

THE SCOOP



Next CLAS Meeting—Thursday, October 18th at 7:30PM Plainville Municipal building (Rte 372)

Business Meeting

Voting on photos for our 2008 Calendar will be conducted at this meeting—please join us and vote.

CLAS Calendar Contest—Get Your Photos Ready!

October will feature our contest for the 2008 Calendar. All members are invited to submit three (3) color or black and white 8”x10” or 8.5”x11” photos for the contest. Photos may be “doctored up” as much as you like. Remember to label all photos on the back with your name, the date the photo was taken, and the location. All voting will take place at this month’s meeting, so please join us and vote. Thanks to Garry Guertin for managing our calendar production again this year. Any questions, please contact Garry at gguertin@cox.net or 860-621-9945.

CLAS Meeting Minutes—September 20, 2007

CLAS President Charlie Perreault called the meeting to order at the Plainville, CT Municipal Building at 7:32 PM. Members in attendance were: Garry Guertin, Tom Murphy, Mark Sand, Rick Silva, Charlie Perreault, Rob Macfarlane, Pam Bogart Macfarlane, Tony Roswell, Clyde Livingston, Mike Bollea, Lesley Pritchard, Kevin Briemann, Lisa Huck, Santo Galatioto, Libby Richardson, Penny Christy, Robert Zirpolo, Kristy Brighenti and Ron Cassidy (guest speaker).

- Rick Silva was welcomed as the newest CLAS member.
- Mark Sand introduced Ron Cassidy as this month’s guest speaker. Ron was invited to the September CLAS meeting to discuss options to be considered when making a home built balloon and/or a remote control balloon. Ron has 18 years experience as a hot air balloon pilot and experience with a repair station. He has been involved in home built balloons for about ten years and to date has build eight (8) balloons and three (3) remote control balloons.
- **Remote Control Balloon:** The sizes to consider would be ranging from 1,500, 2500, 3500 cuft. Ron recommended a good size to be 2,500 cuft. This would require about 100-125 yards (~35 lbs) of fabric at a cost of ~\$5.00/yard. Lower prices for fabric may also be found if we look around. Although any number of gores may be used (6, 8, 16, 24), Ron recommended 16 gores would create a better looking balloon. Ron mentioned he has 12, 16 & 24 gore patterns that could be used. He also has two 1.6 hp fans available at an approximate cost of \$400.00 each. Load tapes are recommended for added strength when building but they are not required for a remote control balloon. Stainless steel cables are also recommended. Remote control baskets can be found on-line at Ebay. They are approximately 18” x 12” and weight about 25 lbs. Total estimated cost to build a remote control balloon is \$1,000 - \$2,000.

- Home Built Balloon: Ron mentioned that to build the envelope for a home built is not much more work than that required to build a remote control. There is, however, many other issues to consider with a home built. Insurance issue could get complicated for a club owned balloon. Ron estimated the cost of a home built envelope to be approximately \$2,500 - \$5,000. Basket, tanks, & burner would increase that cost.
- Ron recommended that CLAS consider building a remote control balloon as a first project. This could be something that everyone could use. If a small group of CLAS members still had a desire to create a home built balloon they could then move up to a larger project.
- A recommendation was made to have one to two people investigate the above costs and make a proposal for the CLAS membership at the October CLAS meeting to either build a home built balloon or a remote control balloon for all the CLAS membership to decide on.

Ron Cassidy's 16 gore, 2,500 ft. Remote Control Balloon

Other Business

- Penny Christy requested authorization for expenses to bring in a speaker for the safety seminar. This will be voted on at the next business meeting. Further discussion on the safety seminar show general agreement to use the same location and food caterer. Tom Murphy mentioned that consideration should be give to the convention which is scheduled for April 2nd – 4th, 2008.
- Santo reminded the membership that officer nominations are needed. Special consideration will be needed for CLAS secretary and treasurer. Jim will send out a communication for nominations.
- Libby requested that anyone that is receiving the Scoop by mail who wants to receive it via e-mail to contact her: libby_rich@yahoo.com
- Garry reminded the membership that the CLAS Calendar photo contest will be held at the next CLAS meeting on October 18th. The requirements are as follows;
 1. Only members that have paid their dues may enter the calendar photo contest
 - a. (you may pay up your dues at the meeting prior to the photo contest)
 2. Maximum of 3 photo entries per member
 3. Photos should be either 8x10 or 8.5x11 (color or B&W)
 4. Each photo is to have the person's name on the back (address labels work great)
 5. Winners of the top 12 photos will be entered into the 2008 CLAS Calendar
- A motion will be made at the next meeting, prior to the contest, to award prizes for the top three photos. Suggested prize recommendations are 1st place to get two tickets to the CLAS winter dinner, 2nd place to get one ticket to the CLAS Safety Seminar, and 3^d place to get one year 2008 CLAS membership paid dues.
- Motion was made by Santo Galatioto to adjourn the meeting and second by Rob Macfarlane. Meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM
- The next meeting will be held on October 18, 2007 at the Plainville Municipal Building. That meeting will be a business meeting.



