

OUTLAND NEWS - December, 2023

Welcome to the 12th edition of Mt. Vernon Outland Airport News (Outland News). So much has occurred at MVN since the last newsletter was published in June. Below, and on the page that follows, are highlights of the last six months at Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.



BONNIE CAFE REMODEL



Airport officials accepted the IDOT, Division of Aeronautics 2023 Illinois Airport of the Year (Large General Aviation Category) Award at the Illinois Public Airport Association Conference in Galena, Illinois in September. It was the airport's third award post 2000.



Bonnie Cafe Mt. Vernon re-opened on July 22, 2023 at MVN. The restaurant was transformed in just eleven days. New tables/ chairs, five buffet tables, an ice cream machine, and mobile omelet stand were added. In just over five months, over 60,000 people have dined at Bonnie Cafe Mt. Vernon!

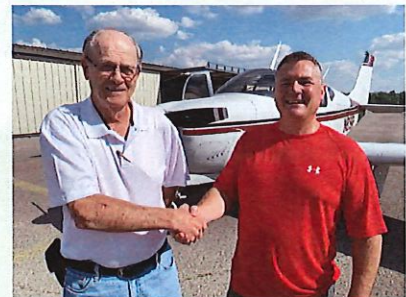
FLIGHT TRAINING ACHIEVEMENTS



Aviation Programs Director Jay Grafton (seated) poses with new Private Pilots Klayton Simmons, Nekoda Colvin, and Luke Wright. All three high school upper classmen finished their PPL Certificates at KMVN in September/October, 2023 - a feat seldom achieved outside a Part 141 program! PPL Colvin is EAA Chapter 1155's first Ray Scholar.



New Instrument Rated Pilots Dr. Ahmad Samadzai and Dr. Travis Gholson with FAA DPE Rodney Resch, CFI Jay Grafton and CFI Ray Xanders.



First Solos Branson Klausman, Mike Hoffman, Keith Barr, and Skip Starkey. With CFI's Jay Grafton and Dr. Stan Blank.



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MIDWEST LSA EXPO



KSPI FSDO's Nick Loftus, Kathy Willis & Steve Willis (upper photo). Orlando Ham and the Ham Family (lower photo).



Midwest LSA Expo continues to attract visitors to southern Illinois!



VISITORS FROM AROUND THE USA
CANADA & THE BAHAMAS Incl.

185 demonstration flights were logged at the 15th Annual event at MVN 9/7/2023 - 9/9/2023.



Congratulations to Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award winners Steve Willis and Orlando Ham. The WBMPA is awarded by the FAA to aviators that have safely flown more than 50 years without accidents/incidents. The awards were presented at Midwest LSA Expo in September 2023 by KSPI FSDO Aviation Safety Manager Nick Loftus.

YANKEE LADY VISITS SOUTHERN ILLINOIS



The Yankee Air Museum's B-17 Flying Fortress "Yankee Lady", one of only three remaining flyable B-17's, visited the airport in late October. The crew of "Yankee Lady" generously allowed residents inside the aircraft to experience history and preserve the legacy of thousands of airman lost over the skies of WW2 Europe. Local B-17/B-29 Aircraft Commander Evertt Atkinson, 101 years young, was on hand to welcome "Yankee Lady" to Mt. Vernon. The large crowd allowed Atkinson to be the first to greet the B-17 crew and only approached the aircraft when Atkinson waived them out - an incredible show of local respect for the Greatest Generation!

JOINT BASE JEFFERSON COUNTY



A ground-breaking ceremony was held on November 20, 2023 for Air Evac Lifeteam Joint Base Jefferson County. Air Evac Regional Management, City/County Officials, hospital administrators, fire departments, and ambulance services gathered for lunch prior to turning soil at Air Evac Lifeteam's new home at 500 Firebaugh Drive. When completed in June, 2024, Joint Base Jefferson will be the east anchor partner in the airport's Innovation Park Development area.