

*"If it's in the Newsletter, it must be true"
"Originality is the art of concealing your sources"*

Maine Powerchute Association

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September 2004

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It's been a busy few months, with several fly-ins, many new members, and of course, our annual Top Gun competition and fly-in. Results are listed here

In addition to the organized fly-ins, we've had numerous impromptu get-togethers at various venues, so we've had a good summer all things considered. We have a few more events coming up – Greenville on 9/3, Bingham on 9/24, Perham (Rob Paradis) on 10/2, and Bethel on 10/9. Then we go into the winter season – we haven't quite figured out our fall/winter schedule yet, but soon. Any suggestions, call me!

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Last chance for dues

Every year about this time we write a little paragraph or two to those few who have not paid their dues, and congratulate them on their good decision. Savings 20 bucks is a good thing, but think of all you'll miss! OK, OK – don't think *that* hard.

When I get bills in the mail that say "This is the last notice we're sending you," I always say "Great – it's about time you guys wised up!"



Campfire at Eastport, Gobel style. While everyone else ran for cover, Jerry bravely stayed behind to protect the rest of the campsites with his trusty cup of water.

But, the MPA is now playing hard ball – this is the last Newsletter for you! Then what are you going to use to line the bottom of your bird cage? Huh? Think about that!

By the way, we do question the sanity of those of you who did pay.

Norridgewock a good show again

In spite of the absence of several MPA members who usually attend this popular event (who went instead to the fly-in by the New Hampshire powered parachute group held to honor Art Willard -see following paragraph), the Norridgewock fly-in enjoyed fairly good weather and a good turnout.

The boys had several good flights. Jerry S. even gave one of his rare instructional flights to new member Mark Rideout's lovely wife – to make room for her, he had to remove the microwave and the small nuclear reactor he carries to power his rig and all the paraphernalia on it.

As the wind picked up, Doug S. was kind enough to demonstrate an advanced

technique of having the wind pick up your chute and roll the cage over. Since some of the more rookie members have not seen this maneuver, they were impressed. No harm done – plane and Doug are fine.

Welcome new members!

We've had a slew of new members during the last month or two – must be the effect of the full moon, or possibly some radioactive fallout from some rogue country's nuclear bomb experiments. Anyway, we extend a hearty welcome to the following new members:

Al Davis from Clinton, ME – Al is an old-time aviator who has more flight hours than all of us combined. However, after flying all that dangerous fixed wing stuff, he decided it was time to do a little “low and slow” flying with us.

Mark Rideout from Bowdoinham – Mark has been taking lessons from Dunbar, and is ready to join us at some of our upcoming fly-ins.

Carroll and Suzanne Werrin from Concord, NH – Carroll and Suzanne joined us for the first time at the Top Gun event, and were getting checked out for their BFI by Dunbar. They will be trying to expand the powered parachute community in the Concord area.

Scott McCurdy from Harpswell rejoined us after a short hiatus – he is ready to add his enthusiasm and experience to our club again.

Matt Flaherty and Amanda Packham from Lewiston – they are new to the area, and are interested in lessons and in buying a PPC in the near future. Well, they were, but after meeting some of us, they may change their minds.

Lastly, we welcome **Ima Dufus**, who moved from Buzzardbreath, Idaho to Maine. Ima's dream is to fly around the world in a powered parachute and to lose 7 pounds and to get rid of an annoying suspicious rash in a very private place.

Best TOP GUN competition yet!

We held the annual MPA Top Gun competition at Wayne's field once again – thanks to Wayne for letting us use his facility. Also thanks to Dunbar and Jerry Parlin and Mike O'Donnell for preparing the field for the large number of MPA members and spectators who usually attend this event.



Pam Andersen was among the many celebrities cheering during our Top Gun contest.

