

The Manager's Approach



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Columbia & Pine Mountain Lake Airports

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Airport Watch

All pilots are concerned with safety and security at our airports. We don't have commercial airline service at either airport, so we do not fall under the current responsibility of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). In most general aviation pilot's mind this is a blessing. We do use the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association's WATCH program which recommends that pilots keep their planes locked to help prevent theft. The WATCH program also emphasizes that any suspicious activity should be immediately reported to the airport administration or local law enforcement.

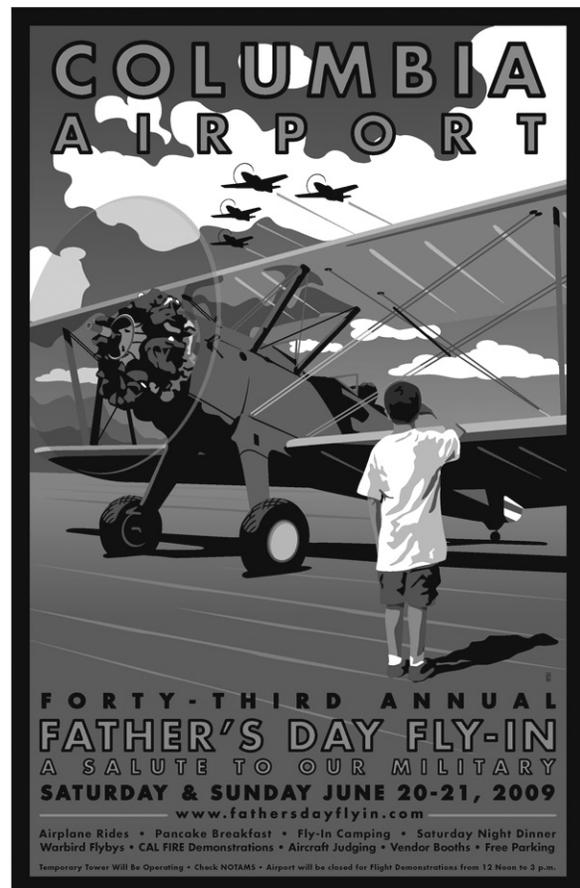
Recently we had two things occur that caused us concern. At Columbia Airport, PHI Med's dark green Eze-Go utility vehicle was stolen in the middle of the night. It was later recovered on Yankee Hill and was for the most part undamaged. At Pine Mountain Lake there has been a report of a suspicious truck with a fuel tank in the bed seen driving around the parking ramp at night. Stealing fuel from aircraft at Pine Mountain Lake Airport has been an intermittent but ongoing problem.

I want to encourage all people using our airports to keep an eye out for suspicious activity. If any is noticed, please contact the airport office during the normal work day or the Sheriff's Office if after hours.

Father's Day Fly-In Will Be A Two Day Event This Year

The planning for the Father's Day Fly-In is moving along. One of the first items addressed by the Fly-In Committee was the

decision to go back to a two day event like it has been in past years. The Committee unanimously agreed a two event provides the community a choice of days to attend, and because Father's Day is always on Sunday and many families like to take their father to the Fly-In on Sunday. This year's Father's Day Fly-In will be June 20th & 21st.



Our theme for this year will be "A Salute to our Military" and we are looking for ideas on how to both recognize those that are currently serving in our military or have served in the past. One way we will do this is to provide free entry to anyone in uniform regardless of the branch of service. We are also looking for displays of military

vehicles, equipment, camping gear, and of course aircraft.

It is now the time when we are starting to encourage people to volunteer for the Fly-In. If you would like to help us out this year, please stop by the Columbia Airport Administration office and ask to be put on our Fly-In volunteer's list.

Noise Sensitive Areas

As a reminder to our local pilots, we have several noise sensitive areas near our airports. Maps showing these areas are posted at both airports. Please be neighborly and avoid these areas.

Stupid Pilot Tricks

Which Runway Is In Use?

Pilots learn early on that a single section of asphalt runway is actually two runways facing the opposite direction. For instance, Runway 9-27 at Pine Mountain Lake allows pilots to take off or land to the west or to the east. Generally, the existing wind direction determines which runway should be used. However, if the wind is calm, there is a good chance that either runway could be used for take-offs or landings. Factors that figure into a pilot's choice of which runway to use during calm winds are:

- The pilot wants to take off down hill
- The pilot wants to land uphill
- The pilot wants to land or take off with the sun to his back
- The pilot wants to make a straight out departure or a straight in arrival.
- The pilot wants the shortest taxi distance

Now as one can expect the two runways could create a conflict if one aircraft is planning to land one direction and another pilot is planning to take off in the opposite direction at the same time. This is where the radio and diligent scanning for traffic come in to play. All pilots in radio equipped aircraft should be using the UNICOM frequency to broadcast their position and

intentions. This gives pilots in the area a sight picture of what aircraft are near the airport and alerts pilots to potential conflicts. Pilots need to remember that not all aircraft have radios so there could be a plane in the area that is not hearing your transmission or not broadcasting his position. Also, a pilot may have his radio turned to the wrong frequency or the volume turned down. For these reasons pilots need to look for other aircraft, especially when in the airport traffic area. Turning on your landing light can also help your plane be seen by other pilots.

One of the right-of-way rules for aircraft is that the landing aircraft has the right-of-way over an aircraft on the ground. In other words, a pilot departing an airport should wait for aircraft in the pattern to land, unless a safe non-conflicting departure can be made. Often times a non-conflicting departure can be made if the landing aircraft and the departing aircraft are using the same runway. If the landing and departing aircraft are using opposite runways and one or both doesn't have a radio or is not using the radio properly it is extremely important that a visual scan for traffic be made.

Keep in mind that even though the landing traffic has the right-of-way a go-around may be required if the departing traffic doesn't see the landing traffic. Also, before pulling out onto a runway for departure all pilots should check the pattern for other traffic. Always keep in mind that each single section of asphalt is actually two runways. During calm wind conditions both runways could be in use. As one of our local flight instructors continually reminds our pilots; "at a non-towered airport ALL runways are active."

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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