

DROPPING PUMPKINS ... AND TURKEYS!

The annual Pumpkin Drop at Watsonville Municipal Airport in California on November 6 attracted a crowd of aviation enthusiasts to watch pilots aim for a bull's-eye with a pumpkin dropped from their aircraft. "It's for fun and to get people involved," said Dan Dawson, a Santa Cruz Flying Club board member. "A lot of people want to learn how to fly or are interested, but are unsure how to get started." People can learn to fly. Pumpkins can't. That was the message, basically, for Sunday's annual [Pumpkin Drop](#). The event is geared to highlight the joys of flying and allows people a free flight in a small plane to hoist that old pumpkin out the window toward a target near the runway below. Santa Cruz Flying Club and Ocean Air Flight Services teamed up to host the annual event.



The FAA had no problem with dropping pumpkins, but when turkeys are dropped . . .

The FAA confirmed to the Associated Press that it was sending agents to the Ozark community of 1,300 to sanction any pilots who take part in the annual Turkey Drop. The event involves live wild turkeys being dropped from aircraft onto the town square and, contrary to the horror expressed by animal-rights groups, local officials insist the birds are perfectly capable of gliding to a safe landing on the square. The FAA is staying out of that aspect of the controversy and focusing on the FAR that prohibits dropping anything, winged or not, from an airplane that might harm something or someone below. Turkeys, gliding or not, apparently don't make the grade for that approval so the FAA people are there to try to make sure no one is hurt. "Our concern is always with public safety," FAA spokesman Lynn Lunford told the AP. "We could be talking about turkeys or boxes of paper. It doesn't matter. If you throw something out of an aircraft it can cause damage to people or property on the ground." As for the turkeys, the greatest peril unquestionably awaits them after the drop. . . Lately, the airplanes just mysteriously show up, drop the turkeys, and mysteriously disappear. In the ultimate buzz off to meddling do-gooders, the locals have taken to wearing t-shirts with "phantom pilot" written on them. No one will be the slightest bit surprised if an airplane with smudged N-numbers shows up and gives the FEDs a run for their money.



A wild turkey drops from a plane over Yellville during the 2002 Turkey Trot Festival.

FLASH: TURKEY DROP ABORTED, "PILOT" VOWS RETURN

Thanksgiving feels like the right time to confirm that the town of Yellville, Arkansas, this year did break with tradition and did not punctuate its October Turkey Trot Festival by dropping live turkeys from an airplane ... though it may next year. According to the [Arkansas Times](#), the drop was effectively discouraged when the FAA promised to send observers and to enforce FAR 91.15

An effort by PETA also offered a \$5,000 reward for the identity of the "phantom pilot" responsible for the drop flight. And so, the 2011 Yellville Turkey Trot Festival turkey drop didn't happen. Other popular festival events, the Miss Drumsticks Competition, for example, went on without a hitch. And the phantom pilot, or someone posing as that pilot, has vowed to return, according to the [Arkansas Times](#). (Information adapted from multiple sources October 7, 2011 – November 28, 2011)

USING A PHONE TO FLY A DRONE (W/ VIDEO)

You might recall the article about a \$300 quadricopter drone you could buy from Amazon and with about \$300 more in simple to install electronics surveil your neighbors and even steal their Internet signal. Well, this is not simply a toy, something like it (and probably costing much more because it's for the military) is being used by MIT and Boeing who have developed a smartphone app that allows non-pilot operators to "take charge after just a few minutes of instruction." This is not, in fact, some science-fiction vision of the future — it actually happened this summer. People at Boeing's Seattle research and development center controlling a small rotorcraft, or Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV), as it flew around an athletic field on the MIT campus in Cambridge — some 2,500 miles away. The MIT/Boeing remote flight control system will let more emergency personnel or disaster responders use camera-equipped UAVs for critical jobs like monitoring the progress of a forest fire or safely getting close-up photos of a dangerous accident or disaster scene. The control system designed by Cummings and her students is so simple and intuitive that operators can take charge of flying the plane after just a few minutes of instruction. By comparison, soldiers who control existing UAVs must undergo a comprehensive, months-long training program. See the video: [Small UAV Test](#) (adapted from *EAA e-HOTLINE* November 8, 2011)

