



CBA Happenings

May 23-26: Aloft – Balloon Festival - Simpsonville, SC

June 2: Board of Directors Meeting

July 7: Board of Directors Meeting

July 20: Newsletter Article Submissions Due

August 1: Newsletter Published

** Each newsletter will contain a "Carolinas Balloon Association Happenings" calendar to inform the members of upcoming events and dates important to the CBA. As we continue to strengthen our roots, the calendar will become more informative.*

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Chairperson's Corner

I would like to start out by thanking everyone that was a part of the first newsletter. Personally, I thought it was a great first edition by the CBA rekindling team and am looking forward to many more informative newsletters in the future.

Now that the proverbial CBA ball is once again rolling, it is time to start asking ourselves; what can "I" do to make the CBA the best dang balloon club in the country. Heck, why stop at country? Let's shoot for the best dang balloon club in the universe! The talent and knowledge of our member base should make that a relatively easy task.

But as kind of a jump start, let me tell you what is going on with the board and expand into how you can help.

The Newsletter – Cloud Chaser – You have had an opportunity to receive and view our newsletter. "What a wonderful tool and benefit to each of us."

Our Website – Our website is undergoing a transformation. I have been allowed the opportunity to take a sneak peek and can assure you that it looks awesome. It has a member's portal to communicate to our membership base privately and there is talk of a public blog page to communicate to the public.

We are taking several old and new membership lists and combining them to get one working list with updated information.

We are looking at ways to get good news about ballooning to the public at the local level and balloon festivals through suggesting venues and membership involvement.

We need your help.

Submit an article. Each and every one of us has a talent related to ballooning. Submit an article. We can't guarantee that it will be published in the next issue. However, we can put it in the "to be published file" and put it in the issue where it fits best as it relates to topic and size. Send your submissions to Amy Davis. She is

your newsletter Editor in Chief, Public Relations, Marketing and Zoo Keeper.

Our website will need updating regularly. Again, Amy is the point person. However, I know there is someone else in our midst that has website skills. I ask that you contact Amy and commit to giving her a hand with the website.

Membership can only grow if we feed and cultivate it. Ask your friends to join. A CBA membership would make a fine gift for your crew. It's a cheap way to keep them fed with great ballooning news.

We need to get ballooning in the public eye in a positive manner. There are two times you see balloons in the media. In advertisements when people want to sell something or when it is negative publicity and/or accidents. Balloons in advertisements and accidents draw attention. We need to capitalize on using balloons and the subject of ballooning to draw positive attention to our sport and the fine folks that make up the CBA. We don't have to be a pilot and stand a balloon up to do this in every case. We can volunteer to read the story of ballooning to children at school, display the basket and talk about ballooning at charity events, Meet and Greet the Public at festivals and the ideas are endless.

We all have something we can contribute. I'm begging you just a little, so please get involved. Be a part of making the CBA a premiere balloon club.

Thank you.

Randy Lee, Chairman

Carolinas Balloon Association

The new website is a GO! Visit us at carolinasballoonassociation.com and check it out! You can access the member portal with the username: cba and the password: aloft.

In the Know

Relay For Life Event

By Marc Klinger

Member Spotlight

Tom Mullinax

"Blame it all on Randy, Roger, and Buddy"...and a whole lot of other friends. That is what this pilot says when asked about his newest adventure "Commercial Pilot". From his first balloon, "Bearly Blue", in 1987 until today in "5 O'Cock High", FUN is the name of the game.

Competition? Only if he is not busy checking out the wind, flying in the opposite direction or showing his passenger the local fauna and animal life. Safety? Do not even think of breaking the rules! (Just ask his crew chief; the witch watches her man and his crew). Landing? His crew loves him in spite of 100-yard slides through cut hayfields, plowing 20-yard furrows in the old gravel pit in Albuquerque and, especially, the briars and grass up to 'you know where'. Greatest supporter? Goes to his first flight instructor, Wayne O'Shields, who put up with all the stuff in teaching him to fly; even the unintentional second solo when his brand new crew chief failed to catch the drop line and finally found him two hours later. No one believes his age or what he did for 42 years for a living, but we all know he loves flying. Yeah, Tom Mullinax! You did it all! Oh, the stories we can tell! *Not to mention the \$20.00 you owe Randy.* 🎈



On Friday night, May 16th, members of the CBA put on a static display for Relay For Life of Statesville for the third year. This annual event is an incredible and inspiring opportunity to unite as a community to honor cancer survivors, remember those who lost the fight, raise awareness about what we can do to reduce our cancer risk and raise money to help the American Cancer Society fight the disease.

