



**PIPER MEMORIAL AIRPORT
353 PROCTOR STREET
LOCK HAVEN PA 17745**

For Immediate Release:

Flight School Operator Adds Maintenance Ratings

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Lock Haven, PA, 10 June 2012 – When H. Paul Shuch opened his flight school on the Piper Memorial Airport 2 ½ years ago, he recognized that the school would require its own maintenance shop to ensure the safety and availability of his trainer aircraft. So, he took classes to earn his FAA sport airplane repair certificate. The retired aerospace engineering professor has now expanded his maintenance capabilities to encompass additional categories of sport aircraft. Last week, he completed training in California, adding glider and weight-shift privileges to his mechanic's ratings.

“Weight shift aircraft, sometimes called trikes, are an outgrowth of the ultralight airplane movement of the 1970s,” explains Shuch. “Once totally unlicensed and unregulated, trikes were incorporated into the FAA’s Light Sport Aircraft category when it was established eight years ago. We have two such aircraft here on the field at Lock Haven, and several others in the surrounding area, but had no shops specializing in maintaining them. Now we do!”

Shuch explains that he has no personal desire to fly weight-shift aircraft, preferring the more capable light sport airplanes in which he instructs. “Sitting out in the open air, and puttering around at 45 MPH, is fun, but it’s not the most practical form of transportation when you’re actually trying to get somewhere,” he says. Nevertheless, for those who enjoy that kind of flying, he now stands ready to provide maintenance and inspection services.

As for gliders, the allure of powerless, soaring flight has intrigued Shuch since he took his first sailplane lessons thirty years ago. But, he never completed his training to become a glider pilot, and never contemplated maintaining them, until the recent advent of light sport motorgliders. “Training in a traditional glider requires one to rent the glider and hire an instructor, as well as securing a tow plane and tow pilot to haul the glider aloft. The new class of self-launching light sport gliders can take off like an airplane, carrying you to a safe altitude before you cut the engine and soar silently. If necessary, the engine can be restarted to take you safely back to your departure airport. It’s the best of both worlds.”

Since light sport motorgliders use the same engine Shuch is already maintaining in his own airplane, he required only an abbreviated training course to add glider maintenance privileges to his repairman’s certificate. And, in the early mornings and late afternoons before and after class, Shuch also took flight instruction to finally add glider privileges to his own pilot’s license.

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. Piper Memorial Airport is the ancestral home to the legendary Piper Cub, arguably the world’s first sport plane. Modern Light Sport aircraft are simple, low-performance machines which Sport Pilots can operate, recapturing the bygone fly-for-fun Cub era, with increased reliability and improved safety.