

Airport plans National Aviation Day celebration

By DK McDONALD The Daily News | Posted: Tuesday, August 16, 2016 12:48 am



NATIONAL AVIATION DAY:

Vintage, single engine and jet aircraft will be on display from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Saturday during the 77th celebration of National Aviation Day open house hosted by Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport.

BULLHEAD CITY — Imaginations can take flight Saturday as the Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport celebrates National Aviation Day with an open house.

“We are really excited to open up the airport to the public to celebrate the 77th annual National Aviation Day,” said Jeremy Keating, airport director. “It gives people of all ages an opportunity to not only come chat with a pilot, but to see different types of aircraft, have some free breakfast and enjoy a piece of aviation we should all be thankful for.”

The airport’s third annual open house, from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Saturday at Signature Flight Support (formerly Landmark Aviation), celebrates the anniversary of Orville Wright’s birthday. Signature Flight Support is the airport’s fixed-base operator south of the main terminal, 2550 Laughlin View Drive. Additional parking is available at the main terminal building. While supplies last, there will be free breakfast items and coffee available.

“The history of aviation has come a long way after the past 80 years or so,” Keating said. “For those of us who work at airports and live it every day, aviation is our passion. We want to continue to share some of that excitement with the local community.”

Scheduled to be on display are vintage aircraft including Beech T-34 Mentor and Nanchang CJ-6, single- and multi-engine aircraft, a sail plane, Mig Fighter Jet, and North American T-6 or T-28. Visitors will be able to watch arriving and departing aircraft throughout the morning.

“This isn’t an air show,” Keating said. “It’s a chance for people of all ages to see aircraft up close and to talk to the people who fly and maintain them. The next young budding pilot, mechanic, flight attendant, aircraft designer, airport director or airline executive might be here in the Tri-state, just waiting for his or her first exposure to aviation.”

President Franklin Roosevelt created National Aviation Day in 1939 as a way to celebrate the growth of and advancements in aviation and is celebrated every year on Orville Wright's birthday, Aug. 19.

The Wright brothers made aviation history in 1903 by successfully flying an aircraft with controllers used to help navigate the plane, Keating said. Though the airplane was only in the air for a total of 12 seconds and flew a distance of only 120 feet, the Wright brothers' experiments with fixed flight wings led to the creation of commercial and military aircraft.

"National Aviation Day is a chance for aviation enthusiasts — including future ones — to look at aircraft up close," Keating said. "We invite everyone to come out and have fun." For additional information about the National Aviation Day celebration, call the Airport Administrative Office at 928-754-2134.

The Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport serves the Tri-state, as well as surrounding areas including Kingman and Lake Havasu City. It is one of the busiest non-metropolitan passenger airports in Arizona and Nevada, with over 230,000 passengers making use of the terminal.

Although traditional scheduled service ended 14 years ago, daily service to more than 130 cities in the U.S. and Canada is operated by Sun Country Airlines and Elite Airways with scheduled charter flights for the Riverside Resort and Harrah's Laughlin. The airport continues to seek traditional scheduled airline service to and from Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport.