

Airport recognizes aviation achievements

Maintenance Superintendent Ron Mosier and Pilots Jerry Spear and Carl Heinrich noted for their accomplishments

BY EMILY ROTH

SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — Three individuals with longtime ties to aviation were recognized Tuesday during the full meeting of the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport Authority Board of Commissioners.

"Captain Jerry Spear, Ozark, TWA (Trans World Airlines), American Airlines pilot ... Jerry's from Centralia, he flies in here a lot, and our own Carl Heinrich were awarded the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award on Saturday in Springfield," explained Airport Director Chris Collins.

Please see **Airport**, Page 3A



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35TH ANNIVERSARY — Maintenance Superintendent Ron Mosier celebrates his 35th anniversary at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport in February. Mosier helped facilitate air carriers such as Ozark, Air Illinois and United Express.



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MASTER PILOTS — Two local pilots receive the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award on Saturday. Centralia resident Jerry Spear, LEFT, and Mt. Vernon Resident Carl Heinrich, RIGHT, were presented with awards celebrating 50 plus years of safe piloting by FAA Flight Standards District Office Manager Dave Slaybaugh. Spear has accumulated over 32,000 hours as an airline captain for Ozark, TWA and American Airlines. Heinrich taught at Centralia High School for 35 plus years. In his spare time, he flew over 15,000 hours and taught over 1,000 students.

Airport:

Continued From Page 1A

"The FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) Flight Standards District Office Manager presented these to them. A significant achievement between those two gentlemen right there, 55,000 hours of flight time. It's pretty neat to see."

Spear, of Centralia, accumulated over 32,000 hours as an airline captain for Ozark, TWA and American Airlines. Heinrich, of Mt. Vernon, taught at Centralia High School for over 35 years. In his spare time, he flew over 15,000 hours and has taught over 1000 students.

February was a major milestone for Maintenance Superintendent Ron Mosier as he celebrated his 35th anniversary at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport. He helped facilitate air carriers such as Ozark, Air Illinois, and United Express and worked during events such as vice presidential visits and the Flower

Aviation Days.

"It's hard to put into words what a person like Ron Mosier's worth," stated Board Chairman Mike Ancona. "He's been around here forever and you don't even realize that you can't plug holes fast enough if it weren't for him. Whatever we give him ain't enough. How do you say thanks for something like that?"

Mosier was given a gift certificate to RARE Chop House and the board voted to approve a \$200 bonus in appreciation of his service.

"The man is over here at 5 o'clock in the morning every morning checking lights and doing air fuel inspection, seven days a week," said Collins. "He takes a week vacation."

"He deserves more than a trip to RARE," added Commissioner Joe Bob Pierce.

Ancona remarked on Mosier's dedication, saying, "When [a job] becomes a part of somebody's life, it's their world, it's the world he lives in. It's not about a job, it's like 'The airport is my life, it's just what I do.' It's not that way for everybody."

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