

# THE SCOOP



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**Next CLAS Meeting—Thursday, December 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM**  
**Plainville Municipal building (Rte 372)**  
**This will be a business meeting of the club.**

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## **Frozen Bunz Flyout**

*From Robert Zirpolo*

Let me remind you all that the Frozen Bunz Flyout this year (or technically next year) will take place on the weekend of January 5<sup>th</sup>, or 6<sup>th</sup>, as usual, at the Aqua Turf Club in Southington. This year we will not let Jim O'Brien be the first to inflate. For those of us that were present last time, we watched in awe as he actually made it snow as he tried getting airborne before the rest of us. After that day, he has continually received requests to part the Red Sea, make gasoline out of seawater and get cheap tuition at Vassar....three ultimately impossible tasks and he's just not up to it. With that being said, let's remember not to drive on any grassy areas at the Aqua Turf and try not to linger too long or too low around the surrounding neighborhoods, major highways, etc. Breakfast location will be decided on that morning.

Thought for this year....If all CLAS members chose not to show up for this event if the temperature that day is below their age, the field of pilots eligible may be less than 5. Enjoy the holidays and if you need directions or any other guidance give a call. Thanks...Robert Z. 203-250-8441

## **Your 2008 Dues Are Due Soon!**

C.L.A.S. dues for 2008 are due by the end of this coming January. Additionally, numerous members are in arrears for their past dues, in some cases multiple years' worth. Please pay your dues for 2008 in a timely manner. If you don't know if you owe dues for past years, contact C.L.A.S. Treasurer Mark Sand at [mdsand@snet.net](mailto:mdsand@snet.net) or via Snail Mail at 142 Greenmanville Ave., Mystic, CT, 06355. Phone: 860-536-7393.

### **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



**When:** **Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>**  
 Cocktails 6:30 ✧ Dinner 7:30 ✧ Additional  
 Cocktails and Awards Soon Thereafter

**Where:** **Confetti, 393 Farmington Ave (Rte 10)**  
**Plainville, CT 06062**  
 (860) 793-8809 [www.idineconfetti.com](http://www.idineconfetti.com)



***Dinner Buffet***

- Salad
- Roast Prime Rib
- Baked Herb Crusted Salmon
- Chicken Marsala
- Penne Roberto
- Lemon Rosemary Oven Roasted Potato
- Fresh Vegetables du Jour
- Coffee with Dessert

\$ 30 Per Person

**Cash Bar**



**CLAS Business**

- 2007 Officer's Appreciation
- 2008 Officer Induction
- CLAS Awards
  - CLAS Challenge (Pilot Award)
  - Crew Competition
  - Art Laliberte Perpetual Crew Award
  - Judith Ushchak Perpetual Crew Award
  - Long Jump Award
  - Sh\*t Happens ! Award
- Land-owner Dinner
- Raffles
- Door Prizes
- Raffles
- Fun and Frolic



***Reserve your seat at this not-to-be-missed evening of memories, friendship, collegial bonding, and celebration!***

Contact Jude Russell via email: [jude@powerlines.com](mailto:jude@powerlines.com)  
 or phone (860) 216-0696.

Mail checks, made out to CLAS, to:  
 PowerLines, P.O. Box 330025, West Hartford, CT 06133-0025

**Remember to forward your nominations for:**

- Crew Awards to Ellen Dressel ( [edressel@cox.net](mailto:edressel@cox.net) )
- Sh\*t! Happens Award to Robert Zirpolo ( [robertzirpolo@comcast.net](mailto:robertzirpolo@comcast.net) )

## **FAA Wants Your Input on Existing Regs**

### *From the Nebraska Balloon Club*

The FAA today issued a notice of proposed rulemaking requesting comments to identify regulations currently in effect that should be amended, removed or simplified. "Getting public comments is a necessary element of our effort to make our regulations more effective and less burdensome," the agency said. To focus on areas of greatest interest, and to effectively manage agency resources, the FAA is asking that commenters responding to this notice limit their input to the three issues that they consider most urgent, and to list them in priority order. Additionally, the agency wants specific suggestions on where rules could be developed as performance-based rather than prescriptive and on any specific plain language that might be used to clarify rules, as well as suggested language on how those rules should be written. Comments are due by January 14. The FAA will review the issues addressed by the commenters against its regulatory agenda and rulemaking program efforts and adjust its regulatory priorities. Since 1992 the agency has completed five rounds of regulatory review, garnering some 1,350 comments in the process. However, the agency didn't disclose how many regulations have been amended or deleted as a result of these comments.