It's well known that the Carolina BalloonFest's primary beneficiary is Relay for Life, so it's no surprise the number of positive comments we received from attendees. Having the balloons as a backdrop for the evening help made it more special for this year's all-night event.



Photo courtesy of Marsha Treacy

We are quite fortunate in Statesville to have great support from the local pilots and crew members who turned out to help make this a wonderful night. Thanks to everyone who jumped in to get the balloons stood up and looking great for the crowd and helping support this important cause.

We all know someone who has been touched by cancer. If you're looking to help make a difference get involved. More information about Relay for Life can be found here relayforlife.org. 🎈

It's A Gas

Why Hydrogen and Not Helium?

By Clarke Harbold

Hydrogen is not a new concept, its use dates back in ballooning dates back to December 1, 1783 by Dr. Alexander Charles and Monsieur Robert. Today, the Aero Club of America-NC Chapter's Padel 24,000 cubic foot balloon uses Hydrogen (H₂) instead of Helium.

Challenges with Helium:

Helium today has a very limited availability and is very expensive, if you can find it. The cost to fill a 1,000 cubic foot helium balloon today would be in the \$25,000 range per flight. Consider this when thinking of the challenges faced by Jonathon Trappe's September cluster flight which took 3,000 cubic feet of helium!

Helium has less gross lift at Standard Temperature and Pressure (STP) than does H₂. However, helium can be an advantage during longer flights as it uses less ballast due to its stability. This is less of a factor in the club's balloon because the typical flight plan is for a 6 to 8 hour flight.

Advantages of Hydrogen:

Of all the gases qualifying as lifting gases, hydrogen has the lowest density. This is the primary factor that affects the lift of a gas balloon. H₂ is also readily available and delivered manifolded together in skids of 4,000 cubic feet each for a small drayage fee.

Hydrogen Safety:

- Hydrogen is colorless and odorless and is a combustible gas. It can be used safely when important characteristics are recognized.
- The balloon is manufactured so that every component is electrically conductive and not capable of generating sparks.

- There must be continuity at all connections of every component. There must be continuity from the top of the balloon to the bottom.
- The fabric, the tread, the Velcro, the valve, the load tapes and the load rings are all conductive.
- During inflation and landing the balloon is electrically grounded. Crews wear anti-static clothing and shoes.

When the hazards of H₂ are understood and mitigated, it is a safe and affordable alternative to Helium. 

Why Join the CBA?

By Kevin Reavis

- ❖ *Digital Newsletters*
- ❖ *Connect through the Club's Facebook Page*
- ❖ *Access to the Club Roster*
- ❖ *Club Website (redesign planned and access to future "member's only" area)*
- ❖ *Association-Sponsored Annual Safety Seminar*
- ❖ *Fun Flights and Social Gatherings*
- ❖ *Participation in All Association-Sponsored Activities*
- ❖ *Regional Directors Serving as Local Liaisons*

Hot Air / High Tales

Drew Egerton flew to over 11,195 feet over Iredell, Rowan and Davie counties in NC to satisfy a requirement of the BFA Pilot Achievement Program.



Aerosports, Inc. tethers near Charlotte Motor Speedway before the NASCAR All-Star race. Pilots and Crew: Ken Draughn, Kevin Reavis, Marsha Treacy, Randy Treacy, Jeff Sweet, Scott Ayers, Tyler Ayers.



Aerosports, Inc. Chief pilot Marsha Treacy along with Jeff Sweet and Drew Egerton fly over Charlotte Motor Speedway May 17 for the NASCAR All-Star pre-race ceremonies.



You've Got This

Restoring and Rejuvenating Balloon Leather

(Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks)

By Tom Roush

I've been sprucing up my balloon baskets leather for over 30 years, and I have been doing it wrong all these years.

