



ASHLAND Balloonfest

COMMEMORATIVE
SOUVENIR GUIDE

July
2-5, 2015

OFFICIAL EVENT SCHEDULE

BALLOONS & PILOTS

BALLOONS AT-A-GLANCE

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Commemorative Souvenir Guide

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Schedule of Events

THURSDAY, JULY 02, 2015

- 4-6pm** **Live Radio Remote - West** - 104.5 WQKT, your source for the best news, sports and country music.
Safety Fun - West & Park Street - Ashland Fire Truck Display & Ashland County Sheriff's Office Child Fingerprinting.
- 4-8pm** **Hawkins Fresh Foods Backyard BBQ - West** Featuring Charcoal Mafia BBQ menu freshly made and delicious!
- 4-8pm** **Kids Fun Zone – East & North Central** Pony Rides, Laser Tag, Inflatables, Airbrush Tattoos & Games.
- 4:30-6:30pm** **Budweiser Clydesdales - Launch Field & Park Street** Hang out with the hitch and get your picture taken with these living legends! Meet the Clydesdales and experience their legacy like never before! Sponsored by Mansfield Distributing.
- 5-8pm** **Merchant Area Open - North** Featuring home improvement solutions, to educational options, to personal indulgence & much more.
- 5-9pm** **Ashland Elk's Lodge #1360 Budweiser Beer Garden Open** 21 and over, ID required.
- 5:30-7:30pm** **Live Entertainment – West** Midlyfe Crysis (www.midlyfecrysis.com) - 60's & 70's Style Rock 'n Roll
- 6-8pm** **Live Radio Remote - West** 93.7-FM the Super Q 'Listener Parties.' Enter to win prizes, and meet your favorite Super Q personalities.
- 7pm** **Media Flight – Launch Field** Watch cold inflation and lift offs as pilots take area media for the ride of their lives.
- 8pm** **Food Concessions Open – Field Perimeter** Many to choose from.
- 8:30pm** **Balloon Glow Encounter – Launch Field** Family 4 Pack of Tickets can be purchased at www.ashlandohioballoonfest.com. Package includes parking pass, 4 Pepsi products, admission to launch field 1 hour prior to balloon glow with bleacher seating and official Balloonfest souvenir.
- 9:30pm** **Ashland Times Gazette Balloon Glow - Launch Field** Enjoy an interactive display as balloons line the launch field and glow against the night sky choreographed to music piped throughout Freer Field.

FRIDAY, JULY 03, 2015

- 7-8am** **Fun Flight - Launch Field** Bring your chairs, coffee and blankets to watch balloons fly-over Freer Field.
- 3-9pm** **Kids Fun Zone – East & North Central** Pony Rides, Laser Tag, Inflatables, Airbrush Tattoos & Games.
- 3-9pm** **Food Concessions Open - Field Perimeter** Many to choose from.
- 5pm** **Opening Ceremonies - Main Stage** Ashland Veteran's Color Guard.
- 5:15-8pm** **Live Entertainment – Main Stage** Acoustic Edge - Alternative, Bluegrass, Country, Classic Country, Folk and a bit of Contemporary Christian.
- 5-8pm** **Jungle Bob - West** Exotic Animal Show every 30 minutes.
- 5-8pm** **Merchant Area Open - North** Featuring home improvement solutions, to educational options, to personal indulgence & much more.
- 5-9pm** **Ashland Elk's Lodge #1360 Budweiser Beer Garden Open** 21 and over, ID required.
- 7pm** **Sponsor Flight - Launch Field** Enjoy the cold inflation process and lift-offs as pilots take sponsor representatives for the ride of their lives.
- 8pm** **Balloon Glow Encounter – Launch Field** Family 4 Pack of Tickets can be purchased at www.ashlandohioballoonfest.com. Package includes parking pass, 4 Pepsi products, admission to launch field 1 hour prior to balloon glow with bleacher seating and official Balloonfest souvenir.
- 9pm** **Ashland Times Gazette Balloon Glow – Launch Field** Enjoy an interactive display as balloons line the launch field and glow against the night sky choreographed to music piped throughout Freer Field.