This is the time for ALL OF US IN BALLOONING to act as one (although we will each need to write individual emails/letters) voice requesting that 14 CFR section 91.119 be rewritten to include balloons in paragraph "(d)" as shown below (the bolded words in paragraph (d) are the added words):

§ 91.119 Minimum safe altitudes: General.

Except when necessary for takeoff or landing, no person may operate an aircraft below the following altitudes:

- (a) Anywhere. An altitude allowing, if a power unit fails, an emergency landing without undue hazard to persons or property on the surface.
- (b) Over congested areas. Over any congested area of a city, town, or settlement, or over any open air assembly of persons, an altitude of 1,000 feet above the highest obstacle within a horizontal radius of 2,000 feet of the aircraft.
- (c) Over other than congested areas. An altitude of 500 feet above the surface, except over open water or sparsely populated areas. In those cases, the aircraft may not be operated closer than 500 feet to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.
- (d) Helicopters and **Balloons**. Helicopters **and balloons** may be operated at less than the minimums prescribed in paragraph (b) or (c) of this section if the operation is conducted without hazard to persons or property on the surface. In addition, each person operating a helicopter shall comply with any routes or altitudes specifically prescribed for helicopters by the Administrator.

I want to encourage you to open the following link to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) and, after reading the NPRM, write/email the FAA your comments about changing § 91.119(d) to include balloons. The link to the NPRM is:

[http://www.faa.gov/regulations\\_policies/rulemaking/recently\\_published/media/29291.pdf](http://www.faa.gov/regulations_policies/rulemaking/recently_published/media/29291.pdf)

(Please note the underline dash \_ in "regulations\_policies" & "recently\_published" as they may not print clearly when this is printed).

**REMEMBER! YOUR COMMENTS ARE DUE BY JANUARY 14, 2008!**

While you are writing you comments, please consider these points –

- If you are a Balloon Aeronaut, mention the grade of your certificate, the number of years you have been flying balloons, and your total flight time in balloons (it lends credibility to what you are about to say).
- Mention the fact that balloons can be operated at these lower altitudes with an "equivalent level of safety" – in fact, use that exact phrase.
- Mention the difficulty and additional hazards when attempting to land a balloon if you are required to descend from a high altitude (talk about the micrometeorology involved in a long descent).

- Mention that there has historically been no increase in accidents/incidents resulting from balloons flying at lower altitudes in FAA Waivered events. The balloons have been operated with an equivalent level of safety to persons and/or property on the surface. The accidents/incidents that occur in these events take place during takeoff or landing – where § 91.119(d) does not apply.
- DO NOT write a single letter and have several people sign it. It only counts as ONE LETTER.
- DO NOT write a letter/email and give it to several people to copy and sign/send in.
- DO NOT talk about “being fair,” “It’s our turn,” “We deserve this...” and the like. The focus group that will review these documents with consideration to rewrite § 91.119(d) will not be concerned with any of that.

Their concern is the SAFETY of persons and property on the surface. Also remember the easiest thing the FAA can do is maintain status quo – and leave § 91.119(d) as it is presently written. We have to convince them that we are able to conduct flight operations at lower altitudes without compromising that safety!

Please take the time to open and read NPRM 29291. We all realize this comes at the beginning of the holiday season and each of us has additional things on our schedules. However, this is the first chance we have had to give the FAA some input about § 91.119(d) and we cannot let JANUARY 14, 2008 slip by without comment. I believe if enough of us comment about this, the FAA will seriously consider amending the paragraph, whereas if we do nothing, we have demonstrated that we are not unhappy with the regulation as it is currently written.

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Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society

# THE SCOOP

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*From the Editor, Libby Richardson*

Happy Holidays to friends near and far! Looking forward to more fun in 2008!

Kevin Brielmann reports **Gene’s Restaurant in Southington in closing**—make sure to say goodbye to our loyal friends at the restaurant before it’s too late!

**Thanks for your contributions for this month’s Scoop: Penny Christy, Mick Murphy, Robert Zirpolo, Mike Bollea, Mark Sand, Kevin Brielmann**

### 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, Southington, CT 06488-0053 Email: libby\_rich@yahoo.com; Phone: 203-988-6577

## **Balloon Photo Contest Winners Named---and it's one of our own!**

www.poststar.com

Organizers of the Adirondack Balloon Festival have announced the winners of their annual photo contest. About 150 entries were submitted for judging under two categories, adult and youth, said Walter Griskot, executive director of the festival.

