

# Touch and Go

BALLONS OVER IOWA

July - August, 2005

## Maiden Voyage Column

*At the May BOI meeting a motion was made & passed to initiate a "Maiden Voyage Column" - to memorialize maiden voyage flights. Everyone who has a Maiden voyage - new balloon, new used balloon, new pilot, new rider, new crew, etc is welcome to write an article for the newsletter. An amendment to the motion was added that a penalty of 1 keg to be provided to the club if no article is provided within 2 editions. So, here is the first article in this new column:*

Patti Todden, Nevada, IA

To all of you who have known me for many years—and others—this is a story a long time coming. March 3, 2005, I completed the training (successfully) for my private license for Hot Air Balloon.

Shortly after returning from New Mexico, we ordered my new balloon. The design was one I have envisioned since my first ride back in the early 80's in Ottumwa. A new idea was the cat, since I am very much a cat lover. (The pattern with the manufacturer is now "Patti cat") Also, the main color was changed from blue to yellow, as it is a happier, brighter and good to glow color. Now if I could just get Dodge to make a yellow van.....I have had a particular name in mind, just in case, but when I saw the first picture of the finished balloon, I said to myself, "My dream has come true", SO, "Patti's Dream", happened.

June 1st, We picked up the balloon from Bill, Louise and Phil, and headed home with a BIG smile on my face. Then, lousy weather and other pre-made plans happened.

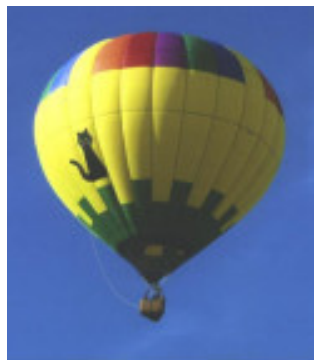
June 16th, A great calm evening, the crew was called and we took the balloon west of the house and finally got to take it out of the bag. We got it inflated – along with lots of sandy soil — and tethered for awhile. It really did rise nicely for the occasion. What a wonderful feeling!!!!!!!!!!!!

June 18th—5:30 a.m.—the crew arrived, pibal goes up—and the time has come for the maiden flight of "Patti's Dream". We go south to find a spot to carry us back to the home place. That spot was the new aquatic park in Nevada. The sky was beautifully clear and winds calm. I had to make a potty break - age or excitement. Good thing McDonalds was

just across the way...The balloon was laid out, fans started and my stomach was aflutter with butterflies. This was a day I had waited for, for nearly 25 years..

All went smooth and the balloon set up. MY BALLOON!! With ME under the burner...Everything was ready, I was ready, Richard was ready, I took a drink of water, the tie down was released and UP, UP and away I went. 6:40a.m. I was sure to let anyone within earshot know that this was my first flight in MY new balloon. The feeling had to be close to having a baby; a milestone I never got to know. This was IT!!!!!! My baby.....

The chase crew got smaller and Nevada and Story County spread out below. There was a slight NE drift, and then it turned due north. The lower turned west, which was great as I was going over power lines and wanted to come down and skim the fields toward west a bit. The crew was now coming up the gravel road below. I radioed Richard to be sure he was getting pictures. Uh—no camera in the



**Patti's Dream**

van..WHHHAT!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I told him to go on up to the house and get one since I would be there for awhile. About then as I was descending, a horse ran out of a barn ahead and was skittish, so I heated and rose way above, which is where the winds were going east. So much for ground tracking today. The crew was back with me and I asked for another pi-ball so I could check the lower winds as I was starting to think about landing. Guess what..no one could tie the balloon and I was past them by now. No big deal, I needed to get over the next set of power lines before landing anyway. Then the left was gone so on up the road we went. By now a

neighbor farmer had rushed across the miles to watch and join in the fun. He said he passed a county policeman sitting at an intersection; doing close to 100, or so it seemed, but another neighbor that was watching called him and let him know the police car was still sitting and not following. Bill was as excited as anyone when he was there as I landed, 8:10 a. m. and they all came out to help

(continued Page 5)

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## Letter from President Meika

Hello to all my friends!

I'm writing this on the 4th of July, and feeling very patriotic. I heard Mom and Dad talking about how fortunate we are to live in the USA. We can plant almost any crop we want, can fly a hot air balloon nearly anywhere and can belong to organizations that have secret handshakes. (Cousin Bill has been trying to teach me one).

Once again, I'm disappointed that I couldn't go to the Carlisle parade. Dad stayed home with me this year to guard the farm, but I suspect it had something to do with the morning rain.

The 4th is a wonderful time for family. The Balloonport and pool had a lot of BOI friends stopping to visit throughout the day. This is not an official BOI event so I had no Presidential duties to perform. Actually, I had a great afternoon nap. Early evening we saw one balloon on the horizon, but couldn't identify who it was. This year I stayed up for the gala fireworks display. Wow, it's almost as good as a mass ascension.

The year is now half over, and the Classic will soon be here. I hope many of you will stop by the Balloonport to visit, or to just find an envelope bag to lay on for a good nap. Let's all look forward to great weather, and of greatest importance, be sure to:

Fly Safely,  
*Meika*

## Letter from Vice-President Sandy

By now, balloon rallies are going strong. Many have attended Waterloo, Galena, Ottumwa, Clinton, Madison and many others. Hopefully, everyone has gotten some flights in. Will be looking forward to reading many of the reviews and seeing photos from these events.

The National Balloon Classic is fast approaching as well. From what I have heard, the 2005 Community State Bank National Balloon Classic should be another fun and exciting week. Now, let's hope for some good flying weather and a little less hot/humid weather. Meika and I are planning to come out to the Classic some time during the week. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone again.

The 4th of July holiday is just a week away. I hope every get to spend time with family and friends.

We can not forget the folks who are serving our country right now. Have a safe 4th of July.

Well, need to finish up my article here. The Radcliff bank is just about ready to open and it looks like several people are in need of some banking. Hope this finds everyone doing well.

Take care,  
*Sandy Drake*

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From: Norris Automotive,  
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## Maiden Voyage Column (continued from page 1)

pack up and load up. He is the President of the new Lincolnway Energy ethanol project and gave us permission for several other good landing / take off spots, providing we call him so he can come watch and help. I landed just about ½ mile east of our house instead of west I had hoped for. Total flight 6 miles.

Richard needed to get on to farm work, so my crew, Kari and Travis and I went into Nevada for breakfast. I had a great Alaskan waffle (Belgian waffle topped with fresh strawberries and ice cream with whipped cream, too). Of course.....what a great finish.....

I took lunch to Richard in the field and then went on into Ames to develop the digital shots Richard took and turn in the roll I had taken along the flight...I pulled the trailer along with balloon to show off and was fun telling all about my morning....

By now my energy level had dropped drastically, so I headed back home and put it all away and took a long nap..The only low part of this all was my folks didn't get to see the first flight, but when Mother heard how high I had gone, she was glad she didn't..hahhaa...She will be my first passenger when the time is right and maybe she will get to see it wasn't so high.

My day was awesome and looking forward to my 2nd plus many, many, more flights in Patti's Dream. A real dream come true!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I want to send very BIG thanks to all who helped with this happening:

- ☺ Ralph and Donna for my first balloon and the trips Ralph made up to the farm for training flights.
- ☺ Bill Griffin for letting me crew and pick up pointers and for a couple flying lessons along the way.
- ☺ John Jensen for coming by one evening and giving me my first official lesson on how to's.
- ☺ Brian Freeman, who started it all for me...
- ☺ The many Club members who encouraged me along the way, those were great helps.
- ☺ Dave Smith who gave me the training in Rio Rancho, New Mexico .
- ☺ Ray Bair, FAA, who tested and passed me for my license in New Mexico.
- ☺ Bill and Louise Clemons for building a beautiful balloon, along with Phil Gray who was there when I had my first ride many years ago.
- ☺ And most of all, I can't say a big enough thanks to Richard Swanson, my guy, for all of his support and financing of this wonderful dream he made come true.

