

Sixth Annual Bell Blast is fun despite lower than usual turnout



Not all in the picture, the words “Bell’s RC” are viewed from a few hundred feet in the air. To put the size of this lettering in perspective the light green round spot below the first “L” is hobbyist unmanned aerial system pilot Jeff M. Hardison.

Story, Photos and Videos

By Jeff M. Hardison © June 30, 2019 at 11:09 p.m.

TRI-COUNTY AREA –The Sixth Annual Bell Blast held Saturday (June 29) at an undisclosed grassy airfield in the Tri-County Area of Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties had fewer than normal participants this year, probably due to predicted rainstorms.

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A radio-controlled plane is seen in the upper right of this photo taken from above. There are three men in the center of the photo guiding planes. The green dot at the bottom of the photo is hobbyist pilot Jeff M. Hardison guiding the drone named Dragonfly as it takes this photo.

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This is an aerial view of a radio-controlled airplane flying perpendicular to the ground.



The huge tent at the left provides cover from the sun for several picnic tables and serving tables as well as a radio center to communicate with aircraft. The giant water slide at the right of the photo offers a place to cool down and have fun in the water.

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This radio-controlled plane has a wingspan of about six and a half feet. It is powered by a gasoline engine. It can move very quickly, performing twists, turns and other acrobatic maneuvers.



A radio-controlled biplane makes its moves in the air as a drone appears to be a dark dot on white cloud in the same picture.

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O- Coming at ya'.

Kenneth Bell and his wife Lisa Bell host the annual Bell Blast for people to enjoy flying their radio-controlled aircraft and to have other fun there each year.

This is an invitational event to celebrate God and country.

This relatively big shindig included hotdogs for lunch. Chip, cookies and drinks rounded out the lunch menu.

Children enjoyed a huge inflatable water slide and other fun activities.

https://youtu.be/XoUMK2j_lxI

In this video from the 2017 event, a green radio-controlled plane lands. Then the yellow plane flown by Brandon Stephens, then-18, of Starke is seen during part of its many excellent maneuvers. At one point in this video, Stephens has the plane hovering front facing skyward and it is relatively near to him.

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

This year, three of his pilot friends flew from the Lake City Gateway Airport (KLCQ) for a flyover above the field at the outset in the morning. They trailed smoke, similar to how some pilots did that at the Dixie County Chamber of Commerce event earlier this year at the Cross City Airport (KCTY).

Those three pilots were Allen Rice of Steinhatchee (Dixie County), and two other pilots from Lake City. Rice was on the ground watching that afternoon as the other two pilots provided a fly-by in the afternoon on Saturday.

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<https://youtu.be/Cp9holilwXg>

In this video, two pilots from Lake City who performed a fly-over on June 28, say “Ya’ll have a good day. We’re headed home.” And Kenneth Bell replies, “Roger that.”



Two airplanes flying from Lake City make the turn as they go from being southbound and turn to the east, while they approach the field for a fly-by Saturday afternoon. Dark clouds are noticed behind them.

(The actual time of the fly-over is on the video.)

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The airplanes go to the east into the wild blue yonder after they fly-over.

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People have come to this event from near and far. Radio-controlled aircraft pilots may have checked the predicted rain for Saturday and Sunday in this part of Florida and chose not to chance it.

As the week unfolds, people will find a few opportunities for fine fireworks shows.

Williston set its parade and fireworks for Wednesday (July 3) to avoid having to pay city workers holiday pay, as has been its custom for several years now.

As for Cedar Key, everyone is invited to enjoy the historic fun on Cedar Key and Seahorse Key on July 4, 5 and 6.

On Thursday, July 4, there is a golf cart parade scheduled for noon and Best Small Town USA Fireworks starting at 9:15 p.m.

On Friday, July 5, everyone is invited to celebrate the restoration of Seahorse Key's Light Station. The shops in downtown Cedar Key plan to stay open late. Then people will gather on G Street at 9 p.m. to witness the ceremonial lighting of the beacon on the island offshore from Cedar Key.

On Saturday, July 6, Seahorse Key will be open to the public for free Lighthouse Tours.

Boat shuttles, for a fee, are scheduled to bring people to and from that island as they run half hourly from Cedar Key City Marina from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The last shuttle leaves Seahorse Key at 3 p.m.

Bronson has fireworks scheduled for launch at 9:15 p.m. or so on The Fourth of July.

Sometimes, beach communities in Dixie County send information about Fourth of July events, but this year the Town of Suwannee and Horseshoe Beach appear to have not wanted to attract too many people.

As for the Sixth Annual Bell Blast, it was once again tons of fun for all who showed up.