

If it's in the Newsletter, it must be true...
Maine Powerchute Association
Newsletter
www.maine-powerchutes.org
February 2008

Good turnout for Christmas party

Undaunted by being weathered out on our original date, our intrepid MPA members still showed up in good numbers for our annual Christmas party. The fact that it was in January was a little weird, but we're used to weird...

It was good to see everybody again after the long no-fly period that usually happens during the November-December period. As usual, we hung around catching up, had dinner, had the annual meeting, watched the annual highlight video, and hung around some more telling flying stories...

Darlene put together a VERY neat slide show presentation that we played during dinner with lots of cool flying pictures and people-being-themselves pictures. If you call Robin or Darlene Paradis, I'm sure they could get you a copy.

Our highlight DVD for 2008 was pretty good too, although we did not have videos of any major screw-ups that always entertain the crowds. We did have a demo of what it's like to fly in 22 mph winds, and a demo of snow storm flying, plus lots of flying shots and people shots and the usual silliness that somehow end up in these videos.

If you'd like to get a copy of the highlight DVD, just call or e-mail me at 207-852-7300, or gobelj@gmail.com, and for \$4.00 I'll mail you a copy. You can owe me, since it's hard to e-mail \$4.00.

Annual meeting recap

To start off our annual membership meeting, our highly capable and talented MPA Treasurer/Secretary Bonnie Davis Micue gave us the financial report, and it went something like this:

Opening balance	\$649
Dues collected	\$790
<u>Total available:</u>	\$1,439

Paid:

Gift to Donna Higgins	\$100
Insurance	\$240
Web site fees	\$224
Supplies, postage	\$57
Rentals (fly-ins)	\$170
<u>Total paid out:</u>	\$791

Remaining balance: \$648

John opened the meeting, welcoming everybody to our 9th annual Christmas party. He summed up the year and the many events we had, (as well as the several weather related cancellations). He congratulated the winner of the 2007 Top Gun event, Mike O'Donnell.

We also needed to be congratulated as a club for so many of us getting our Sport Pilot licenses and even more of us getting our aircraft registered ("N" numbered). In speaking with our FAA rep in Portland, he cited us as probably the best club in the country for the cooperation we showed, qualifying, and for the high percentage of members.

Another one of our members, Carroll Werren, obtained his Certified Flight Instructor rating.

So now we have two CFIs and one Sport Pilot Examiner within our group, so as soon as the weather gets a little better we can finish all the ones who still are flying with a Student Certificate to get their Sport Pilot licenses.

After the meeting, we showed our Highlight video on our 10 foot screen. In our usual fashion, we played the music so loud (we do that so no one can fall asleep) that the kitchen staff all had to come out to see what the commotion was, and they stayed to watch these crazy contraptions actually flying!

Fly-in schedule

Usually we publish the entire schedule for the year in the February issue, but in contacting the coordinators of the many events, we found that most do not have their dates ready. So, we'll do it in the March issue. However, we do have 3 winter fly-in events scheduled, so here it is:

February 15-17– Greenville (Kelly's Landing)

March 1 – Winthrop (Maranacook, south end)

March 15 – China Lake (northeast end)

Both the March 1 and March 15 events are scheduled for a Saturday, but if the weather is bad, we'll do on Sunday. As usual, check the web site for last minute updates, or call Jerry Sukeforth or John Gobel.

By the way, if you haven't flown in the winter off the ice and snow, you've missed out on some real fun (as well as on frostbite, runny noses, ice-cream headaches, etc.). The flying conditions are generally great, and the scenery is beautiful. And you really haven't enjoyed something simple like sitting down in a warm restaurant until you've just finished flying in zero degree temperatures!

So, gather your long underwear, find your skis, buy some chemical foot warmers, get off that sofa, and get out there to get your adrenaline fix!

New members

We welcome two more new members to our jolly group – David Pelletier from Wassalboro, ME and Michael Kuranda from Acton, MA. Glad to have you aboard, although we're never sure why perfectly nice guys would want to hang around with us!

Just a word of warning, though – come to a few of our fly-ins, and you'll find yourself changing into an irreverent, happy-go-lucky, badly-dressed, dirty-joke-telling flyboy! Don't say we didn't warn you.

Student Pilot reminder

For those of you who were issued an FAA Student Certificate, remember that they have to be re-endorsed every 90 days by your CFI. The re-endorsement is a simple entry in your log book, but it has to be done for you to stay legal.

By the way, if you miss the cut-off time, you don't have to start from the beginning, you just have to do it as soon as possible, and definitely before you fly again. I keep a record of each certificate issued, so I'll contact you before you're due, but if I don't get a hold of you, call me or send and e-mail – John Gobel 207-852-7300, or gobelj@gmail.com.