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU  
AND THANKS AGAIN.....Patti T.

## Happy Birthday

### August Birthdays:

Mendi Borts	8-2
Todd Netley	8-2
Amy Williams	8-2
Jen Nordhagen	8-3
Jena Erger	8-3
Al Appenzeller	8-4
LeRoy Clair	8-4
Matt Fenster	8-4
Christine Clemons	8-4
Kathy Schmidt	8-5
Carla Brinker	8-5
Jesse Smith	8-5
Jenny Bridgewater	8-5
Dan Bertsch	8-6
Gary Fouche	8-8
LaVerna Edmister	8-8
Alex Oponski	8-8
Mark Fisher	8-9
Elizabeth Stefani	8-12
Sarah Stefani	8-12
Michelle Craig	8-13
Sharon Foltz	8-14
Terry Garrett	8-15
Mike Blevins	8-15
Pam Hadley	8-16
Cynthia Nutting	8-16
Sheelagh Owen	8-16
Ariel Williams	8-16
Allison Hade	8-17
Jon Danielson	8-19
Paul Schneider	8-21
Jeff Bridgewater	8-21
Emilee Norris	8-21
James Thompson	8-23
Katie Mitchell	8-26
Eric Kennedy	8-27
Julie Ricke	8-27
Brandon Pieper	8-28
Deb Nollen	8-31

### September Birthdays:

Monica Thompson	9-2
Nathan Ziino	9-4
Thad Bloom	9-4
Corrin Clemons	9-4
Caitlyn Clair	9-5
Celsey Clair	9-5
Bill Sponsler	9-5
Wendi Anderson	9-6
Hailey Schmidt	9-7
Tedd Maxfield	9-8
Joel Worthington	9-9
Ron Nollen	9-9
Steve Jones	9-10
Mark Harris	9-11
Georgia Oakes	9-11
Melinda Worthington	9-12
Michael Hadley	9-13
Cathy Clair	9-14
Eric Brown	9-16
Bailey Marhoun	9-16
Karin Riepe	9-18
Adena Worthington	9-19
Anna Schirn	9-20
Becky Wigeland	9-20
Tricia Kruse	9-20
Cory Lamb	9-20
Gerald Conklin	9-21
Robert Nutting, Sr.	9-22
Carolyn Holland	9-23
Eric Carlton	9-24
Alyssa Craven	9-24
Wayne Wasson	9-24
Brian Seymour	9-25
Teresa Purdy	9-26
Rita Fromm	9-26
Gil Wigeland	9-27
Dan Corbin	9-27
Jason Jones	9-27
Madison Rubin	9-28
Jeremy Rubin	9-28
Mike Reinert	9-30
Michele Corbin	9-30
Tiffany Anderson	9-30
Jennifer Delaney	9-30



Dear Balloonists,

I am writing to invite any and all of you to our first ballooning experience to be held in conjunction with our city's annual celebration, "Old SOD Days", September 16-18, 2005. Our celebration includes a car show, softball tournaments, kids' games, variety show, photo contest, parade, lunch stands, pancake breakfast, live music, etc. Prairie's Edge Casino near Granite Falls, MN will be helping to sponsor this event which we hope will put the excitement back into our annual celebration. (Belview is a small community in southwestern Minnesota situated between two casinos and a gateway to the beautiful Minnesota River valley.)

Our plan is to get a commitment from at least five balloonists by August 1, so accommodations can be made and sponsors set up for each balloon - more would be very welcome! If you have any ideas or suggestions to help this event "get off the ground" please contact Mayor Marlo Sander at [kimarlo@redred.com](mailto:kimarlo@redred.com) or call 507-938-4140 as soon as possible. We want this event to happen! Please share this information with anyone who may be interested.

Hope to hear from you soon,

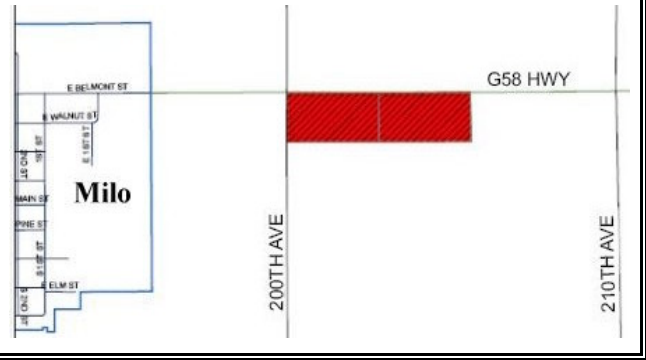
Marlo

### Congratulations

- ✓ Jeremy King received his Private license May 20, 2005
- ✓ Brylee Suezanne Anderson, born May 17th 7lb 10oz 19 ½" long. She is excited for her first National Balloon Classic (hopefully by then she will not cry when she hears the burner).
- ✓ Bob & Penny Pieper have received their new balloon - tentatively named "Fliegvergnügen"
- ✓ Patti Todden has received her new balloon - "Patti's Dream"
- ✓ Rich Jaworski has received a new balloon. Rumor has it that Rich's new balloon is not red and white, but instead white and red.

From John Jensen:

**Here is a NEW shaded PZ east of Milo - new because of NEW Livestock. We have added this to the upcoming event map.**



### Happy Anniversary

Tom & Julie Ricke	8-4	Allan & Mandy Keller	9-4
Fred & Judy Schoening	8-5	Aaron & Amy Foelske	9-5
Jerry & Rosa Tierman	8-9	Marv & Joyce Blevins	9-8
Paul & Valerie Craven	8-13	Rob & Erika Nutting	9-20
Dan & Jeanne Wiley	8-14	Bob & Penny Pieper	9-25
Mike & Julie Herman	8-24		
Al & Mel Appenzeller	8-26		
Wyman & Mendi Borts	8-27		



### The Way It Was

#### 25 years ago in BOI History:

- ★ 8-80 Nationals: Two gas balloons piloted by Maxie Anderson and Joe Kittenger launched Sunday 8-3 from Indianola. Mr. Anderson was forced to land in a lake in Wisconsin during a thunderstorm. Mr. Kittenger landed safely in Rio, Wisconsin. They were among 8 gas balloons in Indianola this week for the first-ever gas balloon race. Six gas balloons launched Tuesday 8-5. These 6 pilots were: Dewey Reinhart, Fred Hyde, Dave Medema, Bob Penny, Ed Yost and Don Piccard; Steve Jones of Texas was first place in the Nationals.

#### 20 years ago in BOI History:

- ★ July 1985 – Rob competed in World Championship in Battle Creek, Michigan
- ★ 1985 Nationals: Shapes – Tony the Tiger & Uncle Sam; New Director – Nick Saum of Golden, Colorado; #1– Al Nels. #2 – Bruce Comstock, #3 – Ed Bowles, #4 – Rob Bartholomew, #6 – Jim Thompson.
- ★ 7-21-1985 Dennis Firestone received his Commercial license.
- ★ 7-27-1985 Bill Clemons received his Private license.

