

Yankee Lady to stop by Mount Vernon Airport

The Yankee Lady is a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress

BY JOSH JONES

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MOUNT VERNON — Area residents will have the opportunity to see a World War II era aircraft next week and while the plane didn't see combat action, it has a rich history.

According to a news release provided by Mount Vernon Outland Airport, the Yankee Lady is a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress, owned by the Yankee Air Museum of Van Buren Township, Michigan. The Yankee Lady and her crew will be stopping for food and fuel in Mount Vernon on their way home to Michigan from Houston, Texas. The plane is scheduled to stop by Mount Vernon Outland Airport for two hours during lunchtime hours either on Monday or Tuesday, Oct. 16/17. Crews will make the interior available for inspection and the public is encouraged to attend and welcome Yankee Lady to the airport.

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Submitted Photo

WWII ERA AIRCRAFT — The Yankee Lady is a Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress, owned by the Yankee Air Museum of Van Buren Township Michigan. The historic aircraft is expected to stop at Mount Vernon Outland Airport on Tuesday for a couple of hours and the public is welcome to view it.

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Airport Director Chris Collins gave his thoughts on welcoming the Yankee Lady.

"I am excited to play host to another flying museum and they are getting rarer and rarer as the years go on," Collins said. "When I started here nearly 20 years ago, I

think there were 12 of them that were flying and I think that number has been reduced by 50% now."

The Yankee Lady was originally delivered to the U.S. Military in 1945. The plane did not see combat action, but it was used by the United States Coast Guard for over a decade. Purchased by the museum in 1986, it has since been restored to WWII configuration and is flown for flight experience rides and airshow ap-

pearances, the release states.

"That is a symbol of the Greatest Generation and it saddens me that the more that we march into the future how many people have forgotten World War II and its importance in how it shaped this country to what we enjoy today and it was because of the Greatest Generation," Collins said. "If people get a chance to come out, view this airplane and look inside it, you will see that it does not have the luxuries that aviation affords now. It is essentially a soda can and we were putting 18 and 19 year old boys up there at 20,000/30,000 feet. There was no insulation on this aircraft and 50 millimeter bullets are whizzing through."

The event is subject to change and may be postponed or cancelled depending on the weather or other factors. Collins encouraged people to check with the airport for updates.

"I just hope by hosting this aircraft that we can get a chance to do others and it would be great if as many people as possible came out and welcomed this crew to Mount Vernon, shake their hands and tell them their efforts of saving and preserving history are appreciated," Collins said. "It is important that people monitor the airport's Facebook page or just call the airport and we can keep everybody updated."

For more information, people may visit the "Mt. Vernon Airport" Facebook page or call (618) 242-7016.

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