



THE SCOOP

Next CLAS Meeting  
Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:30PM  
Plainville Municipal Building

Don't forget your photos for the 2010 Calendar Contest!  
See details in September's Meeting Minutes.

Please join me in welcoming husband and wife pilots Jason and Heather King to Connecticut. We look forward to seeing you in the sky soon!

Congratulations to pilot Garry Guertin who purchased his first balloon. Looking forward to seeing you in the sky soon!

#### Save These Dates!

CLAS Winter Dinner: January 30, 2010

CLAS Safety Seminar: February 27, 2010

More details to follow from CLAS.

GEBA Safety Seminar: March 13, 2010, Rutgers University



#### CLAS is Going Green

To save money and save a tree, CLAS is going green. Now, we know some of you on the snail-mail Scoop list have email (you know who you are). Did you know it costs more than \$1 per issue to print and mail the Scoop each month?

CLAS' board of directors along with Libby Richardson, the Scoop Editor, are going to make every effort to make the Scoop available online, make announcements via email, and more! **If you do not have email, you must notify Libby by December 31<sup>st</sup> that you want the Scoop by mail.** You may contact her at [libby\\_rich@yahoo.com](mailto:libby_rich@yahoo.com) or at (203) 988-6577. Otherwise, you will be removed from the snail mail list and will be expected to view the Scoop online on our website at [www.lighterthanair.org](http://www.lighterthanair.org).

**Thanks for your help in making us green!**

## Minutes – CLAS Meeting of Sept. 17, 2009

CLAS President Mark Sand called the meeting to order at the Plainville Municipal Building, at 7:35 PM.

**Members in attendance were:** Garry Guertin, Mark Sand, Tony Philpin, Kevin Brielmann, Rob MacFarlane, Tom Murphy, Pam Bogart MacFarlane, Rick Silva, Tony Roswell, Terri Rollinson, Libby Richardson, Carlos Kebe, Charlie Perreault, Santo Galatioto, Lisa Huck, Penny Christy, Thad Burr, & Robert Zippolo.

There were no minutes to approve from the last meeting due to the meeting being replaced by a CLAS picnic at the Dressells. A good time was had by all. THANK YOU, Erwin & Ellen. Two new members, Jason & Heather King, came to the picnic.

**Sunshine Committee:** Card was sent out to Jim Regan.

**Education Committee:** No report

**Nomination Committee:** Members are to send nomination ideas for CLAS Secretary to Erwin Dressel.

**Audit Committee:** No report

**Competition Committee:** No report

**BFA/FAA Committee:** No report

**Treasurer Report:** Penny reported the current balance is as follows:

Bank Statement for August 31, 2009 \$5,999.82.  
Plus \$20 membership added on Sept 9.  
\$101.08 spent for the picnic, not all check have cleared

Current total is \$6,019.82 in Checking.

\$6,253.52 in CD's

Grand total is \$12,273.34

*Photo by Libby Richardson*



**Old Business:**

**Reminder that the CLAS radio station authorization expires 11/06/2013.**

Authorized frequencies are: 151.62500 (MHZ) for 35 units at 50 watts  
and 151.62500 (MHZ) for 51 units at 5 watts

**A Red Zone was re-communicated to the membership** from a previous e-mail sent by Erwin. Located at 553 Laning Street in Southington is the CIRCLE G STABLES INC. From the air the Stables are located just south of Hawks Landing Golf Course. (Once called Patton Brook Country Club) It's bordered on the East side by an apple orchard, on the West side by one house and Pleasant Street. The barns and house are red and pretty ram shackled. There is not much for wood fencing so if the horses were in the barn a pilot may not realize horses

Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society, PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053

were there. They have had problems in the past and are pretty upset at this point. Word to the wise, STAY CLEAR! (Reference a June 02, 2009 Jim O'Brian e-mail)

### **New Business:**

**CLAS Non-Profit Status** - Garry confirmed, with Mick's help, that the current CLAS tax status is IRS Subsection: 501(c)(7) – A social or recreation club. CLAS is not required to submit yearly taxes. CLAS has been exempt since Sept. 1989. Note that contributions made to CLAS are NOT deductible on taxes.

