

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

Maine Powerchute Association

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Newsletter



www.mainepowerchutes.org

Well, the weather has finally been cooperating, and we're getting quite a bit more flying in. So those of us doing winter flying have put away our skis, and the rest of us got the dust off the planes and put fresh gas in them. The summer flying season is about to go into high gear, and we have lots of events this year, so let's go!

It's about time too, as we're running out of current pictures, so we're starting to recycle them. Get your digital cameras out, tie a strong strap around it, and snap away!

Welcome back, Snowbirds

All three of our members who left when the first snows fell last fall have returned in one piece. Welcome back to Buzz & Mattie Crane, to Joel & Scooter McCabe, and to Dunbar Seamans. They're all itching to fly again, if they can remember how to start their engines and lay out the chutes. If you don't recognize them our some of our many upcoming fly-ins, they're the tan ones.

New Fly-in

We added one more event to our list of planned events. We were invited to participate by an EAA chapter in Hampden in their annual event. They're sponsoring an FAA talk on the Sports Pilot rules, and they're running the Young Eagles and the Flying Start programs (EAA). Also scheduled is a bon fire Saturday night, along with a big cook out.

The event is the weekend of June 26 & 27. We're welcome there Friday night, and we can camp out along the long grass strip. Directions to the Williams field are on Page 5.



A beautiful winter scene, one we won't see for at least 6 more months, we hope.

MPA members in search and rescue

Jerry Sukeforth, Jim Holloway, and Dunbar Seamans participated in a real search operation a few weeks ago. A while back, Jerry had volunteered our services to the game warden service, which conducts most searches, and they called him when a disturbed individual was lost and may have drowned. The 3 MPA members took off from Belfast under marginal flying conditions, and conducted a professional search of their assigned grid areas. Unfortunately, the individual was never found,

but congratulations to Jerry, Jim, and Dunbar for their valiant effort.

Wanted – high-skilled pilots

We have been invited again to the annual Lindbergh Museum aviation event in Canaan, Maine. This is an annual event at the museum, which houses various artifacts and other items from the famous Lindbergh flight, including the crate in which his Spirit of St. Louis aircraft was shipped back from Europe.

Larry Ross, the coordinator of the event, invites all the school kids from the area, and talks about aviation himself, along with several guests of varying aviation fame. He usually has some big military planes fly by, including C130s, A10s, Blackhawks, etc. He also has several ultralights fly by. Since his field is rather small, with tall trees on both ends, only a helicopter can land there, and of course, intrepid powered parachute fliers.

Last year, Jerry Sukeforth and John Gobel represented the PPC community, did a fly-over a couple of times, then landed, and then did a static demo. The helicopters came over later, by they backed out when they saw the slope of the field – they cited some obscure military regulation about safety limits on non-combat and non-rescue missions. They landed at a nearby field. They were not too happy when Sukee reminded them (several times) that we lowly PPC pilots got in without any problems. The field is too small to take off from, so we brought the trailers to get the planes out.

This year, we're hoping to repeat our performance with a few more PPCs doing a fly-

over, and maybe a few landing there as well, weather permitting. The date is Friday, June 4th. We open the show by flying over a little before 9:00 AM, then landing about 9:10, and the speeches start at 9:15. We take off from a golf course about a mile away.



The new MPA club house, opening soon... We're going for the biker bar theme.

If you're an experienced PPC pilot, and are interested in participating, call Jerry (691-3800) or John (852-7300), and we'll give you exact directions (Easy St. in Canaan), and the schedule. There will be some fixed wing ultralights flying over also, so we need to coordinate flight patterns, altitudes, and timing with them. If you have your blue Kitty Hawk uniform, we will be wearing those. However, after you see the field, you might want to wear your brown uniform.

Officer election nominations

Our annual election of officers will take place at our second general meeting of the calendar year at the DeBlois fly-in on June 19th. This year, we'll do it a little differently. In addition to voting by everyone present at the meeting, we'll also be counting absentee ballots. All active MPA members (over 42 of us at this time) will be sent ballots, and if they're returned by June 19th, they'll be counted.

So at this time, we'd like to receive nominations for President, Treasurer, Safety Officer, and Public Relations Officer. Nominations will be closed on June 5th, and ballots will be sent out June 6th, to be returned by June 19th. So please call me or e-mail me with any nominations (207-852-7300, or jgobel@camdenational.com).

