

# Airport Authority dedicates new hangar

## Illinois' Director of Aeronautics on hand at open house

BY RICK HAYES

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MT. VERNON — Nearly 10 months after a successful bid letting that kept the project under budget, officials of the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority dedicated its new 11,000 sq. ft. hangar on Friday.

The total cost of the project is \$1.1 million, with the local share amounting to the budgeted amount of \$700,000.

"We had a \$700,000 budget to

build a building. We worked really closely with our construction managers, Carey Lipps and Jeff Shaw, along with architect Brian Edmison. We diligently set out to build as big a building as we could. When we bid the building out, we took out a lot of the things we wanted — like bathrooms, sidewalks, floor coverings — so we could maximize the square footage and get the biggest door we could get, and the bidding came in lower than we thought," explained Airport Manager Chris Collins. "We started adding everything back in with change orders and additions at the end of the project. With the help of all the folks who worked on



**DIRECTOR SPEAKS —** Dr. Susan Shea, director of the Illinois Division of Aeronautics, visited Mt. Vernon on Friday for the open house and dedication of the new hangar at the Mt. Vernon-Outland Airport.

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it, we did it for just shy of \$700,000, which is tremendous."

In addition to Lipps Construction and Brian Edmison & Associates, the community hangar team consisted of Round Table Design, Black & Sons Construction, KT Electric, and Wielt Mechanical — all 100 percent contractors, Collins pointed out.

"Thanks to the Illinois Department of Transportation's Division of Aeronautics, we were able to get a lot of assistance with the ramp extension and the parking lot and roadway extension," he added.

Hanson Professional Services Inc. and Kieffer Brothers Construction, based in Mt. Carmel, assisted with the ramp and roadway projects. The aircraft ramp extension totals over 24,000 square feet of concrete. The extension allows for additional aircraft parking and tie-down space.

"Mt. Vernon groups and surrounding counties now have an access that will be a beacon for future opportunities. We're just so thrilled that we have this here now," Collins concluded.

"What a day for Mt. Vernon — another ribbon cutting," said Mayor Mary Jane Chesley. "This project shows a lot of dedication, hard work, but above all it shows a lot of teamwork. A team can get the



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**ATTEND OPEN HOUSE —** Members of the Mt. Vernon Airport Authority were joined by local and state dignitaries at the open house and dedication of the new hangar Friday. Pictured, **FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT**, are Airport Manager Chris Collins and board members Greg Martin, Mike Ancona and Paul Dickerson; **BACK ROW:** Mayor Mary Jane Chesley, board members Gary Chesney and Joe Bob Pierce, Director of the Illinois Division of Aeronautics Susan Shae and Robert White, Jefferson County board chairman.

job done. Airport officials, you are on a roll. I applaud you for your endeavors and the progression you have made. Keep up the good work, because it's important for the city of Mt. Vernon and for economic development."

"This definitely adds to our economic tools. This is perhaps one of the best kept secrets in Southern Illinois," said Jefferson County Board Chairman Robert White. "It's amazing to me how many pilots use this facility and brag about it."

A groundbreaking ceremony was held Aug. 14 for the new hangar — the first building constructed on airport property in 18 years. The last building was erected in 1992.

"This is a day you all have

been working and looking forward to. Our job is to bring to you the federal money and the state money so that we can match it all together to come up with things like this," said Dr. Susan Shae, director of the Illinois Division of Aeronautics. "You all carried the bucket on this one. The local money came from you, and you put this all together. You saw the need, and you saw what an economic development this can be for your community. You are a

very important part in the whole aviation system and the things you can do with this hangar is just phenomenal."

The hangar is capable of housing one regional airliner, four to six medium size business jets or up to 12 single engine airplanes. Collins has said the hangar will be large enough for commercial airplanes, such as the Bombardier CRJ 700 and the Grumman Gulfstream 550.

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