

New Young Eagle program launched at airport

Participants are building a radio controlled aircraft

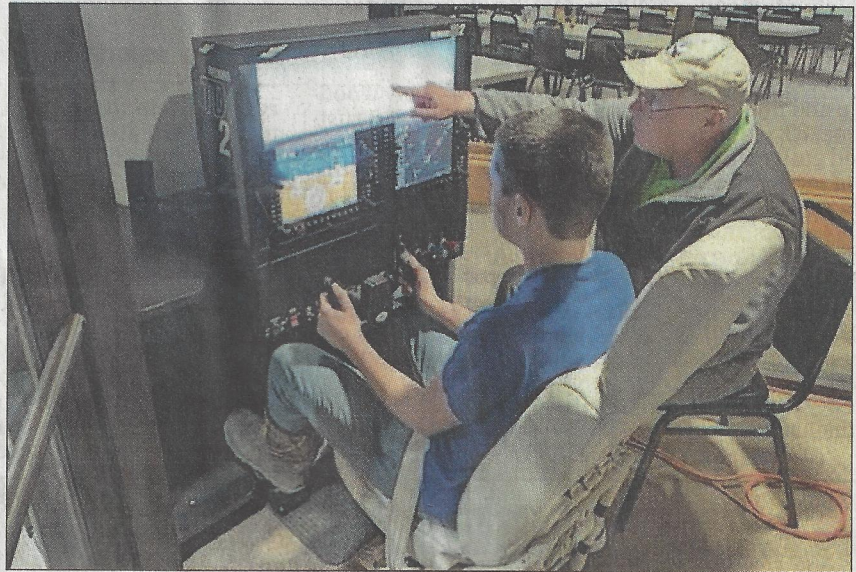
BY TRAVIS MORSE
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MOUNT VERNON — Local kids are invited to take part in a brand new aviation program at Mount Vernon Outland Airport called the Young Eagle Build and Fly Program.

The initiative was launched through a collaboration between the airport, Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 1155, and the Rend Lake RC Club.

Children who take part in the program get to help build a real radio controlled aircraft that will be flown once it's finished in late March. Also, participants can learn about flying with a flight simulator and fly an indoor radio controlled aircraft known as a "Night Vapor."

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Submitted Photo

FLIGHT SIMULATOR — Kids who take part in the new Young Eagle Build and Fly Program can also use a flight simulator. The program meets every Saturday at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

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"Rather than just buying something that's already put together, it gives them experience at building (an aircraft)," said EAA Chapter 1155 President Steve Willis. "It's an RC model but it's put together just like a real airplane. It gives them experience at actually building, putting all the flight controls in, putting all the wiring and then give them the experience of trying to fly it when they get done."

The program was just recently started and so far about four children are taking part. Area kids from seventh to 12th grade are invited to participate. The kids and adult leaders with the program meet from 6 to 8 p.m. every Saturday evening in the Koziara Terminal at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

Willis said interested parties can call the airport for more information and/or just show up at the next meeting to participate.

"It's not like you had to be there the first day to start building," Willis said. "You can jump

right in and start where we're at now."

Willis said the new program is essentially an extension of the Young Eagles ride program at the airport where kids had the chance to fly in a real plane. The children who take part in the building program will get to have a Young Eagle flight later in March, Willis said.

"This is sort of a follow-on to the Young Eagles program where we give free rides to the kids from (age) 8 to 17 as an introduction to aviation," Willis said. "And this is just another step to kind of keep them interested and involved by building this airplane and hopefully intrigue them into the field of aviation."

Kids in the new program are building what is known as an LT40 eCadet RC aircraft. Adult leaders Richard Irvin and Phil Bean — who belong to the Rend Lake RC Club — are helping guide the building of the aircraft, officials said.

Airport Director Chris Collins said he is very pleased to see the Young Eagle Build and Fly Program at the airport.

"We're always for anything we can do to get the next generation involved and it's exciting



Sentinel Photo/TRAVIS MORSE

BUILDING AIRCRAFT — Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1155 President Steve Willis Monday examines the radio controlled aircraft being built by participants in the new Young Eagle Build and Fly Program. The program meets every Saturday at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

to see the kids working with our members, and everyone seems to be really, really excited about it," Collins said. "And, as for me, I'm particularly proud of the partnership that our EAA

chapter has fostered with the Rend Lake RC Club."

For more information, contact the Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

tmorse@morningsentinel.com