



Volume 25: Issue 2 • April 2010
A Monthly Publication of the Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

“Who Packed Your Parachute?”
*April 17 Presentation at
Silvano and Antonella Gai's Hangar
20919 Woodside Way*



Captain J. Charles Plumb USNR, (Ret.)

Captain Plumb is a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, a former jet fighter pilot, and a combat veteran with 74 successful missions over Vietnam. In addition, he helped start the Top Gun school in Miramar, California.

Captain Plumb was shot down over enemy territory on his 75th mission in Vietnam, just five days before he was scheduled to return home. He ejected from his F-4 Phantom jet, parachuted into enemy hands, was taken prisoner, tortured, and survived nearly six years in a communist prison camp.

He has shared his story of winning despite adversity to more than 4,000 audiences in this country and around the world.

Excerpt from “Insights into Excellence”

(a book written by Charles Plumb)

Recently, I was sitting in a restaurant in Kansas City. A man about two tables away kept looking at me. I didn't recognize him. A few minutes into our meal walked over to my table, pointed his finger in my face and said, "You're Captain Plumb." I looked up and I said, "Yes sir, I'm Captain Plumb."

He said, "You flew jet fighters in Vietnam. You were on the aircraft carrier Kitty Hawk. You were shot down. You parachuted into enemy hands and spent six years as a prisoner of war." I said, "How in the world did you know all that?" He replied, "Because, *I packed your parachute.*"

I was speechless. I staggered to my feet and held out a very grateful hand of thanks. This guy came up with just the proper words. He grabbed my hand, and said, "I guess it worked." "Yes sir, indeed it did", I said, "and I've said a lot of prayers of thanks for your nimble fingers, but I never thought I'd have the opportunity to express my gratitude in person."

He said, "Were all the panels there?" "Well sir, I must shoot straight with you," I said, "of the eighteen panels that were supposed to be in that parachute, I had fifteen good ones. Three were torn, but it wasn't your fault, it was mine. I jumped out of that jet fighter at a high rate of speed, close to the ground. That's what tore the panels in the chute. It wasn't the way you packed it."

"Let me ask you a question," I said, "do you keep track of all the parachutes you pack?" "No" he responded, "it's enough gratification for me just to know that I've served."

I didn't get much sleep that night. I kept thinking about that man. I kept wondering what he might have looked like in a Navy uniform. I wondered how many times I might have passed him on board the Kitty Hawk. I wondered how many times I might have seen him and not even said "good morning", "how are you", or anything because I was a fighter pilot and he was just a sailor. How many hours did he spend on that long wooden table in the bowels of that ship weaving the shrouds and folding the silks of those chutes? I could have cared less ... until one day my parachute came along and he packed it for me.

Who looks to you for strength in times of need?

President's Message
- by Michael Lella

On behalf of your Board and Chair Committee, we are pleased to report that our first 2010 PMLAA Meeting at the Buchner Hangar on March 6th was a resounding success. The film "Obsession," presented by our own very talented multi-media guru Ken Codeglia, was a big hit – professionally done, entertaining and insightful. The 50-minute film documents the challenges of air racing, and the passion and dedication of "Team Obsession." Ultimately, the film left us in awe of Scott Alair, his sportsmanship and the class he demonstrated following a controversial decision which banned him from the races on account of a "questionable" racing pass he made on the last day of the competition.

Our next potluck PMLAA Meeting at **6:00pm on April 17th** will be at **Silvano and Antonella Gai's hangar** and will feature a very popular speaker, decorated Vietnam F-4 Phantom Navy jet pilot, Captain J. Charles Plumb. **Set-up will be at 2:00pm.**

Our PMLAA Board and Committee Chairs are working to bring you the best speakers available. On May 8th, we are proud to announce our speaker will be Jim Knuckle, a WWII P38 Pilot, shot down following the invasion of Europe.

Please mark your calendars for these exciting events and plan on joining the festivities. We encourage new members and guests, and we remind all members to bring enough food to share as we'd hate to run out (and it has happened).

A reminder that our 2010 dues are due now. We will be printing a new Roster by mid-April with all new and up-dated membership addresses. **If you haven't paid your dues, your name will not appear on that roster, and you won't receive future newsletters.**

Fifth Annual Central Sierra Helicopter Meet
April 30 – May 2

This is an all helicopter event located on the Miller Ranch, just outside Groveland. Through the years, the event has been very successful, and this year will be even more exciting. There will be several factory ships with some giving lessons and rides. There will be reps from Helicycle, Mosquito and some people to help with Rotorways. Stu and Kathy from Experimental Helo Mag. will also be on site.