The grand prize winner was Deborah D'Onofrio, of West Haven, Conn., who won for her photograph of an inflated, tethered balloon at the Moonglow event held each year in Lake George. Moonglow is held at night, allowing the balloons to "glow." For her photo, D'Onofrio won a hot air balloon flight with pilot Mark Donahue aboard his "Family Affair" balloon.

The adult first-place winner was Andrew Jacovia, of Kew Gardens. First place in the youth category was awarded to Erin Colby, of Levittown. Alan Cederstrom, of Queensbury, was the organizer of the photo contest. "Many of the entries were superb photos of the balloons, which made the selection process especially difficult," Cederstrom said in a statement. D'Onofrio's photo was especially skillful because during the Moonglow, balloons were only inflated for a very short period of time before winds increased and forced pilots to deflate, according to Griskot. "We're looking for originality. We've seen so many balloon photos that we're looking for something different. And they have to be sharp," said Cederstrom, who has been organizing the photo contest since the festival began. Cederstrom said the three local photographers who acted as judges also looked for color and composition. "People want to look at the photos and say 'Wow!' when they see it," Cederstrom said.

The winners are allowed to choose their prizes through phone calls, with priority given to the top winners and trickling down to the fifth-place winner, Cederstrom said. Prizes for adults this year included a Bogen Manfrotto tripod, a luncheon cruise for four on the Lac du St. Sacrement, an overnight stay and breakfast for two at the Holiday Inn Turf at Lake George, a cruise for two with Shoreline Cruises and an overnight stay and breakfast for two at Ramada Inn.

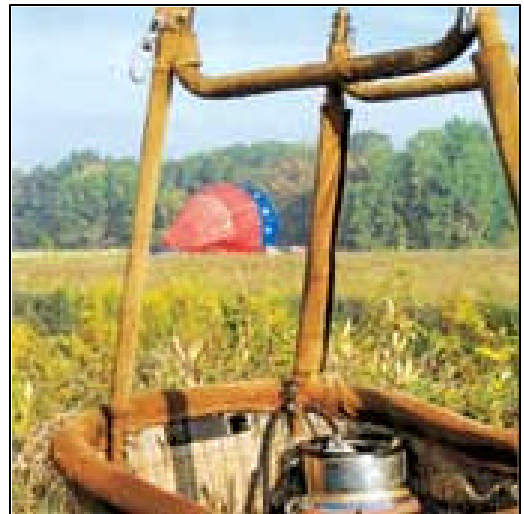
Other winners in the adult category were second place, Cindy Colby, of Centerport; third, David Zack, of South Glens Falls; fourth, Peter Hubbell, of Marshfield, Mass.; and fifth, **Beverly Theodore, of Weatogue, Conn.**

The same criteria used in judging the adult photos applied to the youth photos, Cederstrom said. The other winners in the children's category were John Lines, of Queensbury, who won second place, and Corey Smith, of Fort Edward, who won third place. "We just wish we had more entries," Cederstrom said. There were only three entries in the youth category this year.

The most popular youth prize in the past has been the month of make-your-own sundaes from Stewart's Shops, Cederstrom said.

The other prizes were rodeo admission for two youths and two adults at Painted Pony Rodeo in Lake Luzerne and miniature golf for six at Pirate's Cove.

Congrats Bev Theodore! See the winning photos at <http://www.adirondackballoonfest.org/>



*Bev Theodore's winning photo*

## **2 from Colorado Killed in Balloon Crash**

www.9news.com

HAMPTON, Iowa – Both men who died when their cross-country helium balloon crashed in central Iowa on Friday morning were from Colorado. According to the Franklin County Sheriff's Office, Thomas Boylan, 62, was from Fort Collins and Bradley Brookhart, 37, was from Littleton. Both men were pronounced dead at the scene. They were traveling with 58-year-old Doug Chaplin from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Chaplin was listed in fair condition Friday night at a hospital in Mason City, Iowa.

The accident happened about 9:15 a.m. The crash scene is about three miles southwest of the Franklin County town of Coulter. The balloon was one of two helium craft launched Wednesday night from Greeley, that were attempting to set a new world endurance and distance record. Franklin County Sheriff Larry Richtsmeier says the balloon flew over Nebraska and was on its way to the eastern U.S. The balloons apparently had set down in Omaha Thursday night and were over Des Moines shortly after daylight Friday. The balloons intended to fly to a destination in eastern Iowa by nightfall Friday.

The accident was reported to Franklin County law enforcement authorities about 9:30 a.m. Friday. The whereabouts of the second balloon was not accounted for at mid-afternoon Friday. A spokesman for the group in Greeley that launched the balloons said the group would have no immediate comment but would release information later. Meanwhile, the debris from the Friday morning accident was strewn across a Franklin County farm owned by Delvern Korth.