**The 2010 BFA CLAS Safety Seminar** is scheduled for Feb 27, 2010. Mark your calendars or just buy a 2010 CLAS calendar. Lisa Huck recommended that the CLAS safety seminar be held at the Yale Divinity School. This was accepted by the membership and Lisa will clear it with the dean. Noted speakers will be Gordon Shrontkowski, Keith Sproul, Santo Galatioto, and Darrel Smith. Libby will investigate Veneziano's as a possible caterer.

**2009 CLAS Photo Contest will be held at the next CLAS meeting on Oct. 15<sup>th</sup>**. All CLAS members are allowed 3 entries. Photo entries should be 8 x 10 or 8.5 x 11. Sleeves will be provided. A motion was made, seconded, and passed to dedicate the December photo to Mike Bollea. There will be a second contest to determine the best Mike photo. Each CLAS member may enter 1 Mike photo for the December picture. The suggested theme is "Santa", although any Mike photo will be accepted. To be clear, 3 balloon photos plus 1 Mike photo (total 4) may be entered. Electronic files of all winning photos will need to be sent to Garry Guertin at [gguertin@cox.net](mailto:gguertin@cox.net). 2010 CLAS Calendars will be targeted to be on sale at the November CLAS meeting.

**Anyone interested in attending the Liberty Balloon Ground School should contact Bill Hughes** at [theballoonman@optionline.net](mailto:theballoonman@optionline.net). Bill is putting together a Liberty Balloon School weekend for the winter months.

**2010 Winter Dinner Targeted for January 30, 2010.** Discussion was held on possible new locations. Penny will investigate possibilities in Middletown, CT. Robert was nominated to organize the Dinner. Congrats Robert.

Motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40

Tony & Terri will bring refreshments to the next meeting on October 15, 2009

Respectfully submitted by Garry Guertin, CLAS Secretary



## Minutes – CLAS Meeting of July 17, 2009

**Members in attendance were:** Mark Sand, Garry Guertin, Charlie Perreault, Rick Silva, Penny Christy, Tony Roswell, Al Theodore, Bill Costen, Santo Galatioto & Lisa Huck.

**This month's meeting was dedicated to Education & Safety.**

### **A fan safety demonstration was held by Mark Sand & Charlie Perreault**

Mark & Charlie brought their fans which were set up for demonstration in the parking lot. Mark went over the various annual maintenance procedures for a fan which included oil and air filter changing. Proper spark plug maintenance was also demonstrated on Charlie's fan.

Wind speed checks were conducted for the fans that were there. Due to in-coming weather conditions the demonstration to establish wind speed mapping of a fan was cut short. Perhaps that could be completed another time.

The attendees adjourned inside for continued discussions and refreshments.

**The Aug. 2009 CLAS meeting is cancelled** and was replaced with a picnic at the Dressel's. A big thank you goes out to Erwin & Ellen for hosting this year's CLAS picnic. The next CLAS meeting will be on Sept. 17, 2009.

Erwin & Ellen are signed up to bring refreshments to the next meeting on Sept. 17, 2009.

Respectfully submitted by Garry Guertin, CLAS Secretary

### **Adirondack Balloon Festival**

**September 25-27, 2009**

Photos by Libby Richardson



## **From The Scoop Editor, Libby Richardson**

### **CLAS is GOING GREEN!!**

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CLAS' board of directors and I, the Scoop Editor, are going to make every effort to make the Scoop available online, make announcements via email, and more! **If you do not have email, you must notify me, Libby Richardson, the Scoop Editor, by December 31<sup>st</sup> that you want the Scoop by mail.** My contact information is below. Otherwise, you will be removed from the snail mail list and will be expected to view the Scoop online on our website at [www.lighterthanair.org](http://www.lighterthanair.org).

Questions about this—drop me a line at [libby\\_rich@yahoo.com](mailto:libby_rich@yahoo.com). Thanks for helping us to go green and save some green in the process!

### **What's a girl to do when it's raining and balloons aren't flying? Well, she helps build a house!**

Extreme Makeover: Home Edition was in Suffield, CT from June 21-28 to build a new home for the Hill Family including mom, dad, and 11 children, nieces and nephews. The episode will air on Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 8 pm on ABC. Watch for me as I yell for designer Didiyer to "Get on the Bus" to make a difference in the community as I bring a group of volunteers to the Salvation Army of Greater Hartford. Watch for light blue shirts, like mine on the right, and you'll know it's me.

