

AIRPORT Balloon Glow slated during Fall Fest

BY RICK HAYES

MT. VERNON — Coming off one of the largest and most significant event this year in the LSA Midwest Expo, officials of the Mt. Vernon Airport are now planning on dazzling the community with a Balloon Glow during the weekend of the Fall Fest.

Jennifer Witzel, who along with her husband Kevin, have one of the only hot air balloons in Jefferson County are leading the charge for that event which will cover two days.

Witzel told Airport Authority members Tuesday night there will be a minimum of 10 balloons here for the weekend, (1)

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which will include a fly-over Mt. Vernon around 5 p.m. on Oct. 18, and the Balloon Glow at approximately 6:30 p.m. around the airport lake.

Balloons will take off from the airport

at 7 a.m. Saturday, and “go whatever direction the wind takes us,” she said, and the balloons will be available to see again at 5 p.m. that evening.

“We are expected to have a full moon on that night, and we have a professional announcer. We are really excited about this event. The community has wrapped their arms around us,” Witzel said.

The Balloon Glow will also fall on the

same weekend as the EAA Fly-In and Veterans Reunion.

Collins called last weekend’s LSA Expo the best ever.

“It took five years of hard work but we finally had a breakout year,” Collins said. “The change of positiveness all worked. Everything turned out right.”

In action by the Authority, health insurance rates were locked in from Dec. 1 of this year through Jan. 1, 2015, through (2)

Health Alliance.

The Authority now pays \$1,744 per month in premiums and the new rate of \$1,908 per month is a 9.4 percent increase.

Authority members rationalized that with insurance rates going up annually and with the uneasiness of the Affordable Health Care Act taking effect early next year, now is the time to secure rates for the future.

The policy covers four airport employ-

ees.

The Authority approved a \$14,000 change order at last month’s meeting to relocate a transformer within Innovation Park. However, after learning they would be responsible for additional lines and a pedestal that would double the cost of the project, the Authority decided to leave the transformer in place, although it will have to be moved if future expansion occurs in the

southwest quadrant of the property.

Collins reported the exterior of the hangar is nearly complete; and the 18-foot hydraulic door is only the second to be installed outside of Oklahoma.

Authority members tabled action to change its logo to be in line with the city’s branding initiative. Board members agreed a new logo may be needed, but they want it to look “professional.” 9-11-13 (3)