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Pine Mountain Lake
Aviation Association

Pine Mountain Lake Aviation

Next Meeting:

~~Saturday April 3, 2021~~

Time: n/a

Place: n/a

Airport Events

We're sure we're all looking forward to when we can resume our normal activities. Given the brightening outlook and the longer days coming, we are planning some activities to get us together in socially distant ways. We'll start with some good, old-fashioned competitions and culminate with Airport Day (contingent on the Public Health Rules at that time).



spot landing-E45 airport day 2018

Here's the schedule:

May 1: Spot Landing Contest (Register Here: <https://forms.gle/hC9i9iGs7HVVpxTg6>)

June 5: Air Race (Register Here: <https://forms.gle/P6U1bsZ7LqqEwmjB8>)

July 3: No Event

August 7: Flour Bombing Contest (Register Here: <https://forms.gle/cz8HymPNf1HU67Z67>)

September 4: No Event

October 2: Airport Day

We will require pre-registration and attendance at the pre-event briefing to participate in the competition. While the Spot Landing and Flour Bombing Contests will not have a registration fee, the Air Race will have a donation required to participate. The Air Race will be a test of your flight planning and execution skills rather than who's got the fastest plane, so any aircraft, no matter how fast, can win. Event rules can be found on each registration page. Airport Day is in its planning stages and more information is to come.

We're looking for volunteers to help with the events and to fill a few vacancies for Airport Day! Please email Kurt Howerton (airport@pmlaa.org) if you're interested in helping.

President's Message:

Hello PMLAA friends and members. It was so nice to see a few more cold but beautiful snowy days at Pine Mountain Lake.



With April around the corner and the hope of nice weather, I am happy to say our VP Airport Affairs Kurt has a few fun, safe and social distanced events for us all to enjoy. Keep an eye out for these PMLAA member events. Also, I would like to introduce a great opportunity to our members. If anyone would like to join our board as the Vice President of Social Affairs this position is available. I myself enjoyed being the VPS for several years and am willing to train .



Looking forward to seeing everyone safely out on the ramp soon.

Happy Landings,
Danielle Coelho
PMLAA , President

Vice President, Social Affairs Resignation

It is will great sadness we announce the resignation of our Vice President of Social Affairs, Laura Stengel. Gabriel Coelho has agreed to step in temporarily. If you are interested in taking on this position, please contact the President of the PMLAA Board, Danielle Coelho (president@pmlaa.org).

Monkey Skills

By Marle Hewett

It's as if it was yesterday. It comes to me in my dreams, as my mind wanders back to those heady days launching off a carrier in a fast plane, zooming around for a while and landing back on the boat on a stormy night in a restless sea. My call sign was "Stinger". My nickname was "Fast Hewie". My favorite three letter mission code was TAR. TAR was actually an Air Force code that meant you weren't going to do anything that day except "Tear Ass Around"; the Navy didn't own it. Obviously, the USAF author of that code wouldn't have passed a spelling test. I had a reputation amongst my squadron mates; it seemed I was their nemesis. The thought makes me smile. – M.H.

I was not the typical fighter jock. I was the unassuming quiet type, reserved, never said much; a Clark Kent personality. Do you remember what happens when Clark walks into a phone booth? Fighter and attack planes were my phone booths.

"Kick the tires, light the fires, and get the 'bleep' out of my way," was my mantra. My fellow pilots found my personality jump-shift somewhat confusing. My unimpressive body type didn't help; I was rail thin, 140 pounds of trouble.

I had an advantage. I had good monkey skills; you know, that hand-eye coordination stuff. There had to be a monkey somewhere in my ancestry. Given a stick and throttle, the buzz on deck was that I was hard to beat.

Flashback to Navy flight training at Pensacola. We'd been drinking at the Officers Club in the evening after flight ops. My fellow students were complaining.

"I can't get the home field entry right, those high-G barrel rolls, crosswind landings," on and on it went.

Emboldened with a bit of drink, I pipe in, "What's the problem? This is FUN! They pay you to do this!"

Out of flight school, I was assigned to a newly commissioned carrier-based attack squadron, VA-163. We were known as "The Saints". You can guess our theme song: When the Saints Go Marching In.