**Thanks for your contributions for this month's Scoop: Garry Guertin, Penny Christy, Jim Regan and Beth Miller.**

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:libby_rich@yahoo.com); Phone: 203-988-6577*



## **In The News**

### **Some Flights**

By Jim Regan

After being in the sport for 23 years and a pilot for 18 of them, you'd think there wouldn't be much I haven't done. Well this morning I did a first and I gotta tell ya, I'm still smiling from the results.

This morning I had the opportunity to take a 92 year-old gentleman up for his first balloon flight. Robert Atkinson lives in a senior independent living facility and submitted his request for a balloon ride to their "Experiences of a Lifetime" program. This was a lifelong dream of his and even though he's now legally blind, he still wanted to fly. Here's a quote from the media release: "Although I may no longer be able to see the sights from high in the sky, I can still feel the wind on my face, feel peacefully weightless as the basket floats silently along, and hear, smell and feel the roar of the fire as the balloon rises," said Atkinson.

We rigged & secured a chair into the basket so he could sit if need be, but he only used it for about 1/2 the time we were aloft. It was a beautiful fall morning as we launched from New Britain, headed over the Shuttle Meadow Reservoir & Rogers Orchard, and then over the neighborhoods of eastern Southington before landing on Pleasant St.

He thoroughly enjoyed his flight and was a true pleasure to have aloft with us. He'll tell you he has a sarcastic wit and he used it on me a couple times to the delight of everyone around. Just a great person to have on-board with us and hopefully we'll get some photos up on here shortly.

THANKS Bob for allowing me the opportunity to fulfill your dream and for making this flight special for me too.

### **Dress Your Family In Eurostar Remnants and Virgin Hot Air Balloons**

A couple years ago, we were all able to live our greatest dream of wearing repurposed airline seat covers, thanks to Worn Again, which turned worn-out covers from [Virgin Atlantic](#) planes into bags and accessories. To read more, click [here](#).

### **Pilot in fatal hot-air balloon crash launches lawsuit**

The pilot of the hot-air balloon that crashed into a Surrey trailer park two years ago has filed suit against the balloon's designers and manufacturers. To read more, click [here](#).

### **Summer's calling editorial**

A short story about a hot air balloon

[http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2009/07/hunterdon\\_county\\_democrat\\_edit\\_3.html](http://www.nj.com/hunterdon-county-democrat/index.ssf/2009/07/hunterdon_county_democrat_edit_3.html)

### **YouTube video clip**

Check out this video of a repo of two hot air balloons

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUtUdX1\\_v\\_0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUtUdX1_v_0)

**Check out the CT Ballooning group on Facebook.** Lots of pilots and crew are members including Jim Regan, the group's founder, Erik Albrycht, Jude Russell, Mick Murphy, Jim O'Brien, Ron Thornton, and more!

**Did you know we have some great photographers in our group of friends?  
Look what I found on Facebook!!**



September Ballooning  
Photos by Jude Russell



Adirondack Balloon Festival  
Photos by Carlos Kebe

## Analogy of an Insurance Claim

### (3 Part Series)

#### Part I – What is an Insurance Claim?

**By: Beth Miller, IMC Balloon Agency**

*Please note: I represent IMC Balloon Agency. Each insurance company and contract (ie: policy) differ, so please call your agent and discuss claim definitions and procedure if you are not currently with IMC Balloon Agency.*

To define a claim, we may look under the dictionary and find several appropriate definitions: “Notification to an insurance company requesting payment of an amount due under the terms of the policy” or “Legal demand or assertion by a claimant for compensation, payment or reimbursement for a loss or injury due to negligence” or “A request or demand for payment in accordance with an insurance policy” etc.

What does all that mean in real life terms and scenarios?? Hopefully, this series of articles will help sort out all the ‘fact and fiction’ surrounding hot air balloon insurance and claims.

Many balloonists may be surprised to know just what kind of occurrences result in a claim. We are all aware of passenger injury – any type of injury to a passenger (whether the passenger is a ‘paying passenger’, crew person, friend, family member, etc) should result in a phone call to your agent. **Remember, your agent is on your side!** Always call to discuss with your Agent anything that happens that causes you concern or your sleep is disrupted. No matter how insignificant it may be, your agent will professionally advise you on how you should proceed and/or whether or not a claim should be submitted to the company. That is the job of your Agent.

