

Maine Powerchute Association

Autumn, 2000

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Newsletter

Welcome to the sort of mid-fall edition of the Maine Powerchute Association's Newsletter. We'll bring you up to date on our eventful September MPA meeting, which was sparsely attended but was loaded with content. Yes, I was at the right meeting. Flying turns generally spotty this time of year, so we'll try to reminisce about the past summer and look forward to some serious winter flying – with skis, shivering, doubting your sanity, long underwear, drippy noses, etc. It's true, you guys with beards and mustaches are particularly disgusting while flying this time of year.

September meeting in Lewiston

After the usual pre-meeting and during-meeting banter, the September MPA meeting turned philosophical. We all agreed that the Association serves a good purpose to provide a forum for parachute pilots to discuss their experiences, and to get people together to fly, and that the whole flying experience can be more fun when there are more people involved.

Our monthly meetings, however, are not nearly as much fun as flying. Most people have to drive quite a ways to get there, in fact the driving usually takes more time than the meeting. And the people who come to the meeting only do so to hang out with people they would not ordinarily see too often. It's nothing against the meetings – it's just hard to get people there.

So the members present discussed alternatives, and suggested that meetings be limited to a few a year, and they be held in conjunction with some other event like a fly-in. Our biggest turnout, not surprisingly, was the one held at the Bowman fly-in. We still want to keep in touch with the members, and to keep the Maine Powerchute community informed and together, but we thought that could be done with newsletters every month or so.

The club officers (and anybody else who is interested) still need to get together more

frequently to discuss and plan events, and to come up with safety, flying, and other information to be put into the newsletter.

The key to the success of the Association is the events, so we'll try to organize and publicize those more frequently. For that purpose, we have created a website to bring up-to-the-minute information about events to our members. The address is home.earthlink.net/~gobelj

Unfortunately, the web page editor I used to create the web page can only be accessed by Internet Explorer 5, and therefore Netscape users and earlier versions of Internet Explorer see just gibberish. So for those who can't see it, trust me – it's a cool website. Of course you can always upgrade your browser – it's free off the Internet.

We also spent a little time discussing flying during the hunting season, and it was generally agreed that it needs to be done with caution and courtesy. It was eloquently summed up by our resident poet Dunbar, who said "Don't piss them off – they got guns."

It was mentioned that powerchutes.com is a good site for selling/buying powered parachutes. Also, we can put items for sale into the Newsletter – let one of the people at the top of the letter know.

So to sum it all up...

We will continue to keep the Maine Powerchute Association a viable entity, and to organize and coordinate events for the members. We will only have 4 meetings a year, generally in conjunction with an event of some sort. The downside is that we will continue publishing the MPA Newsletter, probably about 9 or 10 issues a year.

And the next event is...

Mark your calendar – Sunday, December 10th! The social event of the year! (that is if you've been hiding from the law in the Great North Woods for the last year). Wayne has been gracious enough to reserve space for us at his restaurant in Fairfield (Belangers), so we can have our annual Christmas or End of Season party there. The agenda looks something like this:

- Around 2 PM – flying from Wayne's field (optional)
- Around 4:30 PM – come in to Wayne's restaurant (mandatory)
- 4:30 to 5:30 – thaw out
- 5:30 or so – dinner
- 6:30 or so – entertainment
- 7:30 or so – stoning of the people responsible for the entertainment, and farewells.

We're subsidizing the dinner with about half the funds from our treasury, to the tune of about \$200. So if there are 20 people there, each person will have \$10.00 of their bill paid for. Sorry, you can't make money on this – your bill has to be greater than \$10.

We do have two flying tapes (actually, they're tapes about flying) which we'll project onto an 8' by 10' screen. One of the tapes is an edited version of Bob Ellis' and Dunbar Seaman's

Lubec trip, and the other is basically a porno tape into which we edited about 10 seconds of flying scenes. Just kidding! – it's actually about 15

minutes of flying videos shot from the air at various places around Maine. Rude comments throughout the shows are encouraged.

RSVP is a must!

Please let Bill Grusik (797-3636), or John Gobel

(322-7198) know if you and your wife/girlfriend or husband/boyfriend (that's EITHER, not both) plan on attending – we need to know how many to prepare tables for - leave a message if we're not there. It should be a fun evening – low key, with the typical pilot banter, and showing off, and lots of food. (Directions to the restaurant and the field will be sent to those responding).

Other events on the drawing board

Winter flying is coming up, and a good number of us really like flying with the skis. With all the lakes in our state, and the great lift provided by the cold air, excellent flying opportunities are all over the place.

Our friends in the New Hampshire group have had a January fly-in at Paugus Bay off Lake Winnepesaukee (spelled something like that) for a number of years. I have attended a number of them, and with a Burger King (and its endless supply of hot chocolate) sitting right on lakeshore, it is a perfect setting. It would be great if we could do something like that somewhere in Central Maine. If you know of a lake that has a restaurant next to it from where the flying can be viewed, let us know!



This picture is real – not doctored like some others in this issue

Another winter fly-in idea is to use a golf course. The space for flying is usually great. They generally have a restaurant or club house, and we can probably talk them into opening it for an event like this. I know the Bucksport course and the Winterport course would be available – if you know of a more centrally located facility, try to talk to them, and let us know so we can organize an event.

Greenville Fly-in – a hero is born!

This years' fly-in at Greenville was about like previous years' – with lots of very expensive seaplanes, and a few ultralights that get most of the attention. The weather was marginal as usual – winds are generally too high there on Moosehead Lake for powered parachutes, but you can get in a half hour in the morning and evening most of the time. That's just what Bill Grusik and I did – took off around 6:00 PM, as the winds died down enough to fly. I've gone there a number of times in the past, and knew about the general unpredictability of the weather at that airport, so I stay within 10 – 15 minutes of the airport at all times – that gives you enough range to overfly the bay and the town.

After about 20 minutes, it started getting real squirrely, so I headed back to safe harbor, and with only a moderate amount of adrenaline and prayer, I was back on the ground 10 minutes later. No sign of Bill. By this time, the winds were about 20 knots and gusty. 30 minutes later, still no sign of Bill.

Finally, a faint sound over the trees – yes, it's a powered parachute, and yes, it's Bill! Heading at about 90 degrees to the runway, bouncing all over the sky, and making about 3 or 4 knots of headway. LOT of people are watching by now – it's the best show they've had so far. Most had no idea that at this point Bill had actually wet his pants several times, and the death-grip on the throttle had drained all the blood in his arms, and that powered parachutes are NOT supposed to do chandelles and near-loops!

With vertical drops and rises of about 20 to 30 feet, I was pretty sure Bill was going to have

some major damage to the plane on landing, as well as wiping out some of the doe-eyed spectators, their near-by RVs, and their very expensive airplanes. You can't buy entertainment like this!

Anyway, Bill showed some of the best flying I've ever seen in any aircraft, managed to land on the runway (still perpendicular to it), and actually came to a stop instead of crashing into the spectators. Ghost white, sitting shell-shocked in the seat of his Six Chuter, he actually managed a smile as people came up to him and said "Hey, that really looks like a lot of fun!"



This picture is suspicious

Short Final....

(Stolen from AVflash, a weekly on-line newsletter)

Airline captain to clearance delivery: "Delta1184 to BOS, and we're a DC9 today."

Clearance delivery: "Roger cleared to BOS via ... and we'll change the B737 to a DC9."

Unidentified pilot: "Clearance, while you're at it, could you change this PA28 to a Learjet?"

