



Volume 25: Issue 7 • November 2010
A Monthly Publication of the Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

**“Flying Tigers”
“Honoring the Past –Looking to the Future”
Saturday, November 6th
at the Gais’ Hangar
20919 Woodside Way**

- by Frank Perry

As many of you know, Larry and Nina Jobe spend a lot of time in China. A few years ago they became passionately interested in the legacy of the Flying Tigers. This week Larry and Nina were honored at the home of Chinese Consul General Gao, in San Francisco where Larry presented a Flying Tiger historical presentation. Now, we get to hear it too and learn about these remarkable men.

For several years now Larry and his volunteer team have been working on a project with the citizens of Lingui County in China to build a historical and memorial park honoring and remembering the Americans and Chinese who, side-by-side, fought to defeat a brutal and determined Japanese enemy in WWII. Their battle was long, their battle was tough, but through mutual cooperation and trust they emerged victorious.

The Flying Tiger Heritage Park in Guilin, China will honor the memory of American forces who fought in China in WW II, collectively known as The Flying Tigers by the Chinese, the American Volunteer Group, (better known as the AVG); as well as the Hump pilots and China-Burma-India theater forces; and the 10th and 14th Army Air Forces under General Claire Chennault.

The AVG entered China before the US entered the war to help the Chinese defend against heavy bombing of Chinese cities and civilians by the Japanese Air Force. With never more than 98 pilots and only 69 operational air planes, under the leadership of Claire Chennault, they were able to stop a Japanese Air Force of over 1000 planes while compiling an aerial combat record that has never been matched.

When the US entered the war against Japan the only route of supply lay over the Himalayan Mountains. Transport pilots flying out of India and Burma hauled in tons of war material and supply to keep the Chinese army and Army Air Forces fighting. They did this at great risk and peril. The Hump route was one of the most dangerous routes you could fly due to

high terrain and unpredictable weather. The Japanese Air Force regularly patrolled the route shooting down many unarmed transport aircraft. Proof of how dangerous this route was lies in the fact that more Hump pilots were killed than fighter and bomber pilots combined. That route is sometimes referred to as the aluminum trail because of all the aircraft wrecks along it.



The respect and admiration between the American forces and Chinese in WW II has left us with a legacy of friendship that we hope to be able to show and honor in the Flying Tiger Heritage Park

Larry’s presentation will cover the memorial project and the amazing achievements of these dedicated and brave men.

President's Message - by Michael Lella

We had a fabulous day on October 2nd, our 5th Annual PMLAA Airport Day! The weather was perfect and all the events were performed without a hitch and right on schedule. The new hangars turned out to be a blessing as they provided the perfect shade for our attendees. A special thanks to all of the pilots who gave Young Eagle rides, to Clay Lacy for his Pilatus demonstration, the model airplane guys (yes, the jet flew this year) and to the RV Ravens and the Beech Boys for their superb formation demonstration. Congratulations to Jim Thomas for winning the Flour Bombing and to Wayne Handley for winning the Spot Landing contest for the second year in a row.

We deeply appreciate the excellent organization of the day by Wayne Handley and his committee. Their professionalism and expertise made the whole day work. Thanks also to Ed Sunday for organizing the Young Eagles flights and to Virginia Gustafson for all the publicity – including the front page of the PML News – which brought out the crowd.

The events of the day concluded with Michael Thoben driving his *Ferrari replica* Acura to a solid win over the overly *handicapped* airplanes piloted by Al Craig and Vicky Benzing. The club then met at the Buchners' hangar for an abundant and delicious potluck dinner, award presentation and photo display of the days' events. It was another night to remember and fun and laughter was had by all. Airport Day is certainly a highlight event of the year and one that we will be sure to continue.

Our November 6th meeting and potluck is a very important one. It will be held at the Gais' hangar with our own Flying Tiger expert Larry Jobe as guest speaker.

Nomination Committee Chair Paul Price will also announce the nominees for the 2011 PMLAA Board. We have a wonderful group of Board Members lined-up to make 2011 another great year for PMLAA members and the airport.

Some noteworthy changes were discussed and voted on at our September 24th PMLAA Board Meeting. Most important was a proposal from our Treasurer Don Brown that the scholarship fund of \$1000 this year would be granted to Camp Tuolumne Trails. Secondly, a resolution was passed that from here on any member who contributes the use of their hangar for a club event will receive a complimentary yearly membership. The purpose is to recognize and appreciate generosity of members who lend their hangars, which is so vital to the success of our organization. A special thanks to all who have shared your hangars this year: Alan and Conni Buchner, Silvano and Tony Gai, Norm and Patti Peebles, to the Jerry and Paula Baker Foundation of Tuolumne Trails, and our Roster coordinator Carol Simpson.

In conclusion, I cannot end this message without mentioning the most recent improvements to our airport. Thanks to EAA President Silvano Gai and the fundraising committee and to all who contributed to our Fundraiser in June, we are now proceeding with needed erosion repairs.

