

Airport Day takes flight

Andrew Richmond
for the Index

Aerobic, parachuting, NASA and air show are not terms typically associated with Kirksville, but they will be this weekend.

The Kirksville Airport Association and the City of Kirksville are hosting the annual Airport Day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday at the Kirksville Regional Airport.

Airport Day, which is much like an air show but on a smaller scale, will feature airplane rides, two presentations by NASA representative Sally Carter, sky-diving demonstrations, aircraft on display and five hours of stunt flying maneuvers called aerobatics.

Brad Bolz, secretary and treasurer of the KAA and a coordinator for this year's Airport Day, said he wants the event to be an enjoyable airport experience for community members.

"With the world in the state that it is today, going to the airport hasn't been that much fun lately," Bolz said. "This is going to be fun."

Last year, 1,200 people visited the airport, and the plane rides were the sole attraction, he said. With the addition of the other events, Bolz said he estimates a significant increase in attendance for this year's event.

"If we can't get three to five thousand people out there for a mock air show, I'll be shocked," he said.

The Wichita Aerobatics Club will perform aerobatics demonstrations that they will use in competition for the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships on Sept. 23 in Texas. Bolz pointed out that the club includes a pilot who placed in the top 10 at the national competition.

Airport Day is intended to encourage the community to take part in a positive airport experience and to raise funds for the KAA. Proceeds from the food vendors and the airplane rides will help finance several projects, he said.

Possible projects might include plaques to thank benefactors of the KAA and other items to improve the appearance of the airport for visiting pilots.

Randy Smith, professor of music and president of the KAA, said Airport Day also will help promote the economic development of Northeast Missouri.

"Corporations, factories and such don't want to locate in an area that doesn't have an airport, and we get a lot of corporate folks," Smith said.

He said the airport is vital to the community, and Airport Day also will demonstrate air travel safety in general.

"[We want to] show people how safe it is, and we want people to experience it by



Phil Jarrett/Index

An airplane sits just off the runway at the Kirksville Regional Airport. The airport is hosting Airport Day from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday with airplane rides, sky-diving demonstrations and aerobatics.

taking an airplane ride," Smith said.

For safety precautions, the airport will be closed to commercial and corporate planes with the exception of one plane that will land prior to the start of Airport Day, because it is too dangerous to have aerobatic planes flying routines with regular air travel.

In terms of other security issues, Bolz said they will have minimal law enforcement presence, but there are no

issues of concern. Bolz said Airport Day is a rare opportunity when visitors can walk out on the tarmac without showing identification or passing through security checkpoints.

"You can bring your toothpaste or your hair gel or any of that stuff," Bolz said. "Nail clippers, fine, we don't care."

David Hall, director of the Kirksville Regional Airport, said special arrangements such as closing the airport and ap-

plying for an air show waiver, had to be made. The waiver permits pilots to fly upside down, do loops, rolls and other aerobatic maneuvers, he said.

"There has been coordination with the Adair County Sheriff's Department, Kirksville Police Department and the Missouri Highway Patrol," Hall said. "And I think everyone's had their thoughts in line about [Airport Day], and we're good to go."

Umbrella group opposes new Wal-Mart in Boonville

Grace Mattie
Assistant News Editor

Citizens in Boonville, Mo., don't think a new Super Wal-Mart is so super, and Greentop resident Jeanne Harding didn't think the Kirksville store particularly benefited the community either.

"I don't remember that there was a big deal at the time when they built the Supercenter because that was kind of a new, convenient thing," Harding said. "I think it was more after the other things were gone that you realized that you don't have them."

Harding said a Kmart, Pamida and several other family-owned stores were put out of business after the installation of Super Wal-Mart, and she wishes Kirksville housed more competitive businesses.

In Boonville, life is panning

in a similar manner. Resident Eldon Bugg joined in a declaratory judgment action approving the annexation of property for the Supercenter shortly after the City Council passed the proposal in August 2005.

"I'm one who likes to know for sure," he said. "I'm not sure if the city did enough research, ... [but] if the facts turn out that it is a good thing for Boonville, I'm all for it."

After the Boonville City Council approved the annex, Wal-Mart hired a public relations firm for advertising purposes, and more than two-thirds of Boonville citizens voted

yes to the annex, according to the Nov. 8, 2005, election results. Bugg said he filed his pleading, which is called an answer, thereafter.

"In this country, you don't have to be a lawyer to stand up for what's right or question what's being done properly," he said.

Bugg said the small population size of Boonville, which is about 7,000 people, simply could not support a bigger Wal-Mart. He said the Wal-Mart that Boonville has now is a good size for their community, and he doesn't find it necessary to build a new one only 200 yards away. He said Wal-Mart is trying to cannibalize other local stores, and he doesn't want to see any closures because of it.

Environmental concerns also arise. Bugg said the private land

Wal-Mart has purchased consists of a spring-fed lake that the store fully intends to build on.

But Bugg isn't the only citizen opposing the building. Citizens formed a group called "Not So Super" last January when Wal-Mart requested about \$500,000 for infrastructure, said Ken Hirlinger, chairman of the "Not So Super" citizen group.

"It wasn't necessarily Wal-Mart per se," he said. "We were kind of an umbrella group."

Hirlinger said the group was more concerned with the inactivity of local business as a result of a new store.

"We really haven't recovered from when Wal-Mart came 20 years ago," he said. "We felt like it was just getting back on its feet, and we don't want that to happen again."

The group also was concerned about the proposed location of the

new store on private land owned by citizen Rick Ball.

"It would be the only Wal-Mart in the world where you'd have to drive up a gravel road," Hirlinger said.

In addition to their efforts, the group brought in Al Norman, a spokesman for Sprawl-Busters Consultants. The company helps local community coalitions on-site to design and implement successful campaigns against megastores and other undesirable large-scale developments, according to its Web site, www.sprawl-busters.com.

Although the group made it clear to the City Council that they had strong feelings about the new store, Hirlinger said they really had little impact on them.

"If you looked up close-minded in the dictionary, last year's City Council would be there," he said.

Hirlinger said he thinks if Wal-Mart is adamant about the new an-

nex, there's really nothing anyone can do to keep it out of Boonville.

"If they do, do it, you want them to do it right," he said.

The group hasn't shown much activity since elections in November.

Originally, Bugg said he had filed his pleading and city counselor Megan McGuire had filed another.

They have since been consolidated, and the parties are going through the preliminary steps.

There was a hearing Monday where McGuire requested the deletion of irrelevant material from Bugg's pleading, Bugg said.

"It's my contention that he is trying to create a legal burden that the city does not have," McGuire said.

The judge hasn't ruled on the motion yet, but Bugg said he should in the next week.

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