



Chapter 736 Newsletter for June 2006

Last Month's Meeting

Those who attended the presentation by John Gobel of the Maine Powerchute Assoc.'s trip from Augusta to Kitty Hawk, N.C. were treated to quite a show. The PowerPoint slide show and DVD movie of their exploits were excellent. Check out their web site at <http://www.MainePowerChutes.org>

Once again, our thanks to John for taking the time and making the trip to Norridgewock. The Maine Powerchute group is planning on attending our fly-in in August. Stop by and chat with them about their memorable trip when you're at the Fly-In.

This Year's Fly-In

August 5 – 6, 2006 is rapidly approaching. Undecided, at this point, is whether to ask the FAA to present one of their Safety Briefings on Saturday, Aug 5. If you have a preference please let us know what it is and, if it is in the affirmative, what subject matter would you like to have the FAA discuss.

We need to know your wishes soon so that there is enough lead time to set things up.

AOPA petitions FAA to allow more pilots back in the air

AOPA is petitioning the FAA to fix the sport pilot "Catch 22" and to allow recreational pilots to fly with a "driver's license medical."

A pilot exercising recreational pilot privileges could fly in day-VFR conditions in a single-engine, fixed-gear aircraft with no more than 180 horsepower. Up to four seats are allowed, but a recreational pilot can have only one passenger on board.

The FAA has been petitioned numerous times to remove the medical certificate requirement from the recreational pilot certificate. The last few times, the agency rejected the petition saying that the issue was being considered under the sport pilot initiative. The FAA wanted time to see what happened with sport pilots flying without a medical certificate.

The AOPA Air Safety Foundation review of more than a decade of accident data showed no difference in the percentage of medical incapacitation accidents between pilots without medical certificates and pilots required to carry a medical certificate. Furthermore, the Air Safety Foundation's analysis showed that the majority of medically related aviation accidents were not attributable to predictable conditions or conditions that could have been revealed by an aviation medical examination.

Fixing the sport pilot "Catch 22"

AOPA's petition would also eliminate the sport pilot "Catch 22." Under current regulations, a pilot who has previously been denied a medical certificate cannot exercise sport pilot privileges without regaining a medical certificate. However, another pilot with the same medical condition who just allowed his medical to lapse can still fly as a sport pilot, as long as he has a current driver's license and self-certifies that he is healthy enough to fly.

AOPA has recommended to the FAA that a pilot be allowed to obtain a health statement from his/her personal physician declaring that he/she is healthy enough to operate a moving vehicle and is not likely to suffer any kind of incapacitation within the next 24 months. Like a medical certificate, the health statement would need to be readily accessible to the pilot when operating an aircraft.

AOPA argued that these regulatory changes would be in the public interest because they would "bring new entrants to recreational and sport aviation without a demonstrable reduction in safety, and help re-energize an industry which has seen a steady decline in certificated pilots for more than 25 years."

Nontowered airport operations: Are you up to par?

As operations at your local airport increase with the summer flying season, take extra precautions to ensure your safety, particularly if you fly at non-towered fields. The experts in AOPA's Pilot Information Center recommend honing those basic skills you learned as a student pilot.

For example, obey all airport and runway markings, particularly the hold-short lines. Fight the urge to try to squeeze in your takeoff while someone is on final or before an aircraft has cleared the runway after landing. These actions can help prevent runway incursions. If you need a refresher on runway markings, check out the AOPA Air Safety Foundation's [flash cards](#) and [Runway Safety online course](#).

When making your radio calls, keep nonessential chatter to a minimum. This will help free up the frequency for the increased number of pilots who will be calling in. Also, clarify in your calls whether you are addressing traffic or unicom.

Watch for pilots not following the correct traffic pattern — and make sure you aren't that person by getting an airport advisory. It's also a good idea keep an eye (and ear) out for pilots who might be practicing instrument approaches.

With the increase in operations at the airport, make sure you follow noise abatement procedures to keep those neighbors happy. Look for the procedures at your airport.

For a refresher on collision avoidance, right-of-way rules, communication, weather information, and more, check out the AOPA Air Safety Foundation's Safety Advisor [*Operations at Nontowered Airports*](#).

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at OWK on Tuesday, June 20 at 7:30 p.m.