

# LSA Expo returns

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MT. VERNON — Roughly 40 planes will be offered for sale at the upcoming Plane & Pilot Midwest LSA Expo, which is set for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 4, 5, and 6 at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport.

The event, in its sixth year, gives potential buyers the chance to shop for planes in an "intimate" setting and to test fly the models of their choice, said Airport Manager Chris Collins.

Collins added the airport's proximity to major population centers, plus Mt. Vernon's winning reputation for hospitality, make the site ideal for the LSA Expo. In past years, the event has drawn between 600 to 1,000 people over its three-day period.

"It's a dandy place to do an event like this," Collins said. "They get to see the latest aviation products in one place."

The Mt. Vernon expo was launched in 2009 and is modeled after the U.S. Sport Aviation Expo held in Sebring, Fla. Collins said these two events are the only expos of their kind still ongoing in the country that focus on light sport aircraft or LSA.

There is also the EAA AirVenture convention in Oshkosh, Wis. However, this show is much larger and does not offer buyers the same shopping opportunities as the local LSA Expo, Collins said.

At the Mt. Vernon event, buyers can have uninterrupted conversations with exhibitors and participate in test flights, he said.

"The consumer just can't comparison shop and comparison fly at the (Oshkosh) show," Collins said.

Exhibitor Steve Minnich said the Mt. Vernon event is one of the best of its kind, being that it's centrally located in the U.S. and tends to draw those with a serious interest in aviation.

This will be Minnich's fifth year exhibiting at the

LSA Expo. He plans to have two aircraft for sale at the upcoming show — a Sport-Star Max and a Harmony LSA.

Minnich is a member/manager for Dreams Come True Aviation LLC in Tipp City, Ohio.

"I keep coming up

so it must be pretty good," Minnich said of the local event.

"Chris (Collins) really focuses on the needs of the aviator looking for an airplane and the industry as a whole."

Exhibitor Chris "Doc" Bailey, CEO of Renegade Light Sport Aircraft out of DeLand, Fla., said the first year of the LSA Expo had lower attendance because of cold weather.

After that, though, Collins moved the date of the event from October to September, which helped a great deal, Bailey said. This

year's show promises to have a great turnout, he added.

"I think it'll be his best year ever," Bailey said.

Collins said attendees from as far away as Alaska and Canada have purchased aircraft at the local expo.

"It's not just an Illinois type of thing," Collins said.

In addition to the planes offered for

sale, this year's expo will likely feature a display of historical aircraft. Also, free food and music will be provided, and several aviation seminars will be held on site.

There is no admission fee for the expo. Volunteers are still being sought to help with the event. If you are interested, contact the airport at 242-7016. 8-29-14