It was time to improve both the looks and condition of both the top and bottom leather on my balloon, and fate put me in the right place. Let me explain. The Knoxville Girl Scout Office is right down the street from the TANDY LEATHER STORE, so when my favorite person and Lifetime Girl Scout, (my wife Pat), needed to stop by the GS Office, I immediately had important things I needed to do...elsewhere. Don't get me wrong, I'm all in favor of the Girl Scouts, and their cookies, but the Knoxville GS Office is not a fun place for this male to hang out. On this particular and fateful day, I escaped to the [Tandy Leather Store](#). I went in, was waited on by a very helpful guy, and quickly learned what I had been doing all these years was slowly destroying my leather. My technique was to get brown shoe polish and scrub it into the leather with the aid of a hair drier until it turned the color I wanted. Then I'd use neutral shoe polish to cover the brown so it wouldn't rub off on clothing...and I'd happily move on. My helpful guy clerk then began my education by telling me you should never use shoe polish on fine leather, especially oil tanned leather. Never, Ever. Or anything else you can find in WalMart, for that matter.

Restoring the top leather and upright covers: (Smooth leather only, not for suede leather) (Part 1)

All the materials used for my balloon cost under \$30 from Tandy and I have enough left over for another restoration.

First, clean the leather. A soft brush or rag will probably do just fine. Avoid water, unless the leather is really dirty.

Next, you will likely need to re-stain skinned or worn spots. This is a job for Feibling Professional Leather Dye. Note that this product is NOT intended for touch up work, but rather for whole or partial hides. However, by carefully selecting the color you want, it does a pretty good job of matching the rest of the leather. This is what worked for me.



Rub the dye in until it really soaks in and is the color saturation you want. Blend it in to the rest of the leather as well. Don't worry that it is not nice, shiny and soft, it will be.

After the dye has dried, use The Doctor Jackson's Conditioning Cream. Just rub it in until the leather won't hold any more. A hair drier speeds the process, but don't cook the leather. If the leather surface becomes hot to the touch, it is too hot.

This Dr. Jackson stuff is magic! It makes the leather look almost new. I did both the top leather and the upright covers and it required every bit of two tubes to complete my balloon. As soon as you get the leather looking really great, rub in the Aussie Conditioner. It is like a wax and restores the leather finish. It took a couple of applications using the hair drier to speed the process. Buffing it with a rag provides the luster and shine.

Restoring and repairing bottom leather: (Part 2)

My bottom leather was in pretty bad shape. The use of shoe polish and other WalMart remedies over the years had caused the leather to shrink and even pull the stitching from some of the holes. I thought I needed to replace all or at least most of it. There were even abrasion holes where the underlying wicker was beginning to show and to wear. I decided to try the Tandy approach pretty much as I did for the top leather to rejuvenate the bottom scuff leather, and then see if I

could get by only replacing the damaged leather. Essentially, I decided to do a patch job. Hang with me here, because it worked beautifully and didn't cost much.

Clean the leather as above and then rub in the rejuvenator cream. I think the Aussie Cream worked best on the tough bottom leather.

Tools you will need: You will need a small and a medium screw driver, a hemostat, a pair of needle nose pliers, some wire, (think bailing wire), a cordless drill, a 3/16" bit, some tough scissors or pruning shears and a helper.

Be brave and cut out one of the damaged and torn leather areas, making the cuts as straight as possible. Torn out lacing holes need to be cut out as well. I was fortunate to have some thick bottom leather but Tandy has scraps of the tough stuff for reasonable prices.

Next, get a piece of leather a bit larger and of similar shape to the damaged piece and wet it; ten minutes in warm water is adequate. Now, you are going to need some holes and heavy duty leather lacing (again, from Tandy). I found a cordless drill with a 3/16" bit to be the easy way, or a commercial duty leather hole punch will also work. Make a few holes on either side of the repair, using a piece of wood to backstop the drill bit. Only make a few holes at a time or you'll get a crooked line. Duplicate the pattern used by the manufacturer; mine has an 'X' pattern, which is easy. This is where the tools listed above come into play. You will need your helper to crawl into the basket and help you stitch by grabbing the lacing and pulling, then feeding it back to you. Limit access to alcohol until you are nearly finished.

Finally, start stitching the piece in, cutting as needed for fit, drilling and stretching as you go. Occasionally, tie the leather into the wicker for stability. This does not have to be every stitch because the leather will tighten as it dries and will form itself to the wicker. Just look how the manufacturer did it and copy the pattern. Be sure to anchor the corners. The leather corners are compound curves and the leather will form to the curve.

