

# MIDWEST FLYER

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# SPORT PILOT – LIGHT SPORT AIRCRAFT



"Rainbow Aircraft Cheetah XLS"

Jesse Peckham



"Bowers Fly Baby"

Jesse Peckham



"Flight Design CT"



"Pietenpol Air Camper"



Concentric distance rings of 500 and 1,000 miles around Mt. Vernon, Illinois, illustrate that the "Midwest LSA Expo," October 1-3, is a day's drive from anywhere within the eastern half of the country, and easily accessible to 50 percent of the U.S. population.

## Midwest LSA EXPO Debut Approaches!

**Exhibitors, Purchasers, SP-LSA Enthusiasts...**

**Plan Now To Be At**

**Mt. Vernon Outland Airport**

**Mt. Vernon, Illinois**

**October 1-3, 2009**

*by Ed Leineweber*



Ed Leineweber

If you are interested in the Sport Pilot-Light Sport Aircraft movement, you know where to be and when: Sebring in January; Lakeland in April; Oshkosh in late July; Mt. Vernon in early October. Wait! Mt. Vernon in October? Yes. Note

October 1, 2009: the date another must-attend event gets added to the calendars of SP-LSA incurables.

If you are in a SP-LSA-related business, thinking of buying a Special Light Sport Aircraft (S-LSA), interested in pilot training for the Sport Pilot Certificate, or just "plane curious" and looking for a place to head on a beautiful Midwestern fall day, you shouldn't miss the first-ever Midwest LSA Expo. Years from now you can tell your grandkids you were there when it all started.

The reasons for attending this event are numerous and compelling, whatever your interest in SP-LSA. But first, the basics.

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Mt. Vernon Outland Airport, MVN, is the municipal airport for the city of Mt. Vernon, Illinois, and serves all of Jefferson County. Located at the intersection of Interstates 57 and 64 in South Central Illinois, the city is 75 miles east of St. Louis, 275 miles south of Chicago, 215 miles west of Indianapolis, and 230 miles north of Memphis. According to its promoters,

Mt. Vernon Outland Airport, Mt. Vernon, Illinois, has ample ramp, hangar and terminal space for exhibits and aircraft, and for visitors to mingle, at the first-ever "Midwest LSA Expo," October 1-3.

50% of the U.S. population is within an 8-hour drive, making this an ideal location for a regional show of this type.

The Mt. Vernon Outland Airport is also ideally suited to stage the Midwest LSA Expo. Named the 2007 Airport of the Year by the Illinois Department of Transportation

Division of Aeronautics, MVN is a General Aviation Category A airport with a 6,500 foot main runway and an ILS precision approach. The expansive area of paved ramps makes for plenty of exhibitor space, as does the large hangar and terminal facilities which are available for indoor exhibits, forums and seminars.

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Included among the many activities conducted at the airport are those of fixed base operator SRT Aviation, Inc., which offers full-service ground support, maintenance and flight training. Eric Evans Aviation, Ltd., also based at MVN, is an aircraft dealer handling jets to LSAs, and for you fly and diners, "Grandma's Landing" is the local airport restaurant, famous for home cooked specialties.

On the other hand, Mt. Vernon Outland Airport is a non-towered field without scheduled airline operations, making it an ideal site for demo flights over the open country of South Central Illinois.

It's hard to imagine a better time and place for a Light Sport Expo than Mt. Vernon in early October. Mt. Vernon's population is about 16,000; Jefferson County's totals about 40,000. There are over 1,200 motel rooms and over 60 restaurants to accommodate visitors, as well as



Mt. Vernon Outland Airport, Mt. Vernon, Illinois, was the "2007 Illinois Airport of the Year." The airport features a 6,500 ft. main runway, a crosswind runway, and an ILS approach.

campgrounds, parks and recreation areas. The city itself is well-kept and attractive, and has historical roots

dating back before a then little-known lawyer named Abraham Lincoln came to argue his cases at the old Appellate Courthouse downtown.

