

Rural Jewel: RAMONA AIRPORT

With an annual average temperature of 71 degrees, nearly 340 days of ideal flying weather and its proximity to North County business and recreation centers, Ramona Airport is an ideal destination for work or pleasure. With just over 164,000 operations (takeoffs and landings) each year, Ramona is the third busiest facility among the County of San Diego's eight airports.

Ramona Airport started as a dusty Navy airstrip in 1943. In 1956, ownership was transferred to the County of San Diego where it evolved into an aviation center for San Diego's inland and mountain communities. At the beginning of 2003, the runway and a parallel taxiway were extended to 5,000 feet. By the end of 2003, the airport completed construction on a four-story air traffic control tower.

Sanctioned by the National Hot Rod Association nearly 60 years ago, a quarter-mile drag strip was constructed at Ramona Airport. Racers were hitting speeds of nearly 130 m.p.h. Remnants of this old hot rod playground remain alongside the airport's runway.

Ramona is home to many fixed base operators (FBOs) such as Chuck Hall Aviation, Cruiseair Aviation, Pacific Executive Aviation and Classic Rotors, the world's only helicopter museum with operational aircraft. California's 1st Division of Forestry (CalFire) and the U.S. Forest

Service's Air Attack Base are also based at Ramona (see "Water Bombers", page 2).

Ramona's Air Show, the annual open house featuring the airport's activities and the Air Attack Base, is now one

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Ramona is home to firefighting aircraft that help protect San Diego County from wildfires.

CalFire: Fighting Fire at 200 Miles Per Hour & 200 Feet

Ramona's Air Attack Base (RAAB) has come a long way since its early formation. On June 30, 2008, the firefighting facility celebrated its 51st year of operations serving California's citizens from Ramona Airport. CalFire has several Air Attack Bases: Ramona, Hemet, San Bernardino and several in Northern California. Ramona is the first and oldest.

RAAB's defining moment came in October 2003. While fires burned out of control all over Southern California, San Diego County was hit by the



Original Air Attack Base at Ramona. Photo courtesy of CalFire Battalion Chief Ray Chaney.

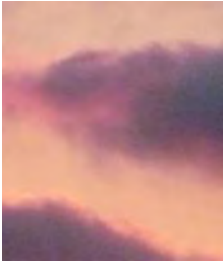
Cedar, Paradise and Otay Fires. RAAB sent out an air tanker every 30 seconds for a total of 215 flights on the first day of fires alone. Over a three-day period,

560 flights were launched from Ramona using ten CDF air tankers and two U.S. Forest Service DC-4 air tankers, all without an incident or accident.

In October of 2007, it was much the same as pilots and their support crews battled what started as the Witch Creek Fire in eastern Ramona. Crises then multiplied as fires spread all over San Diego, Riverside and Orange Counties. Thousands of acres and hundreds of homes were saved, again thanks to the skill, dedication and hard work of those based at the Ramona Air Attack Base.

RAAB responds to an average of 450 calls per year. On average, the base pumps 850,000 gallons of

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*“Across the clouds, I see my shadow fly
Out of the corner of my watering eye...
There’s no sensation to compare with this
Suspended animation, a state of bliss...”*

—David Gilmour (Pink Floyd), from the song “Learning to Fly”

Customs Helps Cut Flying Costs & Local Noise

Customs service at McClellan-Palomar Airport (CRQ) continues to serve public and aviation communities. Since Customs opened in January of 2008, flights from Asia, Mexico and other international locales have benefited from its service. It seems that it arrived just in time to help alleviate concerns over high gas prices.

CRQ Customs allows North County-bound planes the ability to fly directly into Carlsbad. By avoiding Customs at Brown Field, local area corporations and private pilots save gas, time and money. Additionally, fewer flights from Brown Field to Carlsbad mean aircraft fly at higher altitudes longer, causing less noise to local residents.

For Customs information, please call the 24-hour, toll-free VIP line at (800) 848-7766.

