos and pictures taken during the year at our annual Christmas party. It’s fun to look back at our events, our flying trips, and our friends any time after that.

Our website ([www.mainepowerchutes.com](http://www.mainepowerchutes.com)) has these videos from the last 25 years – even more fun to look back to see how wonderful we looked 25 years ago!

The link to the highlight video for 2024 is this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vOMGIOskwOQ>

The link to the 2024 picture show is this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NgZVlyusLo4>

To see all the highlight videos, go to our website and click on "Videos" on the left.

By the way, all our Newsletters for the last 25 years are also on our website – click on "Newsletters" on the left. You'll get a pretty good idea about the colorful history of our club.

***How can I trust you if you keep running away every time I untie you?***

### **Schedule**



After hours and hours locked up in a smoke-filled room, surrounded by pizza boxes, paper coffee cups, and empty beer bottles, our esteemed Exec Committee has finally come up with our event schedule for 2025 – see page 4!

As usual, our schedule is somewhat fluid – if the weather seems unsuitable for flying, we usually reschedule for the following weekend. If that weekend is also a wash-out, we just cancel it. We hate to do that!

The schedule dates listed are for Fridays (except the Christmas party on Saturday). Most of us get there on Friday afternoon, and stay through Sunday AM. Of course, you're welcome to come any time during that stretch.

One more note – both the Presque Isle and the Ft. Kent fly-ins are 4 day events, meaning people get there Thursday afternoon and stay until Sunday AM.

This is done to allow all our more senior southern members (a.k.a. the "Over The Hill Gang") to rest up from that arduous journey to the end of the world. This way, we get an extra day of flying, and we don't have to make the long trip back so soon after getting there.

By the way, I was kidding about the smoke-filled room, pizza boxes, coffee cups, and beer bottles. It was actually beer cans.

***I'm not donating to the blood bank anymore. They keep asking stupid questions like "Whose blood is it?" "Why is it in a bucket?"***

### **Pilot communications**

The recent series of serious aircraft accidents has brought a lot of attention to the general question of pilot communications.

The most important rule – do exactly what ATC (Air Traffic Control) tells you to do! Failure to do that results in the revocation of your license, that is if you live through the incident.

In the incident on 2/25/2025, ATC told the pilot of a private jet to hold short of an active runway. Instead, he continued crossing the active on his way to the next runway.

A large commercial airliner was on a very-short-final, and thanks to the excellent action by the pilot of the airliner who did an immediate go-around, a certain major catastrophe was averted.

The pilot of the private jet can kiss his license goodbye.

There have also been many incident and some mid-air collisions in uncontrolled airfields. "Uncontrolled" means the facility has no control tower, so traffic depends communications by the pilots in the vicinity to communicate with each other.

This, of course, pertains to us. Just about all the venues where we fly are uncontrolled airfields. We all have radios, and it greatly behooves us to listen to the traffic in the area.

Furthermore, not only should we be listening to other traffic, we should announce our position and our intent.

The rules for communications at uncontrolled airfields are simple (it's the same at towered airfields also). Here it is:

1. – who are you talking to
2. – who you are and what you are
3. – where you are
4. – what are your intentions
5. – repeat who you're talking to

So for example:

***"Bethel, powered parachute N12345, entering left downwind for runway 31, full stop, Bethel."***



Let's break this down:

1. Who you're talking to – **Bethel**
2. What & who you are – **powered parachute N12345**
3. Where you are – **entering left downwind for runway 31**
4. What are your intentions – **full stop** (or touch and go, or low pass, etc)
5. Repeat location - **Bethel**

When you think about it, it's actually just like when you make a phone call. For example:

**(1)** Joe, **(2)** this is John, **(3)** I'm at Rosie's bar and grill **(4)** celebrating my divorce, do you want to join me? **(5)** Joe, are you still there?



One last thing – when you hear other traffic (for example, a fixed wing approaching the airfield), you should try to make visual contact with the aircraft, and obviously avoid it. Also, you can speak with the approaching aircraft to let him/her know where you are and what you're going to do ("I'm 3 miles south of the airfield and have you in sight – I'll wait for you to land").

One more last thing – the most common CTAF frequency is 122.8, and many airfields share that. That's the reason for identifying who you are talking to, as we will often hear traffic from nearby airfields.

*When I see lovers' names carved into a tree, I don't think it's sweet. I just think it's surprising how many people bring a knife on a date.*

### Recent bevy of aircraft accidents

If you want to give up flying forever and take up a much safer hobby like knitting, take a look at the accidents and incidents the FAA is currently investigating. Here's the link:

[https://www.faa.gov/newsroom/statements/accident\\_incidents](https://www.faa.gov/newsroom/statements/accident_incidents)

Most of these never made the national news, but the few that did are spectacular.

1/29 – Washington – mid air between Army helicopter and Bombardier airliner – 67 dead

2/6 – Alaska – Cessna 208 crashed into the sea – 10 dead

2/17 – Toronto – Delta airliner crashed and flipped upside down – amazingly, all 80 people survived

2/19 – Arizona – mid air between Cessna and Lancair – 2 dead (uncontrolled airfield)

2/25 – Chicago – Southwest airliner averted a deadly crash by doing a last-second go-around when business jet was crossing the runway

Of course, statistics can be misleading – we'll probably go for many more months without any newsworthy aviation accidents.

Overall, since January 1 of this year, the FAA is investigating 89 accidents/incidents. Yep, it's a dangerous world out there in the skies. The good news is that none of the 89 involved powered parachutes.

But still, knitting seems like a good alternative.

### On a happier note: MPA Schedule!

Weekend	Event	Location
May 9	Bethel	0B1 - Bethel Regional Airport
May 30	Bowman (E. Livermore)	B10 - Livermore
Jun 20	Dover Foxcroft (Chase fld)	44B - Chase Memorial field
Jul 11	Ft. Kent	Ft. Kent Municipal airport
Aug 1	Deblois & Machias	43B - Deblois; MVM - Machias
Aug 22	Presque Isle	Paul Cyr field
Sep 12	Pittsfield (Thompson fld)	ME62 - Pittsfield
Dec 6	Christmas party	Saturday, 12/6 3:00 PM

### The End

