



Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

*Next meeting April 3, 2026
Potluck Social 6 pm / Dinner 7 pm
Reyes Hanger 20920 Elderberry Way*

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President's Message - By Bob Mackey

Elections

The membership of PMLAA has elected the 2026 Board Officers:

President:	Joe Sobczak
VP Airport:	Catherine Santa Maria
VP Social:	Cheryl Fisher <and Team>
Treasurer:	Michael Fisher
Secretary:	Bob Mackey

We are in the process of transitioning from the 2025 Board to the 2026 Board.

Many thanks to the outgoing members who have contributed their time and energy over the past years: Ralph McLaughlin, Daniel Anema, Phil Boortz. I (Bob Mackey) will be staying on for another term as Secretary. Julie Anema is staying as Newsletter Editor. Thanks also to the cast of dozens that keep everything working.

Meetings

After making quick work of the elections, the March 7 meeting at the Sobczak hangar, featured guest speaker Elliott Meer recounting his adventures with a windscreen blowout in his LX7 over Missouri.

Once again in April, the guest speaker may be a surprise!

Potluck dinner and entertainment will be at the Reyes hangar on the south taxiway, 20920 Elderberry Way.

In May we will welcome Denis Mills with the history of the Tuskegee Airmen.



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

Safety Corner by Mike Gustafson

The impetus for this article is a casual question I was asked recently by a newly minted Private Pilot: What is an "In-Flight Emergency?" Clearly their Flight Instructor had let them down!

My answer was simple, any occurrence in flight that could negatively affect the safe outcome of the flight. Seems like a rather broad definition, all things considered. Almost anything happening during the flight that was not considered during flight planning could rise to meet my definition: it could be unanticipated weather, sick passenger, scared passenger, scared pilot (it happens!), avionics malfunction, turbulence, and anything untold happening firewall forward!!

It is this last item that I focus on for this article -- smoke in the cockpit and/or engine fire.

We were all taught that if we smell or see something like smoke coming out from under the instrument panel, we first turn off the master switch and see if the smoke or smell abates. This could take a minute or two, which might feel like an hour, but give it time to diminish. For the purpose of this article, I am going to assume the smoke continues or gets worse and it is time to get this pile of aluminum on the ground post-haste!

We are now talking about an emergency descent. Unfortunately, if you haven't practiced this maneuver recently there is a good chance the descent will either be too slow and bad things will continue to happen firewall forward. On the other hand, if you are too fast you will not be able to slow down to make an orderly landing. Be sure to turn off the fuel valve on the chance the fire is fuel driven. Oil also burns but there is not much we can do about that from the cockpit. Given this scenario pity the poor Cirrus SR pilot, he has an aircraft parachute but that will be too slow, so you must execute a spiral descent, and then pull the chute at the right altitude. Decisions, decisions...

I am going to confine my discussion to a pilot in a fixed-gear draggy airframe, and the pilot has found an open field to park the plane in but has to get down now. A quick show of hands, how many of my loyal readers can tell me what the Vne is for their favorite steed? (Bueller, Bueller, as I thought, crickets....) Ok, take a moment and go look up the Vne and write it down 50 times so you have a fighting chance of remembering it when it's needed. And if you have to ask "what does Vne stand for, well, you might want to take up another hobby.

Some of you might even suggest dropping flaps to help you stay slow as you spiral down to your landing spot. Did I mention where there is smoke there is fire?? Going down slowly is a really bad idea, but ripping the wings off when you pull out is worse. The fastest way down is to use a steep spiral, roll into a 45 to 60 degree bank and let the nose drop and airspeed build. Here is the hard part, select an airspeed that gives you the fastest descent but is less than Vne. A lot less. Also remember as you increase the bank angle you will feel the additional G-Force. When you see your selected airspeed use a gentle pull on the stick or yoke to hold that airspeed without increasing the bank angle! You may have to actually decrease the angle the elevator will act like a rudder and steepen the bank.

At this point with the descent stabilized you need to keep an eye on your landing spot and roll out high enough to start slowing down. With all the drag your speed should be decreasing, flaps out now and plant it on the field, road, parking lot, etc. If you can remember, have your passenger open the door about now so it won't get jammed as the fuselage may be tweaked during roll out.

You no doubt noticed that I didn't say anything about turning the avionics back on and declaring an emergency? My first priority is to get the plane on the ground, but if you have enough situational awareness, sure, avionics on and 7700 on the transponder can't hurt. If you decide to go out and practice steep spiraling turns, sneak up on the bank angle, do a few at 30 degrees, then 45, then 60. Be aware that the G forces will increase as you attempt to stabilize the spiral. A little back pressure goes a long way. If the maneuver gets away from you, first roll wings level then pitch to level flight.

With good maintenance and preflight inspections, I hope you never have to find out if you can pull off this maneuver in a real emergency.

Spring is here, time to go wipe the dust off the trusty steed and enjoy the sky!



Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association

Membership Application, Renewal and Update



- () New Member
- () Renewal – no changes
- () Renewal – with changes

Date: _____

	<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 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 – 2026

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OFFICERS		COMMITTEE CHAIRS	
President, Joe Sobczak	650-777-1230	Property, Ed Peters	209-962-6267
VP, Airport Affairs, Catherine Santa Maria	209-768-9281	Multimedia, Phil Hickerson	209-962-6714
VP, Social Affairs, Cheryl Fisher	408-410-5922	Membership/Rstr, Bob Mackey	707-622-5392
Secretary, Bob Mackey	707-622-5392	Airports Manager, pending	
Treasurer, Michael Fisher	408-410-5922	Display Day Coordinator Dan Anema	209-406-9236
Email: president@pmlaa.org or board@pmlaa.org		Safety, Mike Gustafson & Joe Sobczak	
		Newsletter, Julie Anema	anemajulie@gmail.com
		Webmaster, Jeremy Zawodny	408-685-5936