A special thanks to Michael Thoben who has dedicated much of his personal time to reviewing bids and supervising the

work granted to Down To Earth Construction. As of this date much of the erosion has been addressed including enlarging the asphalt surface area of the south/north crossing taxiway at the west end of the runway. As I jog hundreds of miles on the taxiway in preparation for my December 5th California International Marathon, I am pleased to see all of the improvements that our community has made towards this necessary and immediate need to fill cracks (performed expertly by Ken's Asphalt) and repair severe drainage issues. There is no doubt in my mind, that this is a good thing and it represents the generosity of this community. Thanks to all you who donated towards this effort, our airport is safer and better because of you.

PMLAA Organization Update

PMLAA's President Michael Lella hosted a board meeting on Oct. 29. The club remains in excellent financial shape:

- Membership - 182 Memberships, equivalent to approximately 324 members
- Treasury - General funds total \$ 6008 and the Scholarship fund has \$1710. Airport Day cleared \$500

Ground School Opportunity

Do you need your private pilot ground school, or could you use a refresher course? PMLAA member and CFII Mike Gustafson has offered to conduct a ground school here at PML, *if there is enough interest*.

The class will meet twice a week for six weeks in January and February. Cost is just \$300 per person (plus a required textbook). If interested, call Mike at 962-6336 to sign-up.

It's a Wrap – Dec. 11

Our final PMLAA event of the year will be "It's a Wrap," on December 11th. For many years, in a tradition started by Sandy and Kent Blankenburg, PMLAA members have donated and wrapped children's toys for the Groveland Christmas Basket project.

This is an excellent way to remember those less fortunate than ourselves and bring some joy to area children at Christmas. Dar Brown, event chair, says they are perennially short of gifts for young teens – ages 10-14, so keep that in mind as you shop.

This has been a tough year for many area families, so start shopping now and bring your unwrapped toys to the event on December 11. Helping Hands and PMLAA will supply a delicious chili dinner. Stay tuned for more details.

Member News

Jan and Roger Sloan recently visited the Blankenburgs at their lovely home outside Phoenix. Jan reports they are well and happy and send best wishes to all their PML friends. The two couples enjoyed an outing to the Copper State Fly-in in Casa Grande, AZ.

Airport Day Re-cap



Vicky Benzing and her Extra 300S

PML pilot and part time resident, Vicky Benzing has had two highly successful careers and until recently they were concurrent. She's an accomplished pilot and recently retired as Vice President of Technology and Intellectual Property at Novellus Systems. Presently, she is concentrating on her own business goals as Vicky Benzing Aerosports.

Vicky has often teamed up with Wayne Handley to provide the PML community with some fantastic air-show aerobatics. She is an inspiration to all with her accomplishments in the field of science and aviation.

Vicky has logged over 5000 hours of flight time along with over 11,000 parachute jumps. An accomplished pilot, skydiver and aerobatic competitor, she has a passion for everything airborne.

In college, she learned to fly in an antique Taylorcraft in her hometown of Watsonville, California. Early on she took aerobatic instruction from the legendary pilot Amelia Reid and has since had a love for the sport. Her flying career has spanned over twenty years and today she holds both a Commercial Helicopter and an Airline Transport Pilot Rating.

Vicky began training with air show legend Wayne Handley in 2005 and now competes in International Aerobatic Club competitions throughout the US. In 2006 she won first place in the Intermediate Category in both the Northwest Regional Championship and the Southwest Regional Championship, as well as winning numerous regional contests. Currently, she competes in the Advanced Category and won third place in the 2008 and 2009 Northwest Regional Championship.

Vicky's airplane is a modified German-built single seat Extra 300S, powered by a Lycon experimental AEI0540 high performance engine and a Hartzell "Claw" propeller.

Vicky is sponsored by FESTO Corporation, a worldwide leader in pneumatic and electromechanical components and controls for the industrial automation market. You can follow Vicky's progress at www.vbaerosports.com.

The purpose of Airport Day is to promote good will between the PML aviation community and the Groveland Area. The program was designed to bring the community close to the activities to experience the fun and excitement of aviation.

The day started with the highly successful "Young Eagles Program" in the morning. Over 60 youths took advantage of this opportunity. The kids had the thrill of their life and the chance to see the world in a new and exciting way. Many thanks to Young Eagles Coordinator, Ed Sunday and EAA chapter president, Silvano Gai for their hard work.

The Aviation Day committee chair, Wayne Handley and his many volunteers orchestrated a flawless show with all the events on schedule and full of entertainment. Even the weather cooperated.

Community feedback was very positive -- a great opportunity to check out your county airport, see a show and dozens of aircraft on display, and meet many of our local pilots.



A Young Eagle gets set to fly

PMLAA thanks all the pilots who participated in the Young Eagles program, the displays, or the airshow; as well as the volunteers who provided food service and staff to support the events, the County Airport (Jim Thomas and supporting equipment), and the community for coming out and making the day a success.



