



AP PHOTO

In a maintenance class conducted at Rainbow Aviation Services in Corning CA, H. Paul Shuch, AvSport's chief flight instructor and director of maintenance, prepares to inspect the canopy of a powered parachute.

Flight School founder completes more training

LOCK HAVEN - Nearly four years after opening his Sport Aviation flight school on the Piper Memorial Airport, H. Paul Shuch has hung yet another certificate on his office wall.

The retired aerospace engineering professor completed additional maintenance training in California, adding powered parachute privileges to his mechanic's ratings.

"Powered parachutes are about the simplest low-and-slow flying machines in existence," explains Shuch. "A pilot straps an engine onto his or her back, and an overhead parachute canopy serves as a flexible wing. Considered by many to be an extreme sport, powered parachute flight is the aerial equivalent of motorcycling. Although I have no personal desire to fly such contraptions myself, I am now fully qualified to inspect and maintain these machines for those so inclined."

Shuch completed his powered parachute training at Rainbow Aviation in Corning California, where last year he studied to add weight shift control and glider maintenance ratings to his original airplane mechanic's credentials. By adding a powered parachute endorsement to his maintenance certificate, he now becomes one of very few aviation maintenance professionals in the country trained and certified to inspect and repair all four classes of Special Light Sport Aircraft.

The Light Sport Aircraft category was created by the Federal Aviation Administration nine years ago, to encourage recreational flying at reduced cost and improved safety. Along with establishing a new certification pathway for sport aircraft, the FAA created standards for the Sport Pilot license, a new class of pilot's certificate. Since 2009

Shuch, a licensed commercial pilot and instrument flight instructor, has enthusiastically embraced sport aviation, as an aircraft owner, educator, engineer, and mechanic.

The Sport Pilot license, in which AvSport specializes, is the newest portal of entry into the world of aviation, allowing prospective pilots to become licensed in half the time, and at half the cost, of the traditional Private Pilot license.