#### 15 years ago in BOI History:

- ★ 1990 National Balloon Classic: Balloonmeister – Jim Christiansen; Special shapes – Sinclair Dinosaur and Hog Heaven; Winner – Jim Thompson
- ★ 8-31-1990 Mike Reinert received his Commercial license

#### 10 years ago in BOI History:

- ★ 7/10/95 – Benji Clemons received his private pilots license on his 16th Birthday.
- ★ 7/14-16/95 Ottumwa: 19th Annual; 35 pilots; 2 flights. #1 Dave Tallant #2 Pat Fogue #3 Mike Hadley. Sherry Allsup presented with an award for 18 years of flying in Ottumwa

- ★ 7/22-23/95 Grinnell - 12th Annual - 14 balloons. Balloonmeister - Jeff Holmes; 2 flights; #1 Dennis Firestone #2 Terry McGonegle #3 Paul Randleman
- ★ Mark Weeks is new BOI "Touch & Go" Editor
- ★ 7-22-95 Joe Thompson & Monica Fromm married
- ★ July 23 - Weatherman's flight - 10 balloons flew from the Golf & Country Club.
- ★ July 25 - Media flight across DM - Bill Griffin, Rob Bartholomew, Jim Fromm - flew from 52nd & Grand, WDM to Altoona/Bondurant area.
- ★ 1995 Classic: Winner - Jay Holcomb #2 Ron Nollen #3 Mike Reinert; Crew of the year award to Jill Rubin's crew; Special shapes - Polar Bear.
- ★ 1995 Mini-Nationals - Sunday, August 6. Balloonmeister - Jason Jones. Weather not flyable, but other activities held. The first annual "Sherry & Red CB Toss" was held - Sherry tossed the base of the CB, Red tossed the mic to try to get it as close to the base as possible. All crew chiefs then tried to toss the mic to the target. Mike Van Hamme was the winner - thus his pilot - Bill Griffin was crowned next year's Balloonmeister. After the competition, a surprise going away party was held for Sherry & Red Allsup. A celebration was also held for the famous chase vehicle known as the PIG WAGON - its 20th birthday
- ★ 8/18-27/95 Nationals - Columbia, MO - BOI's Rob Bartholomew 13th place. Gary Miklus 5th place in the Fiesta division. #1 Pat Cannon, #2 Harold Cliver, #3 John Petrehn.

#### 5 years ago in BOI History:

- ★ US Nationals canceled - Rantoul defaulted on contract
- ★ Weatherman's flight - 15 balloons, 2 weathermen
- ★ Flight over Des Moines: 10 balloons launched from Brody Middle School & flew over DM, with reporters from WHO giving live broadcasts from the air; Pilots flying: Rob Bartholomew, Brad Craig, Jim Gebhart, Bill Griffin, Mark Harris, Gerald Knoll, Scott Moon, Jill Rubin, Brian Seymour & Eric Young.
- ★ 2000 National Balloon Classic: Balloonmeister Dick Drake, Assistant - John Johnson; New space shuttle balloon made maiden flight; other shapes - Champagne Bottle, Oggy, Purple People Eater, Whopper, Cheshire Cat & Sinclair Dinosaur; 1st - Maury Petrehn, 2nd - Rob Bartholomew, 3rd - Dave Edmister; Donna & Ralph Rieck received the John Russell award; Tom Ricke - New Competitor of the Year.
- ★ August 20, 2000 BOI Meeting: Motion made to purchase new hats for the board & founding fathers; New members John & Tracy Jensen introduced.
- ★ 8-26-2000 Tom Klitz received his Private license.
- ★ Lighter Than Air Balloon Fair - Council Bluffs: no flights, one glow

## Calendar of Events

- July 17 6:30 p.m. **BOI membership meeting**, Balloonport, Carlisle, IA
- July 23-29 **BFA Nationals**, Anderson, SC
- July 25 **Flight over Des Moines** Contact Jim Gebhart 515 961-6042 or Al Appenzeller 515 961-4429.
- July 29 - August 6 **National Balloon Classic** Contact Classic office at 1-800-FLYIOWA or www.nationalballoonclassic.com
- August 19-21 **Lighter Than Air Balloon Affair** Council Bluffs, IA Contact Stacy Kirchert 712 325-3257
- August 21 6:30 p.m. **BOI membership meeting**, Balloonport, Carlisle, IA
- Sept 2-5 **Great Pershing Balloon Derby** Brookfield, MO. Contact Sherry Techau 660 258-5290 or rstechau@shighway.com
- Sept 9th/11th **30th Great Plains Balloon Club Annual Huff'N Puff Balloon Rally**, Topeka, KS. Contact: Karl H. Fruendt (785)554-2003. www.huff-n-puff.org Email: info@huff-n-puff.org
- September 16-18 **SW Iowa Pro Balloon Race** Creston, IA. Contact Rob Bartholomew 515 989-3708
- September 16-18 **Old SOD Days**, Belview, MN. See Invitation - page 6
- September 18 6:30 p.m. **BOI membership meeting**, Balloonport, Carlisle, IA
- September 30 - October 9 **Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta** Albuquerque, NM
- October 15 **Jill Rubin memorial Flight**
- October 16, 2005 6:30 p.m. **BOI membership meeting**, Balloonport, Carlisle, IA
- October 29 **BOI Halloween Party** Balloonport, Carlisle, IA
- November 20 6:30 p.m. **BOI membership meeting**, Balloonport, Carlisle, IA

#### 2006 BOI Events:

- February 18-19, 2006 **BOI Ground School**
- March 18, 2006 **BOI St. Patrick's Day Party**
- April 29, 2006 **BOI Ode to Spring**
- October 28, 2006 **BOI Halloween Party**

Nebraska Balloon Club new web site:  
<http://home.alltel.net/hotair>



## Connie Austin Christensen

Vichy, MO

Connie Austin Christensen was born June 28, 1948, in Doylestown, PA to George and Beatrice Bechtold. Connie died August 30, 2004 in St. James, MO, following a long battle with cancer.

After graduating from high school and junior college in Phoenix, AZ, Connie worked for the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce and then as Executive Administrator at AG Communications for many years. Connie moved to Vichy, MO, in 1997 and enjoyed planting many flowers on their acreage.

An avid hot air balloon pilot, Connie loved coming to Indianola where she made many friends and spent many hours volunteering for the National Balloon Classic. She is survived by her husband, Jim Christensen of Vichy, MO; daughter Ann Austin and grandson, John John, of Phoenix; her father, George Bechtold of Tucson, AZ; and sisters Janet Bell of Bakersfield, CA, and Penny Cook of Flagstaff, AZ. She was preceded in death by her mother, Beatrice Bechtold.

A memorial service will be held Monday, August 1, 2005, at 2:00 at Farmers Chapel United Methodist Church located northeast of Indianola.

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society or the National Balloon Classic.

### Inflation of the Channel Champ

On May 23, Ed Yost, Orv Olivier & members of the SF Balloon Club inflated & tethered the Channel Champ - the balloon that Ed Yost flew over the English Channel April 13, 1963. Photos by Mark Meier.



**Ed & Orv sit in the Gondola**

*Touch & Go*

*Thanks to all who helped with the  
4<sup>th</sup> of July parades  
to promote the Classic!*



**Scott Moon & crew after the WDM 4th of July parade**



**Ed making some modifications to the burner**



*Page 8*



# My Waterloo Days



Spectators of all species enjoyed the balloons

*Photos by Carla Brinker & Carol Harris*



## Galena

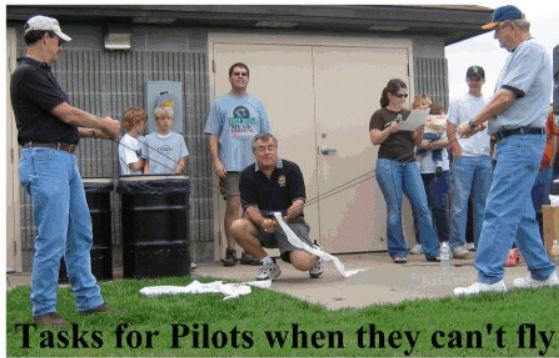


*Photos by Mark Weeks*





# Sioux Falls



Tasks for Pilots when they can't fly

Photos by Brad Temeyer & Mark Meier



I want one of these!