Wherever we were celebrating, Happy Hour on Friday nights at the Officers Club or some other dive, we would ask the band or ivory-tinkler to play it over and over.

"Play it again, Sam." Wherein we'd get up and dance around single file, swinging and singing to the music.

The patrons would be like, "What the 'bleep'?" It didn't take long for us to develop a reputation.

Our carrier was the USS Oriskany, CVA-34. She's one of the smaller carriers of the day, a "27-Charlie" conversion from a straight deck to an angled deck to handle jets. She was known as "The Big O". We had another nickname for her; we called her "The O-risk-your-ass", due to her size compared to the newer carriers and the challenge of landing jets on her.

So, why did my squadron mates think of me as their nemesis? We typically went on at least one weapons training exercise deployment to either Fallon, Nevada, or Yuma, Arizona, or both, prior to every WestPac cruise. The exercises involved dropping live ordnance on instrumented ranges, firing live missiles at drones, or firing guns at target banners towed by support planes. Everything was scored. Oh, was it ever competitive; these are Navy fighter/attack pilots!

The squadron maintenance crews liked to join in on the competition. They would set up a Calcutta consisting of teams that bid on the pilots. It's fun to watch an auction when you are the one being sold. Each team pooled their money, putting it at risk. The team who "owns" the pilot scoring the most total points in weapons accuracy wins the pot. I often went to the highest bidder.

I especially liked air combat: one-on-one, two-on-two, four-on-four, whatever. "Yankin' and bankin', kick 'em in the ass" is the battle cry. I was usually on my opponent's six in a heartbeat. Well, a few heartbeats. "Fox 1. Fox 2. Bye-bye, honey!" That's pilot slang for two missiles away and I would launch my simulated missiles.

I often dream about those days of old. The debriefing dreams are interesting. "I can't beat him", they would say. "I can't beat Fast Hewie." It brings a smile to my face in my dreams and sometimes a little laugh.

"What?" my honey, Judy says, as she's awakened by my giggles.

"Nothing", I respond. Judy reads my thoughts at night. She has special radar.

Reno Air Races 2021

By Ed Gregory



Mark your calendar, the 2021 National Champion Air Races at Reno-Stead Airport (RTS) is scheduled for September 15th-19th. Organizers are optimistic with vaccinations underway and restrictions on gatherings relaxing. The hard GO/NO GO date is May 30th.

If you haven't been to the Reno Air Races in a long time, or maybe never, this might be a good year to attend. The fastest woman in air racing, our E45 neighbor, Vicky Benzing will be racing again this year. In addition to the six classes of race planes, military demos from the USAF Thunderbirds and an F-22 Raptor are planned, along with civilian performances from Lightning Formation, Tony Higa, Tucker's Air Patrol, and Jim Peitz. Electric motors will make an appearance for a demo or even a possible test race.

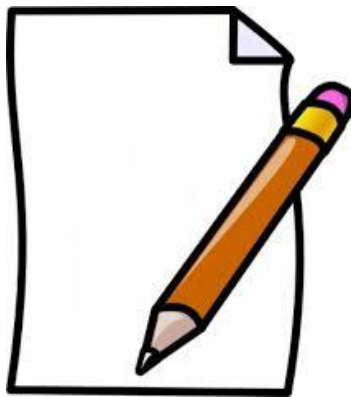
The real reason to consider attending is that the future of the Reno Air Races is uncertain. Event insurance has been problematic in recent years. Growth in the Reno area is encroaching on “the race track” with open space, new homes, new warehouses, and vacant property development exploding. Not to mention the struggling finances, especially after this COVID year.

Janet and I will be there as we have almost every year for the last 45. The first 10-years, we scraped together money, camping on the field, general admission, and on special days got a pit pass. We reconnected with a college buddy of mine who was a bi-plane racer and made life-long friends with other racers. The next 10-years, we bought “season passes” for the week and stayed at one of the casinos downtown, even though we don’t gamble. The next 20-years, we had a box at show center. Now we are volunteers and work the back field as Pylon Race Judges. Well, we haven’t really made it to Pylon Race Judge status yet. We are “speed bumps”, newbies learning the ropes, and closing roads to ground traffic when aircraft are flying.