You are almost done. Let the repair dry overnight, dye it if needed and then rub in more Aussie as above. When that sets, buff it and you are done.



For small repairs, just follow the same procedure. 

Tech Talk

Technology in the Basket

By Drew Egerton

A balloon is a very simple contraption: fabric, a lifting source and a gondola. We are exempt from the multitude of gauges, warnings and indicators present in most other aircraft; thus enabling us to enjoy a peaceful float through the air at the whims of the wind. This simplicity can serve as a wonderful distraction from the everyday annoyances of cell phones, tweets and invites to play funny farm from people with which you went to middle school.

However, for some, technology can and does have a place in the basket. This group ranges from hardcore competitors to every day cattle car drivers and all things in between. Some may ask, why convolute the serenity of the sport with these modern day implements?

For a competitor, the advantages of a moving map in the basket are tremendous. Seeing exactly where you are in relation to targets and landmarks can make the difference in a great score or a big mistake. At the Nationals level, tasks that require flying in three dimensional shapes or cross map gridlines become much simpler with accurate representation on a live map. In events with GPS loggers, you cannot skirt the edge of a

PZ or think you can fudge the altitude restrictions without getting busted.

Many of you may say, "I don't need to fool with that nonsense; I don't compete!" However, flying with a moving map can provide many advantages to everyday flying. Does your area have a scattering of unfriendly farmers or restricted airspace? You can see EXACTLY where you are on that confusing sectional chart in relation to that controlled airspace or on the event map in relation to that grouchy farmer. That beat up old road map from 1995 in the bottom of your drop line bag may not accurately show the information you need to know to stay out of those areas. When flying in an unfamiliar area such as a new event, these things become even more important.

What about the distractions of navigating a phone or tablet while flying the balloon? While certainly a reasonable concern, I would argue that taking the time to fold, unfold and fold again a six foot wide paper map is much more time consuming and distracting in a four-foot-wide basket.

I would strongly encourage you to research your technology investment ahead of time, both with other pilots and with general consumer reviews. If you get a tablet, be sure it has GPS capability and a screen large enough and bright enough for your taste. Matte finish screen protectors are a big help in cutting down glare, as well as preserving your investment. Purchase or build a mount that works best for you and your balloon system; what works for one pilot or on one type of basket may not work for another. The most important tip is to learn your setup inside and out on the GROUND before you ever use it in the balloon. This will minimize distraction and make you feel more comfortable with getting the information you need when you need it.

If you just aren't convinced that flying with a moving map is right for you, that's okay. There are other ways you can use technology to communicate effectively with your crew with little or no effort on your part. Some apps such as Glympse will let you send a message to your crew or anybody else with your current location updating automatically along the way. Crew can see exactly where you are at any given time on a Google

map. We've all had those frustrating radio conversations trying to tell the crew where they need to be, or trying to ask our pilot what the heck they are doing.

While ballooning can offer a wonderful escape from the everyday, we can also implement today's technology to make it safer and more enjoyable for all involved. In future newsletters, we can dive into specific apps along with tips and tricks so feel free to write to us with questions or suggestions! 

Chase Junction

Journey to the Check Ride

By Daniel Sasser

I began ballooning when I was six years old. Not unlike most, my first exposure was at a festival in southern New Hampshire, where my family had recently moved. We attended the High Hopes Balloon Festival, a festival for the Make-a-Wish Foundation in Milford. During the Friday evening flight, my sister and I decided we wanted to follow one. We picked our favorite, chased it and by the end of the weekend I was hooked. Little did I know, that weekend sparked what would be a sixteen-year-long journey to becoming a pilot.

Fast forward to last Friday: I had the oral portion of my check ride the night before. I was nervous for the both the oral and the practical flight of the test, but was more nervous for the oral. I spent the morning studying with ADM flashcards, sectional charts spread all over the floor and my manual within arm's reach at all times. I felt confident that I knew the material and the oral portion went great. Now all that was left to do was fly in the morning. The weather was looking pretty good, with slight concern over the speed of the winds aloft.

We met at the Klinger Farm the next morning and the weather ended up being a near carbon copy of a flight Drew, Marc and I did two weeks before. The winds were from the west and a "fast lane" about 800-1,000 feet off the ground. We decided to head down to the Iredell county fairgrounds and ended up taking off in

conjunction with the closing ceremonies for Relay For Life.