Respectfully submitted, Garry Guertin, CLAS Member

The Joy of Ballooning

By Mark Sand

We go down to South Carolina every year for Freedom Weekend Aloft (FWA). Our crewmember and good friend Pat, and her husband Gerry, Anderson, SC residents, would crew for us every year. Pat was diagnosed with ovarian cancer a few years ago. She successfully beat the beast back but it returned with a vengeance this year, and in March she was given 3 weeks to live. She defied the docs and was still with us during Memorial Day weekend and FWA. Since the festival was moved to Simpsonville this year from Anderson, Pat was not up to the trip. She did ask if there was any way we could come down to Anderson so she could fly with me. There was no flight scheduled for Sunday AM, so we arose long before dawn and pulled "Mystical Flyer" down to Anderson, and gave Pat and her best friend Dana their ride. It was truly a magnificent experience. It seemed like Pat regained years of vitality during that hour. We landed so gently in the middle of a street in a subdivision we wouldn't have broken an egg if it was under us - a rarity for me! Gerry, Pat's daughter Mary, her husband Steve, and their two children crewed for us along with fellow pilot Mike and CT crewmember Mark. There wasn't a dry eye anywhere to be seen. Breakfast at the Cracker Barrel turned out to be a celebration of Pat's life. As we said our goodbyes and headed back to Simpsonville I'm sure we all felt we had been part of a very special few hours. Pat passed away three weeks later. To add to the magic of that morning, Randy, Pat's good friend, who works for the Anderson Flight Service Station, and would always give us the weather brief at FWA when it was in Anderson, saw us in the air and met us at our landing site. Additionally, when I was on my landing approach, a woman out on her back deck shouted "You gave my son a ride in your balloon yesterday." I thought, "yeah, right." After we landed, here came Steve, who we gave a sponsor ride to the previous day in Simpsonville, 40 miles away. He lives two houses from where we landed in Anderson! It was truly a very, very special day.



*Pilot Mark Sand, Pat, Dana, and Gerry
Photo by Mark Abraitis*

*Article submitted to the Balloon Reflector
Summer 2007*

Adirondack Hot Air Balloon Festival—Glens Falls, New York

By Mark Sand

It was the weekend of September 21-23. The flying weather was great. We didn't get off the ground on Friday night until about 6:20 PM, so we had a short flight - just flew along the runway (1.2 miles) and landed on the grass at the north end of the runway. Saturday morning was foggy so they held us on the field until about 7:30 and then we all ascended pretty much at once (about 100 balloons). The flight was great - landed in a hay field and the landowner invited all who landed there to an outdoor breakfast. Saturday night was a wind and rainout. Sunday morning was one of the greatest flights ever! We could go almost anywhere we wanted to go in an arc of about 270 degrees. Landed in a big field. All in all, one of the best weekends of flying I ever had!

Here's the link to the pictures I took:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/12320005@N06/sets/72157602132377164/>

Here's the link to the pictures Carol and Rick Silva took:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/12320005@N06/sets/72157602139383470/>



Photo by Carol and Rick Silva



Photo by Mark Sand



Photo by Carol and Rick Silva



Photo by Mark Sand

View more photos from a variety of festivals including Glens Falls at
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/heartlover1717/sets/>

Convention Registration to Begin

It's not too soon to begin planning to attend the BFA's first National Convention in over a decade. Unbridled Flight, a 3-day national gathering of balloonists is coming to Louisville, KY on April 4-5-6, 2008. Multiple registration opportunities are planned beginning with:

- Sunrise registration - October 1-31, 2007 - \$175
- Early registration - October 16- December 31, 2007 – \$195
- Registration - January 1, 2008 to convention opening – \$225
- Spouse's registration - \$125

*One family registration available for spouse or child under 18 years of age for each full paid registration. Includes all Full Registration Benefits.



