



Volume 35: Issue 9  
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Aviation Association

## *Pine Mountain Lake Aviation*

### *Next Meeting:*

~~Saturday October 3, 2020~~

*Time: n/a*

*Place: n/a*

*Speaker: n/a*

### President's Letter – by Danielle Coelho

Hello PMLAA Members and Friends

As we near the middle of September 2020, I hope you are all continuing to stay safe and healthy from the Covid 19 virus. I used to jokingly say "What Next?" but I find these days I'm leery to even ask the question. I have found now we have yet another challenge to face. A different type of navigation for us pilots - navigating ourselves and loved ones not only through Covid 19 safely but navigating through evacuations and bad air quality due to the massive fires.

This photo shows the conditions at E45, September 2020:

We are continuing to suspend any PMLAA events or gatherings due to both of these issues.

Stay Safe & Healthy.

Happy Landings,  
Danielle Coelho  
PMLAA, President



*photo by Rob Compton*

## PML Airport Celebrates 50-Years ... supporting firefighting aircraft

by Janet Gregory

PML Airport is a vital firefighting asset for PML, Groveland, Tuolumne County, and CalFire. With our recent evacuation due to the MOC Fire, it really accentuates the critical importance of our airport.



*North American Rockwell OV-10 Bronco*

In support of the firefighting ground forces, CalFire has 13 air attack and nine helitack bases located around the state. We are fortunate to have a CalFire Air Attack Base so close by. It is located at Columbia Airport (O22). Our local CalFire Air Attack crews respond to fires in Tuolumne and Calaveras counties as well as portions of San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Alpine counties.



*Grumman S-2 Tracker air tanker*

During the 2013 Rim Fire, many of us witnessed first-hand how indispensable PML Airport is to our community. A PHOS-CHeK mobile retardant plant and crew set up operations at the airport. We saw a DC-10 flying low and dropping a mile-long stream of this bright orange fire-retardant along the fire line. The retardant slows and reduces the rate, route, and spread of flames. It is a slurry mix of a chemical salt compound, water, clay or gum-thickener agent, and the distinctive orange coloring.

Both Pine Mountain Lake and PML Airport were invaluable in fighting the Rim Fire. Helicopters dipped water from the lake and refilled fire-retardant reservoirs at the Airport. Air and ground fire crews used PML Airport as a key operation center for fuel, supplies, staging, and communications. Even with the significant ground and air firefighting, the Rim Fire burned 112 structures and 257,000 acres (over 400 square miles) of forest; thankfully no lives were lost.

PML Airport has been used for firefighting operations since our airport was certified in 1970. At that time, CalFire was known as CDF (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection). CDF first began using agriculture spraying planes as airtankers in the 1950s. By the 1960's CDF contracted with a private airtanker service that used larger converted World War II aircraft. Beginning in the late 1970's CDF began building a fleet of its own airtankers.

The CalFire base at Columbia operates multiple aircraft in its firefighting efforts. They have three fixed wing, twin-engine, turboprop aircraft. They also have a North American Rockwell OV-10 Bronco used as air tactical support, flying over an incident directing airtankers and helicopters to critical areas.

The two Grumman S-2 Tracker air tankers do the heavy lifting. They cruise at 270mph and carry 1200-gallons of retardant or water for fast initial delivery of fire-retardant on wildland fires.

The Bell UH-1H "Super Huey" helicopters are the most versatile member of the Columbia firefighting team. The Hueys serve multiple purposes: fast initial-attack water/retardant drops, mapping, medical evacuations, short-haul rescue, and delivery of 9-person fire crews to battle fires.



*Bell UH-1H "Super Huey"*

A big shout out and thank you to our first responders, fire fighters, and support personnel for keeping PML and the Groveland area safe. Thank you PML Airport for playing an important role in 50-years of firefighting.

*Sources: CalFire, PML News, Wikipedia, TuolumneCounty.CA.gov, MyMotherlode.com*

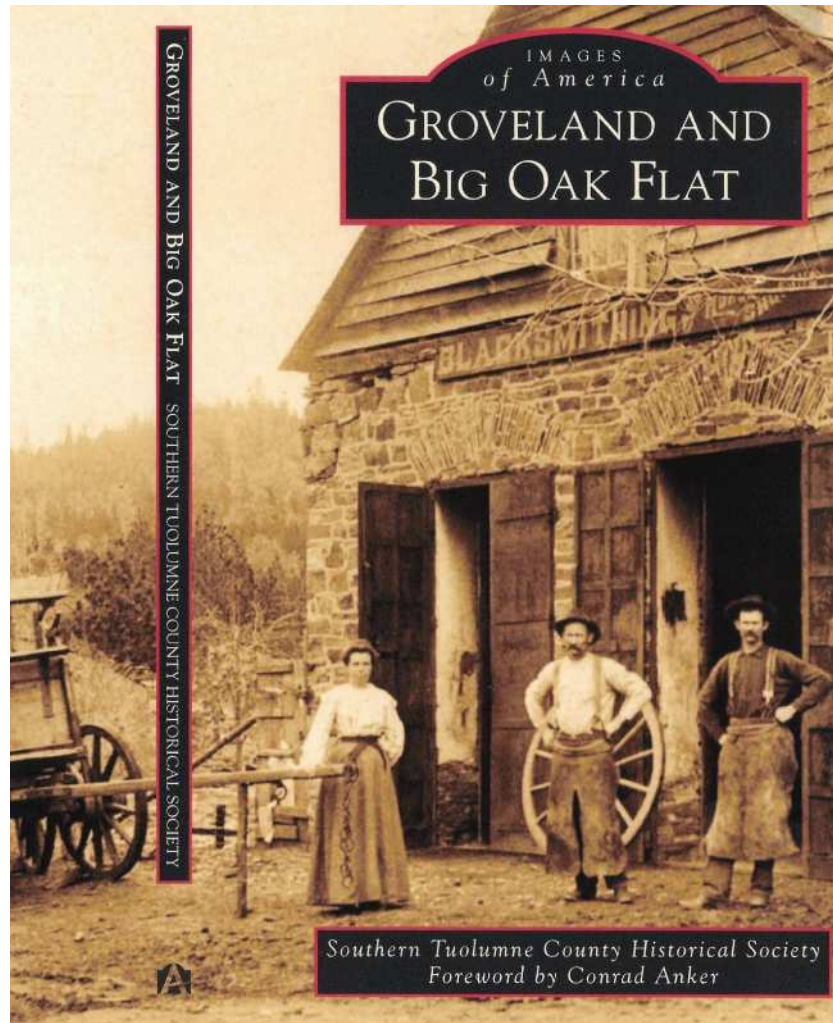
## Groveland History - by Harriett Codeglia