The Beech Boys formation flying team

From the Director
- by Jim Thomas, Airports Director

Fundraiser Committee Makes a Difference

Most of you know that these tight financial times have resulted in a very limited maintenance budget for both our Airports. However, the maintenance needs at our airports don't care about the size of the budget. A primary need at the Pine Mountain Lake Airport was repairing the worsening cracks in the runway, taxiways and ramp area. This crack repair work was completed early last summer thanks to the work of the PML Airport Fundraiser Committee and the contributions of all of you. Now the Fundraiser Committee has funded some repair and upgrade to the storm water drainage system, fixing erosion damage that occurred over the last few years.

As many of you are aware, this year the Fundraiser Committee in conjunction with the local EAA chapter raised money from the local residents to fund certain PML Airport maintenance and upgrade projects. The most recent of these projects was the repair and upgrade of the airport drainage system. This involved the repair of culvert inlets, installation of drain pipes, contouring drainage ditches and the addition of a little paving. A list of problem areas was prepared by the County from which the Fundraiser Committee selected six priority projects. It is very encouraging to see our pilots and residents contribute their time and money to help maintain our airport. Everyone who contributed to the fundraising effort is to be congratulated. A special thanks to the Fundraiser Committee and especially to Silvano Gai, Michael Thoben, Al Craig, Jerry Baker, Mike Gustafson and Wayne Handley.

On a personal note, speaking as an airport resident and someone who uses the airport almost daily, I want to express my sincere appreciation for all the enthusiasm shown by the PML Airport Fundraising Committee. Seeing the local pilots interested in improving our airport actually putting in the significant effort to make it happen makes me proud to be a resident in this community.



Grading and paving on the Northwest end of the runway



Culvert Installation at the Mid-Field Runway Exit

Thank You from Camp Tuolumne Trails

Camp Tuolumne Trails thanks the many PMLAA members who participated in our fall volunteer day and the Celebrity Golf Tournament. We appreciate your support!

Special thanks to PMLAA aerobatic pilots Wayne Handley, Vicky Benzing, and Mike Gustafson for putting on a great show to entertain our celebrity athletes and local golfers.



Mike Gustafson, Jim Goodrich, Dewaine Carver, Jerry Baker and Roger Sloan built a bocce ball court for the kids

The camp also thanks PMLAA for your generous scholarship donation. Your donation will enable three needy campers to come to camp. We thank you and the kids thank you!

Please remember the camp as you plan your year-end charitable contributions. The camp has very little overhead, so all donations go directly to serving the special needs campers. Mail your contribution to: Camp Tuolumne Trails, 20988 Ferretti Road, Groveland, CA 95321. We'll send you a tax receipt.

Safety Corner
-by Larry Jobe

With the recent forced landings of two of our membership it is a good time to review NTSB 830: "Notification and reporting of aircraft accidents or incidents and overdue aircraft, and preservation of aircraft wreckage, mail, cargo, and records."

Q: To whom do you report an accident or incident?

A: NTSB not the FAA. (If ATC gave you priority handling or you declared an emergency you may also have to file a report with the FAA).

What is an accident?

1. Death (within 30 days)
2. Serious injury -
 - A. Hospitalized for more than 48 hours within 7 days of accident.
 - B. Fracture of bone. (except fingers or nose)
 - C. Heavy bleeding.
 - D. Nerve, muscle or tendon damage.
 - E. Internal organ injury.
 - F. 2nd or 3rd degree burns over more than 5% of your body.
3. Substantial damage to the airplane -
Damage which adversely affects the structural strength, performance, or flight characteristics of the aircraft, and which would normally require major repair or replacement of the affected components.

Note, these are *not* considered substantial damage:

- A. Engine failure
- B. Bent fairings or cowling
- C. Dented or punctured skin
- D. Propeller blades
- E. Landing gear
- F. Wheels, flaps, tires, brakes, engine accessories, wing tips (This basically eliminates the need to report a gear up landing)

Q: When is immediate notification to the NTSB required?

A: When an accident or serious incident occurs or any of the following:

1. Flight control system malfunction
2. Failure of internal turbine engine component that results in debris escaping out of any route other than the exhaust pipe.
3. In-flight fire
4. Mid air collision
5. Property damage in excess of \$25,000.
6. Piece of the prop comes off
7. Complete loss of more than 50% of glass cockpit

Refer to 830.15 for reports and statements to be filed.

Note: It is highly recommended that you carry NASA aviation safety reporting forms with you and fill them out anytime you think you may have had an accident or incident or other deviations from FAR's or ATC.

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Mark your calendar:

November 6 th	Flying Tigers: Honoring the Past – Looking to the Future	6:00pm potluck at Silvano Gai and Antonella Caporello's Hangar 20919 Woodside Way
December 11 th	“It’s A Wrap!”	Bring and appetizer or dessert. PMLAA and Helping Hands will provide chili. Bring unwrapped gifts. Location to be announced.

PML Aviation Association
PO Box 131
Groveland, CA 95321

Mark your calendars:
Nov. 6 – Flying Tigers
Dec. 11 – It’s a Wrap party