



Mt. Vernon Outland Airport personnel & volunteers

Area residents honored with Governor's Volunteer Service Award

Area residents were among the honorees when the Serve Illinois Commission on Volunteerism and Community Service presented 24 Illinoisans and four businesses with the Governor's Volunteer Service Award during a special reception on April 20 at the Hoogland Center for the Arts in Springfield. The award recognizes volunteers and volunteer programs that have made a difference in Illinois and highlights the importance of volunteerism and community service.

"These 28 represent the work that 2.57 million Illinoisans do each year," said Scott McFarland, executive director. "The work that these individuals and businesses do make the lives of thousands better. We are honored to have the opportunity to highlight their service."

The Governor's Volunteer Service Awards focus on five areas — Economic Opportunity, Education, Environmental Conservation, Disaster Preparedness/Response, Health and Veterans' Affairs. Individual awards in each of the commission's five service regions (northeast, northwest, east central, west central and Southern Illinois) are presented in three categories: youth ages 18 and younger, adult ages 19 to 54 and seniors ages 55 and older. Businesses and Americorps and Senior Corps members were also honored.

Area honorees included:

• **Senior** — Bev Virobik of Centralia was honored for service to the City of Centralia Recycling Center.

"Bev is a very active member of her community," according to the commission. "If there is a club, organization or event in her community of Centralia she has probably been involved in it in some way. She has served in many capacities of the Business and Professional Women organization since 1986 in their local, district, regional and state levels and was named BPW Woman of the Year in 1987. She has more than 20 years of volunteering with the Heart Association. She has held every office in the Junior Women's Club. She also has held nearly every office and served on countless committees for the Centralia Schools Parent-Teacher Association. She chaired and has been very active in the annual local Halloween Parade."

"But her community involvement doesn't stop there. She is involved in recycling as a board member with Centralia Clean and Green. Additionally she is involved with the local Salvation Army,

the Centralia Library, Downtown Merchant's Association and Daughters of the American Revolution. She has also assisted many health organizations such as Relay for Life, American Lung Association, co-chaired the local Jerry Lewis Telethon and worked with Centralia Jaycees on Call Santa Program. And if that is not enough she has also served as a Boy Scouts Den leader and a Brownie Scout leader."

• **Youth** — Savannah Beck of Mt. Vernon was honored for service to Cove Connection.

"Savannah, 17, is the daughter of Ed and Dana Beck and is a junior attending Mt. Vernon Township High School," according to the commission. "She has two older brothers. Since she was 12 she has been helping others by volunteering at Cove Connection, where she cared for children while their parents were taught important life skills. Her plan is to attend Southern Illinois University to become an ultrasound technician."

• **Business** — Mt. Vernon Outland Airport was honored. "Airport Manager Chris

Collins and his dedicated group of volunteers had the unique opportunity to support the C-130 Military Transport planes which have stopped at the airport periodically over the past couple of years," shared the commission. "The transports stop by to refuel as well as pick up and drop off soldiers. Due to the higher-than-normal security during these stops the airport's volunteers help with covering every entrance and exit. Additionally, the volunteers help park the plane, walk the soldiers to the plane, provide a hot box lunch and provide a friendly presence."

"Volunteers and the Airport Board have developed a Hall of Honor and Military Museum honoring over 500 regional veterans with a plaque which lines the hallway of the airport terminal. It is a great honor for the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport to house such an important piece of our history. The Mt. Vernon Outland Airport will continue to recognize the area veterans this fall during a large Veterans Reunion in conjunction with the Balloons Over Mt. Vernon and Fly-in. This event along with several others enhances the airports operations of being the perfect mix of service, location, safety and fun! None of this could be done without a very dedicated group of volunteers."



Bev Virobik



Savannah Beck