Looking for Top Gun site

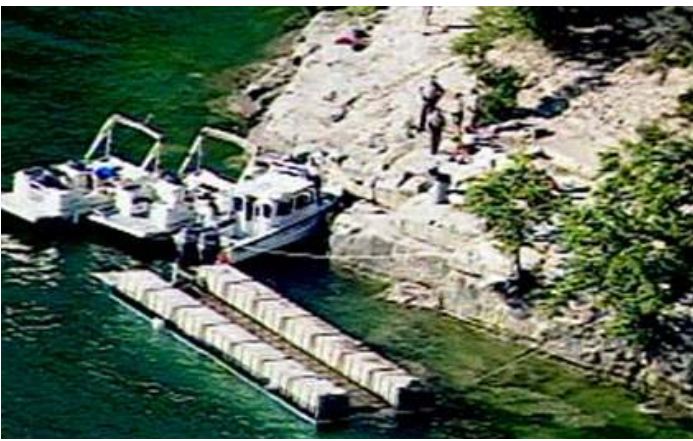
We will not be able to have our Top Gun fly-in this year at Wayne's field, so we're looking for an equally good site. That is our most-attended event of the year, so the ideal site would not have much air traffic, be on an open grass strip, have enough room for camping, and not have too many crabby neighbors. If you know of any, let us know as soon as possible so we can coordinate.

We have a number of possible alternates already, and some of us are doing preliminary investigations with the owners. Possibles at this time are Lili's field, Miller's field (Newburgh), EAA Rt. 69 field (Hampden), Meddybemps field, and Bowman. The date is July 24-25.

A lesson here somewhere...

Scanning the globe for interesting powered parachute stories, we found this one from Lake Travis in Austin, Texas. A party boat with about sixty passengers aboard was cruising by a nude beach. All the men rushed over to the railing nearest to the beach, followed by their wives and dates trying to cover their eyes. The party boat capsized, of course, sending all 60 into the lake.

Thanks to rescue boats and good swimming, there were only minor injuries. Apparently, one of the 60 had a cousin who flew a powered parachute once. Good PPC story, isn't it?



Rescue boats helping the capsized party boat. People on the nude beach are still laughing.

Flying competitions

The June issue of Aero Connections had a couple of excellent pieces on flying competitions – the editorial by Jim Stephenson on page 4, and the article on “Your First Contest” on page 24.

The point they're making is the same we have stated in our Top Gun competition – “it represents practice and training that improves safety.” The events are designed to simply show how well you can control your aircraft. None of the events are dangerous, none are outside the safety envelope of the aircraft, and they are all maneuvers that require the skills necessary for normal flying.

To quote from Dave Ahlberg's article, “What skills does it take to successfully fly in a contest? Basic piloting skills, really. Competing does not require you to know anything that good pilots don't already know: flying the pattern, landing where you intend, and basic navigation.”

Our Top Gun event results count toward a point ranking system that determines national champions. There are a number of other PPC competitions, most of which are in the Midwest, and there are also world level competitions.

Four MPA members place in Top 50 of National Competition Rankings!

The ASC National Rankings for 2003 have been published, and the MPA is proud to have placed 4 of its members in the top 50, and one in the top 20! Here are the results:

- 14th place – John Gobel
- 20th place – Mike O'Donnell
- 24th place – Bill Grusik
- 31st place – Joel McCabe

Nice going, guys!

More uses for powered parachutes

NASA had launched the Genesis probe capsule, which contained very delicate silicon plates in an experiment to measure solar wind particles. On its return from space, the capsule deployed a parachute exactly like ours, however it would have been damaged upon contact with the Utah



desert. So they hired some Hollywood stunt pilots to catch it in mid-air. It worked – see picture above!

Advice from the MPA love doctor (tnx, SR)

Marty wakes up at home with a huge hangover. He forces himself to open his eyes, and the first thing he sees is a couple of aspirins and a glass of water on the side table. He sits up and sees his clothing in front of him, all clean and pressed. Marty looks around the room and sees that it is in perfect order, spotlessly clean. So is the rest of the house. He takes the aspirins and notices a note on the table "Honey, breakfast is on the stove, I left early to go shopping. Love you." So he goes to the kitchen and sure enough there is a hot breakfast and the morning newspaper.

His son is also at the table, eating. Marty asks, "Son, what happened last night?" His son says, "Well, you came home after 3 A.M., drunk and delirious. Broke some furniture, puked in the hallway, and gave yourself a black eye when you stumbled into the door"

Confused, Marty asks, "So, why is everything in order and so clean, and breakfast is on the

table waiting for me?" His son replies, "Oh that! Mom dragged you to the bedroom, and when she tried to take your pants off, you said, "Lady, leave me alone, I'm married!"