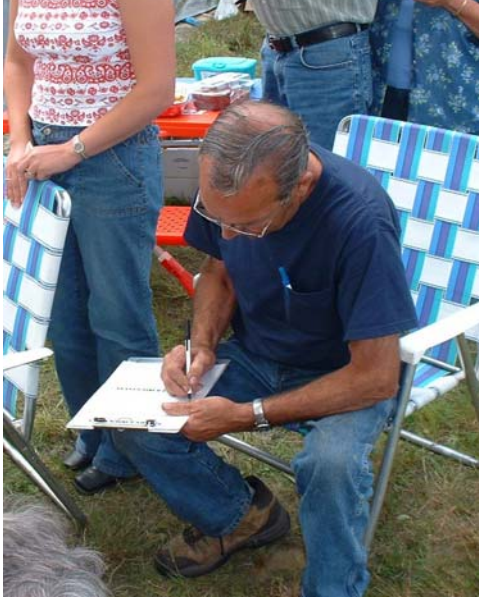
True to form, this was our best-attended event, with about 18 powered parachutes there, and with MPA members from all over the state. Weather was great, and a good time was had by all.

Ten intrepid fliers signed up for the competition, all gunning to depose two-time Top Gun winner John Gobel. In a last minute rule change, the group decided that whoever won the event last year has to go first the following year, so Gobel took off.

Just like last year when guinea pig Joel McCabe was sent out to sacrifice himself to see if the wind was too strong, Gobel made an attempt to complete the four laps of competition. Watching him dance all over the sky, the rest of the group decided that maybe we needed to wait for calmer skies.

So after a short wait, the competition finally got going, and turned out to be the best display of flying we've had so far. Every one of the contestants completed all the events (with one exception – see below), and the scores were much closer than ever. Nobody even cut the 3 foot high tape! No accidents or even close calls during the competition – nice flying, boys!

Thanks to Dunbar for once again being the Air Boss, and running the show from the ground so it proceeded smoothly and more or less on time. Also, thanks to Jerry Sukeforth, Bonnie Micue, Darlene Paradis, Charles Beck, and Carolyn Nadeau for being the judges!



Long lines formed for Leon Markee to sign autographs – apparently he’s often mistaken for Tom Cruise

Since we got a late start for the competition, it was getting sort of dark towards the end, and our last contestant Joel McCabe “claims” he could not see the targets onto which he was trying to drop his bean bag bombs. He dropped one of them into Dunbar’s coffee cup, and the other onto his head. Ended up with pretty good scores though – the judges gave him bonus points for some reason.

Anyway, Joel declined to fly the last two events, and since it was too dark to see him by this time, we couldn’t verify his claim that he actually did not fly them. We gave him a chance to complete it Sunday morning, but by that time the competitive fires in his belly had gone out (replaced by coffee and eggs and bacon).

So, here are the results!

High Bomb Drop (from over 100 feet):

- 1st Place – Robin Paradis (3’9”)
- 2nd Place – Mike O’Donnell (8’6”)
- 3rd Place – John Gobel (15’9”)

Low Bomb Drop (from any altitude):

- 1st Place – Doug Sukeforth (3’1”)
- 2nd Place – Wes Daggett (4’2”)
- 3rd Place – Bob Ellis (4’9”)

Barrier Jump:

- 1st Place – Mike O’Donnell (5’6”)
- 2nd Place – John Gobel (8’9”)
- 3rd Place – Bill Farland (15’0”)

Spot Landing:

- 1st Place – John Gobel (4’7”)
- 2nd Place – Mike O’Donnell (6’8”)
- 3rd Place – Herb Micue (10’1”)

Final TOP GUN results (combined scores):

- 3rd Place – Robin Paradis (53’9”)
 - 2nd Place – John Gobel (37’11”)
- and the **TOP GUN WINNER FOR 2004** –

Mike O’Donnell (27’11”)



It was a warm day at an MPA fly-in, so some of our wives/girlfriends asked if they could put on something more cool and comfortable. We said “no,” of course.

“Lucky” Adair - wrong place, wrong time

Our own daredevil Scott Adair finished his backpack flight (actually, he used his bike gismo with it that time), and parked his chute near his tent in the camping area, and set up his wind sock.

