

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

Maine Powerchute Association

John Gobel, President 852-7300
Bob Ellis, Safety 354-8740

Mattie Crane, Treasurer 346-6023
Dun Seamans, Event Coord 785-3006

Bonnie Micue, Secretary 273-2016
Ed Nadeau, Public Rel. 726-5865

Sept/Oct 2002

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www.mainepowerchutes.org

By all measures, we've had a wonderful summer of flying, and we still have bit of it left. This month's issue will bring us up to date on some of the recent happenings, and list some of the events coming up. We also have lots of pictures - the obvious up-side of that is that more pictures mean less room for the so-called articles!

We got several new members recently, which goes to show you that there are actually people out there whose standards are as low as ours! While we can't quite figure out why you'd want to waste 20 bucks like that, we do welcome you into our jolly gang of pilots and near-pilots and social butterflies and other outcasts from society.

Lewiston balloon festival

We had some excellent weather once again for this annual event. About 30 balloons were flying, along with 7 MPA chutes (plus a few trikes and some other non-desirables). As usual, it's pretty spectacular to fly with these giant, colorful, and out-of-control air things.

Thanks to Mattie & Buzz for making the arrangements again at Mahie's field, and thanks to Mrs. Armstrong for letting us use her property.

The many spectators who watch this event seem to really enjoy our presence (yes, that IS highly unusual!). We've been told that we add much to the festivities, and judging from all the friendly interest and waves from the on-lookers, it seems to be true.

Noise issue – again!

The great majority of people who see us fly are intrigued by our machines (and by our sanity?). There are some, however, who forever are making our life more difficult by constant complaints about the noise we make. We've had issues at Fairfield, at Warren, and several other places.

We're in the process of borrowing a device that measures noise volume, and with it we'll document the actual noise we produce at various altitudes. We can then compare the result with the noise



Neat scene from Lewiston balloon festival. Those who have had pigeon droppings land on them were quite worried about the flying polar bear.

produced by other vehicles, such as motorcycles, trucks, etc. We can also use the numbers to verify that we are within town ordinance specifications.

Regardless of the outcome, it does make immense sense to not annoy people by flying directly over their homes at low altitudes. The last thing we want is town ordinances banning or restricting our activity, or even just trying to pass such rules!

Wes Daggett flies again!

Welcome back to Wes, who's been out since his accident in February. While not fully recovered, he is well enough to fly again (with some minor modifications to his steering mechanism.)

Wes did give us permission to use some of the pictures we took at the accident scene, but being the ultra-sensitive folks that we are, we chose not to do it. Also, it is editorial policy not to run any pictures without a funny caption (yes, those are supposed to be funny!), and generally ambulance pictures are a challenge even for us hard-core irreverent types.

And you thought Suke was just another pretty face!

Well, you would have been wrong – he is also a public servant, able to save large amounts of property in a single flight! Jerry, Dunbar, and some other MPA members were flying out of Warren, when Dunbar spotted smoke from an accidental fire that was close to being out of control.

All the toys Suke has on his plane actually found a practical use – he was able to use his loudspeaker to alert some neighbors, who were able to react to the fire and contain it before it got out of control. Nice work, Jerry and company!

Herb donates rides to charity

Herb Micue has donated several rides to a variety of charitable causes, and has raised pretty good amount of money for them. It's great to see MPA members doing good deeds while promoting our sport. Herb has provided many a thrill to fellow MPA members, so it's nice to see him giving some thrills to others as well. Nice going, Herb!

Bowman fly-in another success

Nice weather and a large turnout made Bowman a successful event again this year. We had a large

MPA contingent there, and about 10 chutes from the New Hampshire group were there too. We all got quite a bit of flying in, and no incidents or accidents at all made it even a happier occasion.

The fly-in was used as a forum for an FAA seminar, so tons of fixed wing aircraft lined both sides of the runway – we had to get assistance from the organizers to leave enough room for us to take off and land. But it all worked out, and since nearly all of us have aviation-band radios, we coexisted with the much faster fixed wing traffic without any problems. In fact, we even got a compliment from one of the fixed wing pilots, (all of whom were using very proper radio protocol) – he said he was very impressed with the quality of our radios, and with the professionalism of our calls.



More beautiful scenery from Bowman. Unfortunately, there's nothing funny in this picture except that Dave's fly is open.

MPA General Membership Meeting

The third GM meeting of our fiscal year was held at the Bowman field. We had a pretty good turnout, with the 13 members in attendance sitting, lounging, standing, and sort of participating.

We did have a guest, Ed Roy, who is the Secretary/Treasurer for the Norridgewock flying club. As many of us remember, the Norridgewock fly-in used to be one of our favorite events, but last year we felt we were forced to fly out of a small and unsafe field, and in general were treated like second-class citizens. As a result, this year none of us went to that event.



Beginning of the MPA meeting in Bowman. We saved a chair for our keynote speaker, President Bush, but he never showed.

Ed Roy was gracious enough to address us at this meeting, and to apologize for an error they made in appointing an individual to handle

the powered parachute traffic who did not do the right things.

