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News from Around the Mountain

McCloud man participates in radio controlled Wings Across Ar flight

By Gene Eagle

Mt. Shasta Area Newspapers

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McCloud, Calif. — Controls in hand, Squaw Valley resident Bob Friday had a battery powered radio controlled park airplane off the ground and into the air using less than 20 feet of the runway at his flying field Friday morning. As it climbed ever higher with each rotation, the humming sound of the motor growing softer as it climbed.

“Got it done,” Friday shouted after about a 10-minute flight. As the small plane touched down in a small grassy area halt, then tipped slightly on its nose – a great landing.

Certified as pilot No. 244, Friday is one of 380 pilots nationwide helping to fly the parkflyer in all 48 contiguous Uni Dubbed Wings Across America, or WAA-o8 for short, the adventure is the creation of Frank Geisler of Gloucester, V avid RC pilot, USAF veteran, and AMA leader member who volunteers his free time to help promote the sport of mo

The project was launched during Memorial Day in 2008.

Similar projects have been attempted before, according to a press release. What sets this project apart and makes it having the pilots hand-deliver the plane from one to the other.

The plane designated as a parkflyer will never be shipped by mail to its next destination. This method creates a “cha personally fly, then hand the model to the next pilot all across the United States.

Upon completion, the model airplane will have flown in all 48 states and cover a distance of about 18,000 miles. It v journey in eastern Virginia.

Currently 380 pilots are registered to participate and 240 Academy of Model Aeronautics chartered clubs are hostin

Friday, a model aviation enthusiast for more than 55 years, said the plane was delivered to him on Wednesday by pi Redding, after being flown in his home field.

“I was told to fly when the weather permitted, and today is a beautiful day,” he said.

Friday said “the parkflyer has a wingspan of 38 inches, is a durable little plane; it’s light and flies real nice.”

It’s typically flown in a field such as a local park or soccer field,” he added.

Friday pointed out a few patches on the plane that indicated it had already had a couple of in-flight mishaps somewl way, but said it did not affect performance.

He planned to drive Saturday morning to Medford and deliver it to the next pilot, Calvin Emigh. From there Emigh another pilot in Washington.

All the equipment used for WAA-o8 has been donated by the participating pilots. One pilot, who owns Stevens Aero Colorado Springs, Colo., donated the parkflyer called a "SQuiRT," which stands for Simple Quiet Robust Trainer. Th parkflyer is easy to fly and was built to take the abuse that over 380 pilots can dish out.

Stevens also talked his Horizon Hobby sales representative into donating their newest high-tech radio system to go : plane – the Spektrum DX6i radio. A battery charger was donated by Jeff Williams of SuperFly, and the batteries fro

To ensure the plane survives the 18,000 mile journey in the back of pickups and cars, Steve Griffin of Victor, Idaho, built a custom made travel box for the plane and support equipment.

"The RC community has really embraced the idea of flying this plane across America," said Friday. "I have had the p with many wonderful people participating in this adventure and have never been involved in any activity which has willing to help one another.

"The sense of camaraderie demonstrated by the pilots in this project has been outstanding, and I am humbled by it to be a participant. The RC community is always looking at ways to promote the hobby and introduce the fun, excite learning opportunities this hobby has to offer to young adults. What better way is there than to fly a model airplane

Friday is a member of Jefferson Aero Modelers Club in Mount Shasta.

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