

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

Maine Powerchute Association

Newsletter

www.maine-powerchutes.org

December, 2005

Hey – something's not right!

Yes, our Newsletter logo of the last two years or so finally bit the dust, and is replaced by the cheery new one you see above. The old one was getting just too boring for those of us who have the attention span of a gnat. And for those of you who hate change of any sort – well, I'm sure by next month, you'll have forgotten what the old one looked like anyway...

Since most of you use the Newsletter to line the bottom of your bird cage anyway, we tested the new format with a couple of canaries, and they loved it!



These ladies are the finalists for our 2006 MPA Cheerleading Squad. Thanks to all of you who participated in the grueling selection process.

Winter flying is here – yippee!

For most of us, it usually takes a month or so to acclimate to the winter weather and to dust off the old winter flying clothes and find the skis for the plane.

For some of you others, it takes 4 or 5 months, by which time, what a surprise, it's spring, and lo and behold, you've neatly avoided all the joys of frozen toes, fingers, nose, ears, and any other protruding parts. However, once you get past all that, and are able to start your plane, the flying is just divine in the winter!

We're planning at least two formal fly-ins for the winter season, and probably will have several other get-togethers. One is scheduled for Moosehead Lake at Kelly's Landing, usually in mid to late February, and one in January in mid-Maine (China?) as those lakes seem to freeze pretty solid pretty early.

Christmas Party final details

The date is Sunday, December 18th, 2005.

The time is from 3:30 P.M. to about 6 P.M.

The place is Jeff's Catering in Bangor – directions and a great map are on the last page.

The dinner is buffet style with lots of different things, all very good.

The entertainment is... well... each other, I guess. Anybody wants to do a stand-up routine, or sing a song can do so.

We'll have the usual highlight video production (about 15 minutes at this point, but still growing – maybe to 20 or 25 minutes). We'll make some extra copies on DVD of the production for about \$3 each – just in case in the dead of winter you want to look back at our summer fly-in activities in T-shirts and shorts. We found that if you play those scenes with us

hairy legged, fat guys in shorts just before dinner, it will take away your appetite and you WILL lose weight!



Since we had many questions about what to wear to the Christmas party, here is one suggestion. I suspect this outfit is primarily for the women.

The MPA treasury will subsidize most of it, due to the superb stewardship of our funds by our Treasurer/Secretary Bonnie Micue. However, bring a few bucks as we may all have to pay a little – probably not more than \$5 or \$7 per person. What a deal!

True children stories #1

A kindergarten pupil told his teacher he'd found a cat, but it was dead.

"How do you know that the cat was dead?" she asked her pupil.

"Because I pissed in its ear and it didn't move," answered the child innocently.

"You did WHAT?!?" the teacher exclaimed in surprise.

"You know," explained the boy, "I leaned over and went 'Pssst!' and it didn't move."

Mike O'Donnell takes Top Gun for 05

As you remember, the originally scheduled Top Gun event for the MPA in August got scrubbed due to weather. Since then, we've been trying to find an opportunity to hold a make-up session, and we finally did it at the Robin

Paradis sponsored fly-in at Paul Cyr's field in Presque Isle.

Mike is now a two-time winner, tying the record previously held by John Gobel (in 2002 and 2003), so a special congratulations to Mike! Everybody is gunning for the last winner, so to prevail over a field of hungry and eager and fired-up MPA pilots is quite a feat! (I know that while you can accept "hungry," it's hard to imagine "eager" and "fired-up" when it comes to our merry little group!)

A couple of funny things happened. The guy who usually sets up the course and organizes the event (John) couldn't be there, so some of our able members did it from memory. The event that probably is the most difficult is the barrier jump, where you touch down at the first point, fly over a 3 foot obstacle at mid point which is 70 yards away, and touch again at the third point which is 70 yards farther down course from the midpoint.

As most of you know, a "yard" is about one step or about 3 feet. All right, exactly 3 feet. So there's quite a difference between 70 yards and 70 feet. Unfortunately, our man in charge of setting up the course remembered "70," but couldn't quite remember whether it was yards or feet, so he set it up using 70 feet. This made the event nearly impossible to complete, and Mike was the only one light enough and skilled enough to do it. Congratulations to Mike – he will receive the coveted Top Gun hat for 2005 at our Christmas party!



A Norman Rockwell powered parachute painting

Flight of a lifetime

Mountains have a special fascination for most people – some are even crazy enough to climb them. We just like to fly over them or in-between them, mostly so we can say we’ve done it. Unfortunately, conditions are almost never good enough to fly powered parachutes.

