

Airport to host open house

*Airport, Boy
Scouts collaborate
on career program*

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MT. VERNON — Mt. Vernon Outland Airport and the Boy Scouts are teaming up to teach young people about aviation.

The airport has become an "Exploring Post" through the Greater St. Louis Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America.

That means youth who join the Boy Scouts' Exploring program will get to work with volunteers at the airport to learn about aviation careers. Exploring is part of the Learning for Life initiative.

An open house for the program will be held from 9 a.m. to noon March 18 at the airport.

"We want to give back and help the future generations and this is a great way to do that," said Airport Director Chris Collins.

Airport plans open house

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Louis Area Council, said Nick Schubert, district executive for the Boy Scouts of America.

Collins said the airport's program will teach young people about all facets of

The co-ed Exploring program is designed to give young people the chance to investigate possible careers and decide whether they want to pursue them. It is open to youth ages 14 to 20, or 13-year-olds who have completed eighth grade. You don't have to be in the Boy Scouts to participate.

The Greater St. Louis Area Council partners with dozens of businesses and organizations that are designated as posts where youths can learn about careers in arts and humanities, aviation, engineering, communications, law enforcement, fire service, and more.

To date, Mt. Vernon Airport is the only Exploring Post in Jefferson County and the only aviation post in the Greater St.

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aviation.

He said a lot of people are unaware of just how many careers there are in aviation. It's not just pilots but also maintenance personnel, ticket agents, tower controllers, dispatchers, designers, and others, Collins said.

Those who enroll in the program will meet at the airport once a month to get a behind-the-scenes look at aviation. There may also be field trips to places like

the St. Louis Lambert International Airport traffic control tower and a Boeing plant, Collins said.

Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Steve Willis and Dr. Stan Blank will spearhead the Exploring curriculum at the airport. Other volunteers will help as well, Collins said.

"People want to give back and help the kids and it's a collaborative effort," Collins said.

The March 18 open house

will begin with breakfast at 9 a.m. and the program at 10 a.m. The event is free and open to everyone.

"The goal is for them to sign up (for Exploring) that day," Schubert said of the open house.

There is a \$24 fee to enroll in Exploring. The fee covers registration and liability insurance.

To RSVP for the open house, contact Schubert at 207-6433 or at Nicholas.Schubert@scouting.org.

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