Congratulations Matt  
1st Place!



Temeyer weather





O  
t  
t  
u  
m  
w  
a



**Injured Crew rescued - updates at 6 & 10**



**2nd Place  
Benji Clemons**



**3rd Place  
Leroy  
Clair**



**4th place - Jeremy King**



**Lotsa  
Smiling  
Faces**



*Photos by Rick McCubbin & Carol Harris*



## Balloons Over Iowa Membership Meeting

BOI Balloonport; Carlisle, IA

May 15, 2005

**Present:** Bob & Penny Pieper, Rick McCubbin, Mary Eagan, Joel Worthington, Maggie Worthington, Don Prine, Bill Griffin, Dick & Phyllis Drake, Sandy Drake, Patti Todden, Richard Swanson, Rob Bartholomew, Meika Bartholomew, Ellie Bartholomew, Bill Craig, Michelle Craig, Brad Craig, Max & Carol Harris & Cory Bloom. Charlie Worthington got into the "grass" today, so wasn't allowed to attend.

Meeting called to order by Chair Dick Drake at 6:54:05.

**Secretary's report:** Secretary Tom not present. Minutes from April's meeting presented. Max moved to approve secretary's report, Phyllis 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion approved. Penny Pieper corrected the spelling of their last name.

**Treasurer's report:** Treasurer not present.

### Old Business:

- ★ Old Business is here! Don moved to check Bill's eyes. Don has nothing to report.
- ★ Ode - good party, but no flight. The club has had 10 flights out of 27 years. Bill was the last winner. Dick pointed out that Bill was the Weathermeister - did he give everyone the wrong info, so he could remain the most recent winner?? Inquiring minds want to know. Discussion on date for Ode. Historically it is the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> weekend. Discussion.

Don called for a Ponderance. Dick read from his Book of Imponderables - Why does mayo, fruit, etc stay fresh on the shelf, but require refrigeration after opening. Members all amazed. This explains why deviled eggs get eaten so fast at BOI parties - to prevent spoilage. *And some people say our meetings aren't educational!*

- ★ Further discussion on Ode date tabled until next meeting - it's a crap shoot, no matter which weekend we chose. Meat & all food delicious at Ode - thanks to all who cooked & served.
- ★ The Kybo left from Ground School was picked up. The Treasurer left the check for payment inside the Kybo. Then the Kybo blew over. No one knows where the check is (*or wants to go looking*).
- ★ Discussion on the purchase of NBC spectator parking. We could ask for a tax abatement and look into Government funding. This may require another subcommittee of the Retirement Home Committee. Bill G questions the possibility of AARP support. MORK can provide security - if we let them store their cash crop & provide "garden" space.

### New Business:

- ★ Discussion on a new party.
- ★ Patti's new balloon will be completed in 2 weeks.
- ★ Pieper's balloon is completed, needs inflation - then will be shipped to Iowa.
- ★ Discussion on committee to christen new balloons. We can break champagne over someone's head. Possibly a new balloon/new pilot party. Each new pilot or owner of a new balloon should write a story for the newsletter for all members to enjoy. Don moved to initiate a "Maiden Voyage Column" - to memorialize maiden voyage flights. Carol 2<sup>nd</sup>. Don added a friendly amendment - A penalty of 1 keg to be provided to the club if no article is provided within 2 editions. Motion carried.

*VP Sandy is attempting to help Dick's supply of gloves*

- ★ Rob is auctioning off clothing left from Ode & various parties. Rob has a Busch 1978 coat - still fits. Round of applause for Rob.

*Sandy is very smart - as Rob was showing a coat from the Disney store, Sandy went to get Minnie Mouse. Sandy is chewing up Minnie Mouse. The chair attempts to save Minnie.*

*The meeting is out of control.*

- ★ Joel announces the Ft. Madison Rally is July 15-16. Last year there were 5 balloons.
- ★ Dick brought up news from the BFA. Competition committees from BFA & NABA are talking. They are looking into points being good for both groups and the possibility of a combined Nationals in 2006.
- ★ Rob announced that Firefly is looking for pilots to go to Egypt in late August - early September to do training. They'll supply the balloons - all expenses paid & compensation negotiated. This will be for 1-2 months. Brad is thinking about going. Don may go to check into Retirement sites. We may want a Pyramid for passed on members.
- ★ The Drake's are going on a Disney cruise. Maybe we could buy a big ship for the retirement home. Members were very excited about this option!
- ★ Joel is working on the club web site - [www.balloons-over-iowa-club.com](http://www.balloons-over-iowa-club.com) has been registered. It is a work in progress.

Max moved to adjourn the meeting. Patti seconded. Motion carried with only Don voting "Not a Chance". Meeting adjourned 7:48:50.

Respectfully submitted  
Carol Harris, temporary secretary.

## Balloons Over Iowa Membership Meeting

BOI Balloonport; Carlisle, IA

June 19, 2005

**Present:** Patti Todden, Richard Swanson, Joel Worthington, Charlie Worthington, Bill Griffin, Bob & Penny Pieper, Amy Williams, Michelle Craig, Brad Craig, Max & Carol Harris, Rob & Linda Bartholomew, Meika Bartholomew & Ellie Bartholomew.

*Members honored - Rob has a tie on. Is he setting a new dress code for BOI meetings?*

Meeting called to order by Chair Joel Worthington at 6:46:06.

**Secretary's report:** Secretary Tom not present. Minutes from May's meeting presented. President Meika moved to approve secretary's report, Max & Patti 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion approved.

**Treasurer's report:** Treasurer not present.

### Old Business:

- ★ Old Business not here - Where is he?
- ★ Joel reported on the club Web site - it is up, but not yet done. [www.balloons-over-iowa-club.com](http://www.balloons-over-iowa-club.com). The year's newsletters are posted. Joel would welcome any suggestions.
- ★ Discussion on Ode date - issue tabled from last meeting. Bill moved to have Ode to Spring April 29, 2006. Patti 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed

### New Business:

- ★ Ground School 2006 - 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend in February. Patti moved to have Ground School February 18-19, 2006. Rob 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed. Max voted "Not a chance", just because Don would have if he'd been here.
- ★ Halloween party 2005 is October 29.
- ★ Bill moved to have St. Pat's party 3-18-06. Rob 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed
- ★ Bill moved to have 2006 Halloween party 10-28-06. Patti 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed.
- ★ Discussion on theme for 2005 Halloween party. Ellie moved to have Todd Isley & Jenn Nordhagen as co-chairs for the Halloween party. Charlie 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion passed unanimously (that will teach them not to miss a meeting)! They will choose a theme; appoint judges for chili cookoff, pumpkin carving for adults & kids, costumes for adults & kids; and make sure that prizes are available.
- ★ Rob moved to have Joel & Al as co-chairs of Ground School 2006. Max 2<sup>nd</sup>. Motion carried. Mike Oberman will remain as Ground Schoolmeister, Joel & Al will assist Rob with instructors, computer information, materials.
- ★ Rob moved to have Amy O'Williams chair for St. Pat's party 2006. Brad 2<sup>nd</sup>. Carol made a friendly amendment

to have Michelle O'Craig as co-chair. Amendment accepted, motion carried.

