

Fly Iowa a hit for community

By John Rohlf Herald Staff Writer Sep 26, 2016



John Rohlf/Clinton HeraldCommunity members watch the air show Saturday afternoon at the

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CLINTON — After two years of preparation, a local event promoting aviation came to Clinton this weekend.

Fly Iowa, an annual event held each year in collaboration with a local airport in a community chosen to host the event, was held Friday and Saturday at the Clinton Municipal Airport. Fly Iowa aims to showcase the role and benefits of aviation to local communities and throughout the state of Iowa. Clinton's Fly Iowa event started Friday with a steak fry hosted by the Clinton Area Chamber of Commerce. A fly in breakfast for various pilots, an airshow and several exhibits were a part of the event Saturday. There were approximately five different groups who participated in the air show.

Convention and Visitors Bureau Director Carrie Donaire said event organizers were happy with the turnout, even without having final numbers for the event. She said as she and other event organizers were preparing for the event, they targeted two different groups of people.

"First of all, we wanted to target those interested in the aviation aspect," Donaire said. "And then we also wanted to target families to come to the event. Maybe they were not totally interested in learning more about aviation but were looking for a family-type event to go to. I think we did well in pulling people from both groups."

According to Donaire, the steak fry, which was suggested by Mike Nass, who serves as the Clinton Municipal Airport manager and was also a co-chairman for the event, saw a good turnout to kick off the event Friday. She said event organizers were hopeful for approximately 3,000 to 4,000 people in attendance at the events and said they were happy with the overall turnout. She said weather conditions throughout the day may have limited the turnout during the airshow.

"The cloud cover throughout the day has meant limited visibility for the pilots in the airshow, meaning they could not do certain things they could otherwise do," Donaire said.

Each host town is given the opportunity to name a theme for their Fly Iowa event and Clinton had a Space County, USA, theme, promoting Clinton County astronauts. A video was shown prior to the air show that gave community members an overview of Clinton County's history in aviation and space exploration.

Donaire said she also believes the event will help tourism to Clinton. She said with the Clinton Municipal Airport not offering commercial flights, many people, both in the Clinton community and outside the community visiting, may not know what the Clinton Municipal Airport has to offer to the community.

"I think many people don't even know we have an airport in Clinton," Donaire said. "It was a good chance for people to not only see we do have an airport but also to see what we have to offer right here in the community."

Herald Staff Writer can be reached at jrohlf@clintonherald.com.