Hope to see you at Reno this year. For more information on the event, tickets, and the race courses, go to www.airrace.org.

PMLAA Newsletter ... Looking for writers

The PMLAA Newsletter is looking for more writers/contributors. We want more writers with articles about pilots, airplanes, airspace, your own aviation stories and anything aviation related. Contributions can be monthly, when the inspiration arises, or rotating monthly contributions with others.



We are looking for a new contributor to prepare the Aviation Calendar and Radio Rumors.

Send a note to newsletter@pmlaa.org if you would like to be involved with this.

SAFETY CORNER

By Joe Sobczak

“Gear Down and Welded”

Your Monthly PMLAA Safety Quiz:

What is VVM?

- a. The sound an amateur airplane builder makes when the cockpit is finished enough to sit in.
- b. Volumetric Volt Meter
- c. Women’s Aerobatic Association (Upside-Down and Backward... “WAA”)
- d. Vaccine Vial Monitor
- e. None of the above.

The answer will be divulged at the end of this article – and if you hang in there, by then you should know the answer.

I flew F-4s, F-15s, A-7s and F-16s (among others) in the Air Force. Before every landing we were required to Verify 3 green lights and broadcast “Gear Checked” on the tower frequency. This was a requirement for all aircraft at a military base. I even had to call gear down when I flew my Citabria into Edwards (and, yes, I was sometimes tempted to skip the call and fly an inverted low approach to see if they were really checking). Tower controllers preceded every landing clearance with a reminder such as “Citabria 57515, Check Gear Down, Cleared to Land.” If you didn’t call “gear down” the tower sent you around.

Those memories (from the last millennium) were evoked a couple weeks ago when I heard a pilot in the pattern call, “Pine Mountain Lake Traffic, Bonanza 123AB, Right Base runway 27, Gear down.” I kind of chuckled, since I was probably one of two aviation geeks listening on the frequency, and zero of us would have told the pilot to go around had he not made the call. To my utter surprise, I heard a pilot (maybe the same dude) make a similar call at Franklin just yesterday.



Then I got to thinking... besides comm jamming, there really IS a point to that radio call. By Verbalizing the activity, we create a habit pattern that reminds us to, in this case, Verify that the gear is down. Follow the science: cognitive scientists know that monitoring something is a task we humans do NOT do well. That’s why we have lights and buzzers instead of just gauges for things like low fuel, oil pressure, and gear not down. By Verbalizing the task and Verifying/Monitoring the result (looking at the green lights) we are much more likely to remember it and do it correctly. Most planes have some kind of warning for the landing gear, but it can sometimes fail and under certain conditions it may announce too late, not at all, or go unnoticed. Hence the high cost of insurance for your Bonanza.

This technique of Verbalizing, Verifying, and Monitoring was originally concocted by the airlines to reduce altitude busts. Airliners have great autopilots and a place to dial in the assigned altitude. But if you set the incorrect altitude, the autopilot will, with exceptional precision, fly the plane to – yep – the wrong altitude. Airline SOP requires that one pilot dial in the assigned altitude and the other pilot point to the altitude and Verbally, **out loud**, repeat the assigned altitude. That little procedure has resulted in a ten-fold reduction in altitude deviations for the airlines. They do pretty much the same thing for the gear using a challenge and response checklist, and you don't hear about 787s landing gear up very often.

Verbalize... give it a try. You will build an excellent habit pattern to help insure the gear is extended before you land (or retracted if you happen to be landing a Lake or Twin-Bee on the water). Sure, you'll sound like a dweeb on the radio when you call "Gear Down" in your Cessna 150, but on tomorrow's flight in the Bonanza the odds will be much greater that the gear really WILL be down when you land. If you're too self-conscious to tell everybody on 122.9, you don't even have to key the mike. But DO say it **out loud**. In the words of my friend Tony Fauci, "Follow the science."

So, what is VVM? It means Verbalize, Verify, and Monitor (Answer e: None of the Above). OK, it was a bad question: there really is a thing called a Vaccine Vial Monitor but I have no idea what it is. Since one of the words is Monitor you get 1/3 credit for (D). And (A) is at least conceivably a good answer (I know because I've done it). If you picked B or C, geez, I just made those up.

