

Airport highlights successful year

By RORYE O'CONNOR

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MT. VERNON — The Mt. Vernon Outland Airport Board celebrated its accomplishments over the past year with the State of the Airport at the board's annual meeting Tuesday evening.

"Thank you to Ted Buck of the County Board for my re-appointment," said Mike Ancona, Mt. Vernon Airport Authority chair. "I've got another five years to get it right."

Ancona said the airport hosted numerous aviation events including the 13th annual Little Egypt Fly-In, the Veterans Reunion/Southern Illinois Harvest Festival, the Women With Wings Aircraft Wash and the monthly Fly-In/Drive-In, as well as hosting

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several community events like the Relay for Life, the Celebrate Life Festival and the Continental Tire the Americas Annual Picnic.

"It has been beneficial to have this community involvement," Ancona said. "The people of the community feel this is their airport."

He mentioned that SRT Aviation became a Federal Aviation Administration certified repair station, making the airport the only place in Southern Illinois to have a CRS. In addition to the repair station, SRT

opened the Southern Illinois Light Sport Aircraft Training Academy, also the only one in Southern Illinois.

"We have had eight citizens solo and six have received training," Ancona said. "They have come a long, long way. It's exciting to have them on board and it's only going to get better."

In other business, the board:

■ Granted airport manager Chris Collins permission to tell people involved with the Commemorative Air Force Boeing B-17 Superfortress "Sentimental Journey" that they can return to Mt. Vernon. The plane is scheduled to

come to the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport June 7-10. The "flying museum" came to Mt. Vernon last in 2008. Collins is working to find sponsors for the Superfortress to come to Mt. Vernon, as rooms, transportation and fuel for the plane cost approximately \$4,000;

■ The board moved to approve an architectural agreement with Brian Edmison of Brian Edmison and Associates on the new hangar project, part of the Momentum 2014 plan.

"It's good to see this thing moving forward," Ancona said.

Edmison drew up maps of the flood plain on the airport grounds, showing that

the actual flood plain based on elevation is different from what the Federal Emergency Management Agency has on hand.

"What needs to happen to remove this is a map amendment we send to FEMA," Edmison said. "It will take about two months and we need to do it before we can commence with the new hangar project," and:

■ Moved to approve a request by Collins to let out bids for the Spill Prevention Counter Control/Mobile Fueler Containment Project. The airport is looking for general contractors to build a containment area for its two mobile fuelers with a carport-type roof.

Collins said. *S (12/10)*