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NEWS



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Saturday, February 05, 2005

Air show coming in May: DeKalb airport plans new event

By Bill Gisel

AUBURN — Victory Aviation and the DeKalb County Airport are planning an air show May 20-22 in conjunction with the 14th Annual Auburn Spring Motorfair.

Todd McCutchan of Victory Aviation said the show will be coordinated with the DeKalb County Visitors Bureau and provide another activity for people attending the weekend auction.

In addition, an auction of aircraft and World War II aviation memorabilia is planned as a part of the Motorfair.

McCutchan said there has not been an airshow at the DeKalb airport for a number of years. He said an estimated first-year attendance of what he foresees to be an annual airshow would be about 3,000.

“It is an excellent way to promote the airport, and is great family entertainment,” McCutchan noted.

Airport manager Russ Couchman agreed, adding, “An airshow is a monumental task.” He said corporate and business sponsorship will be vital, as well as volunteers to make the event a success.

A Midwest-based aerobatic act will be the highlight of the first year’s show, Couchman said, but he foresees the event becoming “world-class with military participation” in years to come.

Federal Aviation Administration approval will be sought to close the airspace at the airport during the show flight, Couchman said. In the meantime, he added: “We need people in the community to get involved to help make it happen.”

He said people interested in volunteering should call Victory Aviation at 927-4040.

At a recent meeting, the Aviation Board:



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- Learned the DeKalb County Commissioners have agreed to contract with a Fort Wayne firm to provide Internet Web site services for the airport. The design of the page should be under way by mid-February and on line in March. Couchman said the Web site will be of great benefit in promoting the airport and providing current and archived information including the airport's newsletter and Aviation Board minutes. Plans call for the page to emulate the design of the City of Auburn web site.

- Learned the airport's Instrument Landing System is to be flight-tested again next week. A flight check in December revealed the system needed further tuning and the glide slope antenna array needed to be raised.

- Elected Jim Mason as board president, the position previously held by Layden Rieke, who resigned from the board last month. Jeff Turner, who was named to fill Rieke's vacated seat, was elected vice president. Board members George Wappes and Brad Stump remain as secretary and treasurer, respectively.

- Voted to give Couchman the full authority to handle T-hangar rental and lease enforcement. The board noted the shift of many responsibilities previously handled by the board to the airport manager.

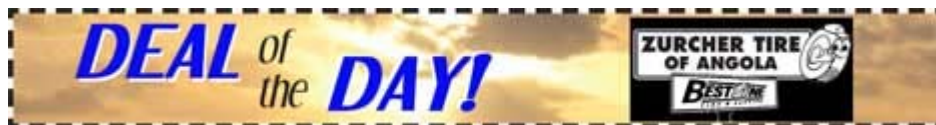
"When we didn't have an airport manager, we had to do everything; I think a gradual shift of responsibilities traditionally handled by the board is our goal," Mason said.



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