See how the chute flies just as well over ice as over land? See the smile on Carroll's face? He is either very happy or his face is frozen like that.

Web site update

We're slowly redoing our web site, since it's been pretty boring over the last year or so. We put on a landing page (first page you see when you go to www.mainejumpchutes.org). We'll put a picture of a different member each week on that landing page –that can be our 15 minutes of fame – the whole world can see you in the air!



The new logo for the MPA web site

So, please e-mail me some pictures, and we'll take turns being stars. The first two have been Randy Autrey, and the current one, Carroll Werren.

We also added two links on our web site – one to the infamous Chuting Eagles web site (www.chutingeagles.com) and the other one to the instruction and certification web site (www.jagobel.com) which answers most of the questions and procedures needed to get certified and to get the lessons and checkouts needed.

2008 Adventure Trip

It's not too early to plan for this year's adventure trip – it will be during the week of August 11th. This year, we're planning trip through the White Mountains – starting near Montpelier, VT and ending up in Augusta, ME. See our web page for a schematic of the all the stops along the way, and watch for more details as we get closer to the date.

If you haven't flown in the mountains, you're in for a treat – breathtaking views, exciting flying, altimeter showing 5000 feet



Sample of breathtaking view

while the trees below you are at only a couple of hundred feet, et cetera.

We usually have a great time at these annual adventure trips, so tell you boss (at work or at home) that you'll be missing for that week. Actually, you can bring your boss (or wife, if it's the same person) that he/she can come and drive your truck!

New High-Tech Supermarket

A new supermarket opened near my house. It has an automatic water mister to keep the produce fresh. Just before it goes on, you hear the sound of distant thunder and the smell of fresh rain.

When you pass the milk cases, you hear cows mooing and you experience the scent of fresh mown hay.

In the meat department there is the aroma of charcoal grilled steaks with onions.

When you approach the egg case, you hear hens cluck and cackle, and the air is filled with the pleasing aroma of bacon and eggs frying.

The bread department features the tantalizing smell of fresh baked bread & cookies.

I don't buy toilet paper there anymore.

Chuting Eagles get ready for 2008

The MPA & USA powered parachute flight demonstration team, the Chuting Eagles will be putting on their show at every fly-in, as well as at some county fairs (two so far tentatively scheduled) and some other town events.

For the highlight of the season, we were invited back to Brunswick Naval Air station again for the Great State of Maine Airshow featuring the Blue Angels in September. I guess our special rain show last year sealed the deal – all the other acts were rained out for one of the two days, so we were the only ones crazy enough to get airborne.



One of the many who can't wait for the Chuting Eagles show.

The team does about a 15 to 20 minute show demonstrating the many capabilities of our aircraft and how precisely they can be flown (in the hands of experienced pilots who practice a lot!). It's a lot of fun to watch, and it's great advertisement for our sport and for our group.

The Right Stuff

We had a minor incident last summer that illustrated a major point. During our Top Gun competition, one of our members Ray Godbout

came in too low on the low bomb drop, and his wheels touched the ground as he was also turning, so he flipped his aircraft. Tore off one wheel, bent some tubes, and had some sore ribs from the seat belts for a few hours.

The wind conditions were less than ideal, but certainly flyable for all but beginner pilots. As Ray's plane was sitting on the edge of the runway upside down, a number of other MPA members went to help, righted his plane, helped him get out, and helped load his damaged aircraft into his trailer. When the runway was clear, a number of us continued the contest and finished it without incident, but several decided to drop out of the competition at that point.

Ray's attitude throughout the whole incident showed beautifully what being a pilot is all about. He is an excellent pilot, but he made a mistake. He analyzed his mistake and learned from it. I cost him some money, and could have cost him some more serious injuries. But throughout the event, he did not blame the wind, the contest, the other pilots, the manufacturer, the sun, or anything else. He simply made a mistake, and is now a better pilot for it. He thanked his friends for helping him. He said if he could have fixed his plane right there and then, he would have continued his flight.

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Flying is one of the many activities that are inherently risky. That's one reason why many people fly. Same sort of reasoning why people climb mountains, or ski, or surfboard, or skydive. You want to feel the intensity of being focused, of doing your best, of being alive. You just don't get that from sitting in your living room watching others do risky things.

Ray, like many of us, loves the feeling of flying and the intense feeling of being alive that it creates. And he certainly was not going to let a mistake take that away from him. Ray definitely has the right stuff.

Three stages in a man's life

