

## **THE SCOOP**

### **SPECIAL ADDENDUM to SUMMER/FALL 2016 ISSUE of “THE SCOOP”**

November 27, 2016

#### ***MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT***

##### **FAVIA Update**

As many of you know, the year 2018 will be a milestone in the history of lighter than air aviation. On January 9, 1793, the First Air Voyage In America (FAVIA) took place with a hydrogen balloon ascension at Philadelphia, PA, followed by a successful landing in Deptford, NJ. That flight's takeoff, piloted by French Aeronaut Jean Pierre Blanchard, with a small black dog as his passenger, was witnessed by President George Washington, three future Presidents, and Benjamin Franklin, who was present at the first ever manned balloon flight in Paris ten years earlier.

CLAS will be deeply involved in events commemorating this historic flight. In 1993, The Great Eastern Balloon Association (GEBA) commissioned master balloon maker Bert Padelt to construct a replica of the balloon basket flown by Blanchard for that FAVIA flight in 1793 to mark the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that event. The basket was flown under a gas envelope in Glens Falls, NY sometime after the actual anniversary date of January 9, 1993. CLAS subsequently purchased the Blanchard basket from GEBA for approximately \$2500 and presented the basket to the New England Air Museum (NEAM) in Windsor Locks, CT, where it is presently on display. CLAS raised the funds to purchase the basket through raffles.

GEBA and CLAS have decided to help celebrate the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of FAVIA by once again providing the Blanchard basket as the centerpiece of the FAVIA activities in 2018. CLAS members Chris Mooney, Bill Costen, and Mark Sand have met twice with NEAM Executive Director Jerry Roberts to discuss the role their Blanchard basket would play in the commemoration festivities. On behalf of the NEAM, Mr. Roberts has agreed to loan out the Blanchard basket for the events. GEBA will have overall responsibility for the safe handling of the basket and CLAS will transport the basket to the site(s) where the event(s) will take place. To date, the proposed events, with approximate dates are:

- ❑ CLAS will hold a fly out from the grounds of the NEAM on or about the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of FAVIA, January 9, 2018. In order to maximize participation, the fly out may be held

the previous Saturday or Sunday, January 6 or 7. This fly out would also comprise our annual "Frozen Buns" fly out.

- ❑ A balloon glow at the museum grounds may also be scheduled at a different date.
- ❑ The annual CLAS Winter Dinner will be held in one of NEAM's exhibit hangars later in January, 2018, with possible added features such as music and dancing.
- ❑ The Blanchard basket will be moved to the Franklin Institute, a world-class museum located in Philadelphia, PA, sometime in March, 2018, where it will be placed on display to the general public.
- ❑ The Blanchard basket will then be moved to the site of the Balloon Federation of America (BFA) convention, which will be held in Philadelphia March 22-25, 2018, where it will be displayed to the convention attendees (see page 29 of the NOV/DEC issue of *Ballooning Magazine*).
- ❑ Sometime during the convention the basket will be mated with a gas envelope and flown by Bert Padelt.
- ❑ The Blanchard basket will be returned to NEAM following the events in Philadelphia

The year 2018 is also the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of CLAS. In addition to the FAVIA commemorative events described above, we plan on some special events honoring our 30<sup>th</sup> year. Some proposed events are:

- ❑ Fly outs, tethers, glows, and demonstrations at various venues, possibly including Waterfire in Providence, highlighting our 30<sup>th</sup> year.
- ❑ Providing awareness to media with the idea of positive publicity for CLAS.
- ❑ Promotion of CLAS at regional balloon festivals.
- ❑ Prominent display of a new CLAS banner at all club activities and regional balloon festivals.

The activities proposed, both for the FAVIA and CLAS 30<sup>th</sup> celebrations will require a commitment by the membership in the form of personnel and funding. As an example, NEAM requires \$2000 to rent one of their exhibit hangars for our Winter Dinner. To defray the costs involved in these activities, we plan on soliciting corporate sponsorship from the many large corporations doing business in Connecticut as well as holding raffles and utilizing any other means we can think of to fund these celebrations. With sufficient funding in place we should be able to:

- ❑ Move and insure the Blanchard basket

- ❓ Hold our Winter Dinner at NEAM
- ❓ Reimburse CLAS memberships for their expenses incurred for their participation in fly outs, glows, tethers and any other CLAS functions requiring balloon participation (fuel, meals, etc.).

In addition to funding we need the CLAS membership to step up and take a hand in the preparation and execution of our planned activities. We will ask you, the members, for your commitment to our proposed FAVIA/30<sup>th</sup> activities at a CLAS business meeting in the near future. We already have a FAVIA/30<sup>th</sup> committee on the books, but we need more than just 6 or 7 members to make it all happen.

We will send out a reminder shortly before the meeting at which we will discuss our participation – probably the January 19, 2017 meeting, which will give us ONLY a year to pull this off. We CAN do it and make ourselves proud!

Sincerely,

Mark Sand  
CLAS President