Now as everybody knows, that particular combination of events is like waving a red flag in front of a Spanish bull, and our new member

Carroll just didn't have the experience to resist it - he landed right on top of Scott's chute! We could try to describe the scene, but definitely can not do it better than Scott did himself. In his own words, it was like a "salad shooter" – pieces of chute flying all over the place, with pieces of lines interspersed for variety.

Apparently, Carroll became preoccupied with some aspect of his landing and lost sight of his target landing spot – luckily, no one was hurt. Carroll was out a few thousand bucks however. On the plus side he did gain a new nickname - "Salad Shooter" Werrin. And of course, Scott's new nickname is "Lucky."



Early morning scene from Gilmanton, NH event

Fly-in to honor Art Willard

Several of our friends at the New Hampshire powered parachute group organized a fly-in near Gilmanton to honor one of the first individuals to fly a powered parachute, Art Willard. Art was instrumental in getting our great sport going almost twenty years ago in the New Hampshire area, which then spread rapidly throughout the northeast.

Back in those days, there were no two-seaters for orientation or instructional flights, so your first flight in a PPC was also your first solo flight. Art (with his associate Steve Reep at the time) did a superb job in preparing students for that event. By the way, a part of that preparation was making them watch an hour long disclaimer video that made the student understand that no matter what happens for the rest of his life, it's not the manufacturer's fault.

Many of us got our start through Art's expert instruction before and during our first flight. While he never lost a student, Art had enough close calls that he jumped at the very first two-seater that Buckeye put out, and quickly retired his single-seat Paraplane.



Art Willard, his lovely wife Dot (and an unidentified pair of feet trying to steal the scene) at the Gilmanton, NH event in Art's honor

In addition to his instruction and his dealership. Art, with assistance from his talented wife Dot, was always there to help with advice or with mechanical skills to overcome any difficulty any of us had with our rigs. He made a lot of close friends, both near his home in Gilmanton and throughout the country.

The MPA had several members attend this event. We received a touching thank-you note from Dot for our attendance and for the small donation the club made to Art.

Since his sickness has taken him out of active flying and instruction, we will all miss seeing Art at future fly-ins. His ready smile, his sense of humor, his willingness to help out whenever needed, and the great courage he has shown under tremendous adversity is truly an inspiration to us all. Our best wishes and prayers are with you, Art.



BFI refresher course well attended

About 15 MPA members attended the BFI Refresher course held at Knox Country airport in August. Thanks again to our AFI Dunbar Seamans for organizing and conducting this event, as well as to Jim Holloway, Ed Nadeau, and several others who helped out with the set up and presentations.

As we know, these sessions are pretty much mandatory every two years in order to keep up your exemption and maintain your BFI status (there are other ways, but none are as painless). While there's some value in reviewing the ASC and FAA rules regarding ultralight operations, the real value of the refresher is discussing the myriad of safety issues that come up during the free discussion period.

Father Dunbar *forced* everybody to confess their sins, and relate some safety related incident in which each one of us was involved at one time or another. And we had some doozies (clearly that's not how you spell it, but it's not in the dictionary). We could dedicate the whole Newsletter to those stories – but we won't. In any case, there are a lot of lessons to be learned from these discussions, as it is far better to learn from somebody else's mistakes rather than trying to make them all yourself.

Oversight corrected

The last issue of the Newsletter did not include our usual bevy of scantily clad beauties (mostly female). Our circulation plummeted, so we're overcorrecting by including a bunch in this issue. Save it - it could become a collector's item (snowball in hell, you say???)



Two more cadets working hard to become good enough to join the MPA. I think they may be out of uniform.

Bed-time story

A man and his wife were getting ready for bed. The wife is standing in front of a full-length mirror taking a hard look at herself. "You know, dear," she says, "I look in the mirror, and I see an old woman. My face is all wrinkled, my boobs are barely above my waist, and my butt is hanging out a mile. I've got fat legs, and my arms are all flabby."

She turns to him and says, "Tell me something positive to make me feel better about myself."

