

Aviation school lands here

By SAM HATCHER

An aviation school, one of only a handful or so of its kind in the U.S., is relocating to Lebanon and plans to open by the end of next year, according to its president.

Jennifer Baker, president of the Baker School of Aeronautics, now located in Nashville, said final arrangements are being made to begin the construction of a 10,000 square foot facility in Lebanon to house the almost 35-year-old aviation school.

Baker said the school, which accommodates 1,100 to 1,200 students annually, will be located near the Lebanon airport on Franklin Road on property just east of the Outback restaurant.

The Baker School of Aeronautics, formerly the King School of Aeronautics, was launched in Nashville in 1973 and has been located on property adjacent to the Nashville airport since its beginning.

The school, according to its website, “is designed to prepare the aviation mechanic for his F.A.A. written, oral and practical examinations. In addition, we offer a four day preparation course for the certified A&P mechanic wishing to obtain his Inspection Authorization rating, and weekend preparation courses for private, commercial, and instrument ratings.”

Baker said the relocation move for her school provides a number of advantages.

She said the visibility for the school’s structure along Interstate 40 is important as is also the convenient accessibility to both I-40 and State Route 840 for students enrolled at the school. She also said the Lebanon location is convenient to a majority of the school’s staff. Six of eight school staff members reside in Wilson County.

Baker, who lives in Mt. Juliet and who also serves as director of the school, said students are generally enrolled in curriculums at the school ranging from five days to two weeks.

In the course of a year she said the school will use more than 8,000 hotel rooms in Lebanon to accommodate attending students, adding that 97 percent of the students enrolled at the school are from out of state or out of the country.

The school, Baker said, attracts “all types of students from all walks of life,” including entertainers, country music stars, doctors, lawyers, and even recently a state senator from Montana.

Among those touted as former students of the school are music entertainers Alan Jackson and Aaron Tippin, although Baker adds there have been other famous students enrolled.

Mike Manous, Manous Consulting and Design, a Lebanon architectural firm, prepared the plans and construction design for the new aviation school. Bids for construction on the facility are to be let “soon,” according to Baker.

John Baugh, a member of the Lebanon Airport Commission and a local aviation enthusiast, said the Baker School’s relocation to Lebanon will prove to be an important asset to the community.

He said the school is “well respected” nationally and for more than three decades has been a credible resource in aeronautical education.

Baugh pointed out that among the benefits to be realized from the school being located in Lebanon is the fact that students attending the school will be living in local hotels and spending money in the local economy during their stay.

Other schools similar to the Baker School of Aeronautics are located in California, Texas and Florida.