



CBA Happenings

February 21: CBA Safety Seminar/Continuing Education and CBA Membership Meeting

February 22: CBA Fun-Fly

January 20: Newsletter Article Submissions Due

February 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

As our flying slows during the winter months, I ask that each of you find the time to do some relaxing by the fire and reflect on those memorable flights of the past. Our reflections should be of those that went ever so perfect and should include those that were not so perfect. Those that were perfect are the ones we typically look back on with a light-hearted smile and share with anyone with time to listen. However, the ones that were not so perfect are the ones that give us an opportunity to look back and see what we, as pilots, could or should have done differently that would have shifted that flight to the perfect column. As I reflect, pre-flight planning and education comes to mind as things we could or should have done a bit better to make some flights better. Simple things that we may overlook in haste, while not creating a serious safety issue, could lead to a less-than-enjoyable flight for the pilot and crew.

One way we can become better pilots is through communications with other pilots. In aviation, it's always better to learn from the mistakes of others. Talking and sharing with other pilots about how, why or when we do things will enhance our flying. Being a CBA member can help in this area.

The CBA Board has put together some great opportunities that will allow us time to fellowship (in a non-rally atmosphere) and share experiences, good or bad, which could shape us into better pilots. Heck, one of these outings may be a perfect time to do a flight review, reward crew, or introduce someone new to ballooning.

CBA Annual Continuing Education/Safety Seminar & CBA General Membership Meeting: February 21, 2015

CBA Fun-Fly: February 22, 2015

I invite and encourage each of you to participate and/or volunteer at one of these CBA functions. We can use this time to fellowship and learn from one another to enhance the experience for others. More information can be obtained within this newsletter and at the CBA website: carolinasballoonassociation.com

I would like to wish each of you a very Merry Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Randy Lee, President

In the Know

By Amy Davis

One of the nation's premier hot air balloon festivals has found a new home! Brian Hoyle, event organizer and managing member of Hot Air Marketing, has secured Raleigh, NC for the WRAL Freedom Balloon Fest on Memorial Day weekend, 2015. Sponsored by WRAL-TV, events will take place at Zebulon's Bennett Bunn Plantation with planned public events also scheduled for Spring Forest Road Park in North Raleigh. Freedom Balloon Fest will be the first festival and competition balloon event in the triangle region in nearly 25 years and Hoyle anticipates more than 30 balloon pilots and teams from 15 states and overseas will compete.

"We are delighted to be part of this new Memorial Day weekend event," said Steven D. Hammel, Vice President and General Manager WRAL-TV. "This is yet another vibrant activity for the Triangle. We hope this will become an annual tradition, celebrating freedom with family, saluting those who have served our country."

WRAL Freedom Balloon Fest will invite the public to a mass ascension of all participating balloons, followed by a balloon glow just after sunset on Friday, May 22 at Bennett Bunn Plantation in Zebulon. Events in Zebulon continue on Saturday, Sunday and Monday mornings with competition balloon flights. On Saturday and Sunday afternoons, spectators will be invited to experience ballooning up close with pilot "meet-and-greet" events, tethered balloon rides and an evening balloon glow each night at both Bennett Bunn Plantation and Spring Forest Road Park.

"Securing WRAL as a title sponsor, with the enduring trust the community has in them, is just wonderful. They bring so many resources to this inaugural event," said Hoyle. "With WRAL's capacity to support other sponsors' investments and build audience through its television, radio, and new media capabilities, we are very confident in the promise of the WRAL Freedom Balloon Fest to become a lasting cultural resource for our community."

Organizers encourage those seeking to sponsor, volunteer, or get more information, visit the event's official website at

www.WRALFreedomBalloonFest.com 

It's A Gas

By Clarke Harbold

During the Albuquerque Fiesta this October, the Aero Club of America-NC chapter's balloon, was invited to sport fly with six other competing balloons competing in America's Challenge. One balloon was from Spain, one from Poland, one from Germany and three from the US. The NC Chapter's balloon is not large enough to engage in formal competition, as it is only 680 (24,000) cubic meters, versus the required 1000 (35,300) cubic meters for competition.

The NC Chapter's balloon took off with members, Bert Padelt, Mike Emich, and Al Nels. Due to the direction of flight toward the mountains, it was decided that too much ballast would be expended clearing the mountains; the highest peak is 10,678 ft. The NC Chapter's balloon only carries 440lbs of sand which is similar to fuel in a gas balloon. The pilots made the decision to treat the residents of Albuquerque with a low flight over the city. Fifty-three hours and twenty-two minutes later, the Spanish team won the competition; landing in Campbellsville, KY; 1,189 miles away.

When it comes to getting more pilots engaged, group ownership of a gas balloon is the way to go. In Europe, the lifting gas is less expensive, allowing more opportunities to fly. Utilizing a club dives the expense, opening the opportunities for silent flight. In Albuquerque, another gas balloon club is being formed by Mark Sullivan. This club is being formed to compete; introducing more pilots to the excitement of the America's Challenge. 🎈

Treasurer's Report

By Kevin Reavis

Account Balance as of 10/31/14:	\$2,109.91
Membership Dues deposited in Nov.:	\$300.00
No Disbursements	
No Bank fees	
Account Balance as of 11/30/14	\$2,409.91

December activity as of 12/6/14

Deposits:

Transferred from 2 nd BB&T account	\$39.22
From Pay Pal	\$142.67
(Membership dues less Pay Pal fees)	

Disbursements:

From Pay Pal by Mark Klinger	-20.00
(Cost of Email services)	
Check to Mark Klinger	-125.82
(Cost of Web services)	
Account Balance as of today:	\$2,445.98

Check to Kristie Darling \$ to be determined/reimbursement for 12/6 party food. 🎈

You've Got This

Back-Up Communications

(For when the string breaks off your tin can.)

By Tom Roush

Expanding the range of your cheap Chinese communication radio? More and more balloonists are using 'cheapy' Chinese hand held communication radios, either as Amateur Radio (HAM) Operators or using the BFA licensed frequencies. While these radios are actually pretty good, they have some limitations. The big problem (aside from being hard to program) is that they have limited range, especially when transmitting from within a vehicle.

While I'm not about to give up my trusty Motorola handheld and mobile radios, I have bought two Quansheng radios. I use them for back up to the Motorolas and for an extra radio for my crew to use when they need to leave the vehicle, wanting to 'listen in' on other frequencies or talking to other balloon crew while not cluttering the frequency being used to communicate with the balloon.

What I have done to AT LEAST double the range of the Chinese radio I use in the truck is to add an external magnetic mount antenna. These are cheap as well, costing under \$10 on eBay.

NAGOYA
ANTENNA™

UT-102

CCentury



Above is the one I use. It was shipped from California and arrived in 4 or 5 days.

First, screw off the short antenna that comes with the radio and screw on the end plug of the external antenna, route the coax out around the door jamb and stick the antenna to the truck roof. If you need to use the radio outside the truck, just put the short antenna back on. Bingo!

These radios are easy to find on Ebay, just search Chinese ham radio, or Quansheng. They cost well under \$100! There are several different brands that are very similar. For the antennas, just add 'magnetic mount antenna' to the search. Just use caution to get the right connector!💡

Editor's Note

I want to personally thank each and every one of you for your continued support of the CBA. Please keep your submissions coming and invite your friends to contribute to our nifty little club! You can submit your stories to me at outdoordogs@gmail.com and I will happily edit them.

Thanks again!
Amy Davis

CBA Board of Directors' Email Directory

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