

STATE OF THE AIRPORT FY 2013/2014

INNOVATION PARK

Phase One of the long awaited redevelopment of the southwest quadrant was completed. A \$511,600 State/Federal Project removed old building foundations, distressed pavements, and returned the areas to level grade green space. The project also involved the construction of a new aircraft ramp/taxiway and a new vehicular roadway on the exterior side of the perimeter fence. The return to level green space and an exterior vehicular roadway makes the southwest quadrant an attraction for aviation and non-aviation businesses. The redeveloped southwest quadrant is now known as Innovation Park.

Phase One of Innovation Park also included one new locally constructed aircraft storage hangar and corporate office structure. A large portion of the financing for Hangar #1 was secured privately – the airport’s first foray into public/private financing. The total cost for Hangar #1 was \$490,316. Innovation Park Hangar #1 is the home of Eric Evans Aviation. Eric Evans is the national sales manager for Jabiru USA and the eastern seaboard dealer for Found Aircraft Canada.

EAA AIRVENTURE CUP

Mt. Vernon Outland Airport was selected as the starting point host of the 2013 EAA Airventure Cup Race – a cross country air race that kicks off EAA Airventure Oshkosh. The race has occurred annually since 1996 and is patterned after the cross country air racing of the 1920s and 1930’s. Race organizers alternate the course each year between a western starting point of Mitchell, South Dakota and a southern starting point of Dayton, Ohio. Logistical challenges with the southern course forced the organizers to look for a new southern starting point and Mt. Vernon Outland Airport was mentioned due to the industry’s knowledge of the airport and strong logistical support offered at the Plane & Pilot Midwest LSA Expo. The airport lobbied hard and won the opportunity. Over the weekend of July 27th, nearly fifty race and twenty support aircraft flew into the airport and were on display. On Sunday morning, July 28, forty-eight race aircraft left Mt. Vernon bound for Wausau, Wisconsin – the official finish line. Marty Abbot of Calgary, Alberta, CANADA, flying a Turbine Legend, was the fastest from Mt. Vernon to central Wisconsin covering the course in 1 hour 17 minutes at an average speed of 354 miles per hour.

EPILEPSY FOUNDATION

The Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Southern Illinois signed a five year lease for Koziara Terminal Suite “B” in July, 2013. The Epilepsy Foundation covers the southern-most 34 Illinois counties offering educational and clinical services. The regional office will be

staffed by two employees. Koziara Terminal Suite “B” is the former American Red Cross Regional Office.

JEFFERSON COUNTY HALL OF HONOR

Phase One of the Jefferson County Hall of Honor was completed in July, 2013. An individual Tribute for the late SSgt. Dorris Mallory, constructed by volunteer graphic artist Cliff Christensen, was placed in the last spot in the last frame inside the actual hallway. SSgt. Mallory’s was the 435th Tribute to be constructed and displayed. Phase Two will consist of new panels/Tributes on display inside the Koziara Terminal Banquet Room. Committee members note that once Phase Two is complete, over 750 Tributes will be on display.

The Jefferson County Hall of Honor made headlines again in April, 2014 when United States Congressman Bill Enyart dropped by to present the Presidential Unit Citation to the family of a local World War II Veteran. Due to the research of volunteer graphic artist Cliff Christensen, the family of TEC5 Walter Chesney was informed that Sgt. Chesney’s unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation in July, 2011. Since Sgt. Chesney passed away in 1989, the family had no way of knowing their loved one was eligible for the award. The 672nd Amphibious Tractor Battalion, Sgt. Chesney’s unit, participated in the Los Banos Internment Camp Raid 25 miles behind enemy lines. When completed, over 2145 allied lives were saved. The Los Banos Raid was one of the largest POW liberation operations in U.S. Military History.

WILKEY’S AIRPORT CAFE

Wilkey’s Airport Café, the airport’s restaurant located inside the Koziara Terminal celebrated its 60th Anniversary in August. The restaurant is currently owned and operated by second generation Wilkey family members. Third generation Wilkey family members assist during busy period and on Sundays.

LSA EXPO

In early September, the Plane & Pilot Midwest LSA Expo kicked off with some exciting changes – a visit by the CAF B-25 “Maid in the Shade”, daily shows by the gas turbine powered Mosquito Mini Helicopter, and a professional sound system. The upgrades coupled with nearly all of the new products aviation has to offer on the ramp produced what the organizers called the show’s “breakout event”. Over ten aircraft were sold and exhibitors left with high praise for the airport, the City, and the volunteers.

BALLOONS OVER MT.VERNON

Hot Air Balloons returned for the first time since the late 1980's over the weekend of October 19th. Balloons Over Mt. Vernon, in conjunction with the Mt. Vernon Fall Festival, held a balloon glow on the north shore of the airport lake on Friday, October 18th. Ten balloons and approximately 4500 people turned out for the festivities taking absolutely everyone by surprise. The event had a Salute to Freedom atmosphere and the automotive parking lot looked like the parking lot for the Salute to Freedom event.

AVIATION REPORT

The Annual Aviation Report released in February showed total operations at 24,720 – up slightly from the previous year's 23,050. National aviation events such as the EAA Airventure Cup Race and the Plane & Pilot Midwest LSA Expo are big draws, but infrastructure, logistics, and aviation related services continue to be attractive elements that draw aviators to the airport. Based tenancy continues to grow and a record 49 aircraft are registered, including 11 multi-engine aircraft.

CIRCUS

The Kelly Miller Circus rolled into the airport over Easter weekend. Large crowds turned out for two shows conducted under the big top in beautiful Spring weather. The airport and event organizers worked out an agreement for the circus to stay two nights, including Easter in Mt. Vernon. With over 100 additional guests, the local tax base benefited with the circus at the airport.