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NEWS



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Saturday, September 18, 2004

New airport manager is ready to take the controls

By Bill Gisel

AUBURN — Russ Couchman, the new manager of the DeKalb County Airport south of Auburn, is excited about moving here.

Couchman officially begins his duties Monday, but he attended Friday's monthly aviation board meeting to get a head start on learning about the fast-growing county airport.

Born in Nebraska but moving to southern California at the age of 3, Couchman comes to DeKalb County from Milwaukee's General Mitchell International Airport. His first aviation job was at McClellan-Palomar Airport in San Diego.

"I was operations coordinator when I left San Diego, but also was an environmental noise specialist and community relations officer," Couchman said. At General Mitchell, his job focused on noise issues as they relate to airport planning.

"I am really proud to be involved with this airport," Couchman said. "It is a very nice airport."

Aviation board treasurer Brad Stump noted that the board is anxious to put to good use Couchman's expertise in community relations.

"We want to do a lot more in involving the community with the airport and in possibly planning some major airport event," Stump said.

Couchman is married and has three children, one a middle-schooler and two in elementary school. The Couchmans will be living in an airport-owned house on C.R. 27.



Russ Couchman, right, was welcomed to his first aviation board meeting Friday at noon by Brad Stump, DeKalb County Aviation Board treasurer. Couchman begins his duties as airport manager Monday, replacing Wade Troth, who left DeKalb County Airport for a similar position in South Dakota last month. Photo by Bill Gisel



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Couchman said he is especially impressed with the friendliness of the DeKalb community. "People smile in the aisle at the supermarket, and actually stop in traffic to let you out of a driveway," he marveled.

As did his predecessor, Couchman holds a private pilot's license.

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