



## RC flier takes part in cross-country adventure

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LONDONDERRY — When Rich Bono launched a small battery-powered, radio-controlled airplane in Londonderry last week, he was just the 45th of 260 pilots to send the plane on its record-setting, nationwide journey.

As president of the local radio-controlled flying club, New Hampshire Flying Tigers, Bono has decades of experience flying planes and was thrilled to be part of the plane's journey that will take about two years and will cover the lower 48 states.

"I thought it would be fun and good for the Flying Tigers," Bono said.

Bono said it's a little smaller than what he typically flies, at a 38-inch wingspan, but the aircraft handled Saturday's windy conditions well. A typical flight lasts between six and 10 minutes, but, due to the wind, Bono's flight was a little shorter.

Although the Parkflyer is geared more toward beginners, Bono said the plane still has the same complex technology used in his planes that have a wingspan of 5 to 6 feet.

"It's not like the little toy you would buy at Wal-Mart," Bono said of the plane that appropriately wears the stars and stripes of the American flag on its wings.

Nationwide flights of radio-controlled planes have been attempted before, but Bono said this one is a little different because this journey forces each pilot to interact with the one following them. This flight will be the first of its kind when it's completed in Virginia in 2010. It started in the same location in May.

"It's traveling hand-carried from site to site, and at every location it's being flown," Bono said.

Bono was first contacted about the program months ago and picked up the plane in Massachusetts early last week. After a quick safety check of the plane, he was ready to put it up in the air last Saturday at the Derry club's airspace on Auburn Road in Londonderry.

Right after the flight, he drove to Epping to deliver it to the next pilot.

Even though Bono flew this plane by himself, he says he has club members of all ages in the Derry club and that it's a great thing for families to do together.

"With this, it's something that parents can do with their kids, and everyone's involved," he said.

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