

Mt. Vernon Airport wins Airport of the Year

The IDOT Division of Aeronautics General Aviation Airport of the Year Award was accepted at the 2015 Illinois Aviation Conference Thursday

BY EMILY ROTH

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ROCKFORD — The Mt. Vernon Outland Airport accepted the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) 2015 Airport of the Year Award on Thursday.

Mt. Vernon Airport Authority Board Chairman Mike Ancona, Vice Chairman Greg Martin, Secretary Eddie Lee, Treasurer Gary Chesney, and Airport Director Chris Collins accepted the IDOT Division of Aeronautics General Aviation Airport of the Year Award at the 2015 Illinois Aviation Conference in Rockford.

The award is presented based on the following criteria: cooperation with IDOT and FAA (Federal Aviation Administration) officials, safety record, service to the local community, and general maintenance of the facility.

This is the third recent honor for the local airport. The Jefferson County Hall of Honor and Colonel R.D. White Veterans Museum, based inside the Koziara Terminal, won the Governors Hometown Award in December. The Governors Volunteer Service Award was

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presented to the airport and its volunteers in April.

"We are very grateful for this honor," stated Collins. "The dedication to this facility and to the community by the staff, tenants, and volunteers is extraordinary has been recognized statewide as evidenced by these awards."

In addition to daily tenant activities, the airport also hosts U.S. Military Airlifts, Veterans Events, Plane and Pilot Midwest LSA (Light Sport Aircraft) Expo, EAA Airventure Cup Race, Independence Day Salute To

Freedom, Balloons Over Mt. Vernon, EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) Young Eagle Flights, YMCA Programs, U of I Extension 4H Programs, school tours and field trips, weddings, civic club meetings, and the Chamber of Commerce Home Show.

"I feel this award is an extension of our outreach to the national aviation industry and to the local community," added Ancona. "Few airports host as many events and are as welcoming to residents. The team always has the welcome mat displayed."

Collins indicated that this is an exciting time for the airport. "It's nice to be honored by your peers and the governmental bodies," he said.

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Submitted Photo

AIRPORT OF THE YEAR — The Mt. Vernon Airport Authority accepts the Illinois Department of Transportation's Airport of the Year Award. On hand for the presentation, FROM LEFT, were: IDOT Division of Aeronautics Director Steve Young, Board commissioners Eddie Lee, Gary Chesney and Greg Martin, Board Chairman Mike Ancona, Airport Director Chris Collins, and IDOT Division of Aero Engineering Director Steve Long.

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