"Witnesses said they saw the balloon come across the sky and watched it get caught on the top wire of a power line," Sheriff Richtsmeier said. "Then it just dropped." Richtsmeier said the wicker basket carrying the men plummeted to the ground, dumping the men and their belongings into a farm field. The basket was packed for a long-distance trip, officials said, including helium tanks. Boots, clothes, backpacks and coolers littered the field around the basket. The balloon separated from the wicker basket when it hit the power line. The basket landed below the power lines; the balloon was found about a mile away in a corn field.

Korth's wife Marillyn said the basket landed about one-half mile from the Korth farmhouse located at 110th Street and Finch Avenue. "A neighbor called us and said there was a balloon going north in the sky. That was exciting for us, so I went to the picture window and watched," she said. "Then I saw the balloon start to veer and it just took off. I was going to put my shoes on so I could go out and wave at them," but at that point my son told me to call 911." She had called her son Jon, who was in a nearby field, to watch for the balloon. Jon told her "the basket just dropped. Call 911."

Marillyn Korth said "they (the balloon) were moving fast and they seemed low." She said "at first, I wasn't sure it was a weather balloon. Then my son told me there were three people in the basket." Marillyn Korth said she went to the site and saw the basket tipped over on its side with a parachute flapping in the wind. She observed the bodies and the single injured person while making the emergency call. "It's sad to hear that people lost their lives," Korth said.

Witnesses told officials that the balloon was gradually losing altitude before it struck the power lines. An investigator from the Federal Aviation Administration was at the crash scene at mid-day Friday as government officials try to determine what caused the balloon to lose elevation and crash. Calls to the FAA regional offices in Chicago were not returned Friday.

Sheriff Richtsmeier said the men fell about 50 to 60 feet to the ground after the basket was torn loose from the balloon. He said their deaths were "consistent with blunt force trauma." The sheriff said of Chaplin, "He was hurting really bad. All we know at this point is that he has severe leg injuries."

Reached on her cell phone late Friday afternoon, Boylan's wife, Margo, said she had no comment.

Shannon White, co-owner of Mountain Breeze Ballooning in Fort Collins, said he would have likely been in the balloon basket with Boylan had his wife passed on the message Boylan left on their answering machine Tuesday asking White to join him. "I'd probably be dead right now," White said. "She just forgot to pass along the message. Usually she is on the ball about that. I think my angels were looking out for me. That's all I can figure because I'm sure I would have been right there. It's not my nature to turn down a flight."

According to a phone call Boylan made to the Coloradoan on Tuesday inquiring about the possibility of coverage of his flight, he and a friend, Troy Bradley, were going to launch two balloons from Greeley on Wednesday evening. Boylan said he was going on a training flight. Paperwork found in one of the men's pockets indicated they had left Greeley on Wednesday and spent Thursday night in the Omaha, Neb., area. They were flying beneath a helium balloon, rather than a more common hot air balloon inflated by air warmed by propane burners.

White of Mountain Breeze Ballooning said helium balloons are more difficult to control than hot air balloons. Helium balloons only have ballasts to release to adjust elevation. Hot air balloons have ballasts and heated air blowing into the balloon to adjust elevation. Boylan had more than 20 years of experience piloting balloons. "It takes a lot of time for a helium balloon to respond," White said. "I'm sure that had a lot to do with it."

On Friday morning, there were high scattered clouds and winds of 15 to 20 mph, Richtsmeier said. Investigators from the sheriff's office were at the scene Friday afternoon and officials from the Federal Aviation Administration had arrived to assist in the investigation. White said Boylan was an excellent pilot who was respected and willing to help others. He never flew with Boylan in his basket but went to events where Boylan flew.

"My best memories of Tom were up at Snowmass," White said. "We used to tailgate after flying and it was a lot of fun. He was a great guy. It's like losing a family member."

### **Club Photo Gallery**



*A pretty morning at the Aqua Turf in 2005  
Photo from Mike Bollea*



*Adirondack balloon festival  
Photo by Pete Hubbell*

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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Will accept newsletter electronically? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**(Default will be electronically unless notified otherwise.)**

**CLAS Membership Info:**

Single (\$20) \_\_\_ Family (\$20) \_\_\_ Extra Vote (\$5) Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter Only (\$15) \_\_\_

New \_\_\_ Renewing \_\_\_

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) \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks payable to CLAS and mail to: CLAS PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053**



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