Visit our website for additional information...
www.AshlandOhioBalloonfest.com

SATURDAY, JULY 04, 2015

- 7-8am** **Donley Ford Lincoln of Ashland Balloon Competition - Freer Field** Bring your chairs, coffee and blankets to watch balloons compete for cash prizes.
- 11am** **Cornhole Registration & Warm-up – Central** \$20 Per Team.
- 12pm** **Cornhole Tournament - Central** Double elimination. Everyone guaranteed to play at least 3 games. 70% payout.
- 1pm** **Food Concessions Open - Field Perimeter** Many to choose from.
- 1pm** **Merchant Area Open - North** Featuring home improvement solutions, to educational options, to personal indulgence & much more.
- 1-3pm** **Ashland Bicentennial Vintage Base Ball Game - Launch Field** Come out and cheer on The Mansfield Independents Base Ball Club as they play a vintage base ball game (yes, it was two words prior to 1880s) played by the rules and customs of the 19th century, wearing period reproduction uniforms.
- 1-9pm** **Kids Fun Zone – East & North Central** Pony Rides , Laser Tag, Inflatables, Airbrush Tattoos & Games.
- 1-9pm** **Ashland Elk's Lodge #1360 Budweiser Beer Garden Open** 21 and over, ID required.
- 2-5pm** **COSI on Wheels – West Tent** Play, explore and learn as COSI comes with 5 hands-on "Science Spots" kiosks.
- 2:30-3:30pm** **Donley Ford Lincoln of Ashland Pilot Meet & Greet - Park Street** Bring your Commemorative Souvenir Guide and meet hot air balloon pilots; if you capture all their autographs you will receive a free T-shirt courtesy of Donley Ford Lincoln of Ashland.
- 3:30-4:30pm** **Safety Fun – Launch Field, West & Park Street** Metro Life Flight & K-9 Demonstration.
- 5-9pm** **Live Entertainment- Main Stage**
 Red Ball Jets - A high-energy band that will keep you entertained from start to finish.
- 7pm** **Donley Ford Lincoln of Ashland Competition Flight – Launch Field**
 Enjoy the cold inflation process and lift-offs as pilots compete for cash prizes.
- 8pm** **Balloon Glow Encounter – Launch Field** Family 4 Pack of Tickets can be purchased at www.ashlandohioballoonfest.com. Package includes parking pass, 4 Pepsi products, admission to launch field 1 hour prior to balloon glow with bleacher seating and official Balloonfest souvenir.
- 9-9:50pm** **Ashland Times Gazette Balloon Glow - Launch Field** Enjoy an interactive display as balloons line the launch field and glow against the night sky choreographed to music piped throughout Freer Field.

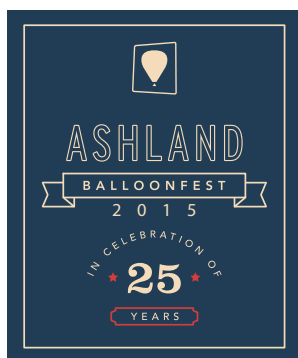
SUNDAY, JULY 05, 2015

- 7-8am** **Donley Ford Lincoln of Ashland Balloon Competition - Freer Field**
 Bring your chairs, coffee and blankets to watch balloons compete for cash prizes

SPECIAL NOTES: For paid tethered & untethered ride availability check www.AshlandOhioBalloonfest.com
 ALL Balloon activities are weather permitting and subject to delay or cancellation. See page 43 for more information.
 For other weekend activities, visit Ashland Area CVB www.visitashlandohio.com

Map





A History of Ashland

Modern Ashland is commonly pictured as a place of beautiful landscapes, with rolling hills, rivers, fields, sunsets, and hot air balloons. Yet, how did the peaceful serenity of the colors, floating amid blue skies on morning and evenings rich with dew, first come to be a staple of our historical community?

In the 1960s, Ashland wanted to celebrate its status as balloon capital of the world – a name they earned because in those days 70 percent of the world's toy balloons were manufactured in Ashland, Ohio — with a Balloon Festival.

The first Balloon Festival took place in 1963, complete with balloon parades, a carnival, and a balloon queen pageant. That year, Susan Roberts reigned as Ashland Balloon Queen and also represented Ashland in the Miss Ohio pageant.

A number of other activities at the event celebrated toy balloons and their production, but the one that inspired the current festival was the hot air balloon ascension from Brookside Park.

