

R/C model aircraft flying across the country visits Fulton

Hundreds of R/C model aircraft pilots from all over the continental United States are lining up to take their turn at flying a little plane called the "Squirt" that is crossing the nation.

"What sets this adventure apart from the others is that the plane can not be shipped. Each pilot must hand deliver the plane to the next pilot in the chain," said Tim Pease, chairman of the Hawks R/C Junior Aviators in Fulton. "The good news is that the little Squirt is now in Syracuse on its way to Fulton."

The Squirt started its 48-state journey Memorial Day 2008 with a flight by Frank Geisler of Gloucester, Va., the man behind the WAA-08 adventure. The plane's journey started in Virginia, went north up the east coast through New England and is working its way across New York State headed for Rochester before heading for the southern states for the winter.

The plane will finish its journey of over 14,000 miles having been flown by several hundred pilots in 48 states before being returned to Geisler.

The Squirt is a 38-inch wingspan electric powered R/C model aircraft donated by Bill Stevens of Stevensaero and designed for small fields and backyard flying.

Steve Griffin of Victor, ID, designed and built the one-of-a-kind wooden travel chest for the plane and support equipment to ensure the plane survives its multi-year journey in the back of cars. The chest is already developing its own character by getting covered with pilots names and locations along with club stickers and other items.

When the Squirt arrived in Fulton Friday, pilots from the two Fulton R/C flying clubs, the Oswego Valley Modelaires and the Hawks R/C Junior Aviators were on hand to participate.

John Hansen, Dennis Redhead, Shane Pease, along with several other pilots and Hawks program junior pilots flew the Squirt before Pease handed it over to Pat Moschiano, a member of the Finger Lakes Air Pirates R/C Club in Geneva.

"The RC community is always looking at ways to promote the hobby and introduce the fun, excitement, fellowship, and learning opportunities this hobby has to offer to our young people," said Pease. "Here in Fulton we have the OVM club and the Hawks youth program but on a national scale what a way to call attention to this great hobby than by flying a model airplane around the United States."