He studies hard for a moment thinking about it and then says in a soft, thoughtful voice, "Well, there's nothing wrong with your eyesight."

Services for him will be held Saturday morning at 10:30 at the Mid-Town Memorial Chapel.

Confused by the ASC letter about DPEs?

Several weeks ago, most of us got a letter from ASC soliciting interest in becoming an FAA Designated Pilot Examiner, which is the title of those who can legally sign off for Sport Pilot licenses under the new Sport Pilot rules. Here's the whole story behind that situation:

When the [Aero Sports Connection](#) (ASC), a membership group for sport flyers and ultralight pilots, sent out a letter last week to its registered ultralight instructors asking them if they want to become FAA Designated Pilot Examiners (DPEs) in the proposed Sport Pilot category, it opened a can of worms -- which may be only the first of many such cans lying in wait, as the long-anticipated Sport Pilot rule, with its multitude of devilish details, creeps toward finalization. "We need to get started on this," ASC

President Jim Stephenson told AVweb yesterday.

"We have over 2,400 instructors, and we'll have to have examiners to give them check rides." But to some, the action seemed premature. The letter asked instructors to submit information to the ASC about their background and experience. "This is our own internal process," Stephenson said.

... As EAA Calls for Clarification ...

About 5 p.m. Tuesday, a teleconference with EAA, the ASC, the FAA, and the [U.S. Ultralight Association](#) (USUA) was held to clarify the procedure for authorized ultralight instructors to become DPEs in the proposed Sport Pilot category. "FAA emphasized that, contrary to some reports, the application process has NOT started and that no action to start the DPE process would begin until a final Sport Pilot/Light-Sport Aircraft rule is published in the Federal Register and subsequently the DPE policy is released," EAA said on its Web site Tuesday night.

Stephenson said that his letter to instructors was "fully compatible and coordinated with the FAA process." On the ASC Web site, an announcement is posted regarding Sport Pilot Examiners: "The Sport Pilot program requires many pieces of infrastructure. ... One of those pieces is a set of examiners who are competent in these light craft. A transitional plan is now starting to identify and train a significant number of examiners from our ranks. The first step in this plan is to send a letter to all BFIs and AFIs [basic and advanced flight instructors] to see who wants to be an examiner. ... Those who wish to be considered will supply background and experience information to aid in the evaluations. Once ASC has recommended candidates for SPE [Sport Pilot Examiner], the FAA examiner evaluation board will select from the pool of available candidates."

Another true story with a sad ending...

Old Merton from Warren, Maine worked hard all his life, but all he had to show for it was a small house, a plot of land, a mule, and a wife that would just never stop nagging him. Just a continuous stream of "Did you fix the roof yet?", and "When are you going to finish that porch?" and "How come the well water tastes funny?" and so on and so on.

The only peace he got from the continuous nagging was when he plowed his land with his mule. So, he plowed a lot.

One day he was plowing again, when his wife came out to see why he was taking so long to plow that field. As she continues to nag him, the mule rears up and kicks her in the head. She dies.

At the wake a few days later, the minister is watching the proceedings from the back of the room. He notices that whenever a woman goes up to Merton, he nods his head in agreement, but whenever a man goes up to him, he shakes his head in disagreement. So the minister goes up to Merton and asks him about it.

"Oh," says Merton, "that's because all the women who came up to me told me about what a wonderful woman she was, and I nodded in agreement. But the men, they just wanted to know if the mule was for sale."



Last year's Top Gun (Gobel, at left) and this year's Top Gun (O'Donnell, at the other left) toast each other with imaginary beers. They look like they already had too many.

For Sale

Art and Dot Willard are selling a 30 foot trailer – it has the cargo area for the PPC, and also a regular RV type living quarters (the usual sink, shower, toilet, range, A/C, heat, sofa, bed, etc.) They're asking \$15,000. If interested, call Dot at 603-267-6322.

Disclaimer

All objectionable material in this Newsletter was obtained from either Jerry Sukeforth or Joel McCabe. So quit yelling at me.