

LSA Expo draws a crowd

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MT. VERNON — The Plane & Pilot Midwest LSA Expo at Mt. Vernon Airport had its best ever opening day Thursday in terms of foot traffic and the number of airplanes, said Airport Manager Chris Collins.

The annual expo, in its fifth year, continues through today. It features over 30 planes for sale, as well as historic commemorative aircraft on display.

"We had the best opening day we've ever had yesterday," Collins said Friday morning. "I know we've already sold three airplanes."

Over 150 people had signed in at the primary registration table as of Friday morning. However, visitors were not required to sign in and some chose not to. Friday afternoon and today were expected to be the

EXPO

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expo's peak times.

Since the expo is free, it can be difficult to estimate the number of people in attendance, Collins said. In past years, the event has drawn between 600 to 1,000 spectators over the three-day period.

"The LSA event isn't really triggered for thousands of people being here. It's selling airplanes," Collins said. "To (the exhibitors), it's not about having 5 or 6,000 people on the flight line. It's

having those three or four that come here to maybe hand them a check."

Exhibitor Jerold Cordell, an associate dealer with U.S. Sport Aircraft, had an LTD model Sport-Cruiser for sale at the expo Friday. He said the airport offers a perfect location for showing off light sport aircraft.

"This is a great forum because you're close to Kentucky (and) you're really close to Tennessee," Cordell said. "It's a great airport. They do a great job in facilitating us as we show the aircraft. There's a lot of camaraderie that's developed among the group."

Exhibitor John Snider had for sale Friday a Turbine Mosquito mini-heli-

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copter from the company Personal Rotorcraft LLC. He also took the helicopter up for a demonstration flight that day for an admiring group of on-lookers.

Snider said foot traffic was a little slow Friday morning, but he expected today to have a much better showing.

"It's a great place to display and perform," Snider said of the airport. "There's lots of room."

Collins said he considers this year's expo a success since it is helping the airport accomplish its main goals.

"Number one is to

try to promote aviation," Collins said of the expo's benefits. "The second reason is to bring people to Mt. Vernon, (to) put them in the motel rooms and expand the tax base."

The expo officially concludes at the end of the day today. However, both commemorative planes — the B-25 Mitchell bomber and the Red Nose P-51D — will still be on display at the airport until around 10 a.m. Monday, Collins said.

"After church on Sunday would be a great time to come out and see them," Collins said. 9-7-13

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