Don't Get Burned: WILDFIRE SAFETY TIPS

It's always fire season in Southern California! Here are some tips for keeping you and your loved ones safe before, during and after a wildfire:

- Write out a Family Disaster Plan & an In Case of Evacuation List
- Have more than one way out of your home & neighborhood
- Pack and maintain three-day emergency backpacks
- Pack three days of supplies for pets
- Review your homeowner's/renter's insurance annually
- Use “lean, clean & green” landscaping that extends 30'–50' from your home
- Don't wait until the last minute to evacuate
- Leave exterior lights on to help firefighters locate your home in heavy smoke
- Move all curtains, furniture & other combustible material away from windows & sliding glass doors into the center of the room
- If you must leave your animals behind: confine large animals in an area clear of vegetation; leave smaller animals in interior rooms without windows; and leave a note for emergency crews that animals are inside
- To minimize smoke inhalation, wear a dust mask or bandana and keep windows & vents closed
- Once cleared to enter your home by law enforcement officials, open windows & doors to allow airflow for smoke odors & any water damage.

For more wildfire safety information, visit the County of San Diego's Office of Emergency Services website:

<http://www.wildfirezone.org/>



Superscoopers at Ramona Airport.

“Superscoopers” are Canadair's CL-415s, now San Diego County's newest airborne tools to fight wildfires. Two of these 223 m.p.h., 1,600-gallon waterdropping aircraft, along with their Cessna 421 support ship, will be based at Ramona Airport between September and December, the height of fire season in Southern California.

The CL-415 is the only amphibious aircraft designed and built specifically for aerial firefighting. In December of 2006, the Bombardier 415 was awarded the *Batefuegos de oro* by Spain's *Asociación para la Promoción de Actividades Socioculturales* (APAS) for the “Greatest technological advancement in firefighting.”

Rural Jewel

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of the community's biggest events and sends its profits to the families of fallen CalFire pilots.

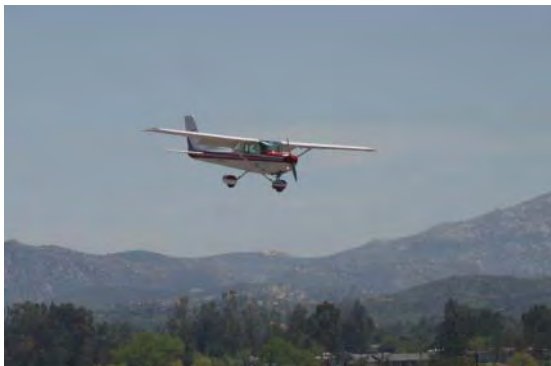
"The show typically hosts between 10,000 and 20,000 visitors and features radio-controlled aircraft, aerobatics, a street rod show, the "Tricked-Out" Big Rig Truck Show, food and craft vendors, as well as some amazing demonstrations by CalFire and its talented pilots," said Airport Manager Bo Donovan.

From home-built experimental aircraft to corporate jets, a variety of machines destined for the sky take off and land at Ramona Airport. Kids, families, pilots, members of surrounding communities and countless others sit in the airport's viewing area just to watch the airplanes come and go.

CalFire

continued from page 1

retardant a year, with a peak output of 250,000 gallons of retardant each day. CalFire pilots operate these aircraft at 200 feet of altitude, going 200 m.p.h. The base's direct protection area encompasses over 1.4 million acres for CalFire and 300,000 for the U.S. Forest Service, covering all of San Diego County.



"Why fly? Simple. I'm not happy unless there's some room between me and the ground."

—Richard Bach, from the book *A Gift of Wings*

McClellan-Palomar Terminal Reflects Southern California Style



The new terminal at McClellan-Palomar Airport (CRQ) is taking shape. Exterior construction is complete, and interior work will soon be the focus. A bridge and an elevator tower to the lower parking lots have been installed. Palm trees line the terminal entrance to provide a Southern California atmosphere.

