

# Stars and Constellations event planned at airport

*Event is free and open to public*

**BY TRAVIS MORSE**  
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

**MOUNT VERNON** — Rend Lake College and Mount Vernon Outland Airport are teaming up to offer a free Stars and Constellations educational event from 6 to 8 p.m. March 24 at the airport.

Area residents are encouraged to bring their whole family for an evening of stargazing. The program will be led by Rend Lake College Instructor Greg Hollmann who will point out the bright stars and constellations, states an event news release. He will also tell stories about ancient mythology and modern science and how these stories relate to the night sky.

"The majority of time will be spent pointing out the major stars and constellations of the spring sky," Hollmann said

of his presentation. "This will include zodiac constellations such as Gemini 'the Twins,' Leo 'the Lion,' and Cancer 'the Crab.' Also visible will be the winter favorites Orion 'the Hunter,' Taurus 'the Bull,' and Canis Major 'the Big Dog.'

In addition to the constellations, the planet Venus will also be discussed, Hollmann said.

"Known as the 'evening star,' this planet has been very bright in the Western sky near dusk for a couple of months now," Hollmann said, later adding of the program, "More than any one piece of information, I hope that participants come away with a greater appreciation of the night sky and the stories the stars have to tell us."

RLC and the airport have partnered on similar stargazing events in the past. The airport, Hollmann said, makes for a great location. The lights at the airport are turned off once the program begins.

"Its proximity to town and

parking make it an ideal location for a community event," Hollmann said, later adding, "It really makes for a great night sky."

Airport Director Chris Collins said the program offers a unique educational opportunity for the public.

"Any time we can bring people to the airport, we're excited," Collins said. "I enjoy working with Greg. He's a super guy. The best teachers are the ones that are excited about what they're teaching (and) he's certainly that kind of teacher."

If there is bad weather threatening on the evening of March 24, Hollmann will present an alternate program, the news release states.

Admission is free and interested parties are asked to register for the program online at [www.rlc.coursestorm.com](http://www.rlc.coursestorm.com). The online registration helps organizers get an idea of how many people to expect for the event.

3-10-2020  
[tmorse@morningsentinel.com](mailto:tmorse@morningsentinel.com)