Fly Safe!

Joe

Pilot Lounge Remodel

You might have noticed some changes to the Airport Building. The office space has been leased by the Johanson's and they have begun improvements to the building. With the Airport Manager's approval, they intend to extend the improvements into the pilot lounge. Due to county requirements, they are unable to accept donated materials. We'd like to support their efforts by helping defray the costs of the materials (exterior door, windows, flooring, lighting, furniture, and various construction materials) needed to make these improvements. We'd like to raise about \$1500 for the project. You can donate here <http://pine-mountain-lake-aviation-association.square.site/> (note it's for the Pilot Lounge Project) or send a check to PMLAA, PO Box 131, Groveland, CA 95321.

2021 Meeting Calendar

<u>Date</u>	<u>Program</u>	<u>Time & Location</u>
April 2021	Look to next month!	
May 1, 2021	Spot Landing Contest	See pg 1 for reg info
June 5, 2021	Air Race	See pg 1 for reg info

**** 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.**

Radio Rumors “Say Again”

- **A great wind blew on January 18th**
 - Sustained winds at PML Airport on January 18th were 20-30 knots with gusts to 50-60 knots. It was ferocious.
 - “A great wind is blowing, and that gives you either imagination or a headache.” Catherine the Great (1729-1796).
 - Imagination presided in teamwork and community effort at E45 after the high winds. Thanks to everyone who contributed.
 - The windsock on the hill at the wind-T was recovered by Allen Craig from a tree and reinstalled by Wayne Handley and Joe Sobczak.
 - A new windsock at the 9er end of the field was donated by Jason Johanson, then fitted and installed by Ed Gregory.
 - The county hangar doors blown open, or off their pins, were reset and repaired by Tyler Stoy and Jeff Angermiller, Airport Maintenance Techs for Tuolumne County Airports.
- **Celebrating Vicky Benzing, our favorite female aviator for March, Women’s History Month**



- Vicky Benzing, native Californian and PML Airport resident, is an accomplished pilot, skydiver, aerobatic performer, and air racer with a PhD in Chemistry.
- She has flown over 200 air show performances across the US, including EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, WI.
- Vicky set a record as the “Fastest Woman Racer” at the Reno Air Races in 2015, and currently races in both sport and jet class.
- Her flying is feature in the documentary film “Mercury 13” which you can find on Netflix. Other film projects include an episode of “Ice Pilots”, “NCIS LA” and stunt work for the short film “Niner Echo Foxtrot.”

- **Great shopping find!**
 - ➔ Great T-Shirt to proudly wear on flights around the house.
 - ➔ Perfect for you or a gift for your favorite COVID traveler.
 - ➔ Saw this at www.acornonline.com or give them a call at (844)734-8470



2021 Aviation Revival Calendar

March	<p>10 – Ed Gregory first solo, T-41 at Reese AFB, TX (1967) USAF 14 – <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins (Clock springs forward)</i> 17 – <i>St. Patrick’s Day</i> 20 – <i>Vernal Equinox</i> 27 – Jim Goodrich first solo, Schweizer 233 sailplane at 46CN, Crystal Airport, CA (1970)</p>
April	<p>3 – PMLAA Meeting – Stay tuned ... 3-4 – E45 Airport Display Day, 8:00-4:00, sign off at 12:00 4 – <i>Easter Sunday</i> 10 – Norm Peebles first solo, Hiller OH-23D Raven Helicopter, Mineral Wells, TX (1968) US Army 22 – <i>Earth Day</i> 25 – Bill Thomas first solo, Beechcraft T-34 Mentor at NPA, NAS Pensacola, FL (1967) US Navy</p>
May	<p>1 – PMLAA Meeting – Stay tuned ... 1-2 – E45 Airport Display Day, 8:00-4:00, sign off at 12:00 4 – <i>Star Wars Day – May the fourth be with you</i> 5 – <i>Cinco de Mayo</i> 9 – <i>Mother’s Day</i> 26 – <i>Total Eclipse of the Moon (visible in eastern Asia, Australia, Pacific)</i> 31 – <i>Memorial Day</i></p>

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