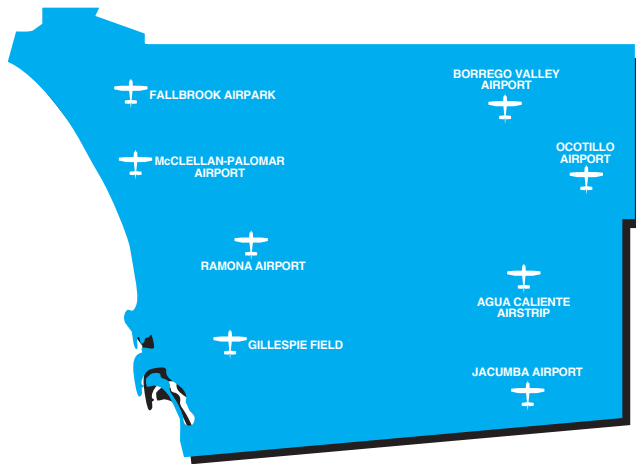
Slated for a grand opening in January 2009, the terminal will include modern conveniences such as WiFi accessibility and a new restaurant. Other terminal amenities include security, a waiting area for outbound passengers and a patio where people can watch airport operations. Additionally, the parking lots will feature colorful, ornate landscaping.

"...the terminal will not be a cold, sterile building."

According to Real Property Project Manager Lee Ann Lardy, one of the most important factors is that the terminal will not be a cold, sterile building. Instead, it was specifically designed to reflect Carlsbad's outdoor, scenic, coastal warmth.

"We anticipate that passengers will feel and appreciate the spirit of Carlsbad from the moment they step off the plane," said Lardy. "It will be a positive experience for everyone who visits the new terminal."

How to Contact County Airports



County of San Diego Airports manages eight airports, leases property surrounding these airports, redevelops Airports-owned property and improves County aviation facilities.

Agua Caliente – 95 miles east of San Diego; **Manager**, Roger Griffiths; **Airport Designator**, L54; **Phone**, (619) 956-4800

Borrego Valley – three miles east of Borrego Springs; **Manager**, Viki Cole; **Airport Designator**, L08; **Phone**, (760) 767-7415

Fallbrook Airpark – two miles south of downtown Fallbrook; **Manager**, Bo Donovan; **Airport Designator**, L18; **Phone**, (760) 723-8395

Gillespie Field – ten miles northeast of downtown San Diego; **Manager**, Roger Griffiths; **Airport Designator**, SEE; **Phone**, (619) 956-4800

Jacumba – 75 miles east of San Diego; **Manager**, Roger Griffiths; **Airport Designator**, L78; **Phone**, (619) 956-4805

McClellan-Palomar – three miles southeast of Carlsbad; **Manager**, Willie Vasquez; **Airport Designator**, CRQ (CLD for airlines); **Phone**, (760) 431-4646

Ocotillo – 100 miles east of San Diego; **Manager**, Roger Griffiths; **Airport Designator**, L90; **Phone**, (619) 956-4800

Ramona – two miles west of Ramona; **Manager**, Bo Donovan; **Airport Designator**, RNM; **Phone**, (760) 788-3366



“Flying a plane is no different from riding a bicycle. It’s just a lot harder to put baseball cards in the spokes.”

—Captain Rex Kramer, in the movie *Airplane*

COMPASS POINTS

As we move ahead with development of County Airports, supporting regional firefighting is being integrated into our plans. The last several years have proven that Airports plays an important role during Southern California’s fire season.

During the 2007 October wildfires, more than 1,200 sorties (firefighting aircraft) were flown and over 1,000 firefighting and support personnel were based at County Airports. Over 50 volunteers managed and maintained an animal shelter for horses and other animals at Gillespie Field. In times of crisis, such volunteers prove to be invaluable.

This year the County of San Diego has contracted with the Canadian government to lease Superscoopers between September and December. Integrating these new resources should provide an extra level of protection for the region. Airports is proud to support these aerial firefighting assets.

As we move forward in our new designs of County Airports, whether it’s the 70 acres and additions of new transient ramps at Gillespie Field; redevelopment of Fallbrook Airpark which includes transient ramp, taxiways, and runway safety areas; or the addition of helipads at Borrego Valley Airport, fire access and firefighting support is included in design and is a top priority.

I hope that this issue of *Plane News* gives you a better understanding of how County Airports supports regional firefighting. County Airports has made and will continue to make a large effort in supporting regional communities before, during and after fires. We should all remember that fire prevention, response and safety requires a commitment of us all to work together.

Clear skies & happy landings,

Peter Drinkwater,
Airports Director

Get to Know County Airports: REAL PROPERTY



Real Property team members (l-r) Anne Paul, Debbie Stalnaker, Linda Chiles, Dave Turosak, Tim Caulder, Lee Ann Lardy, Ian Hodgson & Lida Sosinsky. Photo by Sarah Solis.