“Images of America: Groveland and Big Oak Flat” is a new book, just released. The book honors the raucous, rugged, and varied history of Groveland and Big Oak Flat.

The book is a pictorial history chronicling our area from our Native American culture to mining in the Gold Rush, ranching and farming, the Hetch Hetchy construction project, and the development of Pine Mountain Lake.

Photos were carefully selected so that each tells a story, illustrating an aspect of area history. The photos often speak for themselves but our local historians have captured important and interesting details to accompany each one.

The book took months to put together by a team of dedicated volunteers including many from PMLAA and STCHS (Southern Tuolumne County Historical Society). Contributions from PMLAA members include Jim Phillips, Kathy Brown, and me, as well as others. The book is part of the “Images of America” series published by Arcadia Publishing.



One entire chapter is dedicated to Pine Mountain Lake and includes rare photos of PML Airport as a dirt strip.

You will want the book in your collection or as a gift. The book is \$21.99 plus tax. There are four ways to get a copy: 1) Stop into the Museum Friday, Saturday or Sunday between 10 and 2. The Museum reopens Friday September 18<sup>th</sup>. Hooray! 2) Stop in the Book Nook any Saturday morning. 3) Order online: <https://grovelandmuseum.org/buy-book-online>. 4) Email [gygmstchs@gmail.com](mailto:gygmstchs@gmail.com) for an order form.

## Radio Rumors “Say Again”

- **Where are you?**
  - **GPS** (global positioning system) is a staple of modern life, both on the ground and in the air. Aircraft use GPS to show pilots their position on a map, in the same way that cars or handheld devices do.
  - **GPS satellites** carry atomic clocks that provide extremely accurate time. Time information is placed in the codes broadcast by the satellite so that a receiver can continuously determine the time the signal was broadcast. A receiver uses four satellites to compute latitude, longitude, altitude, and time that results in the GPS location.
  - **ADS-B Out** (automatic dependent surveillance–broadcast) works by broadcasting information about an aircraft's GPS location, altitude, ground speed and other data to ground stations and other aircraft, once per second.
  - The world's **air traffic control (ATC)** network is still almost entirely radar-based. ADS-B is intended to replace or supplement traditional radar-based surveillance of aircraft by ATC. Instead of using ground-based radar to interrogate aircraft to determine positions, each aircraft would use GPS to find its own position and report it.
- **Mark Twain’s California commentary in 1864:**
  - “Whiskey is for drinking; water is for fighting over.”
  - The Wright brothers didn’t make their first flight until 1906. In his 1886 book *Roughing It*, Mark Twain wrote this about where eagles and airplanes fly: “The air up there in the clouds is very pure and fine, bracing and delicious. And why shouldn’t it be? — it is the same the angels breathe.”

## 2020 Meeting Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Time &amp; Location</u>
October 3	No program	
November 7	TBD	
December 5	TBD	

## Boring Aviation Calendar

<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	<del>12-21 – National Championship Air Races, Reno – cancelled</del> <del>26-27 – Vicky Benzing @ MCAS Miramar Airshow – cancelled</del> 28 – Ask a Stupid Question Day (Hmmm, isn’t that every day?)
<b>OCTOBER</b>	<del>3 – PML Airport Appreciation Day – cancelled</del> <del>3 – PMLAA Meeting – cancelled</del> 3-4 – California Capital Airshow, Sacramento – cancelled 3-4 – E45 Airport Display Day, 8:00-4:00, sign off at 12:00 <del>3-4 – Vicky Benzing @ Point Mugu Airshow – cancelled</del> <del>10 – Young Eagles Rally at PML Airport – cancelled</del> 10-11 – Patriots Jet Team @ Fleet Week – cancelled 10-11 – Vicky Benzing @ Edwards AFB Aerospace Valley Airshow – cancelled 17-18 – Vicky Benzing @ Central Coast Airfest, Santa Maria - cancelled 31 – Halloween 🎃
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	7 – PMLAA Meeting?? – watch newsletter for updates 7-8 – E45 Airport Display Day, 8:00-4:00, sign off at 12:00 11 – Veterans Day 26 – Thanksgiving

**\*\* E45 Airport Display Day: Until the Shelter-in-Place order is lifted, display your aircraft on your own ramp. The “powers that be” will go around the airport and take note. Once the SIP is lifted, the individual airplane owner’s paperwork will be done.**

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