



Maine Powerchute Association

Bill Grusik, President (797-3636)
Mattie Crane, Treasurer (346-6023)
John Gobel, Secretary (322-7198)

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Well, you've done it again – you opened the envelope with the Newsletter in it, and now you feel obligated to sneak a few peeks, just in case there's a centerfold, or something interesting. But, once again, nothing but flying stuff, updates on meetings, a few semi-funny stories, and more flying stuff. However, this summer, we're going to run a Miss MPA Bikini contest (for females only!), and we'll run the winner as a centerfold. That should do wonders for our circulation! (the Newsletter's circulation, not yours, you perverts!)

Start with the funny stuff

Usually, we try to throw in a few bits of humor in the middle to keep the readers who are still awake interested, but we thought we'd start off this issue with a few aviation term definitions:

Airspeed: Speed of an aircraft. Deduct 25% when listening to Jerry Suke

Lean mixture: Non-alcoholic beer

Rich mixture: What you order if the other guy is buying

Roger: Used when you're not sure what else to say

Tail Wind: Results from eating beans, often causing oxygen depletion in the immediate vicinity

Fly-in at North Appleton

Had about 6 or 7 chutes at Leely field in North Appleton, on a wonderful Saturday. Wes Dagget and Dunbar Seamans mowed most of the field. Nobody screwed up, nothing funny happened, so it really wasn't a newsworthy event, except it's always good to get together with our fellow pilots for a nice uneventful morning of flying, followed by the usual 4000 calorie breakfast.

The Night before the Big Election meeting

On Friday afternoon, Dunbar Seamans, with a slight amount of help from Jerry Parlin, was once again on the scene, with mowing equipment in tow, doing a great job of mowing Wayne's field in preparation for the big MPA fly-in the next day. That, of course is Dunbar's version. Reliable eye witness accounts scored it 28% Siemans, 72% Parlin on square footage covered, and 0% Siemans, 100% Parlin on artistic expression.



Scene from our annual MPA fly-in and election meeting. One of the pilots thought we had to pay club dues right then, so he quickly flew out of there.

We had four chutes and pilots staying over that night, and got in

some decent flying before darkness. After dark, we sat around and told pilot stories by the pretend fire (everybody was too lazy to make a real one). While some of them were pretty interesting and even educational at times, nobody could top Jerry Parlin's true story of how to build a deck.

Jerry, like most guys, thinks a deck lasts forever, or until it disintegrates, whichever comes first. Most wives, however have stricter standards – they can sense impending disintegration, and will force guys to rebuild it *before* than happens instead of after, which would be the logical male way. Anyway, Jerry's deck needed serious rebuilding, which he did after some gentle prodding from his lovely wife Carla.

When he finally finished with all that hard work, there was still daylight, so he mowed the lawn.

So far, this sounds like a pretty bad way to spend a weekend, but there's a happy ending. When darkness finally came, he decided to go sit on his new deck, have a drink and do nothing, but much to his surprise, his deck was decorated with candles, his drinks were ready, and his lovely wife was waiting for him. And all she had on was the radio and a smile.



A great Grusik photo of the MPA early morning sneak attack on Norridgewock airfield. Just like Pearl Harbor.

I should mention that a story like that, told by a campfire (imaginary or real doesn't matter) to a bunch of lecherous pilots brings out the competitive instincts. A person who wanted to remain nameless (but whose last name rhymes with ellis) casually mentioned that while that's a nice story, his wife not only greets him like that *every* night, but she also has five of her girlfriends there, similarly attired.

We all threw our cigars at him, and he died in a blazing fire. But he was the winner.

Annual meeting

We had a great turnout for the annual MPA fly-in and election meeting. The weather cooperated, and we had about a 10 or 11 chute cross country flight to Norridgewock and back (again followed by the usual 4000 calorie breakfast.)

Since it was about 90 degrees that morning, Bill Grusik set up a large awning for shade during the meeting. Dunbar took credit for it.

We had several new members show up for the meeting, and see first hand how we run the business part of the club. Much to everyone's surprise, they had several opportunities to run away when nobody was looking, but they stayed for the whole meeting! Welcome to Dave Schay, Scott McCurdie, Dennis McFeeder, and Bob Getchell.

Mattie Crane gave the Treasurer's report – she had sent the \$50 donations we had decided to give to several groups holding fly-ins this year. Our financial status is still very good, with over \$500 available to us for various activities to be voted upon later.

Bill spoke about several ways to promote our sport, and to recruit new members – a lot of it has to do with being responsible pilots, and being present at community events. We also need to be active in promoting safety, and donate some of our time to worthy causes. Bill also reminded everyone of the responsibility to renew the BFI rating every two years, and listed the ways to get that accomplished.

We had a very interesting discussion on the real purpose of having an organization like the MPA in the first place. While there were some different ways of expressing it, there seemed to be a general agreement that there is definite value in having a unified voice in dealings with the FAA and the public. We're a sanctioned club under the ASC (Aero Sports Connection), and we all pay considerable dues to that group. The ASC does a good job of representing the interests of ultralights and specifically powered parachutes.

Another major benefit of our club is the safety element. There were many many instances of individuals benefiting from the experience of others in all aspects of powered parachuting, from flying, to rules, to engine maintenance, to clever little shortcuts. In addition, there's the intangible benefit of associating with people who have similar interests, and who can share and understand the joys and excitement of our sport.

It's been said that flying is hours of boredom punctuated by moments of sheer terror. We all know that most of those "moments" are due to some stupid thing we *did*, or to some smart thing that we *didn't* do. It's nice to have a group of friends who can appreciate these little "sheer terror" stories, since they've all been there. It's also nice to have friends

who are foolish enough to tell you these little stories, knowing that you'll make merciless fun of them.

