

The sky's the limit

Young Eagles Rally a success at MV Airport

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Sentinel Photo/TRAVIS MORSE

LIONS CLUB TRAIN – The Mt. Vernon Lions Club's popular Lions Train was featured at Saturday's Young Eagles Rally at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

MOUNT VERNON — Sometimes fun and learning can go hand in hand.

Last Saturday, more than 90 kids participated in the Young Eagles Rally flying program at Mount Vernon Outland Airport. The weather was ideal for aviation that day, with clear skies and mild temperatures. Organizers say that they were very pleased with the turnout.

As part of the Young Eagles program, youth ages 8 to 17 were able to go on a free airplane ride with an experienced pilot. Typically, the airport's Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1155 hosts events of this sort twice a year, once

in the late May/early June time period and another one around October. The goal of the Young Eagles Rally is to expose youth to the joys of aviation, Sentinel archives state.

"I absolutely think the Young

Eagles is a great program," said Rylan Crane, a certified flight instructor at Mount Vernon Airport. "You know, growing up I never really



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PREPARE FOR TAKEOFF – Darcy Jenkins, 10, of Mount Vernon, gets ready for her flight at Saturday's Young Eagles Rally at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

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knew much about aviation and I think it's great here that in Mount Vernon they have this opportunity, a couple times a year, for the Young Eagles to come out here and do these free flights and get the younger generation into flying. Because it's just something you've got to be introduced to eventually. Because a lot of people never do, and this is a great opportunity to get out here, and everyone has fun and it's a real nice day for it."

Saturday's rally was free and open to the public. Parental signed consent was mandatory for the flight, and the forms were available at the airport.

The event drew aviation newcomers, as well as kids who had done it before like Wesley Spurlock, 9, of Bluford. His flight Saturday was his second time flying in an airplane at a Young Eagles Rally, said his father Zack Spurlock.



Sentinel Photo/TRAVIS MORSE

YOUNG EAGLES RALLY – Wesley Spurlock, 9, of Bluford, poses in front of the plane he just flew in during Saturday's Young Eagles Rally at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

"I think it's super cool," Zack said of the Young Eagles program, adding that it encourages kids to be interested in aviation. There were also newcomers to aviation at Saturday's event, like 10-year-old Darcy Jenkins of Mount Vernon. Randy Jenkins, her grandfather, praised the Young Eagles program.

"Oh, I think it's great," Randy said. "It encourages kids to get out and fly and maybe learn how to fly."

Also in attendance

Saturday was Jessica Milton, the mother of three kids who went on a plane ride that day. Two had never done it before but one of them had, Jessica said. Her kids are named Malyn, Zaina, and Zeke.

"Yeah, they like it. My brother's actually a pilot from SIU, so they like actually doing it," Jessica said.

For more information on the Young Eagles Rally program, call Mount Vernon Outland Airport at (618) 242-7016. 10-16-25