

Aviation show to touch down in Greenville

Downtown airport to host event

By Jenny Munro

Staff Writer

jmunro@greenvilleonline.com

The South Carolina Aviation Association is hosting the first Southeast Aviation Show at the Greenville Downtown Airport, the busiest general aviation airport in the state, on Oct. 29.

Craig Fuller, president of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association, will be the keynote speaker at the event. He will discuss the latest issues facing general aviation.

"With the recent FAA shutdown, new proposed taxes on aircraft operations and other political issues surrounding aviation lately, he alone will draw many people with an interest in aviation," said Joe Frasher, airport director of the Greenville Downtown Airport.

SCAA President Eric Ramsdell said he would like to make the event an annual one. The registration fee is \$5 for adults and students and children can attend free.

"We are working very hard to make this event a huge success," he said. "In order to make it an annual event, it must really take off this first year."

The idea came from a trade show held in the Northwest region of the country, which draws thousands of visitors, said Frasher, and planning began a year ago.

The event, sponsored by General Aviation News and Trade-A-Plane, will showcase the latest aviation products, a static aircraft display and educational sessions.

So far, vendors have registered 34 booth displays and 20 static displays.

More are expected to join before the event:

A Cessna 172, Beechcraft Bonanza G36, Beechcraft Baron G58, Highlander, BMW cars, Land Rover SUVs, R44 Raven II 2009, PT-17 Stearman 41, Piper Meridian, Pilatus PC 12, Carbon Cub 55, Diamond aircraft, Cirrus aircraft and more are scheduled for display.

Runway Cafe will sell boxed lunches from a booth at the event, said Frasher. Also, bi-plane and helicopter rides will be available and some of the vendors with static aircraft displays will provide test rides for potential purchasers.

"The aviation community in the Southeast is very strong and we expect a great turnout for the first show," he said.

The Southeast has probably the largest community in the country, perhaps because the region has such good flying weather.

In addition to numerous pilots, including corporate pilots, the region is home to many aviation industries. For example, Greenville-based Michelin North America builds aircraft tires in a plant in North Carolina.

The show offers something for everyone interested in aviation. Aviation enthusiasts can learn how to become a pilot and experienced pilots can learn about the latest technology. A listing of all sessions can be found at www.scaonline.com.