PHILLIP TWEETY, INJURED IN MO-PED ACCIDENT REMAINS IN COMA

Many of us have seen Phillip and Janie Tweety on their bicycles riding along Dean's Bridge Road, even in the rain, as well as other parts of the Augusta area. They also frequented Diamond Lakes Regional Park and downtown areas, passing out CDs and pamphlets with the writings of Ellen G. White, a 19th-century Christian writer who



was instrumental in Seventh-day Adventist theology. He and his wife helped others who needed money and mechanical repairs. He flew his foot-launched powered paraglider often at Wrens Fly-ins. A couple months ago someone gave them mo-peds which would save their energy since they were both in their 70s. Unfortunately, on October 8, the last day of the Wrens Fall Fly-in, they were riding on Dean's Bridge Rd., near Fort Gordon, and were hit by a pickup truck. The two, who are affiliated with the Seventh-day Adventist Church, were returning home after a regular Saturday of missionary work. He never participated in the



Janie & Phillip Tweety at the O.B. Brown fly-in May 13, 2011.

Saturday fly-in events. He often cut the grass at the Wrens Airport and gave mechanical assistance to people there. "He didn't see me go over this time," Janie Tweety said of how they try to move from lanes when traffic speeds behind them. "He got hit, and I just screamed and hollered." A witness from EAA 172 said that Phillip was thrown about 100 feet.

Annie Powell, a mobile home park owner who employed Phillip Tweety in 1989, set up a fund to cover medical expenses for the couple who never asked for anything in return. Make a donation to the fund at any Queensborough National Bank and Trust branch in the name of Phillip Wayne Tweety. Powell described Tweety as a "devout Christian man" and frugal spender. Health issues, possibly from a simple vegetarian diet, forced them to stop riding bikes last spring. The couple owned a car but knew gas money lasted longer when they rode mo-peds. Janie Tweety said she will never ride a mo-ped again, but prays she will ride bikes with her husband someday. "I don't want to go home without him. I've been praying. Sometimes, I get downward and think he's not going to make it," she said.

The 74-year old remains in a coma at Medical College of Georgia Hospital. "They just don't know when or if he's going to come out," said Janie Tweety, who was riding alongside her husband and received scratches from the crash. Doctors would like to move Tweety to a nursing home, where he can receive therapy for brain damage. "I want to speak to him. I want him to answer back. I want to give him a big bear hug," said Janie Tweety, who has spent every night beside the hospital bed. "I just don't want to go home. It's not home without him." Her husband reacts to stimulation of his legs and right arm, but he remains on a feeding tube. Breathing assistance was recently removed. "When they move him to rehab, I won't be able to stay and I don't know if I can handle that," Tweety said. (Information adapted from multiple sources October 9, 2011 – November 8, 2011)



DUES ARE DUE!

That time of year has come! Please pay the annual dues of \$30 at the Christmas Party or send a check made out to EAA 172 to:



EAA 172

3076 Old Waynesboro Rd.

Hephzibah, GA 30815-6791

Dues for 2012, paid after December 31, will be \$40!

Sunday, December 11: SOUTH CAROLINA BREAKFAST CLUB At the [Twin Lakes Airpark](#), Ballard's hangar, Twin Lakes, South Carolina (\$17). This will be the replacement for the evening Christmas Party held in the past. Gerald Ballard said that there will be a number of raffled prizes, some of great value! CTAF/UNICOM: 122.9. Arrival: 7:30 - 9:00 AM. Breakfast: Between 9:00 & 9:30 - 11:00 AM. Departure: 11:30 AM.