The area offers a temperate climate, with average summer temperatures of 78 degrees and average winter temperatures of 32 degrees. Early October in Southern Illinois can be expected to be almost ideal for flying, with warm days and cool nights influenced by the large Canadian high pressure centers that often descend upon the Midwest at that time of year.

*So much for the setting; here are the details of the show itself.*

First, the people who are putting this event together are serious professionals who know what they are doing. The board of directors of the Midwest LSA Expo non-profit corporation includes Chris Collins, the airport director, who serves as president; Mary Ellen Bechtel, the executive director of the Jefferson County Development Corporation; Bonnie Jerdon, the director of the Mt. Vernon Convention & Visitors Bureau; and Curt Mowrer, of the Jefferson County Chamber of Commerce and Rend Lake College,

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who is vice president of the expo board. In researching this article and interviewing these folks, I am very impressed with their degree of organization and thoroughness in the preparation and planning of this event.

Others who have been equally impressed have commented that it's a "third-year effort for a first-year show." I agree. In addition to the board, several committees made up of other volunteers are taking care of operations, marketing, finance and legal matters, and programs. This broad base of interest and support among the right people in the Mt. Vernon business and professional community go a long way to ensuring a successful event for all concerned.

I've already mentioned the benefits of the Midwest LSA Expo from the perspective of the visitor: easy access; low-key, open surroundings; great time of year. These apply as well to potential exhibitors, but in spades. Now, when tough economic times make it even more challenging to make a go of it in an aviation-related business, the Mt. Vernon show offers a great selling opportunity at a very reasonable price. You cannot afford NOT to be on the field at Mt. Vernon when the first Midwest LSA Expo opens on October 1.

Many in the SP-LSA business have already made that decision. As of this writing, the Expo Site Plan shows reservations for 21 exhibitors, including S-LSA manufacturers Remos, Flight Design, Zenith, Cubcrafters, Jabiru, Evezkor, Paradise, FPNA, Rans, Just Aircraft, Renegade, American Legend, Gobosh, Allegro, Czech Aircraft Works, Sting Sport, 3X Trim and Tecnam. Chris Collins reports that another 10 or so companies are considering signing up, and he is confident that many more will do so. Additional exhibitors include companies offering ancillary products and services to Sport Pilots and owners of Light Sport Aircraft. If you are in a SP-LSA-related business and you have not yet signed up to attend the Midwest LSA Expo,

it is not too late to do so, even as you read this article. **Call Chris Collins and book a spot:** (618) 242-7016 office, or (618) 315-5462 cell.

**In addition to exhibits and demo flights, Midwest LSA Expo will offer a full slate of forums and seminars of interest to Sport Pilots, LSA owners and wanabees.**

Roy Beisswenger, of UltraFlight Radio, and current president of the Illinois Ultralight Advisory Council, is in charge of forums and seminars and he promises that there will be plenty of information available for beginners and old salts alike on such topics as the various categories of S-LSAs (i.e., airplanes, powered parachutes, weight-shift control aircraft and gyroplanes), pilot training, S-LSA maintenance requirements, the Federal Aviation Regulations in general and the Sport Pilot-Light Sport Aircraft rule in particular. If you

have questions about anything related to SP-LSA, a knowledgeable person should be there with the answers.

Finally, and of admittedly limited interest to most readers, I think the Mt. Vernon/Jefferson County, Illinois, area would be an ideal place to set up a S-LSA manufacturing/assembly/distribution operation serving at least the Eastern U.S. In addition to the central location and mild climate (average 16 inches of snow annually!), the backbone of the local economy is manufacturing, with the associated service businesses, such as machine shops, etc., and technical educational programs that entails. A well-trained workforce and relatively low cost of living complete the picture of a hard-to-beat LSA manufacturing, assembly and distribution scenario.