The balloon lifted off with six people, but only went about a quarter of a mile because the weather was not conducive to flying. Another balloon festival took place the next year, and then, the festival was incorporated into the sesquicentennial celebration of 1965.

In 1990, the idea of hot air balloons was brought back to Ashland during the city's 175th anniversary as an ode to the events in the '60s. About 19-20 balloons were brought in for a one-day festival that had beautiful weather. Residents of Ashland enjoyed the event and asked for it back for an entire weekend.

According to John Sidle, who has been associated in some way with BalloonFest since its inception, organizers in the early years started to look at what other events were already taking place in the community, such as Brookside Golf's Red, White, and Blue Scramble and the Ashland Historical Society's Ice Cream Social, in order to incorporate them. In 1993, it went to a three-day event, and then a fourth was added, which has served as a day for media flights, fund-raisers like the Hawkins BBQ, and public tethered rides.

According to almost everyone ever involved in the event, including the festival's founders, BalloonFest is held every year on the Fourth of July weekend because it is a patriotic holiday, a time for celebration of community and family, and it keeps people local while also bringing in tourists. In 1992, there were 2,000 spectators for the balloon launch. Mass lift-offs, entertainment for adults and children, and other area activities were all added to improve the event. Balloon Glows were added in 2001 and the crowd numbers rose to even greater heights.

In 2002, Ashland BalloonFest was incorporated and handed



BalloonFest:

Celebrating 25 Years of Balloons,
Community, and Colorful Skies

over from the Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce to the BalloonFest Board of Trustees, with Rick Spreng as President. The group hoped to bring the event back to basics: a focus on pilots and the balloons.

"Never in our wildest dreams, as we met with balloon pilots Don Hamilton and Alex Jonard about what they could do for our event in 1990, did we think it would last beyond that first mass lift off, let alone 25 years later stronger than ever before," said Spreng, one of the coordinators of Ashland's 175th celebration and then Ashland BalloonFest, who went on to serve as board chairman and volunteer for many years. "That first meeting....was the night of my first balloon ride. We took off from Freer Field and Don and Alex thought it was ideal. The next year we gave it a name, Ashland Balloonfest, secured funding, and the rest as they say, is history."

The late pilot Bob Zanella, one of the nation's premier balloon pilots to be licensed in the 1970s, came in to offer his help during that 1990 event, too. He went on to serve in many capacities, including balloonmeister, until his death in 2010 at the age of 80. He was a mentor to many pilots everywhere, but especially enjoyed Ashland. He was quoted as saying that he enjoyed Ashland BalloonFest because of the local business support.

Zanella noted in newspaper interviews that pilots love the Ashland community and love flying there as it doesn't have many prohibited zones for landing. This is great in regards to safety. People in the Ashland community seem to generally love chasing the balloons, having them land in their fields and yards all over Ashland County, and even helping the pilots or in serving as crew.

Other balloonmeisters have been Hamilton, Jonard, Maury Sullivan, and Rick Kohut who also have been longtime pilots and supporters. Hamilton, who was tasked with organizing and participating in the 175th balloon race and was affiliated until 2009, will serve as balloonmeister for the 25th birthday race. Pilots who have flown all 25 years are Jonard and Michael Emich.

There have always been over 20 to 30 balloons participating, with the record being 39 balloons in 2005, depending on pilot schedules and sponsorships available. In the past, there have been many shaped balloons such as a Santa Claus, Red Dragon, the Purple People Eater, various Pepsi product cans, a large-sized American flag, a pink monster truck, Gordo the Monkey, and even a man who

was garnering national press who flew over on a cluster of helium balloons!

For the first time in what had been a very long time, the weather was nice enough to get all six flights up in 2010. Also, longtime fan favorite balloon Patches was donated to Ashland BalloonFest by owner and pilot John Gill. It was one of the very first balloons flown in Ashland. Gill was the first pilot safety officer and will serve as safety officer again in 2015.

Many of the initial coordinators are proud to see that the event is still going strong today. Now, people flock in from all over and there are many more volunteers. Sidle said, "No matter how much work goes into the event each year, we always find a way to have fun. Being involved, you get the feeling of doing something important for the community."

Over the course of 25 years there have been all sorts of activities added, such children's games and parade, musical entertainment, field activities, sporting events, food vendors, and more. The organizers have always been open to new ideas and strive to make ABF better every year. Current President Mindi Cantrell would like to see "continued community support through both sponsorships and public participation."