Lastly, we agreed that with or without a club, we'd all still be flying – it's just more fun with it. We also all agreed that the club has to be like us – sort of laid back, not taking all this too seriously, having enough rules to be functional and safe but not so many that it stifles the fun aspect of it. In other words, keep it simple. Which leads nicely into the next section.

The Elections

The first thing we decided was that we had too many officers. Furthermore, some of the officers didn't even know they were officers. So, in keeping with the "pure and simple" theme, we said we need a president, a treasurer, and a secretary. That's it. Everything else can be done on an ad hoc basis with volunteers.

First office to be voted on was that of Treasurer. Since Mattie Crane just gushes honesty, and since under her stewardship we have greatly prospered, she was re-nominated. Running against her was Dunbar's dog, Honey. Mattie won, 12 to 2. We think Honey voted twice.

The second office up for vote was Secretary. Someone had too much to drink and re-nominated John Gobel. Running against him was Dunbar's dog Honey again. This was going to be close, since she was sulking after her loss to Mattie, and people were feeling pretty bad about it. The final result was 8 to 7 in favor of Gobel. We think Gobel voted twice. Honey bit him.

Then came the exciting part, the President. Bill Grusik, the incumbent, made it very clear that he will not run, and not accept the position. While we kid around a lot, we were all sincere about trying to change Bill's mind, as he has done a superb job in being an ambassador for our club and for the sport not only in Maine, but also nationally through his contacts with a number of other organizations.

We offered to double his salary, but he thought it would strain our budget until Honey, trying to get a spot in the new administration, explained to him that doubling zero really doesn't amount to much.

Anyway, to make a long story short, Bill did agree to serve one more year with the understanding that we collectively would assume some of the more mundane tasks of his office. That way, he could focus in on the parts that he does better than any of us, which is the ambassadorship part, as well as the recruiting new members part.

So, the final and complete slate of officers for the Maine Powerchute Association for the fiscal year 2001-2002 is:

President – Bill Grusik
Secretary – John Gobel
Treasurer – Mattie Crane



Another colorful photo from the MPA fly-in, taken by the Six Chuter pilot while waiting for the wind to change direction so he wouldn't have to turn his plane

By the way, we had to create a position for Honey, who was threatening to make a mess in the middle of our meeting. She is now our Sergeant at Paws.

Annual Club dues

It was decided to keep the dues at \$20 per year. Suggestions were made to lower it, but we were reminded of Jerry Sukeforth's comment at the previous meeting that "we piss away so much money on our toys that \$20 is just a drop in the bucket." You don't have to be eloquent to be brilliant.

A separate notice will be going out to everybody who has not yet paid to remind them. We will send this notice even to our former members who somehow dropped by the wayside, and give them one more chance to do the right thing. Or the wrong thing.

Next Meeting

At the Norridgewock Fly-in on August 4th (Saturday) at 10 AM (or 11 if the flying is really good). Look for Bill's camper and awning.

Courtesy copies

We have been sending courtesy copies of our Newsletter to our friends in New Hampshire, our friends at the Blue Heron, and to the ASC. We'll continue with this practice without charging them our annual dues. They have been kind enough to reciprocate, and send us information about their activities, safety tips, maintenance tips, etc. Between you and me, we're getting the better end of that deal!

It's growing!

Having done a quick and highly unscientific survey at our meeting we estimate is that there are about 45 to 50 powered parachutes in Maine (and probably about 45-50 ppc pilots). About 5 or so years ago, there were no more than a handful. Because it's so much fun, relatively safe, and an affordable way to do something totally unnatural (flying, I mean), it's really catching on.

However, as more and more inexperienced pilots are joining our sport, it's up to us "old timers" to set an example with a high standard of safety, discipline, piloting skills, and training. Otherwise, we all know what's going to happen – more accidents, more injuries, a few fatalities, and the next thing you know, it's banned, or so many rules and restrictions are placed on it that it might as well be banned. Not a pretty picture.

Flying Competitions

The World Championship of Powered Parachuting is held this year in Greenville, Illinois. A few of our members were thinking of attending and even participating. While this year's event is pretty much prohibitively far, future ones might be closer. Bill will be organizing some competitive events for the MPA at our next fly-in at Norridgewock, using the specifications from some of the events in the World Championships. Scott McCurdie volunteered to paint the necessary lines and targets.

Odds and Ends

The in-flight engine failure experienced by Bill Grusik was definitively attributed to the small screw from the gas cap retaining chain falling into the tank, wedging itself into the 90 degree metal outlet from the tank to the gas lines, and blocking fuel flow. The screw was a perfect fit, as though it was machined for that purpose. Lesson learned:

- 1.) If you have a retaining chain, check the screw periodically.
- 2.) The "unlikely" will happen sometimes – even Jerry Parlin, who really knows his engines, reassured Bill that the screw scenario is impossible.

Bob Ellis had an incident while transporting his plane with a pretty full tank of gas – apparently the ventilation on the Buckeye's gas tank is not consistent, and he had a lot of gas siphoned out through the carburetor into his trailer.

Thanks to Wayne Kenney (again!) for the use of his field; to Bill Grusik for the photos; to Jerry Parlin and Dunbar Seamans for mowing the fields; to the new members for actually sitting through the whole meeting (never been done before!); and to Mattie Crane for putting up with all the disgusting sheep jokes and other perversions brought up at the meeting.

Complacency

- You've carefully thought out all the angles.
- You've done it a thousand times.
- It comes naturally to you.
- You know what you're doing, its what you've been trained to do your whole life.
- Nothing could possibly go wrong, right ?