There will also be an aviation swap meet. Bring small items to swap.

Bring your build project finished or not so that everyone can see, what you're doing and get some great help. If you do not bring a ship, bring your brag book!

Location: 12850 Cherry Lake Rd. Groveland CA
Ranch GPS co-ordinates 37.51'11.15 n 120.00'06w

CONTACT: Hap or Nancy 707-833-5905
Email nancyandhap@aol.com
<http://cshelimeet.com>

Member Activities

Another Siegfried Takes To the Air

Cormac Siegfried, son of PMLAA members Rand and Andy Siegfried, is keeping up the family tradition. Cormac celebrated his 14th birthday with his first solo glider flight at Pleasant Valley Airport in Peoria, Arizona, March 8, 2010.

All the Siegfried family was in attendance, including the grandparents who started this tradition with their children. Cormac is the youngest of the grandchildren, all of whom also soloed on their 14th birthdays. Cormac's reaction: "This is the best birthday ever!"



Mike Gustafson's First Flight in his RV7



After six years of diligent and painstaking work, Mike Gustafson was thrilled to fly his new RV7 on February 17th, 2010. Roger Sloan provided invaluable assistance in the final push to complete the project.

From the Director
- by Jim Thomas, Airports Director

Airport Fund Raiser & Projects

The June 5th airport fundraiser is being held to raise needed money for several important airport improvement projects. I want to provide an explanation as to why the County has not been able to fund these projects. The money for the operation, maintenance and improvement of the PML Airport comes from four separate sources:

1. PML Airport Revenues, Columbia Airport Revenues, and the County General Fund
2. Caltrans Division of Aeronautics Annual Credit Grant
3. FAA Airport Improvement Grants
4. Donations

The PML Airport revenues come from hangar and tie down rentals, transient fees, Mother Lode Aviation fuel flowage fees, and long term parking fees. As I have explained in prior articles, the revenues from these sources amounts to a little over 40% of the operation and maintenance cost of the airport.

The balance of the money comes from a combination of sources, including an Annual Credit Grant from Caltrans Division of Aeronautics, a balance surplus from Columbia Airport, and from the County General Fund. This fiscal year (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2010) we *did not receive* the usual Annual \$10,000 Credit Grant from Caltrans for either Airport, because the State "took" the money from Aeronautics for the State's General Fund. This left the PML Airport budget even more out of balance and the Columbia Airport budget at barely a break-even point.

Also, the current FAA Airport Compliance Manual, issued last September, says that residential airports are not eligible for Airport Improvement Program grants. Until this policy is changed, it is highly unlikely that the FAA will fund any airport improvements at PML Airport. Obviously, with the Airport budget already in the red when just funding operations and maintenance, there is no money to fund improvement projects. In the past, small improvements have been funded through individual and PMLAA donations and volunteer labor, but larger improvement projects have not been possible due to lack of funding.

I have been asked to identify important projects needed to keep our airport in good shape and in a safe condition. The following list of projects was prepared a few years ago in hopes of obtaining some FAA money to improve our airport.

1. Fill the ever widening cracks in the runway and taxiway asphalt
2. Fix the drainage culvert inlets so they don't clog and flood the taxiway
3. Smooth out the drainage ditches along the side of the runway
4. Install an Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS)
5. Perform "chemical mowing" of the grass between the taxiways and runways to prevent the deer from browsing in this area
6. Upgrade or extend the deer fence to reduce the number of deer on the runway

We hope the upcoming fundraiser will raise a significant amount of money to fund some needed improvement projects. I feel that the organizers and participants should have the opportunity to prioritize which projects will be funded. However, I will certainly provide my input from a homeowner's perspective, a regular airport user, and as the County Airports Director.

Thanks to our PMLAA Multimedia Technicians



PMLAA Multimedia Technicians Phil Hickerson (left) and Ken Codeglia (right), take a moment at Airport Day 2009 for a photo with the event announcer

Our organization has become accustomed to top shelf presentations accompanied with great audio and visual media. Phil and Ken are dedicated association members who make this a reality. They dedicate approximately four hours each to set up and take down for each meeting, as well as their time at the meeting controlling the equipment insuring our quality enjoyment. We appreciate their efforts!

Volunteer Day at Camp

Tuolumne Trails

April 17th 8:00am - noon

Donate a few hours and help
get camp ready for special
needs children this summer.