- ★ Photos passed around of Pieper's new baby. It has arrived at the Balloonport & will be FAA certified next week. The possible name is "Fliegvergnügen" - after the old VW commercial.
- ★ Patti shared photos of her new balloon. She had her maiden flight 6-18 a.m. The name is "Patti's Dream".
- ★ Brad reported on Monroe - they flew 13 tasks. Johnny Petrehn was the overall winner. Nick Donner was the Honda winner.

Rob moved to adjourn the meeting. Bill seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned 7:25:22.

Respectfully submitted

Carol Harris, temporary secretary.

*The following article is reprinted from the Nebraska Balloon Club newsletter with the permission of the author:*

### Trans-Nebraska Revisited

By Wayne Mohring

Other than the title of this story, this really has nothing to do with the week-long Nebraska rally of years past. I'd been watching the forecasts all winter for a distance flight opportunity during a weekend and it finally materialized on March 5th, just a day or two after the last newsletter went out. Went to my usual launch site in Norfolk with 5.5 crew in attendance. Forecast was accurate at the surface, winds 340 degrees @ 6 knots made for an easy and beautiful inflation. Two of the crew took off after inflation, they had other obligations but wanted to be there for the launch. The other 3.5 (11 year old son Mark being the 1/2) packed the fan and settle in for the chase.

And chase it was! Saturday dawned completely clear. I ascended 500 - 800 fpm and leveled off at FL090 (9000 feet above sea level). Normally I set the altimeter to 1000 feet at launch site, no matter the actual elevation. Since we rarely fly far or high, it's easier to remember that actual ground level is roughly 1000 feet below what the altimeter is recording. This flight is different, with communication between me and people other than my crew likely so I figured I ought to fly more according to standard procedure. The winds at 9000 msl were forecast the morning of launch to be 330 @ 31 kts. According to my GPS, they were just a tad stronger at 38 mph but in the right direction. Beautiful, my flight planning was working out. With me in the basket solo and even at these warmer temperatures I could easily do 2.5 hours. Ambient temp at FL090 was already 35 degrees and forecast to warm as the morning progressed.

Forecast called for 12,000 foot winds to be 35 kts so I began another climb. About this time the GPS Janet gave me for Christmas died. Mental note - GPS uses 2 AA batteries

about every 6 hours. Forgot to pack a couple in my pocket. I continue past FL120 and level off at 13,100 feet msl - approximately 11,600 above the surface. Try turning on the GPS again and it works long enough for me to see I'm going 45 mph, or 39 kts. The higher I go, the stronger the forecasted wind. I did not apply for the BFA long jump, this was only intended as practice and for personal goal setting, and therefore did not bother to bring oxygen, which limited me to half an hour above FL125 and never above FL150. I decided FL131 was going to be my maximum altitude for the next 20 minutes or so.

No apparent affects of hypoxia setting in, but I descend to FL120 and then float between there and FL110 as I do some in-flight planning. I'm heading for the eastern edge of Lincoln airspace. Flight Service forecasted winds aloft was off about 10 degrees. My bearing is 150 degrees and I was expecting 140, which would have put me about midway between Lincoln and Omaha.

As I cross the Platte River about 4 miles west of Schuyler, roughly half way into my flight, I look back and see Norfolk is finally disappearing into the haze. I can still see it, but not clearly. Also can't see Lincoln yet, it's a little hazier to the south and east. But I can pick out Wahoo, which I should pass a few miles to the west. Columbus is also clearly visible 20 miles due west, which is 45 miles by nearly straight road south of Norfolk.

In-flight planning makes it clear that I will enter Lincoln airspace on the eastern side. I have no aircraft radio, but I do have their phone number. Crew is still able to keep up with me, but barely. I find out later they spent most of their time going 70 mph, I radio down to them to call the tower and let them know I am requesting to descend through Lincoln airspace and land near Davey, a small village about 9 miles northeast of the tower. Crew radios back, "Air traffic control says no problem, they'll keep an eye out, but does the balloon have a transponder?" Uh, no.

Since crew has been able to keep up, I decide to land before I get to Lincoln even though fuel consumption says I should be able to travel beyond the city limits and land southeast of town. I do this only for easy crew retrieval as I would probably lose them passing over Lincoln.

I begin my terminal descent 2 miles due west of Ceresco. I can hit 1000 feet per minute in terminal with just me in the basket, but with so little heat to begin with (Max temperature in my 90k cu.ft. envelope was 112F in a high altitude 500 fpm climb), the wind rushing up caves in the sides of the envelope a bit so I add enough heat to puff it back out and slow the descent to 800 fpm. 10 minutes later I'm still in terminal descent but close enough now to the ground where I can level out and get a good idea of surface winds. I'm also now flying under Lincoln airspace, having flown vertically through it on the very edge of the circle that designates the edge of the controlled air zone. Might not have been in it at

all, but since I was in proximity I decided to give the controllers a heads-up and something to watch, there was no activity at the airport.

As I descended, the wind slowed and crew was finally able to get ahead of me for the first time in the chase. Ahead of me are harvested corn fields as far as I can see, with cattle grazing in about half of them. Beyond that is I-80 with few bridges over, and then the out-skirts of Lincoln. Since crew is here, I select a cow-less corn field with a 40 foot wide grass strip along the ditch. This will be a challenge since there are power lines before I cross the road. But it's the best I have so I go for it.

Darn, missed the grass, but at least the corn stalks are cut off short. At about 9 mph, the wind is too strong for a stand-up landing, but the envelope lays out easily across the short stalks. An uneventful but ginger pack-up and visit with the landowner is our only tasks between landing and breakfast. Flight was 2.5 hours, distance covered 85 miles. Propane tanks were still 20% percent full. This was a great practice flight, maybe next year I'll try the BFA long jump and log a flight with 3 digits in the distance column. And unless I start the flight in Chadron and fly towards Falls City, it should be something other than another trip across Nebraska.

## **Event Reviews**

### **My Waterloo Days**

Waterloo, Iowa; June 1-3, 2005

by Carla Brinker

The Waterloo Iowa event is back! In years past, the event had been reported to have 30 balloons. We hit that number again this year and what a fine group of pilots we had in attendance. The weather, well, we'll weather the weather whatever the weather, whether we like it or not.

Our Saturday morning flight was poured out. The Saturday evening flight seemed to be a go until a tornado watch was issued. However, a fearless few inflated their balloons and wowed the crowd. As the night went on a bit more, the winds came down and before it was all said and done, we had 25 balloons standing tall. While Seven Mary Three (a popular rock band) played, the crowd's attention was on the launch field. What an awesome effort given by the pilots.

Sunday morning was a bit windy but a few pilots took to the air and completed the competition. One pilot was heard saying, "X? What X?" Needless to say the winds changed while in flight and nobody hit the X so we ended with a tie for 1st (those that flew) and a tie for 2nd (those that didn't fly). We said our goodbyes and the rally ended. But the summary of the event came from the hotel staff. They were happy that the pilots left enough empty beer cans that the girls could have a free pizza party after cashing in the cans for the deposit. Now that to me is a successful rally!



## Sioux Falls

June 10-12

by Brad Temeyer

Mother nature attempted to have her way with the 30th Annual Great Plains Balloon Race in Sioux Falls, SD, but couldn't dampen the balloonists' spirits. Friday evening pilots arrived into town and were treated to an evening social. A pork dinner with all the fixings was served as pilots mingled with crew and sponsors. After everyone was fed, there was a brief pilot and crew meeting outlining the weekend's events.