Misty Miller, Public Relations Chair of ABF, said, "Every year, good or bad weather, when you look out at the crowds knowing you had a small part in their holiday weekend, it gives you goosebumps."

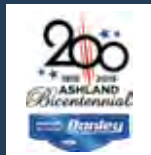
It looks like Ashland BalloonFest might be celebrating 25 years, but the tradition of balloons in Ashland has been around for so many more. With the community behind it, and it in the hands of so many dedicated volunteers giving numerous hours of service, the future looks bright for it to soar well into the future.

Article by Erin Sweet Al-Mehairi, owner of Addison's Compass Public Relations in Ashland. She sat on the board and managed the public relations for Ashland BalloonFest from late 2002 to early 2007. Her two favorite memories are: assisting John Ninomiya, the cluster balloon helium pilot, with his launch and television coverage with Discovery Channel Canada and taking her first flight with Steve Lachendro, in his Silent Red Sea, one of the best experiences in her life with one of the nicest gentle giants she's ever met. May he rest in peace.

2015 Sponsors - Thank You!

If it weren't for the following sponsors, BalloonFest would not be possible. Ashland Area Businesses – Thank you for your many years of sponsorship.

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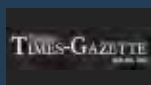
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Birthday Cake

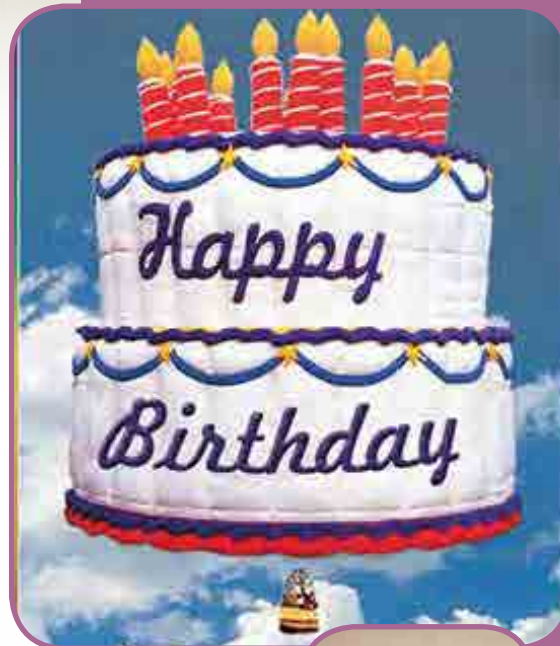
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Pilot Keith Sproul flies the cool Birthday Cake balloon, which of course is named for its shape! Keith feels his greatest achievement in ballooning is being only the second person to fly a balloon into Meteor Crater in Arizona and the FIRST person to ever land a balloon in the bottom of the crater! He flies five balloons, all which are special shaped. His crew chief is Ali Szabo and crew member is Jay Szabo. This is his first time at Ashland BalloonFest.

If you capture all pilot autographs during Pilot Meet & Greet, you will receive a FREE T-shirt courtesy of Donley Ford Lincoln of Ashland!

Pilot Autograph



Keith Sproul
North Brunswick, NJ



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Bolt

Sponsored by: Morris Sign Studio & Shakley Mechanical

The amazing balloon named Bolt is flown by pilot Jim Cusick. He said the name came from the manufacturer of it, as it best describes design of red and blue with a lightning bolt on each side. He is proud to have won the 2013 Ohio Challenge and feels that's his greatest ballooning experience. His crew chief is Ben Parson and his crew consists of Laura and Payton Cusick and "whoever else would like to crew his awesome balloon." He obtained his pilot's license in 2004 and he's flown at six Ashland BalloonFest events!