Call 962-6336 for more info

or to sign-up.

Member News



Update from Linda and Mick Hopson

Linda and Mick Hopson report they are doing very well few months into their move to her old hometown of St. Louis, MO. The winter gave them only one snowstorm of only 6"; they are hoping for a mild summer too. There is a lot to do in the university town, but they haven't hooked up with the aviation community yet. Mick is looking forward to going to Oshkosh this summer with Mike Gustafson and Joel Avey, who will fly to St. Louis and pick him up enroute.

Bonanza on Approach



Kay Meermans is caught on camera by Michael Toben, as she lands Norm and Patty Peebles' Bonanza on a beautiful day in March.

Special Thanks To Our March Meeting Hosts

Our Aviation Community extends a special thanks to Conni and Alan Buchner for hosting the PMLAA March meeting at their lovely hangar

Call for Scholarship Applicants

Each summer, the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Air Academy offers young people between 12 and 18 years the chance to go to Oshkosh, and learn all about aviation.

This year, the Hayward Air Rally is funding two scholarships for local-area youth to attend the EAA's Young Eagles in-residence summer camps at Oshkosh. Our applications have available since January 1, but we've had exactly zero applicants for the air academy scholarship program.

So, instead of restricting this to applicants from the city of Hayward, we're opening this up to anybody in "the local area." We'll leave the definition of local area as fuzzy as possible....we need somebody to apply. Right now, the odds are good for applications that come in!

The EAA Air Academy is a unique summer camp that takes a young interest in aviation to the next level. Participants spend a week at the Air Academy Lodge in Oshkosh, completely immersed in the thrilling world of aviation. Top-notch instructors help to explore the world of flight through aviation studies, hands-on activities, flight simulation and many other exciting experiences. The highlight of the week is a flight in a real airplane. These camps provide the foundation for a lifelong love of aviation as well as the opportunity to create friendships with fellow aviation enthusiasts.

Here are the ground rules:

1. Two scholarships will be awarded to the EAA's Young Eagles Academy in Oshkosh this summer.
2. Round-trip airfare is included.
3. Boys or girls ages 14-18 can apply.
4. Applications are due by March 31 or ASAP
5. Scholarship winners will be announced by April 30.

You can download the application at www.hwdairrally.org/scholarship/scholarship_application.pdf On the application, "resident of Hayward" may be ignored. Let me know if you have any questions.

Chris Verbil Chair, Hayward Air Rally Committee
www.hwdairrally.org
tel:408.533.9357

In Memoriam

Judy Perchonock and Al Halluin

Good friends,

Gone too soon.

**Airport Fundraiser Update
- by Silvano Gai**

Preparation is continuing for the June 5th fundraiser to be held at Camp Tuolumne Trails to benefit Pine Mountain Lake Airport. We need financial donations, donations of items to be auctioned, and many volunteers to organize the event. Please contact Silvano Gai at 962-6378 and get involved!

By now you should have received a letter that explains the event and the donation form. You can also find them at:
<http://pmlaa.org/Docs/Fund-Raiser-Letter.pdf>
<http://pmlaa.org/Docs/Fund-Raiser-Form.pdf>

The organizing committee has been very active in planning this important event. We have completed the following activities:

- The committee met with Supervisor John Gray to involve Tuolumne County in the project. John agreed that the cracks in the runway/taxiway and the drainage issues need to be fixed. We will get together again as soon as we have the estimates.
- The committee met with Duke York, Deputy Director of Public Works, Tuolumne County. Duke indicated that the cracks observed were evidence of pavement aging and not of sub-grade failure. The cracks are only going to get bigger over time as the pavement ages and this is the right time to fix them.
- The committee has marked all the cracks and measured their length and volume. This will allow us to get more precise bids.
- We have also met with private contractors to discuss repairs and cost estimates.
- So far, each has had the same message: the problem will only continue to worsen, especially as the cracks have become noticeably wider and deeper this past winter. It is also clear that if we do not address the problem now, the fixes will be far more expensive in the future.
- Mike Gustafson obtained a bid for an AWOS. A basic system without a ceiling sensor would cost \$42,000, with ceiling \$68,000. The ceiling module can be added later.

The good news is as of today, the average airport homeowner has contributed approximately \$750. If this trend continues we will be able to complete our project.