On Saturday morning, scattered showers and thunderstorms moved into South Dakota from Nebraska, but weren't within the immediate Sioux Falls area. Pilots gathered at the field where the flight was cancelled on the count of gusty winds, low ceilings and the threat of thunderstorms approaching the area. The gusty conditions persisted throughout the day Saturday, but skies cleared at times allowing pilots and crew to take in Phillips to the Falls or a nice stroll along the 20 mile bike path which circles the city. Saturday evening winds continued to blow, and with low ceilings moving back into the area, pilots were grounded. However, just because it wasn't flyable doesn't mean a task can't be called. As a fun task, pilots were given three chances to slingshot a baggie at a target laid out approximately 30 yards away. There were several good shots, including a shot four inches from the center! The activities wound down early enough that pilots and crew were able to get a bite to eat and get well rested for what was promised to be a good flight on Sunday morning.

Pilots and crew awoke Sunday morning to clear skies and light winds, something that had been absent from the Sioux Falls area all weekend. There was a little patchy valley fog, but nothing extensive enough to preclude a flight. With high pressure centered 70 miles south of Sioux Falls, winds at the surface were light out of the west. After a group lead singing the national anthem, a hare and hound task was called. Vern Feekes played the role of the hare, and the remaining 35 balloons followed suit. Balloons drifted over the east side of town to the edge of the neighboring town of Rowena where Vern landed in a gravel pit. Several pilots used the slow winds and steering to guide them into the target and were able to score. Matt Fenster was able to win the event with a 5'4" drop, Scott Christensen took second with a 6'11" drop and Mike Benson rounded out the top three with a drop of 11'4". Congratulations Matt!! Hope to see you all at the 2006 Sioux Falls Balloon Rally!

### **The 4th Annual Great Galena Balloon Race**

June 17-19, 2005 Fathers Day Weekend

Galena, Illinois

by Eldon "Gomer" Benus

Friday morning started off very early with a 400 mile trek

from Jefferson City "Herb at the Helm" to Columbia "to pickup Ellis under the Broadway Bridge" then to Keokuk, Iowa "to pickup the driver Eldon at the Golf Car store". Up the Mississippi river thru the Quad cities then across the river at Dubuque to the old town that time forgot in the lead mining days - Galena, Illinois.

Traveling with Herb Heriford and my son, Ellis, who will be "21" on June 20, 2005 always makes for some interesting discussions. From Keokuk till Galena we almost cured all Ballooning issues, Ninja bike problems, old Chevy truck issues and even some personal items surrounding the country these days.

Arriving into Dubuque was the normal hustle and bustle of a bigger town. Then after a jump over the river into upper N.W. Illinois, close to that cheese state we found the scenery reverting back to a simpler time... a place where time forgot.

Galena: After a short drive more south we arrived at the Eagle Ridge resort and spa... after winding down past the fine golf courses and into a valley we thought we were at the Four Seasons at the Lake of the Ozarks, but without the commercialism and noise of the big boats and houses with grass and mature trees spaced nicely between them.

We pulled up to the main building to have a gentleman greet us with a warm hello and a quick have a great day. The building was a fine stately building with all the amenities spoken in the name. There are 3.5 golf courses on the property with a beautiful lake unspoiled by developments. There was just a peace and tranquility that you just stood there for a moment to stop and smell the roses.

Later that night we glowed and put on a great show for the folks gathered there.

Andy Williams was the Balloonmeister and headed the fine event for Juvenile diabetes of which his 7 y.o. son has. Saturday am found winds to be very easy with turns at every corner and valley. Herb successfully navigated himself and his passenger to a beautiful flight and landing nestled in the woods. Sat. pm found a friend of mine from B.O.I. ground school in 1994 aboard with Herb for his 2nd training flight. Eric Kennedy got to feel the thrills and a little bumping agony of the great sport of ballooning. Then, after finishing the flight Eric and I returned to the field to put on a show for the crowd by glowing. When we arrived Becky Petrehn in the smaller ride balloon were having about 30 children "try" to keep her from getting off the ground tethering. This is truly a family participating sport.

Mr. Williams, "Andy's dad" with help from pilot grandson, brought in almost \$500 for the diabetes cause while the rest of us were out flying...you are appreciated.

Then we proceeded to the V.I.P. tent for some fine vittles provided by the lodge. The best part was the cheesecake on a stick provided by one of the sponsors. Andy Williams

quoted: Anything that comes on a stick has to be good...

Saturday pm's flight was going to be interesting with Light and Variable winds. Ideas were popping from the pilots as to WHAT to call for a task.... it was decided to have a streamer contest between some of the pilots and then to have a target on the same field that we took off from with a minimum of 1000 foot or 10 minutes flight time. Well, the only person to score was Keith Williams' grandson; however he was disqualified due to the fact that after inflation and before tethering, the system was walked over to allow for a throw...The only other pilot was in a blue box truck with a blue envelope. We won't mention names as he decided the winds to get the box to achieve the target were "out of this world" so Ralph Rieck decided it was in the best interest of the competition to achieve a height so as to get a good view of the Earth's curvature and the ability to see three states at the same time and to also get a good view of the Great Lakes...need I say more.

Another pilot Scott Christianson, Alias Mr. 120#'s envelope had a much more challenging flight...his chase crew ONLY had 2 wheels...yes, 2 as there was a competition among them to CHASE Scott until he landed, then he gave them a number - the race was on for them to get back to the starting field - alias the golf driving range into the center of the resort.... this proved to be a real challenge as only 2 bikers without motors made it to him and then made it back....

Scott was said to be hiding; reports came in he was in the lake, then some swimming pool, then in a tree, then somewhere that only a G.P.S. and god can find you...Good job to the bicyclist that did become REAL chase crew...

The final morning Sunday proved to be absolute fantastic. Andy started the meeting as professionally as required and even remembered after giving credit to his dad for bringing in the tether money from the night before to wish him a Happy Father's Day along with all the other dads there. After a weather report from Scott we were off. The conditions were perfect for flying yet another morning and we were up and running. Heading towards Wisconsin we found some back roads that were less than perfect, however, gave that feeling of untouched land and a place that time forgot. We went under a very old R.R. tunnel then back to a bluff with whispering brooks. This chase was truly the highlight of the final day of this event. There was a true awe after we finally found the balloon. 4x4 was needed and the weekend of flying and fun was coming to a close.

Later, after packing up and heading to the awards ceremony overlooking the lake, found Indianola, Iowa's own Brian Seymour taking home the Glass Eagle trophy.

This place should be on your map for a destination for ballooning or just relaxing and taking in the scenery. The people, hospitality and granger were second to none. This is a place you will want to come back to year after year.

I hope you all have soaked in these words to be able to grasp the enjoyment we felt over this Father's Day weekend 2005 in Galena, Illinois. Congratulations to all who stayed out of the old Military Area south of Galena. Again we can't mention names but Jim Fromm may not have anything to write about this year but we hope he will.

I had so much fun writing this that I had alcohol abuse and let a beer get warm. Until next time. Fly High and Land Soft...

