

Flight Line revs up to take off

Restaurant and event center soon to be at Anoka County airport

by Heidi Fehring
Staff Writer

BLAINE — According to Craig Schiller, the booming growth of the Blaine and Lino Lakes area makes now the perfect time to launch his aviation-themed restaurant and event center.

A couple of years into the planning process, Schiller is optimistic his concept will begin transforming into reality by this summer.

Flight Line Enterprise, of which Schiller is CEO, plans to open the Flight Line Cafe & Event Center in a 50,000-square foot building at the southwest corner of the Anoka County-Blaine Airport.

Schiller envisions a complex like no other in the north-

metro. Flight Line is able to offer shares of the company's common stock for \$1 each to individuals interested in participating.

"We feel that (SCOR) is the right path to take for this type of project," he said. "People are seeing the growth and potential for something like this."

The company received a bank proposal for financing the construction, but Flight Line must raise 25 percent of the budget before closing on the proposal. Therefore, 925,000 shares are being sold to anyone interested in the venture.

According to Schiller, 20 percent of the shares have been sold, and the company has an additional 40 percent in commitments and pledges.

If all of those pan out, Schiller said the fundraising stretch could be completed within the next few months.

"Progress is moving along nicely," he said.

Schiller, a pilot himself, first came up with the concept of the center a few years ago and created his company to make that concept a reality. He oversees the Golden Wings Museum, also housed at the Anoka County Airport, which holds a collection of vintage aircraft.

As the museum's director, Schiller realized the potential for more aviation-themed amenities in the airport.

Flight Line is overseen by Schiller and two other directors, including former Lino Lakes mayor Harvey Karth. Karth, who used to work for Northwest Airlines, Anoka County Airport, Polar

Aviation Museum and Golden Wings Museum, is a consultant for the company.

The company recently had an ACNelsen demographic survey done of the area, which identified more than 109,000 households within a six-mile radius of the proposed cafe site. Schiller also is hopeful that businesses from the nearby industrial parks and the new Medtronic facility will be attracted to the event center.

And although a Vikings stadium would likely have delivered business to the area, Schiller is not disappointed that the proposed Blaine stadium plans fell through.

"In reality, there's only eight games there a year," he said. "We feel if the city of Blaine develops that area for industrial (purposes), we would have employees and

workers there all year round." Right now, Schiller is waiting for the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) to complete a land release process regarding non-aeronautical use areas within the airport. Schiller anticipates the process to be completed by spring.

Meanwhile, he continually updates Flight Line's website and hopes to spark other aviation enthusiasts' interest in his concept.

"A lot of people within this area are learning about the project and seeing the growth and potential," he said.

For more information, call 763-784-6400 or visit www.flightlinehd.com. For previous coverage of Flight Line Enterprise, visit www.quadcommunitypress.com.