Many people don't realize leasing revenue from Airports businesses helps support the operation and maintenance of the County Airports system. Lease revenue of County Airports is anticipated to be \$9.5 million for the current fiscal year, including revenue from aviation and industrial leases.

Lee Ann Lardy, Project Manager, heads up the Real Property team based at Gillespie Field.

She said, "I appreciate the hard work and professionalism agents show each day. I'm often in awe of everything that we accomplish. Agents are really keeping a lot of balls in the air, balancing short- and long-term assignments. Their hard work and attention to detail keeps the County Airports leasing program running smoothly."

"Lease revenue of County Airports is anticipated to be \$9.5 million for the current fiscal year..."

Seven other staff members make up the remainder of the Real Property team. Senior Agents Lidia Sosinsky, Tim Caulder and Anne Paul handle complex projects and supervise staff. Also making important contributions are Associate Agents Dave Turosak, Ian Hodgson and Linda Chiles. Real Property Office Support Specialist Debbie Stalnaker handles permits and insurance, as well as some clerical support.

Managing leases at County Airports is unique compared to other types of property management because agents must understand aviation requirements and grant assurances. Agents work closely with Airports Managers, Operations, Engineering, Administration and Financial.

"We really appreciate the cooperation we receive when working with other staff. It produces great results and makes the work more satisfying" said Lidia Sosinsky, Senior Real Property Agent. "This provides a more professional level of service to all airport customers."

Agents work most often with master lessees, but they are also available to answer questions from the public about airport leasing in general. Communication and consistency of policy are very important in administering Airports' leasing program. By making sure all leases follow the same guidelines, agents ensure that everyone is treated fairly.

CAJON AIR CENTER UPDATE

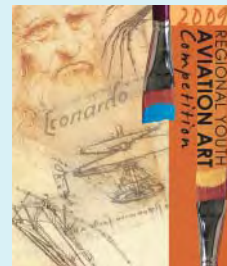
Gillespie Field's Cajon Air Center (70 acres located east of Joe Crosson Drive) is a piece of property that has generated a great deal of interest from the aviation community as well as members of Gillespie's surrounding cities.

Staff is doing final research to finish the Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Report draft. It's expected to be available for public comment in mid-2009. The County is also in the process of hiring an engineering company to design the public infrastructure. Airports staff is currently developing information, exhibits and criteria that will be included in the RFP (Request for Proposal).

Over 130 parties have expressed interest in developing one of the parcels that will become available. There are also those of us who have no interest in building our own hangars or businesses, but eagerly await development of the next piece of Gillespie Field Airport.

Several Cajon Air Center presentations were given at the August GFDC meeting. You can view those presentations as well as keep up with all the latest information by staying tuned to:

www.sdcountry.ca.gov/dpw/airports/gillespie.html



Graphic courtesy of SDRAA

HEY, KIDS!

Not only did Leonardo da Vinci design futuristic flying machines for his time, he designed them without the idea of using fossil fuels for an energy source. The San Diego Air & Space Museum and the SDRAA (San Diego County Regional Airport Authority) want you to paint or draw a futuristic flying machine that uses alternative energy sources, not petroleum or fossil-based fuels. Entries must be postmarked by January 5th, 2009.

For more information and complete rules, please see the San Diego Air & Space Museum's web page:

www.aerospacemuseum.org/education/art_contest08.html

Gillespie Field (SEE)

Gillespie Field Development Council: Meets the third Tuesday of most months (2008 schedule is posted on the Gillespie Field web page). All meetings begin at 6 p.m. and are held at the El Cajon City Council Chambers, 200 East Main Street, El Cajon. For more information, call (619) 956-4800.

Air Group One, Commemorative Air Force (CAF): Join the "Air Force No One Ever Heard Of" Saturdays at 10 a.m. at 1860 Joe Crosson Drive. Pancake breakfast on the last Saturday of each month at 8:30 a.m. (bring a warbird, eat free). For more information, call (619) 448-4505.

San Diego Chapter of 99's: This organization of women pilots meets the fourth Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. For location or information, call Frankie Clemens at (619) 449-0670.

