

# The Manager's Approach



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Columbia & Pine Mountain Lake Airports September/October 2006

## *Proving the Fuel Pump Meters*

The County Weights and Measures staff verified the fuel pumps at both Columbia and Pine Mountain Lake Airports last month. The verification process involves pumping fuel directly from the pump into a container with a proven volume. The volume of the container is compared to the meter reading. Any discrepancy is adjusted on the spot and another test is performed. When the meter is shown to be accurate the pump is tagged with a verification certificate. As far as I know there were no significant errors found in either Bald Eagle Aviation's or Mother Lode Aviation's fuel pumps.



## *PML Master Plan Reviewed By the Board of Supervisors*

The Pine Mountain Lake Airport Master Plan went before the Board of Supervisors on September 26<sup>th</sup>. Although it was not

officially adopted by the Board the Public Hearing was conducted and completed. The only requirement now is to incorporate several clarifications requested by the Board into the Draft Final document. Once the Master Plan is adopted the Airports Department can prepare request for proposal documents for the development of storage hangars at the Pine Mountain Lake Airport.

## *Vehicle & Pedestrian Deviations*

We are continuing with the design of a perimeter access road around the south end of Runway 17-35 at Columbia Airport. When constructed, this road will provide a safe route for vehicles to get from one side of our airport to the other without crossing the runway. Everyone should observe the runway hold lines at all airports, not just our airports. This includes planes, vehicles, golf carts, bicycles, and pedestrians. If you are on the double solid line side of the markings you should stop and look both ways to assure there are no aircraft on or approaching the runway before you proceed onto the runway. Safety is everyone's responsibility. Please do your part to keep our airports safe.



## *PML Deer Fence*

I have asked several times for feedback regarding how effective the deer fence is at the Pine Mountain Lake Airport. The current fence is still just a test because we

are still trying to evaluate its effectiveness and modifying it as we learn more. Also, we have requested a Deviation of Standard from the FAA and until we receive their determination, we cannot consider the fence permanent. The following are a summary of the comments provide to me so far:

- The fence is nearly invisible and I really don't notice it any more
- I don't have any opinion whether the fence is effective but I "feel" safer with the fence in place
- The fence is definitely working and I see deer going around the ends.
- The fence is not working and deer are going through the fence wires
- The fence is not working and deer get trapped between the wires making for a more dangerous situation.
- The fence is working and the deer are walking parallel to it then crossing at the ends
- When are you going to extend the fence all the way to the east end of the runway? That end has a lot of deer crossings.
- I don't know if the fence is working or not but I'm glad action is being taken to try to solve the deer problem
- Fact – there have been no known deer strikes since the deer fence has been installed.
- Fact – there was a deer strike during the time the original deer fence was removed and the new deer fence installed
- Fact – There are hundreds of deer tracks around the ends of the fence

In an effort to increase the effectiveness of the deer fence we have closed off the runway exit located 1000' from the west end of the runway. This is to make the south side deer fence continuous so deer can't get between the fences at this location.

I'm still looking for feedback and ideas for dealing with the deer problem. Please let me know your thoughts.

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## *Stupid Pilot Tricks*

In the last few months I have twice witnessed pilots starting their airplane with the tow bar still attached to the nose strut. I have also seen people try to taxi out with their pitot tube cover still in place. Have you ever tried to taxi away from the tiedown but found the plane just wouldn't move no matter how much power you added because the chains were still attached to your tiedown rings?

Walking around your aircraft prior to each flight is an important part of your preflight inspection. Neglecting to remove the tiedown chains might only results in embarrassment. However, leaving the tow bar attached may cause significant damage to the propeller and or cowling, not to mention the tow bar itself. A blocked pitot tube will render the airspeed indicator useless forcing the pilot to either abort the takeoff or to fly by the seat of his pants, guessing at appropriate airspeeds.

Next time you get ready to fly your plane, make sure you do a thorough walk around. Don't let your haste or your lack of routine procedures make you look stupid because you have to shutdown or abort due to an inadequate preflight inspection.

*Stupid Pilot Tricks is a monthly article that attempts to raise awareness of safety and courtesy issues around our airports.*

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*The Manager's Approach* is a monthly publication from the Tuolumne County Airports Director for the purpose of keeping our community informed of local aviation and airport issues. You can contact me at:

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