Jim Cusick
Marysville, OH

Pilot Autograph

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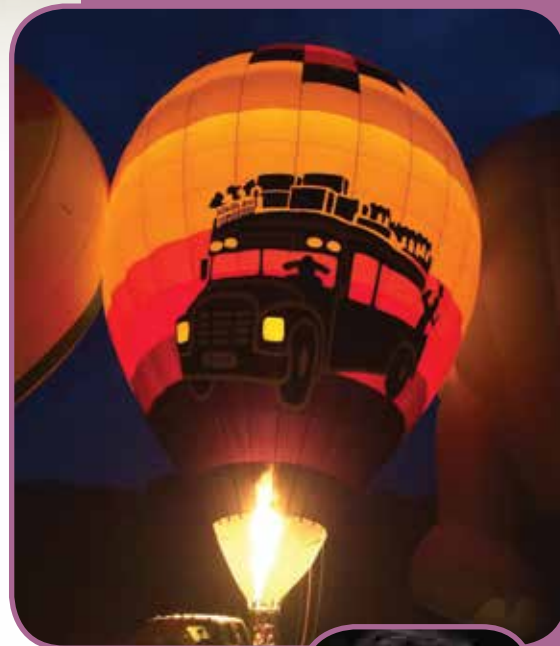
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Breaking Wind

Sponsored by: Ashland Area CVB

Maury Sullivan pilots the interesting balloon, Breaking Wind, which is a silhouette of folk art. Maury named the balloon due to his love of the TV show "Breaking Bad." His best memory is flying over the MIG Air Force base in Leningrad. His crew chief is Harry Meyers and his crew consists of Lynn Sullivan and Karen Meyers. He obtained his pilot license in 1982 and has been participating in Ashland BalloonFest for 12 years.



Maury Sullivan
Canton, OH



Pilot Autograph

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Columbia

Sponsored by: Family Pools & Spas &
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The commanding Columbia is a balloon piloted by Jeff Conley. Named by the previous owner, it graces the sky with horizontal stripes of green, blue, yellow, light blue, and white. His greatest experience is sharing flights with his wife and family! His crew chief is Jill Conley and his crew members are his daughters: Katie, Kendra, and Kyla. He received his pilot's license in 2006 and he's been participating in Ashland BalloonFest for five years.



Jeff Conley
Upper Sandusky, OH

Pilot Autograph

**Have a great weekend
at BalloonFest!**

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ASHLAND BALLOONFEST OFFICIAL EVENT

BACKYARD BBQ

Thursday, July 2

4-8:00 pm

West Side of the Field

Bring the entire family to be a part of this year's
Backyard BBQ by Hawkins Fresh Foods.

FOOD RAFFLES • ENTERTAINMENT

Hawkins Pulled Pork Sandwich	\$6.00
Cole Slaw	\$1.00
Potato Salad	\$1.00
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Cra-Zee

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Alex Jonard pilots Cra-Zee, which is named after his family's dear friend and mentor, Bob "Professor Zee" Zanella, and because of the crazy pattern of the envelope, with its orange, blue, and yellow "digital camo" design. He says that every flight is great when experienced with family and friends! They are so happy and proud to have been at every Ashland BalloonFest so far and love the flying area and the people. Alex's crew chief is Monica Jonard and crew members are Alex T and Nick Jonard, plus the Swaisgood family of Maxine, Tim, Sarah, Jack, and Claire. He obtained his pilot license in 1987.



Alex Jonard II
Saint Charles, IL

Pilot Autograph

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Diamond Girl

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Pilot Kenneth Kus flies the patriotic-attired red, white, and blue striped balloon, Diamond Girl. His balloon was named after the 1973 hit by musical group Seals and Croft. His greatest ballooning experience was flying his balloon from northwest Ohio to southeast Ohio, which is approximately 190 miles, in four hours. His outstanding achievements to date are winning first place at 2007 Thurston classic, 2008 Blossom Time Festival, and 2009 Ashland BalloonFest. Shelly Blaschak is his crew chief and crew member is Dave Merva. He obtained his pilot license in 1999 and has flown at Ashland BalloonFest for 16 years.



Ken Kus
Chagrin Falls, OH



Pilot Autograph

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Eclipse

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Pilot Gregory Miller flies the beautiful balloon Eclipse. Named by his wife and crew chief Sherry for the colors of the sun, its racer balloon shape is yellow with orange and red squares. Michael and Julie are his crew members. Receiving his pilot certificate in 2003, his favorite memory so far is taking his first flight with his wife and son Michael. He's a two-time BFA long jump winner and was a NOBPA Club Champion in 2013. He has flown at Ashland BalloonFest for 12 years!