Civil Air Patrol Squadron 57: Meets Thursdays at 7 p.m. at Ketema Aerospace, 790 Greenfield Drive, El Cajon. For more information, please call Tom Charpentier at (619) 818-4011.



Air & Space Museum: The San Diego Air & Space Museum Hangar at Gillespie Field is open to the public Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and some Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, Saturday hours and tours, call (619) 258-1221.

Display of historical aircraft: Second Sunday of every month from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Only for those based at Classic Hangars. For more information, please call Len Buckle at (619) 449-0539.

Safari Aviation West: The fourth Saturday of each month, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Safari Aviation West hosts an aircraft display at Gillespie Field. To display your plane, bring it to Safari Aviation West at 1905 North Marshall at the east end of the hangar complex. For more information, call Dick McDowell at (619) 448-2360.

Gillespie Pilots Association: Meets the first Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. in the Gillespie Field Administration Building. For more information, visit: www.gillespiepilots.org

Display your historical aircraft: First Sunday of each month from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at the Gillespie Field Administration/Terminal Ramp. For more details, contact the Assistant Airport Manager at (619) 956-4810.

The Wing Is The Thing (TWITT): Meetings are held on the third Saturday of every other month beginning in January at 1:30 p.m. at Hangar A4 on Skid Row. For more information, please call (619) 980-9831 or visit: www.twitt.org.

Fallbrook Airpark (L18)

Fallbrook Airpark Advisory Committee: Meets the first Monday of the second month of every quarter at the Fallbrook Public Utilities District Public Meeting Hall, 990 East Mission Road, Fallbrook. For more information, call Bo Donovan at (760) 723-8395.

Coyote Country Chapter of 99's: Meets the third Tuesday of each month. For time and location, visit: www.sandiego99s.org

Civil Air Patrol Squadron 87: Meetings are held the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of every month at 7 p.m. at the "Scout Shack" (Fallbrook Fire Department conference room and community meeting center), 231 East Hawthorne, Fallbrook. For more information, please contact Jim Redmon at (760) 728-5388 or Jerry Rohles at (949) 369-9425, or visit the squadron's web site at <http://lsq87.cawg.cap.gov/>.

EAA Young Eagles Days: Three times a year on Saturday. For more information, contact Don Evans by e-mail: zc112-g@sbcglobal.net



Photo by Matt Wenhardt

Display your antique or classic airplanes: the last Sunday of each month from 12 p.m. to 2 p.m. The displays will be located on the transient ramp. The public is invited to visit, and owners of antique aircraft from other airports are welcome to display their aircraft. Contact Bo Donovan at (760) 723-8395.

Borrego Valley Airport (L08)

Borrego Springs Chapter of 99's: This organization of women pilots meets the second Saturday of each month at the Borrego Valley Airport. For meeting times or more information, call Louise Phillips at (760) 767-4378.

Display your antique or classic airplane: The second Sunday of the month from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, contact Viki Cole at (760) 767-7415.

McClellan-Palomar Airport (CRQ)

Palomar Airport Advisory Committee: Meets the third Thursday of most months. All meetings take place at 7 p.m. in the Carlsbad City Council Chambers, 1200 Carlsbad Village Drive, Carlsbad. For more information, call (760) 431-4646, extension 5.

Experimental Aircraft Association, Chapter 286 (North County): Meets the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. in the County Administration Building at McClellan-Palomar Airport, 2192 Palomar Airport

Road, Carlsbad. For more information, call Bob Wilson at (760) 489-9031.

Palomar Chapter of 99's:

This organization of women pilots meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. For meeting location or more information, contact Robin Gartman at (760) 931-0546 or palomar99s@gmail.com

Ocotillo Airport (L90)

Antique and classic aircraft display at Ocotillo Airport: Meets on the fourth Saturday of each month from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. during the Ocotillo Wells season (October 15 through May 15). The display site is located near the southwest edge of the airport, across the highway from My Desert Rose restaurant.



Ramona Airport (RMN)

Classic Rotors Helicopter Museum: Open to the public Friday through Monday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Open Tuesday through Thursday by appointment: (760) 803-0244

Display your antique or classic airplane: The third Sunday of each month from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. at Chuck Hall Aviation, Cruiseair Aviation and Pacific Executive Aviation. For more information, call Chuck Hall Aviation at (760) 789-8178, Cruiseair Aviation at (760) 789-8020 or Pacific Executive Aviation at (760) 789-6384.

