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RC plane making journey to 48 states

September 2, 2008 — Labor Day may mark the unofficial end of summer, but it's not the end of the journey for a battery-powered radio controlled airplane.

Since making its maiden flight in eastern Virginia on Memorial Day weekend, the RC plane, a 38-inch wingspan Stevens Aero SQUIRT or Simple, Quiet Reliable Trainer, has visited dozens of fields in about 20 states.

The endeavor, called [Wings across America 2008](#), or WAA-08, is the brainchild of Frank Geisler of Gloucester, Virginia. When he posted his idea online, the endeavor – pun intended – took flight.

According to the rules, the airplane must be hand delivered from pilot to pilot on a list, creating a chain of people — more than 250 have signed up —to fly the model across the United States. So far more about 100 pilots have already flown SquiRT in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and other states.

In the end, the model airplane will have flown in all 48 states and cover a distance of over 14,000 miles. It will end its journey at home field about 12 months after it made its maiden flight.

The model aeronautic community, from child prodigies, weekend pilots, avid aeromodelers, along with Air Force and Army pilots both active and retired, has embraced the idea of flying the plane across America, Geisler told [Aero-News Network](#).

"So many people are willing to help one another to make this happen. The camaraderie is unbelievable," said Geisler. "It's amazing how all of us from many different backgrounds throughout the country have joined to together to make this adventure possible to help promote the hobby and to show our younger generation that there are more things to do with their time between the hours of school and sleep than video games and television."

The flight also coincides with the [Academy of Model Aeronautics'](#) new Park Pilot program that aims to get more people involved in RC airplanes at local parks and



Frank Geisler or Pilot #1, at the beginning of Wings across America.



Pilot #4, left, hands the plane to Pilot #5. Rules of the journey dictate that the airplane must be transferred from pilot to pilot by hand.

soccer fields.

Click [here](#) to see where the RC airplane is now.



Pilot #13, in Founder's Park, Hershey, Pennsylvania. The pilot of record is Colin, 8, who took the sticks after a control and range check with a gentle hand launch at 90 percent throttle. His dad, Tom, also reports that he was able to wrestle the plane and get in a few minutes of flying.

Find this article at:

http://www.youneagles.org/news/archive/2008%20-%2009_03%20-%20Wings%20Across%20America%20Flight.asp

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