Greg Miller
Grafton, OH

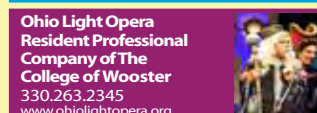


Pilot Autograph

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Free Spirit 5

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Eric Wasson flies the soaring balloon Free Spirit 5, which is the fifth balloon in the family. It was originally named in the 1970s when being a "free spirit" was cool. It is an orange, yellow, and green chevron pattern on a red background. His greatest memory is learning to fly with his father. His crew chief is Sneha Shah, with his crew consisting of Diedre and Brian Kosier and assorted children. He obtained his pilot's license in 2009 and has flown at Ashland BalloonFest approximately five years.



Eric Wasson
Hudson, OH

Pilot Autograph



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Janet Lutkus pilots the amazing Moonlight Sun-ata. It was named by her crew in a contest. The balloon is royal blue with sun and moon celestial design. To Janet, ballooning is a wonderful sport to share with the family and other enthusiastic people, especially children. Janet's outstanding achievement is knowing how to fly a balloon safely. Her crew chief is Diana Beck. She has had her pilot's license since 1993 and has flown at Ashland BalloonFest since 1994.



Janet Lutkus
Medina, OH



Pilot Autograph

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Great Adventure

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Pilot Karen Holt flies the colorful Great Adventure, which is aptly named as after each time her brother would take a ride, he'd say, "That was another great adventure!" It has vertical purple stripes with pink and teal insets. Her favorite memories are sharing in ballooning with family, friends, and everyone they have met during a flight. Her crew chief is Tim Alexander and her crew member is Justin Flickinger. She's had her license since 1999 and been flying in Ashland for 13 years.



Karen Holt
Wooster, OH

Pilot Autograph

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H.E.R.B.

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Pilot Shannon Rote flies H.E.R.B., which is named for her grandparents—Hilda, Eloise, Ralph—and her mentor, Bob. It is a beautiful teal with a rainbow prism. She feels it was a very memorable moment earning her pilot's license in 2003. She's a past president of the North East Ohio Balloon Pilot's Association and in her day job she is a speech and debate coach at Copley High School. Her crew chief is Allan Caddell and her crew consists of Michael Rote, Jason Seiberling, and Landon Caddell. She's been flying at Ashland BalloonFest for six years.

Shannon Rote
Doylestown, OH



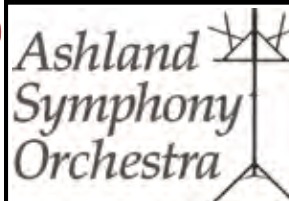
Pilot Autograph



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2015 Balloons



Birthday Cake

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Pilot: Alex Jonard II

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Diamond Girl

Pilot: Ken Kus

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Free Spirit 5

Pilot: Eric Wasson

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Moonlight Sun-ata

Pilot: Janet Lutkus

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Great Adventure

Pilot: Karen Holt

Ashland Board of REALTORS® Inc. &
The Ohio State University at Mansfield



H.E.R.B.

Pilot: Shannon Rote

Simonson Construction Services, Inc.



Hour Big Bundle of Joy

Pilot: Walt Rudy

Akron Children's Hospital &
Ashland Pump



I'm Back!

Pilot: James Mitchell

A & B Tent Rental &
Pentair Pump Company



Joelly

Pilot: Michael Glen

Samaritan Regional Health System/
Samaritan Hospital Foundation

At-A-Glance



K2

Pilot: Tim Midura

Window Nation



Legal Eagle

Pilot: Ted Watts

Brethren Care Village



Magic Carpet II

Pilot: Dennis Helmuth

Hedstrom & Ohio Eye Associates Eye
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Maveryx

Pilot: Steve Sitko

Spreng-Smith Agency



No Name Yet

Pilot: Michael Emich

Pioneer National Latex



RE/MAX

Pilot: Stew Gibboney

RE/MAX Towne & Country Realty



Shining Light

Pilot: David Seekell

BellStores



Silver Wings

Pilot: John Moran

Smetz's Tire & Service Center



Skydancer

Pilot: Mike Ruede

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Hour Big Bundle of Joy

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Walt Rudy is the pilot of the colorful Hour Big Bundle of Joy, which he said he named for no special reason. It's yellow with an oscillating multi-colored center. His best memory is flying over the Grand Canyon of the East Letchworth State Park in New York. His crew chief is Deb Smith-Rudy and his crew consists of Eric Mayer, Gary Coffman, and others. He received his pilot's license in 1984 and this is his second year to fly at Ashland BalloonFest!