Here are some other common claims:

- Passengers injured entering & exiting the gondola
- Propane leaks – during storage, refueling or during flight
- Damage to your balloon in a car accident during transport – basket falling off a truck bed or trailer and dragging behind the vehicle. Not only can this cause damage to the balloon, but can cause a car accident!
- Injury while loading and unloading your equipment to pilot/passenger/crew – do your novice passengers ‘help’ with inflation or deflation??
- Improper packing-up of equipment: moisture, insects, novice crew or passengers damaging equipment
- Crop damage.....property damage....livestock damage (domestic deer farms are now the new rage)....etc

Unfortunately, the list of claims go on and on.....

What is a ‘claim’ to YOU?? This is not a ‘catch me if you can’ type scenario and should not be treated as such. Be proactive!! In some instances, there are many symptoms of a ‘claim’ prior to the claim happening. Be aware...be alert....be conservative. Any doubts about flying, go to breakfast instead!

Be aware of the fact that the most frequent and expensive claims are liability claims. This not only includes your passengers, but your crew. As I am sure everyone is aware that balloon equipment mishandled or handled by inexperienced crew (or passengers acting as crew) can be very dangerous. As the Pilot-in-Command is ultimately responsible for any injuries, realistically you can not see (nor be) everywhere at all times, that is



where an experienced crew chief is invaluable. Some pilots refuse to fly without their crew chief being present. How do you achieve safe inflation and flight?

The most common cause of passenger injury is ...you guessed it...high wind landings/hard landings. What most novice passengers do not realize is that “what goes up, must come down”! To the general public, hot air ballooning looks like the most docile sport (which it certainly can be!) not realizing the inherent dangers that exist. It is up to the Pilot-in-Command to educate his passengers and crew. Waivers and written briefings are essential to the survival of the sport we all love....I will discuss these in Part II.

Fact: high wind landings or hard landings are the cause of the majority of passenger injury claims. Some of these can be avoided, and some can not. Injuries occur when passengers (& pilot) collide with each other or hit equipment in the gondola, flip out of the gondola (then hit by the gondola), etc. Crew commonly are injured in trying to stabilize a high wind inflation and/or landing balloon. Do you have a procedure in place for immediate medical and emergency response ?

Here is an interesting quote from Tom Reusse’s “Flying Safe” book:  
“THE FORCE AT WHICH YOU LAND INCREASES BY A FACTOR OF FOUR (4) EVERY TIME YOU DOUBLE THE WIND SPEED.”

***“OK.....with the above fact in place, you are going to bounce and drag twice as hard and long at twelve (12 ) knots as you would at eight (8) knots – that is only a four (4) knot margin for error.....AND it’s a four (4) knot change that could mean the difference between a SAFE landing and a TRAGEDY for an inexperienced passenger. IF you are serious about ‘flying safe’, you will put the WELFARE of your passengers FIRST - FORGET about yourself, FLY IN WINDS YOUR PASSENGERS CAN HANDLE.”***  
*(Ref “Flying Safe” 3/15/1987)*

Fact: Many claims result from injuries entering and exiting the gondola. How many pilots recognize the importance of the passenger being able to climb into the gondola, and climb out of the gondola without assistance? In an emergency situation, this could be the key to not only avoiding a potential injury but to a life being saved. Should this be a **requirement** of the Pilot-in-Command prior to flying any passenger or crew???

Fact: currently, due to our indulgent and aging society , the highest risk factors are the passengers that are overweight or “older” passengers. Even a ‘perfect stand-up’ landing can result in injuries to these folks. I realize that this is an extremely delicate area for any pilot and I will address ways that other Pilots have handled this situation in Part II.

Fact: In the last 10 years, many more claims are happening during balloon rallies and events.....why? Peer pressure? Pressure from the events to fly? Pressure from the events to fly passengers/sponsors? Poor event organizing or management? Too many balloons? Inexperienced and low-houred pilots involved? Not enough landing areas? Out of state pilots not familiar with weather, flight conditions or geographic conditions of the event site? I have heard all of these reasons cited....your thoughts?

Yes...claims are part of life, whether you are walking down the street or flying a balloon. This litigious world is a bit different than it was 20 years ago! There are actually people that make their living from suing insurance companies and they are looking for a ‘easy’ target – don’t be that target!

*(Part II will address: Avoiding a Claim and/or Submitting an Insurance Claim)*

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 Police Department, 19 Neal Court, Plainville, 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 \_\_\_\_\_

(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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