So that's it! Whether you're a pilot thinking of taking the S-LSA plunge, an aviation enthusiast thinking of

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training as a Sport Pilot, someone trying to capitalize on the SP-LSA movement with a related business, or a S-LSA manufacturer or dealer, I'm sure you will agree that the place to be October 1-3 is the first annual Midwest Light Sport Expo at the Mt. Vernon Outland Airport, Mt. Vernon, Illinois. Hope to see you there!

*Thinking of attending or exhibiting? Contact these folks for more information:*

Lodging Information  
(800)-252-5464

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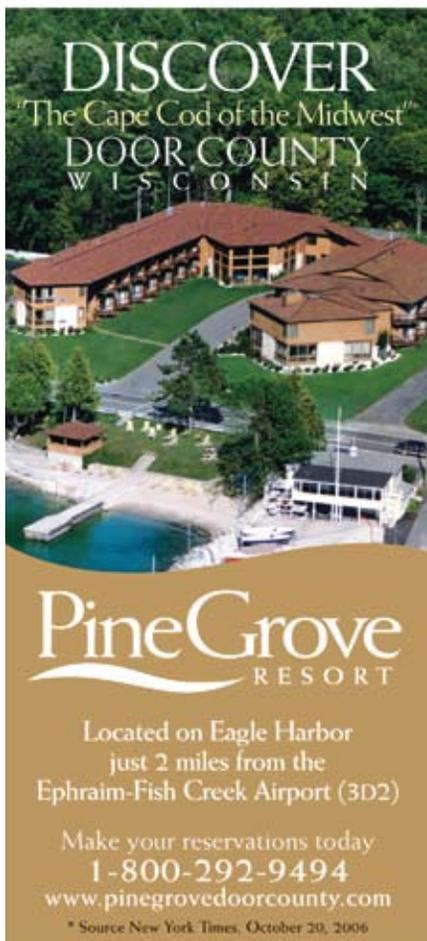
Mary Ellen Bechtel, Executive Director  
Jefferson County Development Corporation  
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Bonnie Jerdon, Director  
Mt. Vernon Convention & Visitors Bureau  
(800) 252-5464

## DESTINATIONS

# Door County's Pine Grove Resort, Ephraim, Wisconsin & The Friends of Ephraim-Gibraltar Airport

by Dave Weiman



**W**e recently visited the much talked-about tourist and recreation area, Door County Peninsula, and flew to the Ephraim-Gibraltar Airport (3D2), Ephraim-Fish Creek, Wisconsin.

The Village of Ephraim, Wisconsin was founded in 1853 as a Moravian religious community. Their church, built in 1858, still stands, as do many other historic buildings including the Pioneer School House (1880), the Anderson Store (1858) and warehouse, and the Anderson Barn (1880). A number of historic homes in the village are still in use as well.

Recreation in the area includes jet skiing, kayaking (Ephraim Kayak Center), pontooning, sailing (Bella Sailing Cruises & Stiletto Sailing Cruises), parasailing in Eagle Harbor, charter fishing at Gil's Rock, and hiking and bicycling everywhere else.

As for more leisurely activities, there's both a drive-in theater (Skyway Drive-In Theatre), and a

theater for the performing arts; an art school, both 18-hole and miniature golf courses (Red Putter Mini Golf); a trolley, carriage and sleigh rides (Mayberry's Carriage & Sleigh Rides); and historical museums. There are evening concerts in the Harborside Park every Monday evening from late June thru August.

For all of you "fly and diners," there are plenty of fine, casual and unique restaurants.

Wilson's Restaurant and Ice Cream Parlor is one of several restaurants in downtown Ephraim, and a classic in itself. Wilson's has been located in the heart of Ephraim across from Eagle Harbor since 1906. Take a trip down memory lane and enjoy their old-fashioned soda fountain and ice cream specialties, home-brewed draft root beer, flame broiled burgers and juke boxes, playing the classics. Open May – October.

Alexander's Dining, located between Ephraim and Fish Creek on Highway 42, is the place to go for hand-cut steaks and fresh seafood.