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5th Annual Bell Blast brings happy fliers to Tri-County Area



This still shot of “Bell’s RC” is taken from the video and put upside-up from the actual perspective of the drone at the time of filming. The letters are so huge that the one white dot in the bottom of the “L” is drone-operator Jeff M. Hardison and the other two dots in the other “L” are Kenneth Bell and a gentleman who was asking about flying radio-controlled helicopters. Parts of some letters are missing due to FAA rules on unmanned aerial systems altitude and the type of lens on the DJI Mavic Pro -- nicknamed "The Dragonfly" by a hobbyist pilot.

Story, Photos and Videos

By Jeff M. Hardison © July 2, 2018 at 12:18 p.m.

TRI-COUNTY AREA -- On an undisclosed grassy airfield for remote controlled aircraft, somewhere in the Tri-County Area of Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties, model aircraft enthusiasts from far and near enjoyed the 5th Annual Bell Blast on Saturday (June 30).

<https://youtu.be/S3LOC8KsBU>

In this video, there is no sound and there is no editing. It is raw footage from a flying camera that went up. What people will see is a view of the grass where Kenneth Bell cut “Bell’s RC” into the grass using his mower. There are also some points where other aircraft fly through the view, and there is a look downward where the camera operator is seen on the ground. Also in the video is Bell. The video starts with videographer Jeff M. Hardison giving The Dragonfly (DJI Mavic Pro) a nod.

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Richard Bahmann of Dayton Beach (Ormond Beach too) is seen with a 50 cc Profile Radio-Controlled plane. He builds planes as part of <http://www.wrongwayrc.com/>.

A model plane is seen flying in the upper right corner of this photo. On the ground, although this is an upside-down view of the words is "Bell's RC" cut into the grass by a lawnmower. Kenneth Bell cut the words with no guides, and just by driving on the grass on the ground.



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This aerial view of the area of fun shows an inflatable slide, a bounce house, a tent (which had picnic tables and more under it). Some of the first vehicles are seen in this shot, the gray 2008 Chrysler PT Newser (Cruiser) is facing to the right and can be found by looking above the upper left corner of the tent.



Brandon Stephens, 19, of Starke is assisted with final touches on his Performance Aircraft Unlimited Edge 540 by Gracelyn Arnold, 14, of Lake City. Stephens said he has been involved with flying model aircraft since he was about 5 years old.

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The destroyed plane in the foreground is a Pilot Extra 330. Norman Green, 44, of Lake City owns the plane. It crashed at about 10:20 p.m. on Friday night (June 29). The owner declared the time of its death at 12:28 a.m. on Saturday. Raymond Johnson, 20, of Middleburg was the pilot when this aircraft crashed. Nick Harwell, 48, of Tallahassee accepted the tail fin of the Pilot Extra 330. The remainder of the aircraft was cremated. A photo of Green presenting Harwell with the tailpiece was made, but the camera failed due to one of the buttons being at the wrong setting. (Sorry about that, Norman and Nick.)

Gracelyn Arnold, 14, of Lake City holds a radio-controlled airplane she built. This young lady also flies these airplanes.



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Watermelons and cold drinks are available for guests.

Chris Westmark is seen cleaning a grill Saturday morning. He and his wife Debbie Westmark are neighbors of the Kenneth and Lisa Bell. Mr. Westmark said they have been part of the barbecue crew for years and years, because



even before the Bell Blast there were the pre-hunting season, hunting season and post-hunting season barbecue events.

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This annual gathering is an invitational event to celebrate God and country.

Kenneth and Lisa Bell are the founders and hosts for this relatively big shindig that included hotdogs for lunch, and a very impressive fireworks show after dark.

Kenneth Bell thanked everyone for coming to the daylong and nightlong event, which celebrates American Independence Day.

While the Fourth of July is on Wednesday this year, the Bell family and hundreds of neighbors, friends, acquaintances and other guests enjoyed the fireworks launched on Saturday night. Fireworks are happening on Tuesday night after the parade in Williston, and on Wednesday night in Bronson, and potentially on some other nights.

Only Bronson and Williston sent notes to HardisonInk.com about fireworks.

As for the Fifth Annual Bell Blast, it was once again tons of fun for all who showed up throughout the day and into the dark of night.

By the peak of the cooking aspect of the event, there had been 350 pounds of country ribs barbecued, and 75 packages of Ballpark hotdogs grilled. By fireworks launching time, there were 500 spectators anticipated to be watching a very long presentation of pyrotechnics in the air.

Kenneth Bell thanked everyone who made this event part of their Independence Day weekend celebration. He let everyone know this event to celebrate Independence Day first gives thanks to God, and then to veterans who have helped keep America free.

Independence Day, which also is referred to as the Fourth of July or July Fourth, is a federal holiday in the United States of America.

This holiday in America commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The Continental Congress declared that the 13 American colonies regarded themselves as a new nation, the United States of America, and were no longer part of the British Empire. The Congress actually voted to declare independence two days earlier, on July 2, 1776.