Tally:

A self-induced hangover - \$100.00

Broken furniture - \$200.00

Breakfast - \$10.00

Saying the right thing - priceless

MPA honored by New England Aero Club

The oldest continually operating aviation club in the nation selected the Maine Powerchute Association for their annual award, and presented it to us in a lovely ceremony in Lexington, MA. The club started in 1898 – before the Wright brothers' flight (and just slightly before I was born) – how, you might ask? – well, they started out as balloonists.

The club has had an incredible list of aviation legends as members. Lindbergh was a member, for one. At the awards dinner, we had World War II aces, Tuskegee airmen, numerous active and retired airline pilots, a Navy test pilot for the F18, many active and retired military pilots, most of whom flew in the two Iraq wars, several of us Viet Nam era pilots (yes, we're still alive, sort of), and even a guy who flew the Concorde. In other words, we powered parachutists fit right in.



Award ceremony in Lexington, MA for the Aero Club of New England. John (4th from left) accepting the Maine state award for the MPA, joined by the club officers, and winners from the other New England states.

A picture of the award is printed on Page 6. Another great document to put on to our clubhouse wall!

During the reception, we had played a slideshow of about 40 pictures we took during the Kitty Hawk trip (mostly the flying scenes), and much to our surprise (much, much to our surprise!), all these distinguished aviators thought that flying our PPCs was the coolest thing!

Quite a few were familiar with some of our adventures, and they enthusiastically read our reports on the web (and yes, they all wanted to meet Roger!). Most of them were very interested in how we pulled it off. I had the honor of giving our acceptance speech, during which I explained the planning, the logistics, and told some of the more humorous anecdotes we had. I did have to explain that while 900 miles may not sound like a long trip to many of the jet jockeys, flying at around 25 miles an hour, with limited fuel, and with no instruments of any significance, you have the makings of an adventure.

Anyway, it was a lovely event, and we can be proud of that accomplishment. Now, let's move on to bigger and better things. Anybody think of anything?

Directions to Williams field (EAA fly-in)

Going North from Winterport on Rt. 69:

At the junction of 69 and Kennebec Road, continue on Route 69 for almost 1 mile. You will cross a bridge over a stream. The airfield is about ¼ mile from the stream on the right.

Going North or South on I95:

Exit 174, go South on Route 69 to the junction of Route 9 and US 2. Continue on 69 for slightly over 1 mile. House is on left.

Other notes from either direction:

There are red balls on the powerline on the west side of the road. You will see a Cessna Skyhawk and a Cessna 150 in the field. There will be a sign posted on the road.

A Deblois sampler

There will be an informal Deblois fly-in on the weekend of June 5 & 6, for anybody who wants to see the blooming blueberry fields – some of the boys think that'll be the peak weekend. Just show up, or call Jerry (691-3800) for weather reports and go/no-go decisions.

New FAA service

The FAA has started a new on-line service to speed up the excruciatingly long time it took to replace certificates and to execute a number of other administrative actions. The web site is: <http://registry.faa.gov/airmen.asp>.

The new service actually has a place where you can record a gender change. In case you were wondering, I believe they set a limit of 3 of those per lifetime, so you have to be pretty decisive.

New web feature

Our world-renown webmaster Ed Nadeau had placed a new vendor on our web page (www.maineppchutes.org, in case you've been stuck in a cave for the last few years). It is called Cafepress, and it will take your favorite PPC photo and print it on T-shirts, hats, mugs, etc. Pretty neat – check it out. And, MPA gets part of the action.





THE AERO CLUB OF NEW ENGLAND
AWARDS THE DISTINGUISHED

Maine State Award 2004

TO

Maine Powerchute Association

"IN RECOGNITION OF YOUR PARTICIPATION
IN THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF FLIGHT BY
FLYING POWERED PARACHUTES IN RELAY
FASHION FROM MAINE AND DELIVERING THE
STATE FLAG TO THE WRIGHT BROTHERS NA-
TIONAL MEMORIAL IN KITTY HAWK, NORTH
CAROLINA"

PRESIDENT

March 29 2004

DATE

We have space to kill...

I used to eat a lot of natural foods until I learned that most people die of natural causes.

Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Never take life seriously. Nobody gets out alive anyway.

Life is sexually transmitted, have you ever thought about that?

An unbreakable toy is useful for breaking other toys.

Health is merely the slowest possible rate at which one can die.

Give a person a fish and you feed them for a day; teach that person to use the Internet and they won't bother you for weeks.

Some people are like Slinkies . . . not really good for anything, but you still can't help but smile when you see one tumble down the stairs.

Have you noticed since everyone has a camcorder these days no one talks about seeing UFOs like they used to?

Whenever I feel blue, I start breathing again.

All of us could take a lesson from the weather. It pays no attention to criticism.

Politics is supposed to be the second oldest profession. I have come to realize that it bears a very close resemblance to the first.