



Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

Next Meeting

*February 01, 2025
20920 Elderberry*

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Association, Inc.

President's Message

By Bob Mackey

One of my New Year Resolutions was to turn in my report on time. Ever since grade school, that's been a good idea, but often something gets in the way. This month, our scheduled February speaker had a conflict come up, so I've spent the last week recruiting an alternate. Fortunately, we have Mike Gustafson to report the latest on relations between the County, the FAA, and our PML Airport. Or should I say our "Tuolumne-Yosemite Gateway Regional Airport"?

There will also be a book swap. We'll set up a few tables. Bring a book or three. Take some home.

The meeting location will be 20920 Elderberry, the dark brown hangar on the south taxiway, fourth hangar west of the fuel pumps. The hangar is not normally heated, so bring your coats. We'll warm it up as best we can.

I'm starting to run low on guest speakers. Please let me know of your suggestions for guest speakers or other meeting activity ideas.

The airport improvements are continuing. Recently, the County has begun removing or trimming trees that are encroaching on the approach and departure paths to runway 09 and 27. The new bypass at the west end of the 27 runway also makes it safer for ground vehicles and pedestrians to move around the airport without crossing the runway. If you haven't tried it yet, consider going around the end of 27 on the new gravel path. It's a big improvement.

Remember to renew your memberships!

-bob mackey

Safety Corner

Night Landings: When things go bump in the night

- by Mike Gustafson, CFII

The FAA defines night as “the time between the end of evening civil twilight and the beginning of morning civil twilight, as published in the American Air Almanac, converted to local time.” Bet you didn’t know that we have our very own almanac!

Official night is important in case you are not night-current. To be night-current you must make 3 take-offs and landings to a full stop, before you can carry passengers. The night currency rules also throw in one little zinger-- take-offs and landings must take place one hour after official sun down or one hour before official sunrise.

The NTSB and the FAA are looking into the official definition of “night” as it applies to mountain airports due to a number of high profile accidents that were caused by night conditions but were, in fact, almost an hour before “official night.” As the sun gets lower on the horizon, mountains, ridges, even hills will cast the airport into “night” conditions well before real night begins. Shadows can cross the runway in weird angles and give false landing clues to the pilot. Think about South Lake Tahoe and its proximity to the mountain to the west as an example of this effect.

Night landings provide an exciting challenge in the best of situations, but add mountain terrain and the results can be disastrous.

I suggest that you should never land at a mountain airport at night unless you have previously landed there in the daytime. One of the biggest problems with night landings is the lack of visual cues. Yes, I know I state the obvious, but most night landing accidents (excluding deer) are caused by running off the end of the runway. I call this the black hole effect. Because you can’t see the terrain below, you stay high throughout the approach, ignoring the VASI, and then try and plant it on the runway. You find yourself gliding along the runway waiting for all the excess speed to bleed off.

Runway lights and the width of the runway also can set you up for a loud bump in the night. If the runway is wider than you are used to, you will try and get the light spacing to “look right” for your flare. If the lights are wider than you are used to, you will flare high, if they are narrower, then you will tend to delay your flare.

Landing at night places an even stronger requirement that you fly the pattern at the correct altitude and speed, turn your base and final at normal spacing and altitude and as soon as you are on final, use the approach aid VASI. Yes, the pucker factor will be high because every part of your untrained sense will be screaming to stay high. Also be aware of the runway differences from your home airport and think yourself through the flare.

I find that the use of strobes often helps pick up the runway surface, but you must give yourself time above the runway to pick up the cues. If you are high and fast, events will be getting out of hand.

Almost every VFR accident report I researched for this article could have been avoided if the pilot had just gone around and slowed things down a bit and flown a normal pattern.

Remember, some airports are not even approved for night landings. They may have runway lights and a rotating beacon, but due to terrain problems, are just too dangerous. Be sure to check the airport guide before you assume that night landings are approved.

All of this assumes good weather, no winds, and no deer on the runway. An IFR approach with circling-to-land minimums at an unfamiliar airport just ups the pilot workload. If it has been years since you last were night-current then find yourself an Instructor to ride with you for safety's sake. If you are just a few months out of currency, go out during the twilight period and start your landing practice and work it into official night.

Night flights can be a nice break in your usual daytime flight plans, providing a different look and feel to the flight experience. Just don't let the last 5 feet ruin your evening!

Fly safe!

2025 Calendar

Filled with everything you love ❤️ Airplanes, Yosemite, and PML
Photos by PMLAA member Frank Leung



Only \$20

Buy them from Rob Compton or Janet Gregory
or at the next PMLAA meeting.

Airport Manager

Coffee &



Conversation

**First Thursday
of the month**

10:00 am—11:00 am

**Yosemite Flights
Pine Mountain Lake
Airport**





Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association
Membership Application, Renewal and Update



() New Member Date: _____

() Renewal – no changes

() Renewal – with changes

| | Order Badge | Publish on <u>Member List</u> |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Name 1: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes \$15 ea. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | |
| Name 2: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes \$15 ea. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes | |
| Child Name: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes \$15 ea. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Child Name: _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes \$15 ea. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | |
| Mailing Address: _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ | | |
| Phone 1: _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Phone 2: _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Email 1: _____ (Required) | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| Email 2: _____ | | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |

PMLAA Mission: To promote aviation interests and ensure the welfare and safety of its members, Pine Mountain Lake Airport, and the general community, through aviation-oriented recreational and educational activities.

Monthly Meetings: Held the first Saturday of each month (no meeting in January or July), usually at 6:00, check the PMLAA Newsletter or website www.pmlaa.org for details.

- Annual membership dues are \$25.00 per household.
- Please make check payable to: **PMLAA**.
- Bring to monthly meeting or remit to: **PMLAA, PO Box 131, Groveland, CA 95321**
- Membership includes:
 - Monthly electronic newsletter.
 - Access to member directory (available *only* to members).
 - Invitation events.to monthly meetings and airport events.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|
| Annual dues \$25.00 per year | \$ _____ |
| Badges @ \$15.00 each | \$ _____ |
| Donation (\$25-\$100 suggested) | \$ _____ |
| Scholarship Fund Donation | \$ _____ |
| TOTAL enclosed | \$ _____ |

2025 Meeting Calendar

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Program</i> | <i>Time & Location</i> |
|-------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| | | |

2025 Aviation Calendar

| BOARD OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS – 2025 | | | |
|---|--------------|--|--------------|
| OFFICERS | | COMMITTEE CHAIRS | |
| President , Bob Mackey | 707-622-5392 | Property , Ed Peters | 962-6267 |
| VP, Airport Affairs , Dan Anema | 406-9236 | Multimedia , Phil Hickerson | 962-6714 |
| VP, Social Affairs , Open | | Membrshp/Rostr , Bob Mackey | 707-622-5392 |
| Secretary , Phil Boortz | 805-944-0148 | Airports Manager , pending | |
| Treasurer , Ralph McLaughln | 408-520-8209 | Display Day Coordinator Dan Anema | 406-9236 |
| Email: president@pmlaa.org or board@pmlaa.org | | Safety , Mike Gustafson & Joe Sobczak | |
| Phone prefix is 209 unless otherwise indicated | | Newsletter , Julie Anema | 614-7606 |
| | | Webmaster , Jeremy Zawodny | 408-685-5936 |