Safety Seminar Only

- October 1 - December 31 - \$125
- January 1 - April 3 - \$150

*Includes all educational programs Friday through Sunday

Registration is available online at bfa.net, at the BFA Booth during Fiesta, and by mail. Three early registrants will win free hotel accommodations at The Galt House in Louisville. One winner will be selected from the Sunrise registrants, then a second and third winner will be drawn at the end of November and the end of December. See You in Louisville!!

Pilot Demographics: FAA Report says there are 10,500 balloon rated pilots in the US??? (courtesy FAA & AOPA)

The FAA has released final pilot statistics for 2006 showing a dip below 600,000. There are now 597,109 pilots.

The average pilot is 45.6 years old. Meanwhile, the average age of new sport pilots is 52.9 years, or seven years older than the total pilot population. The youngest group is the student pilot category where the average age is 34.4 years old. Despite the perception that younger pilots populate the flight instructor ranks, the average age there is 45.2. There are 91,343 flight instructors. The oldest ages are concentrated in the glider rating (37,837 pilots) and balloon rating (10,511 pilots) categories, where the age is 54 years old. Here is a breakdown of other categories: ATP, 144,681; commercial, 130,234; private, 236,147; recreational, 242; student, 84,866; and rotor rating, 41,306.

British Balloonist Sets New Atlantic Crossing Record

British balloonist and adventurer David Hempleman-Adams has successfully completed crossing the Atlantic setting a new world record for the tiny AA6 gas balloon. Adams landed south of Dijon, France on Friday, July 6 completing a 4-day journey across the Atlantic Ocean and establishing a new world record distance of 2,715+ miles for the AA6 gas balloon (37,000 cuft). The previous record of 2,128 miles had been set by a team of Belgian balloonists in the 2005 Gordon Bennett race. Additionally, the tiny 37,000 cuft helium balloon, complete with a traditional open wicker basket built by Bert Padelt, is the smallest ever to fly across the Atlantic Ocean. Adams launched his Toshiba Challenge on July 3rd from St. John's Newfoundland. For more, log on to the official website, www.toshibachallenge.com

Canadian Artist to float giant Banana over Texas (courtesy www.aero-news.net)

The FAA says it has questions about the artist's plans to send a 1,000 foot helium filled banana into the skies over Texas!

"I want to bring some humor to the Texas sky," Montreal artist Cesar Saez explained in a story published Sunday in the San Antonio Express-News. "This will be the largest airship ever built, and it's going to stay in the sky longer than any balloon ever did, using 19th-century technology." Saez plans to launch his mammoth bamboo and paper dirigible -- dubbed, appropriately enough, the Geostationary Banana Over Texas project -- from a site in Mexico in summer 2008. The plan calls for the flying banana to ride the jet stream as it heads east, at altitudes as high as 20 miles above Earth (meaning those on the ground would still be able to see it). The balloon would eventually disintegrate.

And yes, he IS serious. Moreover, he's already raised about a fifth of the estimated \$1 million cost for the project, from such organizations as the Canada Council for the Arts.

"There's no question this is a serious artistic project," said CCA spokeswoman Donna Balkan. "It's a work of public art, but what makes this project unusual is that he's using the sky as his venue rather than a park or street corner."

The organization kicked in \$15,000, according to the Express-News. Michigan-based nearSpace Technology is consulting on the high-flying project.

Saez, who is well-known in Quebec for his public works, compares the stratospheric altitudes his balloon would float across to the high seas -- open to free, unregulated exploration. But to the FAA, it's Class E airspace.

Just how the agency would handle a flying banana, though, is open to debate.

"My first reaction is, are you being taken for a ride? I had some trouble with my folks in Washington, they didn't believe it," said FAA Southwest Regional Spokesman Roland Herwig.

"You can't just put an object over the United States without checking with agencies and organizations," Herwig added. "They'd have to coordinate with the US Space Command and others, anyone from homeland security to the FAA, for something that goes to those altitudes."

A spokesman for Texas Governor Rick Perry says the gov is taking the proposed use of airspace over his state in good humor.

"If it works, people will probably go ape over it," the spokesperson stated. "We have to be careful, though, because putting bananas in orbit could create a slippery situation."



Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta—Early News Reports

Ten Teams Promise Exciting America's Challenge (10/3/07)

America's finest gas balloonists are heading to Albuquerque this week, ready to compete in one of the world's premiere distance ballooning events.

