

Air Race Classic Terminus Celebration comes to MV this week

BY TRAVIS MORSE

TMORSE@MORNINGSENTINEL.COM

MOUNT VERNON — Starting this week, Mount Vernon will welcome pilots, crews, and supporters from across the country as the city serves as the Terminus Host for the 2026 Air Race Classic, the nation's premier all-women air race.

According to an event news release, the Air Race Classic (ARC) traces its roots to the historic 1929 Women's Air Derby and showcases the skill, determination, and teamwork of women aviators as they race across the country. After flying thousands of miles, competitors will complete their journey at Mount Vernon Outland Airport, where a weekend of activities and celebrations will be held.

Beginning Friday, June 26, the local community is invited to Mount Vernon Airport to watch ARC teams arrive at the Terminus. As aircraft complete the race and touch down in Mount Vernon, spectators will have the chance to witness the excitement firsthand and help welcome the racers to Southern Illinois, the release states.

Arrival times will vary throughout the day as teams complete the course and make their final approach into Mount Vernon.

YOUTH DAY

One of the highlights of the local Terminus Celebration will be Youth Day, which is planned for 9 a.m.

to 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 27, at Mount Vernon Outland Airport.

The free family-friendly event will include:

- Meet-and-greet opportunities with ARC pilots and crews.
- Pilot and crew trading cards and posters available for autographs.
- Young Eagles air-plane rides for youth ages 8 to 17 (parental consent required).
- Hands-on educational activities hosted by community organizations.
- Collegiate aviation representatives showcasing aviation training opportunities.
- Interactive exhibits and aviation-themed experiences throughout the day.

"Youth Day is designed to inspire the next generation of aviators while giving families a unique opportunity to interact with women who are pursuing their dreams and breaking barriers in aviation," the news release states.

CELEBRATING WOMEN IN AVIATION

Throughout the weekend, Mount Vernon will host special activities and events honoring the racers and their accomplishments. The Air Race Classic continues a nearly century-long tradition of encouraging women in aviation and demonstrating that determination, preparation, and passion can take you anywhere, the release states.



Submitted Photo

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"We are excited to welcome these incredible women to Mount Vernon," said Sheila Jolly Scrivner, Air Race Classic Terminus Event Coordinator. "Their stories of perseverance, teamwork, and achievement are inspiring, and we look forward to sharing that inspiration with our community."

FAREWELL TO THE RACERS

Following the weekend festivities, racers will begin departing Mount Vernon early Monday morning, June 29. Departure times will vary based on individual travel plans and weather conditions.

For updates and additional information about the Air

Race Classic Terminus Celebration, follow Mt Vernon Tourism and the Mt Vernon Airport Authority on social media.

ABOUT THE AIR RACE CLASSIC

The Air Race Classic is the longest-running all-women air race in the United States. Tracing its roots to the 1929 Women's Air Derby, the annual competition challenges teams of women pilots to navigate a cross-country course while showcasing precision flying, strategic planning, and aviation excellence. The event celebrates the legacy of accomplishments, and future of women in aviation, the news release states.

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