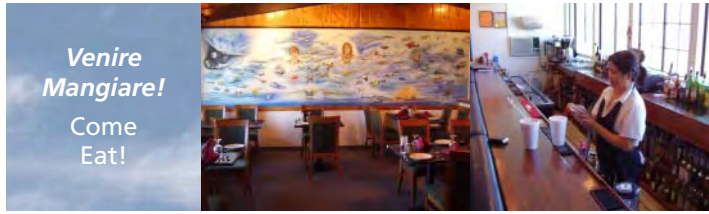
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Jacumba Airport (L78)

Associated Glider Clubs of Southern California (AGCSC): The first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. For more information, call Rolf Schulze at (619) 286-3855 or visit: www.agcsc.org



Assaggio's Ristorante Italiano



Venire
Mangiare!
Come
Eat!

Photos of Assaggio's by Alfonso Freyjes

You're in your plane or car, and your stomach starts growling—where to eat? Make a short trip over to Borrego Valley Airport and take a seat at Assaggio's. Whether you enjoy your meal inside or outside on the patio, you might catch a little aerobatic activity, but the real star is owner and cook, Jerry Ma.

For starters, order beef on a skewer from the appetizer menu, a favorite of the regulars. "This insider can recommend a gem that you won't find on the menu—the meatball sandwich. It's a hot Italian meatball sub with marinara sauce on the best homebaked bread



around," said Borrego Airport Manager Viki Cole. You may also enjoy the homemade cold antipasti salad made with all fresh ingredients. Ready for

dinner? Try the shrimp scampi—you may even smell the garlic as you turn on final approach to the runway.

If you're in a hurry, try the deli where you can purchase items by the pound or pick up a loaf of fresh baked bread for under a dollar a loaf! According to Ms. Cole, "The veal is very special. The ravioli, eggplant parmigiana and filet mignon are fantastic!" Assaggio's also provides soups and homemade desserts such as *tiramisu*.

Assaggio's normal business hours are: Tuesday–Thursday, 11 am to 9 p.m.; Fridays 11 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; Saturdays 10 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.; and Sundays 10 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Call for group reservations or more information (760) 767-3388. As they say in Italy, "Ciao!"

HIGH-FLYING FOOD

Places to eat at County Airports...

Borrego Valley Airport:

Assaggio's Ristorante Italiano

Next to the terminal on Palm Canyon Drive (760) 767-3388

Tue.–Thu., 11 a.m.–9 p.m.

Fri., 11 a.m.–9:30 p.m.

Sat., 10 a.m.–9:30 p.m.

Sun., 10 a.m.–8:30 p.m.

McClellan-Palomar Airport:

The Landings at Carlsbad

Coming soon!

Gillespie Field:

Gillespie Field Cafe

Located near the tower on 2015 North Marshall Avenue (619) 448-5909

Mon.–Sat., 7 a.m.–3 p.m.

Sun., 8 a.m.–2 p.m.

Landing Strip Deli & Catering

New at Gillespie!

1860 Joe Crosson Drive, Suite F

Orders taken by phone

(ask about delivery)

(619) 258-3540

Mon.–Fri., 10 a.m.–2 p.m.



Eventually, there comes a time in a person's career when the fruits of their labor are ready for harvest. This December is **County Department of Public Works** Public Information Officer **Bill Polick's** time, when he'll retire after 17 years with the County.



One for the road. Photo courtesy of Bill Polick.

"This was a thrilling ride," Polick said. "I've been privileged to represent **Airports** and the Department of Public Works during good times and bad. But it's

time to get back to personal projects I've had on hold." Those projects include completing three books now in various stages of development. He'll also continue long-distance motorcycle rides on his Harley, surfing and writing freelance magazine articles.

Plane News

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County Airports Administration Building
1960 Joe Crosson Drive, El Cajon, CA 92020

or

e-mail Sarah Solis: sarab.solis@sdcounty.ca.gov

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County Airports

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San Diego County Airports Website
www.sdcounty.ca.gov/dpwlairports.html

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