That’s why a small group of us who took a chance and went into the middle of New Hampshire’s White Mountains were so thrilled – we got very lucky and hit one of those rare days when you could fly in between huge mountains without the usual 30 to 60 knot winds – in fact, we had almost no wind for most of the morning.

We flew over the famed Mt. Washington Resort (and incidentally woke up all the important guests, who shouldn’t have been sleeping as late as 7 AM anyway), and through the valleys, and over most of the mountains. We did chicken out when it came to Mt. Washington itself, since at the top of it, they define “dead calm” as 30 mph winds.

Anyway, it was wonderful, took some great pictures and videos, and didn’t want to come back, but if you run out of fuel there, it’ll be a long long time before you see your plane again. We’ll try it again next year, and get some more of our intrepid MPA pilots to join us.

The dreaded “F” word – the FAA rules

Like death, taxes, and jock itch, the FAA rules on the new Sport Pilot license and the need for the certification of your aircraft have become inevitable, and are just around the corner. You can get a fix for jock itch, you can delay death considerably (look at most of us!), and you can avoid taxes (if you’re clever and don’t mind spending a few years in a federal pen), but you can’t avoid the implementation of the FAA rules.

So, most of us old wise MPA members will just have to bite the bullet and go through the process. Fortunately, the process is actually pretty easy – it the explanations of the process that’s so damn confusing. Along with the lack of FAA preparedness to implement their own rules, i.e. the shortage of examiners at all levels.

The long and the short of it is that everyone flying a two-seater PPC has to have an FAA license, and that every two-seater plane has to be certified by the FAA and have a “N” number on it like every other airplane in the U.S.



Since this is a PPC publication, we throw in a picture of one of them every now and then. Thanks to Mark Magoon for his contribution.

Of course, some of our pilots will choose to ignore all these rules and take their chances. Bad idea. Real bad idea. All sorts of bad things will happen to you if (or should I say “when”) you have an accident or incident.

We have a couple of MPA guys who have gone through various parts of the certification and licensing process and lived to tell about it, so we have asked them to share their experiences at our upcoming Christmas party - stay tuned.

True children stories #2

One summer evening during a violent thunderstorm a mother was tucking her son into bed. She was about to turn off the light when he asked with a tremor in his voice; “Mommy, will you sleep with me tonight?”

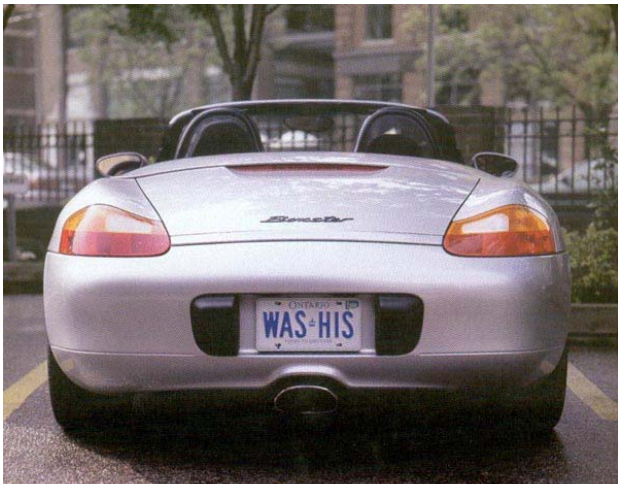
The mother smiled and gave him a reassuring hug. "I can't dear," she said. "I have to sleep in Daddy's room."

A long silence was broken at last by his shaky little voice: “The big sissy!”

Procrastinators' Club Announcement

The Club did not get its notice about their regular meeting into the Newsletter in time, so it did not make last month's issue, or one before it, but finally here it is in its entirety:

"The long and often postponed Club Member Appreciation dinner will be held on August 12th, 2005 at 8 P.M. at the Manor in Waterville. Due to an administrative error by our parent organization in Washington, the Club received one million dollars which it must divide up for each of its members by August 12th, or we have to return it. So dinner and, drinks are free, and each of you will receive about \$80,000 in cash. Hope you can make it."



We're celebrating "Be Nice To Your Wife" week this month. Otherwise, THIS could happen to you!

Other fly-ins since C.A.M.

Since it conflicted with our Chute Across Maine event, most of us could not attend the Lewiston Balloon festival this year. That event is usually a lot of fun – we get to fly near these huge lumbering hot air balloons.

What's really fun is to watch their faces as we get closer and closer – first, the smile disappears, then just a twinge of fear starts showing, shortly followed by the look of horror as we bear down on them while watching their lips mouth the words "*Get away from here you dumb ...*(followed by some word that seems to start with "F", but can't quite make out the rest). Anyway, we missed it, and the event I'm sure was a lot less festive without us.

