

# Airport operations see increase

By RORYE O'CONNOR

rorye.oconnor@register-news.com

MT. VERNON — Mt. Vernon's airport has seen a steady rise in aircraft operations over the past four years, it was revealed at Tuesday's Board of Commissioners meeting.

The Mt. Vernon Outland Airport saw more planes take off and land in 2009, "a really bad year for aviation," said airport manager Chris Collins.

In 2008, the airport had 2,926 "significant" flights, and in 2009, it saw 3,084 revenue-producing flights, Collins said, a significant increase from 2,062 flights in 2006.

"To go up like that in a bad econo-

see AIRPORT/Page 5A

## AIRPORT

continued from 1A

my says a lot about the airport," Collins told the board of commissioners, attributing the increase in part to SRI, the facility's fixed base operator, which conducts flight training, maintenance and other duties.

"I think we're moving in the right direction," he said.

Due to the installation of a new HVAC unit, the facil-

ity also reduced its kilowatt hours by 47 percent compared to last year, Collins said. That translates to \$11,676 less in heating and cooling costs compared to the previous year.

In other business, the board:

■ Moved to begin planning and construction on a containment area for the airport's two mobile fuel trucks. The project, part of the airport's 2014 Momentum Capital Improvement Plan, will

entail the construction of a 30 feet by 20 feet concrete containment area able to hold 3,500 gallons of fuel, with a 13 feet tall carport-type roof.

"This protects our assets and makes us in compliance with the EPA," said board chairman Mike Ancona;

■ Continued a discussion about building an additional hangar on the airport grounds, part of the 2010 Momentum Plan, a five-year capital improvements project. Airport officials

↓ wrote a letter to the Division of Aeronautics Dec. 28 detailing the storage needs of the airport, Collins said. Airport officials have hopes to build the building using local vendors and contractors, Collins said.

"Once the weather breaks in the spring, the ramp would be put on a June 1 letting site. We're trying to get this finished before the expo and all that. We need it now, but that's when we really need the

storage," Collins said;

■ Moved to purchase two check valves for water pipes in the lake lift station. The valves, which cost \$1,100 each, will prevent sewage from flooding into airport buildings, board members said.

"We had an outage in late October," Collins said. "When power got knocked out to that lift station, sewage went into the Air Evac offices."

The purchase was a necessity, Ancona said;

■ Moved to purchase \$459.61 in chemical fire extinguisher for the airport's fire trucks.

"We try to test the fire-fighter truck two or three times a year, and so inventory is getting a little low," Collins told the board, and;

■ Decided to give insurance quotes further thought before making a choice. The board of commissioners opened two bids. The board of commissioners agreed to vote by phone after further examining the bids.