Ed also said that in the future, they would ask one of us to be at their planning sessions, so we could represent the PPC interests. That approach sounded good to most of us, so we may resume adding that fly-in to our event repertoire, and do our famous MPA sponsored PPC-only fly-in a week later or earlier than this year.

Our esteemed Treasurer Mattie gave her report – due to her prudent stewardship, the organization now has \$715, after all bills have been paid. That gives a nice cushion for the Christmas party, for donations to some of the fly-ins we attend, porta-potties for our sanctioned events, Top Gun contest trophies, and some other toys and games we like to play.

Bob Ellis led a nice discussion on various aspects of safety. Bob will have a regular section in the Newsletter to discuss some safety topic each month, and hopefully improve our rather dismal safety record. One of the major points brought out at the meeting was the need to constantly be looking around when near an airport. We had several incidents where PPCs cut in front of traffic on final or on base legs, and also where other traffic cut in front of us. Either case is very dangerous.

Jerry Sukeforth gave a brief talk on the importance of doing the preventive maintenance items from the list provided by Rotax for its engines. In his words, preventive maintenance is cheaper than a mistress,



The Cranes flying amongst the balloons, and showing off for them up by actually returning to their takeoff spot without a crew of 2 trucks and 11 people.

and it will keep you out of trouble instead of getting you into it. The debate on that issue is still raging.



Scene from the Greenville event. Notice giant marshmallow display near the Katahdin boat.

We discussed some of the events coming up – see next few sections for details.

Miscellaneous thoughts

I got my phone cut off, but sometimes it feels like it's still there.

I have a kid now... at least until his parents pay the ransom.

Winter fly-in

Since last year was so successful, we thought we'd push our luck and schedule it for Moosehead lake in Greenville again. We have reserved several rooms and a large suite for January 18th & 19th at Kelly's Landing, which overlooks the lake and has an excellent launching facility. If the weather holds true to form, we should have plenty of ice by then.

At this point, we have room for about 10 people, so let Dunbar (our Event Coordinator) know if you're interested.

BFI Refresher course and Christmas Party!

Mark your calendar for the social event of the year! Our famous annual Christmas social will be held on Saturday, December 7th at a place somewhere in the Waterville – Augusta area to be named. More information on that in the next Newsletter. As usual, we'll have award-winning videos, good company, awards, and real liquor.

The BFI refresher course, which as we all know we have to do every two years to stay current and legal, will also be held on December 7th in the late morning, so it ends by about 3 or 4 o'clock, in time so we can get ready for the dinner and party. Please

let Dunbar know if you're planning on attending this as soon as possible.

Love & Marriage advice column

A couple comes up to a wishing well. The guy leans over, makes a wish, and throws in a penny.

His wife decides to make a wish, too, but she leans over too far, falls into the well, and drowns.

The guy says, "Wow, it really works."



Lisa returns to Maine, and joins us at a fly-in. She looks extremely pleased by the mechanical adjustments Peter is making to her knee.

Safety & Maintenance tips

A few suggestions for this month from Bob Ellis, our safety officer:

- Have someone else pre-flight your plane every now and then. Often, you miss things on your own because you see it so much.
- When warming up your machine, have the lines ON THE GROUND, not up on the hooks. It is very easy to have the prop eat the lines when resting on the hook, as many of us have found out.
- Do NOT leave your parachute laying around uncovered for any length of time, as the UV damage by the sun seriously shortens its lifespan (which may then shorten yours).

Upcoming events

Gadabout Gaddis fly-in at Bingham. Sept. 26-28. It is a fairly small field and quite crowded, so we usually park and fly out of Doug Sukeforth's camp a few miles away. Doug was gracious enough to let us use his fields once again this year, even though he and his family won't be able to be there.

Deblois PPC only camp-out, Oct. 4-6. Just an informal MPA get together at the Deblois airfield near Cherryfield.

BFI refresher course, Dec. 7th. At a place to be named, but in the Waterville/Augusta area.

MPA Annual Christmas Party, Dec. 7th. In the Waterville/Augusta area, exact time and place to be named soon.

MPA Winter Fly-in, Jan. 18-20, Kelly's Landing, on Moosehead Lake in Greenville.

Mattie & Buzz Crane retiring

Lots of luck to two of our long-time members, as they journey to live in Florida for the winters. They'll be back for the summer, so we'll still be enjoying their company at our summer events. Thanks to both of you for all your contributions to our organization.

Welcome New Members

Erlon Lisherness, Leon Markie, and Joel McCabe are three of our new members. Leon and Erlon have been PPC pilots for quite a while, and Joel is a recent convert. We welcome you to our organization, but really, what were you thinking??? Have you seen some of our members? Have you read this trashy Newsletter? Do you have any standards at all?

Memorandum

To: All Company Employees
Re: Company Picnic

We are glad we had the great employee turnout for the first and last annual Company Picnic.

While everyone seemed to enjoy themselves our group did not exactly portray the public image we wish to convey.

Additionally, we are now seeking candidates for the position of "Executive Secretary"



I guess we've all received memos like this from our employers at one time or another...