Walt Rudy
Wadsworth, OH

Pilot Autograph

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I'm Back

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Pilot James Mitchell's balloon tells a tale, since after he took a year off ballooning, he bought a new balloon and called her, I'm Back! It's bright with colors like orange, red, yellow starburst. His fondest memories and times are of flying with his brother, Steve Mitchell, at numerous events throughout the summer. James is a commercial airline pilot and received his balloon pilot license in 2006. His crew chief is his fiancé Carolina, and of his crew, he says that they are always changing but they always have fun. This is his first year at Ashland BalloonFest!



James Mitchell
Brunswick, OH



Pilot Autograph




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Joelly

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Pilot Michael Glen flies Joelly, which is named due to a combination of the "mom balloon" being Lilly and the "dad balloon" is Joey, and it's a bumble bee! Michael's best memory so far has been in giving people rides that otherwise wouldn't have had a chance. His greatest accomplishment is being the first paralyzed person in the world to fly hot air balloons. You can see more on his story at www.rollingpilot.com. His crew chief is Carol Herman and he received his pilot's license in 2006. It's his first time at Ashland BalloonFest!



Michael Glen
Chandler, AZ

Pilot Autograph

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K2

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Pilot Tim Midura flies the interesting K2 (or otherwise known as Kismet Two or Too in honor of previous Kismet). It has a yellow top with different colored gores. Tim's crew chief is Melissa Midura, and his crew consists of Lori, Jay, Eli, and Mae Nowak. A favorite memory for Tim is flying his first balloon in Costa Rica and he feels his outstanding achievements are winning first place at several rallies over the years, as well as training other pilots. He received his pilot license in 1980 and has flown at Ashland BalloonFest for 18 to 20 years!



Tim Midura
Marshallville, OH



Pilot Autograph



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Legal Eagle

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Pilot Ted Watts flies the regal Legal Eagle, which is yellow with Eagles on the meridian. He calls his balloon this as it's a nickname given to attorneys. Marti Troutner is his crew chief and his crew members are Chuck and Grace Wycoff. His favorite memory is flying with well-known Bob Zanella. Ted received his pilot's license in 1995 and has been soaring Ashland BalloonFest skies for 16 years!



Ted Watts
Meadville, PA



Pilot Autograph



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Magic Carpet II

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The fun balloon Magic Carpet II is flown by Dennis Helmuth, which he named as such since he dreamed of riding a magic carpet when he was little. The balloon has custom inlaid artwork of a boy riding on a magic carpet with an appropriate sky blue background. His favorite memory is of descending through a cloud on a winter flight and seeing snowflakes being made by nature. He said the sun refracted through the snowflakes and that he was surrounded by diamonds. Then as he descended, he watched the snowflakes float down with him. He received his pilot's license in 1991 and his crew chief is Dick Frase. His crew members consist of Dave Purvis, Joe Stutz, and John Drouhard. He's been flying at Ashland BalloonFest for 20 years!

Pilot Autograph



Dennis Helmuth
Wooster, OH



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Maveryx

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Pilot Steve Sitko flies the amazing balloon Maveryx, which is mostly pink with lime green and blue spirals and accents of black and silver. They consider hot air ballooning a family sport, so he put his daughters' names, Avery and Maddyx, together to form their balloon name. His wife Sara serves as his crew chief, with his two daughters as the crew. Steve believes that every flight is a unique experience of its own, but his greatest experience was his first flight in his hometown event, where he landed in the neighborhood he grew up in and his old neighbors came out to meet and greet. It was a surreal moment for him, as hot air balloons flew regularly over his neighborhood when he was a child. He received his pilot's license in 2013, so he's flown at Ashland BalloonFest for two years.