Respectively Submitted,  
Eldon R. "Gomer" Benus, Pilot

### **Funnies: "Kid Friendly, Mother approved"**

- ◆ Andy Williams: NOT to be confused with the singer in Branson. From a bystander: "Wow that is a huge dog". Andy's quote: "Yes I have to shovel up after him". We use him to tie off the ride balloon or get us out of a bad place... "That's my Dog" got nothing on "Brutus" Wow, this balloon just got BIG !
- ◆ Herb Heriford: waking up the dead snoring, then finding a cigarette in his chase vehicle from 1996 all this time thinking he smelled a cigarette. Having experienced people that say on the radio; Roger... Roger is not here he lives in Columbia...
- ◆ Herb realizing Sunday after the brunch he STILL had 8 hours with the Benus's in the chase vehicle.
- ◆ "I remembered the camera, but there was ONLY one frame left".
- ◆ Ellis Benus: sleeping thru T.V. time, housekeeping, people coming and going, the flashbulbs going off to freeze time...he doesn't know about this one.
- ◆ Also, realizing it is very difficult to control a crown line lying on your back after sliding many feet.
- ◆ Eldon Benus: Soaking up the sun and burning the tops of his feet.
- ◆ Also, finding out how MANY red gates there are in the Resort and where the 4x4 button is at on the chase vehicle.
- ◆ Scott and Lori Christensen: Finding out WHAT their housemates were...ever seen Animal House? Scott realizing he did TOO good of a job with the weather and the same is expected next year.
- ◆ Ralph and Donna finding out also WHO their house mates were. Ralph going high enough to do repairs on the space station.
- ◆ Gordy has finally got the knack of flying and eating a doughnut - at the same time.
- ◆ Preferred Bud Light over Miller Light, but still drank it.
- ◆ Jim Fromm grasping that North winds are better than South.
- ◆ Mike Hadley understanding the "pull strength" of "Do not cross Police line tape". Mike also got the "prettiest

matching fan award”...

- ◆ Dale Dommer for mastering four boxes “over the swimming pool”
- ◆ Brian Seymour: Understanding there is NO moisture on “some” landing places.
- ◆ Denny Anderson: is “confused” about which system to put into the paper and which one to bring to the event...
- ◆ Herb Heriford: Realized it is hard to fly with Eagles when you have a crew of turkeys...really funny ones at that...
- ◆ Unknown pilot to crew: “You can’t get there from here”. Crew to unknown pilot: “Yes YOU can, Wisconsin and Iowa are open”.
- ◆ Becky Petrehn: I can pick up 20 smaller people with only one hand
- ◆ Jake Hamlin: Where’s the target and what is this track’s speed limit.
- ◆ Jim Thompson: I think I remember this \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
- ◆ Eric & Francine Kennedy: Realizing that feeding the pilot will get you HIGH. Also, realizing that Ballooning IS habit forming for life.
- ◆ Unknown Photographer: Ballooning is really cool, but some people are crazy and need psychological evaluation. Photos to follow.
- ◆ Two propane guys that really love the smell of propane but not the pilots
- ◆ Also noted: They REALLY enjoyed us being there.
- ◆ The unknown “Coffee Lady” who will have coffee smell in her S.U.V. until next year’s balloon race.
- ◆ Unknown: I need S.P.F. 45 with this Mirage burner; who has a hot dog?

<http://www.greatgalenaballoonrace.com>

<http://www.eagleridge.com/>

<http://www.buyaballoonride.com/>

To our special benefit: <http://www.jdrf.org>

Hope to see you all in Ottumwa or somewhere in the air

Respectively Submitted,  
Eldon R. “Gomer” Benus, Pilot

## **Galena**

June 17-19, 2005

by Herb Heriford

Just in case you hadn't noticed, it is balloon event season again. The first race for yours truly this year was in Galena, Illinois.

Somehow I had gotten the idea that it was going to require 12 hours to get there from here so I arranged to pick up Ellis at 5:30 am in Columbia and then drive up to Keokuk, Iowa

to pick up his father, Eldon. 8 hours after picking up Ellis we were in Galena, so 12 hours may not have been very accurate. It worked out well since that gave us time to get checked in and explore a bit.

None of us had ever been there so we were kinda surprised to see that this part of the very northwest of Illinois has been severely blessed with hills! Francine, the retired geography teacher who along with her husband Eric had invited us up to this event informed us that all of the glaciers through 4 or 5 ice ages have managed to wander past this section of the planet without ever crossing the area. Thus, the hills remain in such a way that you are almost reminded of the Ozarks around Branson.

The town is really neat. It is still very old looking and has some historical significance. Many of the streets are very narrow. Narrow enough that you must frequently stop for oncoming traffic. Some of the old stone buildings, which are quite well preserved or restored, stand 3 stories tall, 4 feet from the road separated only by a sidewalk. Many have impressive rock walls holding back the cliffs in their back yards. Ellis has decided to build a rock mansion after being there. Neat, small river with an antique-looking bridge flows through the middle of town as you travel down Hwy 20.

We got there early enough that we had time to get settled into our house before the crowds started arriving. We were floored! This house was beautiful! High open arched ceiling with skylights, a master bedroom with a king-size bed and a deck, a bathroom that you could live in including a Jacuzzi tub...great house! The three of us picked out our rooms and stashed everything in the drawers and closets and were checking out the maps when a couple started walking up to the house with their luggage and walked right in like they owned the place! Eldon was going to put them in their place. We had already staked our claim and they obviously had made a big mistake! Turns out, 3 pilots and their crews were staying in the same house that weekend. So we quickly gathered up our socks and undies and began negotiating for space. It all worked out quite nicely in the end. We didn't end up spending a great deal of time there anyway.

The event itself wasn't so much of a race as a fund raiser for Juvenile Diabetes which is a subject very close to the heart of Andy Williams, the organizer/meister of this event. I think we raised \$11,000 this weekend. Some of the pilots, especially the ride balloons flew Friday evening but most of us stayed on the event field which was actually the driving range for one of the golf courses, and glowed for about an hour.

The 5:00 am alarm got us up and down to the field for the 6 am launch, where we took up a sponsor named Grace for a beautiful ride over the lake to the target - we ended up scoring 53 ft. from center before heading up a thousand feet or so to see the sights. We landed in a perfectly mowed yard on a blacktop driveway, packed up and headed back to the



ranch.

Had a nice breakfast and restful day and headed out to the field for an evening flight but since the pibals would go nowhere but straight up we tried a couple of tasks that would keep us around the field. Sure enough, as soon as we launched the light wind took us all away from the field. It was a perfect night for some practice landings so Eric took over the operation of our balloon and had his second training flight. He did 4 landings...2 of them on purpose and the others not bad anyway. Flew about 800 yards in 45 minutes! Went back and glowed by ourselves.

Another beautiful morning on Sunday. There was no Sunday Morning Syndrome at this event. Way too beautiful. Took another sponsor named Sarah and Francine rode along till we flew past the target, then did a swap so that Ellis could see the place. Went up a couple of thousand feet and headed for serious farmland to the northeast. Landed in a field, walked it up to a yard and packed up in preparation for the toast/ceremony. Little did I know that Sarah would be quite that disturbed about getting the fruit of the earth sprinkled on her hair. She immediately jumped up off the ground and proceeded to chase me down with her glass! There may be pix of this if I ever get them developed.

After the brunch we headed for home down the Illinois side of the river. That was a pretty neat drive too. Lots of cute little river bottom towns right on the Mississippi. We drove down below the lock and dam at Keokuk and they gave me a tour of the river front. Man, that's a big river!

Thanks Eldon and Ellis for taking your Father's Day weekend to help me have a wonderful time! I owe you one.

Now, just a short word about a couple of my other flights.

Thursday before we headed north, I was going to fly one of Gary's balloons and take up someone that had earned a ride in the bank balloon. We launched from the airport and headed right over town and soon were floating over Oak Hills golf course. Not having ever met this young couple, curiosity made me ask, "So, are you two boyfriend/girlfriend or husband/wife?" She says, "We're just boyfriend/girlfriend" and he says, "But I'd like to change that right now," and pulls out a ring that would probably trade even up for my house! He said he was going to kneel down but was afraid to move that much in the gondola. She said yes! We then flew right in front of his Grandma's house so he called her and when she came out shouted down, "Grandma! We just got engaged!"