Bowman

We did have a number of our members attend the Bowman fly-in, and from all indications it was a very good event, with the weather cooperating, and the organizing staff much more cooperative towards our PPCs than last year. Communications is the answer – we explained our situation to them, i.e. that we can't taxi and hold at the end of the runway, so they accommodated our quirks this year.

Ordinarily, that event is well attended and well liked by most of us, and we even get to see our New Hampshire flying friends, so after last year's misadventures, it's nice to be back there again.

Unfortunately, there was a fatality near Bowman field during this event – a fixed wing pilot crashed his plane under very strange circumstances. He was a very experienced pilot, but apparently been having some grave personal problems. The FAA is investigating.

Greenville

The Greenville event apparently was not graced by our presence this year, but they seemed to survive anyway – every now and then we luck out with some good weather there, but usually there's not much flying for PPCs due to the high winds.

Bingham

For the last several years, Doug Sukeforth hosted a fly-in near the Gadabout Gaddis airport in Bingham, and this year was a success again. Besides being a gracious host, Doug always has good weather for us, so a good number of our MPA pilots made it to Bingham.

At the end of Doug's runway, there is a fairly sharp drop-off, and three moose were peacefully grazing there, out of sight from the runway.

Just then, one of our guys takes off right over the peaceful moose, who are totally startled by this crazy contraption just over their head. They swallow their grass the wrong way. They wet themselves. They are embarrassed. They are now no longer peaceful. They charge up

the hill, straight down the runway right towards the other planes getting ready to go. They finally veer between Robin's trailer and Dunbar's, and amble off red faced. You can't buy excitement like this! What a great sport we're in!

Presque Isle

Robin & Darlene Paradis hosted this event, and as it turned out, it was also the site of the Top Gun competition this year. A large number of our members attended, and Robin was kind enough to arrange for good flying weather.

Besides good flying, a good location (thanks to Paul Cyr and his field), and good attendance, Robin and Darlene arranged for some excellent social events as well (meaning lots of food and cook-outs). Definitely on next year's schedule again!

Bethel

This was scheduled to be the last event of our flying year for 2005, with wonderful foliage viewing, et cetera. But instead, it was heavy and steady rain, so only one person showed up. I'm still trying to dry out the camper awning and my sox.

Bowdoinham

This event was not on the original schedule, but Gary Bergendorf is a regular there so he arranged a great impromptu fly-in to make up for the washed out one at Bethel. We have good footage on the Christmas video from this event, which had a surprisingly good turnout.

Considering all the rain we had just before, the runway and taxiways looked pretty solid. So we confidently drove our rigs onto the grass, where we immediately regretted it – looks can be deceiving. Nobody really got stuck that badly (that day), although it was a lesson in physics for one of our members about how a heavy object will slowly sink in a muddy field as time passes. But all's well that ends well, and the nameless one was able to extricate himself and his camper with only minor visible left-over ruts.

True children stories #3

A small boy is sent to bed by his father.

Five minutes later....."Da-ad...."

"What?"

"I'm thirsty. Can you bring drink of water?"

"No, You had your chance. Lights out."

Five minutes later: "Da-aaaad....."

"WHAT?"

"I'm THIRSTY. Can I have a drink of water??"

I told you NO! If you ask again, I'll have to spank you!!"

Five minutes later....."Daaaa-aaaad....."

"WHAT!"

"When you come in to spank me, can you bring a drink of water?"



In case you didn't get anything for Christmas this year, here's the explanation

Closing wisdoms

Do not walk behind me, for I may not lead.

Do not walk ahead of me for I may not follow.

Do not walk beside me either.

Just pretty much leave me the hell alone.

Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and have their shoes.

There are two theories to arguing with women. Neither one works.

Directions to Jeff's Catering, MPA Christmas Party

From 95 North or South, take Exit 182-A onto 395 East.

Travel to Exit #5 (Parkway South) and turn left at end of exit.

Go 1/10 of a mile over railroad tracks, and take the very next right into the East/West Industrial Park.

Travel approximately 100 yards and turn left onto Coffin Avenue. Jeff's Catering is located at 15 Littlefield Avenue.

From Ellsworth take 395 West. Travel to Exit #5 (Parkway South) and turn left at end of exit.

Go 1/10 of a mile over railroad tracks and take the very next right into the East/West Industrial Park..

Travel approximately 100 yards and turn left onto Coffin Avenue. Jeff's Catering is located at 15 Littlefield Avenue.