Once again we ask you to be generous and donate as much as you can: *it is our airport!*

PML Airport Hangars Available

Legacy Aviation Development is working with Jim Thomas to get all the new hangars at Pine Mountain Lake either leased or sold to local pilots. At this time, there are two hangars available for lease or sale. If interested call PML/Columbia Airport Director, Jim Thomas at 533-5685

Reminder: Please pay your \$20 annual dues *now*. Renewal forms are on our website www.pmlaa.org, and the form is also included in this Newsletter for your convenience. The annual membership roster will be distributed with the May newsletter.

**BOARD OF OFFICERS – 2010
WWW.PMLAA.ORG**

OFFICERS

President	
Michael Lella	962-1822
Vice President, Airport Affairs	
Larry Jobe	962-5508
Vice President, Social Affairs	
Debbi Peters	962-6267
Secretary	
Frank Perry	962-0728
Treasurer	
Don Brown	962-0325

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Property	
Paul Sperry	962-4178
Multimedia	
Ken Codeglia	962-6270
Phil Hickerson	962-6714
Seminar Coordinator	
Wayne Handley	962-7868
Membership	
Kay Smith	962-6986
Roster	
Carol Simpson	962-0943
Legal Counsel	
Renie Leakakos	962-0499
Webmaster	
Silvano Gai	962-6378
Airport Director	
Jim Thomas	533-5685

NEWSLETTER

Newsletter Editor	
Frank Perry	962-0728
Safety Editor	
Larry Jobe	962-5508



Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

Membership Application, Renewal & Update

- **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.
- Annual membership dues are \$20.00 per household, payable February 28th each year.
- PMLAA Name badges are \$8.00 each.
- Please make check payable to and remit to PMLAA, P.O. Box 131, Groveland, CA 95321
- Monthly Meetings: held the first Saturday of each month usually at 6:00pm. Please refer to the latest edition of The PMLAA News for more details.
- The PMLAA News is mailed monthly and is available online at www.pmlaa.org
- The membership roster (with information from this form) is distributed with the PMLAA News each April.

Renewing members: include your name and any information changes on this form. Please be sure to include your email address. If no changes, check here _____

Note: The roster is mailed ONLY to members, NOT published on the Web. Which of your information may be included in the Roster? (mark Y or N for each) _____ Mailing address _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Would you like to receive your newsletter by mail? **or by email only?**

Date: _____ New member Renewal Member since _____

Name(s): _____ & _____
(Please print name(s) as you want them on your badges)

Mailing Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

PML Unit/lot: _____ PML Phone: 209-962-_____ Other Phone: _____

Email(s): _____ & _____

Aircraft Make & Model _____ N# _____

FAA Cert/Ratings _____

Certificated pilot since (year) _____ Type ratings _____

Check all aviation jobs for which you have ever been paid.

- Airline Pilot / Crew Flight Attendant CFI Corporate Pilot / Crew Military pilot/crew
 FAA A&P Mechanic IA Lineman Engineer

Details: _____

Special Interests: _____

Military History: _____

Annual Dues: \$20.00 x _____ years in advance = \$ _____ + _____ badges @ \$8.00 each = \$ _____

Young Eagles – April 17th, 2010

Columbia Airport



**Free introductory flights
for kids age 8 to 17**



Location

- Columbia Airport, CA, terminal building

Program

- 8 AM set-up and pilot briefing
- 9 AM to noon – kid flights

*For information contact
Ed Sunday
(Young Eagles coordinator)
at (209) 533-1405*



Kids must be accompanied by parents or guardians that must fill and sign a Young Eagles Registration forms

For more information:
www.young eagles.org



Pilot Requirements

- Be a national member of EAA
- Current Medical
- Current BFR
- Aircraft Annual
- Aircraft Insurance
- **EAA will provide additional insurance**

Mark your calendar:



April 17 th	Charlie Plum, “Who Packed Your Parachute?” Charlie is a decorated Navy Pilot and a Hanoi Hilton survivor	6:00p: Potluck Dinner Gai Hangar 20919 Woodside Way
May 8 th	Jim Kunckle, WWII P38 Pilot and German Prisoner of War	
June 5 th	PMLAA Fundraiser in conjunction with EAA Chapter 1337	Camp Tuolumne Trails
July 16 th	Reverse-Draw Fundraiser and Dance	
September 3 rd	Speaker and location to be announced	
October 2 nd	PMLAA Airport Day	
November 6 th	Speaker and location to be announced	
December 11 th	“It’s A Wrap!”	

PML Aviation Association
PO Box 131
Groveland, CA 95321

**Have you paid
your Dues?
Next meeting: April 17th
Gai Hangar**