

Annual Fly-In at St. Louis Regional Airport attracts large crowd as usual

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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EAST ALTON - Planes, more planes and automobiles.

This year's annual Fly-In at St. Louis Regional Airport went according to plan, former airport board President Gene Helmkamp said Saturday afternoon as the day was winding down. Planes of all sorts were neatly aligned on the runway for everyone to admire, and classic cars were across the sprawling green space around the airport.

Each year at the Fly-In, members of the community are invited to a sort of "open house" at the airport featuring both a car and a plane show.

This year, however, two large monster trucks graced the tarmac as well. Bigfoot, a pioneer in the monster truck world with the first tubular chassis, and High Roller II, a classic example of an old school monster truck, were on hand with Jim Kramer, owner of Bigfoot and 2012 inductee into the Monster Truck Hall of Fame.

"Those trucks were pretty huge," onlooker Sarah Welch said. "I can't believe how much monster trucks have changed over the years. I guess a lot goes into that stuff."

The Fly-In lasted until 2 p.m. Saturday, but will continue in spirit Sunday during the Young Eagles program.

That program takes kids curious about aviation on a ride with a pilot with the aims of getting them involved in that career path. The program out of St. Louis Regional Airport is among the top 25 in the country, having taken as many as 7,000 kids on rides.

To be a part of the Young Eagles, parents must accompany and give permission for their children to take part between 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Sunday.

