



## *Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association*

*Next meeting March 7, 2026  
Potluck Social 6 pm / Dinner 7 pm  
Sobczak Hanger corner of Jimmersal and back taxiway*

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### President's Message - By Bob Mackey

#### Airport Rock Cleanup

With organization from Greg Triplett and EAA 1337, we held a rock party on the morning of February 28, 2026. To protect the mowers from damage, rocks were removed from the infield between the taxiway and runway. With this improvement, the grasses can be cut a little lower, reducing the food supply and cover that attracts deer near the runway. Thanks to the volunteers that helped pick up and move thousands of pounds of rocks!



The County is following up on our suggestion to consider a frequency change for the Pine Mountain Lake Airport. The present frequency, 122.90 MHz, is shared by many other nearby airports and can be congested at times. A frequency survey has been done, and some candidate frequencies have been identified. After the County Supervisors discuss this plan, they will send this suggestion to the FAA for their review. Separately, but in parallel, there is a proposal to change the name to Groveland Yosemite Airport. If both proposals move forward in a timely manner, we can look forward to re-marking the taxiway or runway with the new information, possibly in 2026.

## New PMLAA Bylaws

The membership voted in favor of the Bylaws changes, so PMLAA elections will proceed at the March meeting. The new change shifts the officer cycle to April, allowing the new officers to learn the basics before being overwhelmed with membership renewals. Elections will be held in March.

## Elections

Candidates for the 2026 PMLAA Board Officers include:

President: Joe Sobczak

VP Airport:

VP Social: <Committee>

Treasurer: Michael Fisher

Secretary: Bob Mackey

Nominations are open. Volunteer now! Cajole your neighbors!

The elections will be held at the March general meeting, March 7, 2026.

## Meetings

The March 7 meeting will be held at the Sobczak hangar, near the intersection of Jimmersal and the Back Taxiway. Bring your potluck dinner dishes. Our guest speaker (if any) will be a surprise!

For future meetings, we are looking for new speakers to inform and entertain our members. Please contact me with your suggestions.

## [Safety Corner by Joe Sobczak](#)

### **Situational Awareness**

Situational awareness is one of the most critical skills a pilot can develop. It represents the ability to understand what is happening in the present moment and anticipate what may occur in the future. Mastering situational awareness can mean the difference between safe flight and disaster. This is a summary of the key principles and practical strategies that form the foundation of effective situational awareness.

### **The Four Core Components**

Situational awareness rests on four interconnected components that work together to create a complete picture of your flight environment.

**Perception** is the foundation—the ability to recognize the current status of your environment using your senses, particularly sight and hearing. However, perception alone is insufficient; failing to notice key details or misinterpreting them can compromise your entire awareness framework.

**Comprehension** involves understanding the information you've perceived by combining real-time observations with your knowledge and experience. This creates what pilots call a mental model—your understanding of the world based on accumulated knowledge and observations. Comprehension breaks down when your mental model is inaccurate or incomplete, often due to misinformation or misunderstood data.

**Projection** takes comprehension further by enabling you to think ahead and predict what will happen next based on your mental model. An incomplete or inaccurate mental model leads to flawed predictions about future events.

**Decision-making** is the final component—the process of selecting the best course of action based on your understanding of the current situation and your projections about what comes next. Effective decision-making depends directly on the accuracy of the previous three components.

### **Managing Information Overload**

The cockpit presents a relentless stream of information: flight instruments, radio communications, navigation requirements, and flight control feedback. This information overload can leave pilots feeling stressed and confused, impairing decision-making ability.

To manage this challenge, prioritize critical information first. When airborne, prioritize flying the aircraft above all else, followed by navigation, then communication. Develop good scanning techniques—the circular scan, which moves clockwise through six instruments starting with the attitude indicator, helps build a consistent picture of aircraft behavior during straight and level flight.

Avoid mental filtering, a bias where pilots focus on specific information while downplaying other important data. Instead, diagnose situations fully using all available information without jumping to conclusions. Additionally, guard against task fixation—the dangerous tendency to devote all attention to a single problem while losing focus on flying the aircraft. Maintain your instrument scan, use checklists, and break complex issues into manageable chunks to stay focused on your primary responsibility.

### **Spatial Disorientation and Instrument Trust**

Between 5% and 10% of general aviation accidents involve spatial disorientation, the pilot's inability to correctly perceive aircraft position due to conflicting sensory inputs. This typically occurs when visual cues like the horizon disappear, forcing pilots to rely on their body's sense of motion, which can be unreliable.

The solution is straightforward: trust your flight instruments. When disoriented, return to your basic instrument scan and prioritize flying the aircraft until you reestablish your orientation, configuration, and position. Practice disorientation exercises under instructor guidance in controlled environments to build confidence and muscle memory for handling this stressful situation. Early recognition of disorientation is crucial—as soon as you sense something is wrong, revert to instruments, slow down, and maintain a good scan to regain situational awareness.

### **Multitasking Under Pressure**

High-stress situations demand the ability to balance flying, navigating, and communicating simultaneously. Building this skill requires incremental practice. Over time, you'll develop the capacity to handle multiple simultaneous challenges.

When problems arise, pause and take a deep breath to reduce stress and process information rationally. Break complex tasks into smaller, manageable pieces. If flying with another pilot or instructor, share the workload—handing over control while you diagnose a problem frees up mental resources. When communicating with ATC, request assistance if needed; there's no shame in asking for help to reduce workload and maintain situational awareness.

### **Radio Communication Excellence**

Clear, concise radio communication is essential for maintaining situational awareness and flight safety. Practice radio calls on the ground to reduce the cognitive load in the air. Speak clearly, avoid talking too fast, and always repeat back key information. Don't hesitate to ask ATC for clarification or assistance when operating under high workload.

### **Building Mastery Through Practice**

Improving situational awareness is not an overnight achievement, it requires consistent practice and deliberate effort. By focusing on perception, comprehension, projection, and decision-making skills, you'll feel in control and confident in the cockpit. Maintaining situational awareness becomes second nature, transforming you into a safer, more capable pilot prepared for whatever challenges the skies present.

## **Echo Four Five Book Review**

By Susie Williams

Long-time resident Janet Gregory has just published her fifth book, and this topic is one that's focused on our very local county asset, our airport. The book, four years in the making, brings stories, history, and photos of the 50-year history of the Groveland Yosemite Airport.

Technically an "Airpark" (a fly-in neighborhood where people can taxi their aircraft from their hangar-home to the runway), the airport at the north end of Pine Mountain Lake is a place that has attracted a unique group of residents. The author weaves the stories of the people who have touched the place over the years, from the founders who built the airport as part of the Boise Cascade community project to the interesting people who added to its character and lore through the years. Nearly every aspect of the community is documented via the many stories collected by the author.

One of the best passages in the book is a first-person narration by former longtime resident Eric Henderson. He tells his harrowing story of helping a pilot who was in trouble, about to crash in unfamiliar terrain. I won't give away the ending, but it is an edge-of-your-seat, gripping tale, in sharp contrast to the lighter, breezier stories in the rest of the book.

In addition to historical information, the author touches on a lot of the social and hobby activities that have taken place in this community-within-a-community, from fly-ins and parties to airplane kit-builders who assembled their own aircraft, to movie night gatherings, community airport day events, and more. She documents the aircraft commuters who flew to work rather than sitting in traffic and the entrepreneurs who started or moved businesses to the neighborhood. There's also a chapter featuring selected stories of many of the residents who served in the military.

The airport has played a crucial part in public service as well; the author presents stories covering the major fires that have taken place, as well as the airport's role in supporting CAL-FIRE operations. The airport serves

as a crucial handoff for air ambulance services too, linking our home to lifesaving area hospitals. The author includes a tale of how a medical flight from our airport to a regional hospital saved precious time and possibly a life.

The book is a love letter of sorts, skillfully presenting the stories, lore, tall tales, and history of a special community. It's available at the STCHS Museum, The Grove Mercantile (downtown Groveland store), and at the Groveland Library. It's also available for purchase in soft cover, hard cover, and Kindle form on Amazon.com.

<https://www.amazon.com/Echo-Four-Five-Portrait-Groveland/dp/B0GG5Z64ZM/>



# Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

## Membership Application, Renewal and Update



( ) New Member

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

( ) Renewal – no changes

( ) Renewal – with changes

	<u>Order Badge</u>	<u>Publish on Member List</u>
Name 1: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes \$15 ea.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Name 2: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes \$15 ea.	<input 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](http://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	\$ _____

**BOARD OF OFFICERS & COMMITTEE CHAIRS – 2025**

<b>OFFICERS</b>		<b>COMMITTEE CHAIRS</b>	
<b>President</b> , Bob Mackey	707-622-5392	<b>Property</b> , Ed Peters	209-962-6267
<b>VP, Airport Affairs</b> , Dan Anema	209-406-9236	<b>Multimedia</b> , Phil Hickerson	209-962-6714
<b>VP, Social Affairs</b> , Open		<b>Membership/Rstr</b> , Bob Mackey	707-622-5392
<b>Secretary</b> , Phil Boortz	805-944-0148	<b>Airports Manager</b> , pending	
<b>Treasurer</b> , Ralph McLaughlin	408-520-8209	<b>Display Day Coordinator</b> Dan Anema	209-406-9236
<b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:president@pmlaa.org">president@pmlaa.org</a> or <a href="mailto:board@pmlaa.org">board@pmlaa.org</a>		<b>Safety</b> , Mike Gustafson & Joe Sobczak	
		<b>Newsletter</b> , Julie Anema	<a href="mailto:anemajulie@gmail.com">anemajulie@gmail.com</a>
		<b>Webmaster</b> , Jeremy Zawodny	408-685-5936