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta America's Challenge race for gas balloons launches, weather permitting, at 6:30 PM on Saturday, October 6 from Balloon Fiesta Park. Ten balloons are scheduled to compete: nine U.S. teams and one Austrian entry. This year's launch will be held in conjunction with a new event, the Twilight Twinkle Glow, beginning about 30 minutes before the America's Challenge balloons are scheduled to take off. That evening is also "Thank You, Albuquerque" night at the Balloon Fiesta, with \$1 admission and reduced Park and Ride rates for spectators.

The object of the America's Challenge is to fly the greatest distance from Albuquerque while competing within the event rules. The team that travels the greatest distance wins. The balloonists often stay aloft more than two days and must use the winds aloft and weather systems to their best advantage. Flights of more than 1,000 miles are not unusual, and the winners often travel as far as Canada and the East Coast. The race is always highly competitive, and this year should be no exception:

- Last year's winner, John "Andy" Cayton, is back to defend his title. Cayton and co-pilot Kevin Knapp made a gutsy flight to central Florida, which included a several hour passage over the Gulf of Mexico. Stuart Enloe, who competed in the America's Challenge with Cayton in 2004, will be Cayton's co-pilot this year.
- Local favorites Richard Abruzzo and Carol Rymer Davis will be in hot pursuit of Richard's fifth and Carol's second America's Challenge wins. They finished third in last year's race.
- The all-Albuquerque team of Barbara Fricke and Peter Cuneo is always competitive, having won the America's Challenge in 2001 and finished second twice. They placed fourth last year.
- After a long absence from the America's Challenge, Albuquerque's Troy Bradley is back in the race, flying as co-pilot to pilot Tom Boylan. Boylan has competed six times in the America's Challenge, and Bradley is a former winner of the America's Challenge (1998) and holds several world records.
- America's Challenge founder Mark Sullivan will be competing with Cheri White. Sullivan and White hold the America's Challenge duration record of 67 hours, 25 minutes.
- This year's only international competitor, Gerald Stürzlinger, is no stranger to Albuquerque. He competed in the Coup Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, the famed distance race, when it was held here in 1999 and 2005, finishing third and seventh. Stürzlinger's co-pilot will be Helmut Meierhofer.
- The rest of the field includes fine pilots easily capable of winning the race. Bert Padelt, who is flying with Louis Vitanza, builds and repairs balloons for a living and built several of the balloons flying in the race. Phil McNutt, the tall Texan who has become a fixture at the America's Challenge, is back; his co-pilot this year is former Balloon Federation of America President Phil Bryant. **J. Michael Wallace and Kevin Brielmann will be competing in the America's Challenge for the ninth time.** Finally, Albuquerque's Bruce Hale is flying in the America's Challenge for the first time since 2004. Hale's co-pilot this year is James Herschend, who like Hale is a veteran of four America's Challenge races. Herschend is also a former winner in the Gordon Bennett (1992).

The America's Challenge is the U.S. qualifier for the Coupe Gordon Bennett. The top three American pilots will earn the right to represent the United States in the 2008 Gordon Bennett. This year's race was cancelled due to airspace issues in Belgium, where the race was scheduled to be held. This means the Federation Aéronautique Internationale will accept bids from cities and countries interested in hosting the event. The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta won the right to host the 1999 race after a similar situation caused cancellation of the 1998 Gordon Bennett.

Launch Order Determined For America's Challenge (Friday, 10/5/07)

Ten competitors are poised and waiting for the start of the Balloon Fiesta's America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race -- but they'll have to wait a couple of extra days to get into the air.

The launch, originally scheduled for Saturday evening October 6, has been postponed until Monday evening, October 8, tentatively at about 6:30 PM. Other weekend Balloon Fiesta events, including the morning mass ascensions, Twilight Twinkle Glow and Balloon Glow, AfterGlow fireworks, and tomorrow night's Marshall Tucker Band concert, are still a "go."

In deciding to postpone the America's Challenge launch, Balloon Fiesta officials determined a delay would make for a better, safer, and more competitive event. Since the gas balloons travel long distances from Albuquerque, pilots have to consider not only the weather conditions at launch, but the weather they will encounter over a two to three-day period as they travel across the country. Weather forecasts indicate that on Saturday and Sunday the balloons could encounter bad weather conditions downrange from Albuquerque within the first 24 hours. By waiting until Monday, America's Challenge race officials feel conditions will be safer for pilots and make for a better race.