Then last night I took up an old friend and his girlfriend and low and behold, just before we started our approach to land he pops the question! I'm gonna have to start charging extra for that! He then whips out a big wadded up sign he had been storing in his pocket and hung it over the side for their friends/relatives to see that said "She Said Yes!" Pix at 11.

There was so much more to tell about Galena but my grass is growing while I sit here typing so I best get home to quell what I can of their uprising. I hope your Father's Day weekend was wonderful too.

And to the rest of you, High Flights and Gentle Landings!

## **28th Ottumwa Pro Balloon Race**

June 24-26, 2005

by Eldon "Gomer" Benus

Noted: Parts of this email may contain adult content, foul language and smell. READ AT YOUR OWN RISK AS YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED!

We convened at the AmericInn downtown at 2nd street just off Highway 63 at the river. A nice hotel with all the amenities a balloonist needs - shower, bed and a 4:30 AM wake up call. The carnival at the park was also fun and I heard tacos were to die for, but you have to ask the ones that ate them. The parties lasted late into the morning. Some people were even seen sleeping on the rock landscaping. Others were in the pool getting rid of stored energy and cooling off for the day. I also heard that some people got wake up calls at 1:30 am vs. 4:30 am.

Friday evening, most pilots glowed and put on a big show for the crowd. A couple of pilots decided to glow over by the corral just to give a few the chance to see them up close. The balloons made a beautiful backdrop for photo opportunities including the local newspaper. Others were on TV promoting the event and giving a better understanding of what the pilots and crew go through at events like this.

4:00 Saturday am arrived to find that the storms were around us but not in the immediate area. Pilots were launching from north and west of the field. No one was in a big rush like usual and waited for over an hour to launch.

The winds were all over the place and many were finding out you could go any direction you wanted, however the target at the field closed at 8:00 so time was a big factor now. There were balloons ALL over town - everywhere you looked from 3 foot to 3,000. There was a haze so we were being cautious with these condition. Only 5 pilots made the target before the dealing...One pilot, who we won't mention, but there was a definite hew of PINK, decided even though the target was closed he would use the basket as his baggie and land on the field where the X had been. Others decided to tour the countryside searching for corn, beans, deer and a drink of water from lakes and rivers in the area. After the flight and some propane, it was time for one pilot to repay his decorated crew of nine for retrieving him from a poor landing area to breakfast, however it was almost lunch time so both were satisfied...

Saturday afternoon was enjoyed after a shower and some food. Many chose the pool or water park. Other rooms

echoed the sounds of loud snoring in stereo from one unmanned. Some just relaxed around town but all were taking a break from the heat of 95 degrees and humidity of the same...ugh Iowa summers. You would think the corn would soak up all that humidity but it wasn't happening.

Saturday evening's flight demanded some greater challenges from our balloonmeister, Phil Gray. It was decided that a grade school south of the field, and then the field and then a Watership down balloon, "Dale Dommer" would be enough challenge for all to enjoy and challenge the skills of all in attendance. We were not let down by these challenges. Many made at least one target and even a few made two, but no one made all three. This is the kind of fun we all can strive for. The balloons were now marching more one by one from target to target.

We started three miles south of the field and most ended up north of town and some even decided the Airport was a prime spot. If you were a passenger with a camera you got you money's worth. If you were on the ground you got a view of most all of the field and got to witness some impressive maneuvering by some very skilled pilots. After the flight it was time for some more fun at the carnival or visiting some local establishments. Our new local crew told of a Mexican restaurant to die for under the bridge downtown. Were not let down for the quality or quantity only to find out that there was not much left since some other pilots and crews had also discovered this place. MMMM...MMMM...good. We won't mention any names but one pilot was quoted as to say, "I ate the whole thing and did not leave you any"...the margaritas weren't bad either...

Sunday morning proved to be the real challenge with the heat, winds, overcast skies and some unstable conditions lurking in the surrounding areas. However, safety was given the utmost respect as it was going to be fast up high but relatively calm on the surface. A very challenging task was called at the field - a double inverted "V" with the baggies having to be within the "V". The race was on from the south to the north at about 190 with a right turn up high and a hard left to the west on the surface. There was no hesitation among most pilots to get aloft. The race was on and the challenge was in place. Two pilots who jumped up early were right on the track. The first got too hard of a left on the surface and the second did not get low enough for a score. Plus, wrapping the baggie into the load ropes did not help either; this is where experience plays a big part in this game. However, one skilled pilot did find the right combination to get a score. Some had a speedy 12-minute inflation and a speedy 12-minute flight.

The flight was so fast a majority of the field was down before the propane truck, the fire department and of course our famous Deputy Sheriff who happened to be the same one who arrested "Gomer" last year in the propane line for

tree abuse and impersonating a pilot. But that is another story for Paul Harvey to tell about.

After the flight most were headed for "the showers" as the heat and humidity were no less than 90 again on this day. Many goodbyes were exchanged and yet another story was told and memories to ponder were logged in the book.

At 11:00 many headed to the Hotel Ottumwa for a killer brunch and the passing of the checks \$\$\$\$. This year found Maury Petrehn to be the champion. Since he had to return to the flat state of Kansas, it was voted on by the majority that we divide up his check and not let him know about it until this email hits the presses. Just kidding and great job to all that attended and giving us the opportunity for a safe, fun and challenging weekend.

Getting HIGH and Getting the Psych ward on speed dial, Until next time; Happy and Safe Ballooning

Eldon "Gomer" Benus, Pilot of "Clowning Around"  
From somewhere in Midwestern State  
1-800-555-1212

*Ottumwa Scores from Mary Eagan & Rick McCubbin:*

Overall Competitive Combined Scores

- |                            |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Maury Petrehn 4830.98   | 9. Tom Ricke 944.46      |
| 2. Benji Clemons 1971.43   | 10. Terry Riepe 942.86   |
| 3. Leroy Clair 1943.66     | 11. Bill Clemons 899.72  |
| 4. Jeremy King 1831.78     | 12. Max Harris 885.72    |
| 5. Brad Craig 1828.58      | 13. Brian Bennett 871.15 |
| 6. Terry McGonegle 1800.01 | 14. Eldon Benus 857.15   |
| 7. Bill Griffin 1657.16    | 15. Cory Bloom 771.44    |
| 8. Terry Montague 971.43   |                          |

Top three finishes per race:

Saturday a.m.		Saturday p.m. combined scores:	
1st	Brad Craig	1st	Benji Clemons
2nd	Leroy Clair	2nd	Leroy Clair
3rd	Tom Ricke	3rd	Jeremy King

Sunday a.m.

- |     |               |
|-----|---------------|
| 1st | Maury Petrehn |
|-----|---------------|

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**Thanks** to the following for their contributions to this newsletter: Meika Bartholomew, Eldon “Gomer” Benus, Brett Boerner, Carla Brinker, Sandy Drake, Mary Eagan, Herb Heriford, John Jensen, Rick McCubbin, Mark Meier, Wayne Mohring, Don Prine, Richard Swanson, Brad Temeyer, Patti Todden, Mark Weeks and Jody Woodruff.

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**Fan for Sale**  
 September 10  
 8 HP Briggs & Stratton  
 30" 2 blade  
 Runs great  
 \$500  
 Contact Brad Craig - 515 975-3300

**The National Balloon Museum is updating their list of pilots willing to give paid rides, so when people call we have an up to date list to give them. Then hopefully the pilots would in turn, donate \$25 back to the museum. Contact Becky Wigeland at 515 961-8144 or email [Flamingbecky@aol.com](mailto:Flamingbecky@aol.com). We would like name, address, phone number and e-mail for all pilots that are interested.**