The flight went perfectly. We covered about twelve miles into Rowan County with a max speed of twenty-three mph. We were welcomed by a gracious landowner and flew about ten feet off the ground at three-to-four mph until gently setting down right outside his garden where he happened to be working. The crew followed shortly after. A great flight, a nice, cut, front yard, happy crew, flight examiner, landowner and pilot – what more could you ask for?!



The journey to my license has been a very special one blessed with so many people from all over. It was a very special morning for a lot of reasons, but especially because of the people who got me to this point.

As Drew told me the night before my oral, "your private license is *really* your license to learn." So here's to gentle winds, soft landings and to never stop learning! 



In Memoriam

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army (Retired) Dan Kirk passed away Friday, May 9, 2014. He enlisted in the United States [Army](#) as a Private in 1970, rising to rank of Staff Sergeant. He graduated from officer candidate school in 1980 and retired as Lieutenant Colonel in 2007 after serving 10 years in the US Army Reserves and 24 years active duty with the United States Army. Dan had many interests including motorcycling, auctions, home improvements, and helping his parents but ballooning and his wife were his passions. He was a commercial hot air balloon pilot and avid patriot; he flew "Support Our Troops" and the American Flag from his balloon.



A memorial has been established and donations can be made to The Balloon Federation of America's Youth Camps, P.O. Box 400, 1601 N Jefferson Indianola, IA 50125 or to The Hartly United Methodist Church.

CBA Board of Directors' Email Directory

	<i>Position</i>	<i>Email</i>
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Jean Lee	Secretary	majelee@gmail.com
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Tom Lattin	Eastern NC and Eastern VA	tomlattin@remax.net

Carolinas Balloon Association Happenings at Aloft

Carolinas Balloon Association General Membership Meeting

Saturday May 24, 2014 3:30 PM–4:30 PM

Pilot Tent

We will have a General Membership meeting to obtain input from the members to aid us in moving the CBA forward. Remember, a club such as the CBA is only as strong as its members. Please make plans to attend the meeting and give your input.

Meet and Greet

Sunday May 25, 2014 – 4:30 PM

Designated Area (to be announced at Aloft)

Aloft will be providing us with an area to conduct a Meet and Greet with Aloft visitors. During this time we will promote the CBA, Aloft and ballooning in general. We will need to be at the designated area of the field and be ready to meet with the spectators at 4:30 PM on Sunday. Meet and Greet will last an hour. This will give you time to secure your equipment and be at Briefing at 6:00 PM.

Please email Randy Lee at pilotrblee@gmail.com immediately if you are interested in participating. Wayne, the owner of Skins Hot Dogs has graciously offered to provide soft drinks and snacks to those participating. We need to let them know how many to plan for.

Look forward to seeing you at Aloft.

Editor's Note

It has been a tumultuous month for our community. The tragedy and loss in Virginia was one that will be in the forefront of all of our minds as we step into our sport full-steam. As we take to the skies, let us remember those that were lost and keep safety as our focus. But let us also celebrate the accomplishments of many of our members who have recently received their private and commercial licenses. It is refreshing to see our sport grow! Events are starting to ramp up, the weather is finally cooperating so we can fly and the members of our communities are beginning to look toward the skies in anticipation of ballooning season! This brings me to a new addition I would like to include in our newsletters, "Hot Air / High Tales". You may have noticed it on page five of this issue but if not, go back and reread it (I'll wait...) I would like to ask you to submit any unique ballooning activity so we can all keep up with each other. Also, please don't forget about our "Member Spotlight". In each issue of Cloud Chasers, we will be spotlighting one of our outstanding members, submitted by YOU. This person may be any member of the CBA that has done a lot for ballooning or shared the love of the sport in a way that has benefitted the community. If you would like to nominate someone, please prepare a brief biography and submit it, along with a photo, to me: outdoordogs@gmail.com. (Submit files and pictures in jpeg or doc format.) If you don't send me material, I'll be forced to fill the newsletter with photos that are completely unrelated to ballooning. Take this bunny-nosed selfie, for example:



(Squirrel the rabbit is not amused.) Send in your submissions TODAY!

no bunnies were harmed in the making of this awkward photo