At this afternoon's briefing, the launch order was determined by random draw and will be as follows.

Team 1: Andy Cayton / Stuart Enloe

Team 2: Barbara Fricke / Peter Cuneo

Team 3: Tom Boylan / Troy Bradley

Team 4: Richard Abruzzo / Carol Rymer Davis

Team 5: Mike Wallace / Kevin Brielmann

Team 6: Bruce Hale / James Herschend

Team 7: Louis Vitanza / Bert Padelt

Team 8: Gerald Sturzlinger / Helmut Meierhofer

Team 9: Phil McNutt / Phil Bryant

Team 10: Mark Sullivan / Cheri White



Photos courtesy of KOB.com news, Albuquerque



Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society

THE SCOOP

Thanks for your contributions for this month's Scoop: Mark Sand, Garry Guertin, Ellen and Erwin Dressel, and Carol and Rick Silva



Photo by Libby Richardson

Publishing Information

The Scoop is published on a monthly basis prior to the club's monthly meeting on the third Thursday of each month. Submissions for The Scoop are preferred by email to Editor Libby Richardson at libby_rich@yahoo.com. Photos, articles, and ideas are always welcome. Information may be mailed to 380 Hitchcock Road #258, Waterbury, CT 06705 or can be brought to any CLAS meeting. All materials should be to the Editor at least two weeks prior to the club meeting for inclusion.

The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society publishes this newsletter for its members and interested parties. Portions of this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to the writer and to CLAS. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the organization or members of this organization. For more information contact Libby Richardson, CLAS, PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053 Email: libby_rich@yahoo.com; Phone: 203-988-6577

Call for Nominations

This is a call for nominations for CLAS officers for 2008. Officers are: president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Please forward your nominees' names to Election Committee Chairman, Santo Galatioto, by e-mail at santo.galatioto@yale.org. Also, please get your nominees' permission before you submit their names for office.

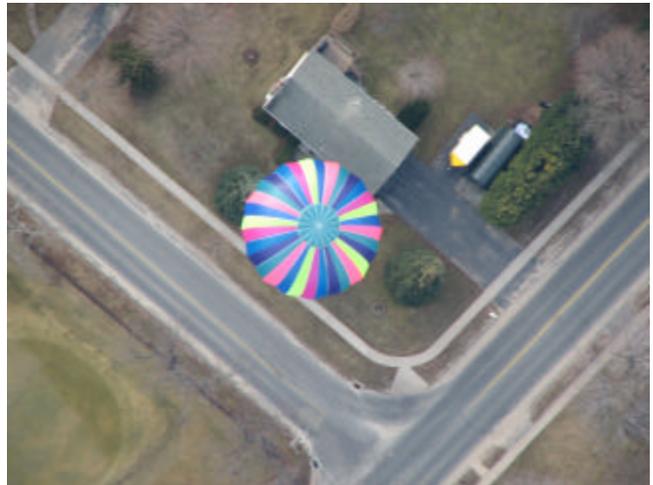


Photo by Libby Richardson

Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society – 2007 Officers

President: Charlie Perreault	860-536-7393	bythefireplace@earthlink.net
Vice President: Santo Galatioto	203-432-9873	Santo.Galatioto@yale.edu
Secretary: Ellen Dressel	203-272-6119	edressel@cox.net
Treasurer: Mark Sand	860-426-0814	mdsand@snet.net

The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society is a club for anyone interested in learning about, participating in, and improving the sport of ballooning. Pilots, crew, and enthusiasts alike are welcome and ALL can contribute to the safety, enjoyment and education of the sport. Meetings are scheduled monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Plainville Municipal Building (Route 372 at Whiting St.) at 7:30 PM. For more information, contact any of the officers listed in this newsletter.

CLAS DUES \$20 include membership privileges and newsletter.
Extra voting family member add \$5
Newsletter Subscription Only \$15 CLAS Member Pins \$5 (\$3 members)
Decals \$2 (\$1 members) Landowner Pins \$4 (\$3 members – limited quantity)

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Crew _____ Student Pilot _____ Private Pilot _____ Commercial Pilot _____ N# _____
BFA # _____ BFA CAAP Level _____ BFA PAAP Level _____
FAA Wings Level Completed _____
Pilot Certificate # _____ Type(s) of Certificate(s) _____

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