

The Quick Release

February
2023
Issue 2



**REGISTRATION
OPENING SOON!**



BFA Camp registration opens March 1, 2023

Balloon Experience not required.

We have five camps this year, offering plenty of opportunity for children 13-17 years old to learn all aspects of ballooning safely, including what is required to become a pilot!

Please go to [Junior Balloonists - Balloon Federation of America \(bfa.net\)](https://www.bfa.net) for details.

2023 BFA Youth Balloon Camps

Hot Air Balloon Traditional Overnight Summer Camps

Southeast Camp - Cordele, GA
June 20th – 25th, 2023

Rio Grande Camp - Albuquerque, NM
July 8th – 13th, 2023

High Sierra Camp - Reno, NV
July 16-21, 2023

Hot Air Balloon Event Camps
DinahSoar Camp - Vernal, UT
Aug 24th – 26th, 2023

Spirit of Boise Classic Youth Camp - Boise, ID
September 1&2, 2023

All dates & details are subject to change.

To inquire about how you can contribute,
Please contact Katie Griggs at youthprogram@bfa.net





All BFA Camp pages will be combined into one please see all BFA Camp pages and information on Instagram and Facebook now at the "Balloon Federation of America Youth Program" page.



BFA On-line seminar will be released on April 15, 2023.

Registration begins that day as well. You will be able to purchase and view at your convenience.

Speakers and Topics

Shannon Rote: Flight Operations

Dr. Alan Kozarski: Class Two Medicals

Scott Wooge: Preparing yourself or a student for a check ride.

Ed DeVore: Pilot Decision Making

Ryan Carlton: Weather

Tony Sandlin: Crew and Passenger Management

Gordon Schwontkowski: Accidents

From the President....

The BFA has received several calls from sport and commercial balloonists expressing concern over the recent shutdown of the Chinese (spy) balloon. The public needs to know more about this from a balloonist's perspective and the concerns brought about throughout our industry are credible.

What our members can do to help is forward the attached press release to all of your local TV and radio stations for their review, or access via this link <https://tinyurl.com/ShootBalloonPictures>. You may be asked to comment or interview about this press release on the air and if you are not comfortable with doing so, please refer the reporter to our BFA office and we will respond to the interview request.

While this has quieted down some since the initial shutdown, there is still concern that balloons may be shot at as our season for flying fast approaches. More information provided to the public is better than none and the BFA would like to stay at the front of this issue until the public concern is reduced.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Best Regards,

Pat Cannon
BFA President





PRESS RELEASE

Shoot Balloon Photos, Not Balloons!

The Balloon Federation of America strongly suggests calling local authorities if you are unsure of what you are seeing in the skies above.

For Immediate Release

Indianola, February 23, 2023: Regarding the recent US military downing of assorted balloons across North America, the Balloon Federation of America urges all Americans to let authorities determine the status of any object they might see floating overhead.

"We're friendly - don't shoot!" says Pat Cannon, president of the Balloon Federation of America which promotes the sport of ballooning for thousands of pilots who fly hundreds of thousands of passengers in gas and hot air balloons.

"Most modern manned gas balloons are white to minimize daytime thermal gains and strongly resemble the round downed Chinese balloon when observed from the ground" says Cannon. "Unfortunately, both gas and hot air balloons most often fly below 10,000 feet and well within the range of most high caliber rifles." All four balloons shot down by the US military were unmanned.

Balloons fly year-round but warming spring weather increases the number of flights. Because of the current fixation on shooting down spy balloons, balloonists from across the nation are expressing concern that they may be mistaken for an unmanned or hostile balloon and shot at.

"Shooting at ANY aircraft is a federal crime – period," says Cannon. "You don't own the airspace over your house. Your shots will backfire – you're endangering the public, you can't claim self-defense, and you will certainly face federal and civil charges," he continues. "Don't do it!" Contact your local non-emergency 911/311 to report anything of concern and keep shooting photos/video until you get a stable image/video zoomed in as close as possible.

Sport gas balloons are flown frequently in the US. The Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race has been an annual global tradition held almost uninterrupted since 1906. Gas balloons annually launch and race from Albuquerque, NM attempting to fly the longest distance and duration. While distances and directions vary yearly, winds generally take these balloons easterly over many states and even well into Canada's northern provinces.

Hot air balloons by contrast are better distinguished as multi-colored, more elongated in shape, and heated a few times per minute with propane burners.

Manned sports balloons have been hit by rifle fire in the past, so far without injury. However in 1995, two American pilots manning a hydrogen-filled gas sport balloon participating in the Gordon Bennett Race in Europe were shot down by a helicopter after entering Belarus airspace. Both pilots perished.

Gas balloons are filled with either helium or hydrogen, the latter being highly explosive if not handled correctly. Gravity, however, is indifferent to a balloon's manned or unmanned status.

Photo Credit (left to right): China, unknown. Middle, Alyssa Sullivan. Right, Gordon Schwontkowski. Viewed from the ground, the Chinese spy balloon closely resembles US manned sport gas balloons and, to some degree, manned hot air balloons which fly much more frequently and at lower altitudes throughout the US.

To learn more about Lighter than Air travel, please visit the Balloon Federation of America's website at <https://bfa.net>



The National Balloon Museum

**Open House
Saturday, March 4th
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**

Presenting the new exhibit portraying the first flight in 1783 in France. Designed, painted, and built by Jean-Pierre Lair from New Mexico.

The program will begin at 2:00 pm with Jean-Pierre and his wife, Lydia in attendance to tell the Montgolfier story and answer questions.

This is a great honor for Indianola and the National Balloon Museum.



Public is welcome, Free admission.

**UPCOMING
EVENTS**

Organizers & Balloonmeisters

It is time to submit your event and seminar information to the BFA for publication on the website.

Go to www.bfa.net click on Event then to Submit Calendar Event. Once we receive the information, we will update your information and update you once it is complete. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact Denise (515) 961-8809 or via email at bfaoffice@bfa.net

WELCOME new members



Jacob Little
Jesse Harden
Eric Smith
Rebecca DeSantis
Laura Meaders
Shelly Biemel
Michael Kirkpatrick
Scott Hughes

Glendale, AZ
Colorado Springs, CO
Centralia, IL
Albuquerque, NM
Reno, NV
Nashville, TN
St John, WA
Cheyenne, WY

Alex Franklin
Timothy Kerns
David Migdal
Jewel Cutter
Alex Augustad
Bondina Kirkpatrick
Peter Asp

California
Lincoln, IL
Candler, NC
Albuquerque, NM
Sioux Falls, SD
St John, WA
Sullivan, WA

Renew Your Membership

The BFA's membership renewal just got easier! You can now sign up for Auto renewal when you are renewing your membership.

Log on to [BFA Home - Balloon Federation of America](#) and choose **Edit Membership** in the top right corner to renew and set to automatically renewal.

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Balloon Federation Of America

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