Steve Sitko
Jackson, MI

Pilot Autograph



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No Name Yet

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Michael Emich pilots a balloon which he hasn't named yet, because he's only flown it a few times so far! It has an off-set block spiral pattern with colors of white, gray, black, yellow, sky blue, and navy blue. Michael's favorite memory is flying a WWII Navy gas balloon in 1984 from Akron, Ohio to Boston, Massachusetts, which was a flight that was 515 miles and during overnight hours. However, he feels his outstanding accomplishments are winning five distance races. Ed Yost Master Pilot Award, Shield-Trauger Award, and Lighter-Than-Air Society Achievement. He is retired from the Akron Fire Department and has had his pilot's license since 1974. His crew chief is Rozanne Emich and his crew members are Steve Uhler, Cody Uhler, Carmine Barretta, and Bonnie Barretta. He's flown at all the Ashland BalloonFest Festivals!



Michael Emich
Akron, OH



Pilot Autograph



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Stew Gibboney
Grove City, OH

RE/MAX

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The aptly named corporate RE/MAX balloon is flown by Stew Gibboney, with the colors of red, white, and blue. His crew chief is Julie Gibboney and his crew members are Michele Gibboney, Nikki Crister, and the local Ashland RE/MAX agents and Stoops family. His best memory is being one of the 33 pilots invited to participate in the Centennial Era Balloon Festival at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway (IMS) May 1, 2009. The first event at the speedway in 1909 was a balloon race, and so they started their 100 year celebration in 2009 with a balloon race also. He said the organizers and IMS are what made it a very memorable experience for him. He was the President of the Central Ohio Balloon Club from 2001-2008. He received his pilot's license in 2000 and he's flown at Ashland BalloonFest for 11 years.



Pilot Autograph



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Shining Light

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Shining Light is the balloon flown by pilot David Seekell. He named his balloon in memory of his mother who passed away in 2003, as she was their "shining light." It is primarily light blue with an eye-catching red and white striped lighthouse. Tina Seekell is his crew chief and crew members are Nicole and Emily Seekell. One of his best memories was having the honor of taking a man for a ride on his 100th birthday! He says that they look forward to returning to Ashland each year as the people are wonderful. Obtaining his pilot's license in 1994, this is his sixth year at Ashland BalloonFest.



David Seekell
Jackson, MI



Pilot Autograph



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Silver Wings

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Pilot John Moran flies the pretty Silver Wings balloon, which you can spot by its silver birds spiraling up each side. It's blue with a rainbow around the middle and of course, the birds. His favorite memories are of the experiences he had flying the balloon in France, Poland, Mexico, and Czech Republic. Marie Russell is his crew chief and his crew member is Bobbie Holton. Having his pilot's license since 1989, he's flown at Ashland BalloonFest for 19 years!



John Moran
Cortland, OH

Pilot Autograph

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Skydancer

Sponsored by: **Grandpa's Cheese Barn**

The beautiful balloon Skydancer is flown by pilot Mike Ruede. It's dark blue, with pink and teal tear drops, and is named simply because the first balloon he owned was called Sundancer. His greatest times are taking passengers for their first hot air balloon ride! He obtained his pilot's license in 2003 and his crew chief is Anne Wade. His other crew member is Amy Meyers. Being the last 10 years at Ashland BalloonFest as a crew chief, he is now going to fly his balloon for the second time at the festival.



Mike Ruede
Orient, OH



Pilot Autograph

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Slow Drip

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Pilot Shanon Donnelly flies the cool Slow Drip, which he named since when he built the balloon it took longer than he thought it might! It's also a skinny, racer-type balloon and so its elongated shape looks like a drop of water and it's a purple, black, and yellow spiral. His favorite memory is of a summer evening landing when someone was having a barbeque and they got to join in the fun! Michelle Davis is his crew chief. He obtained his pilot's license in 1995 and has flown at Ashland BalloonFest for four years.



Shanon Donnelly
Akron, OH

Pilot Autograph

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Spitfire

Sponsored by: Donna D's Family Pizza

Paul Dale pilots Spitfire, which he named due to the balloon's design and colors, but also because of his personality! It has two larger diamond patterns on the front and back and flame patterns by the mouth. His crew chief is Dave Smith and his crew members include Melissa Larson and Anthony Goffus. He has 28 years of ballooning experience, but he obtained his pilot's license in 2014. It's his first year to fly at Ashland BalloonFest!



Paul Dale
East Canton, OH



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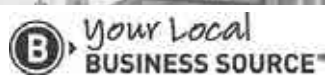
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Sunshine

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Pilot Meredith Bennett flies Sunshine, which she rightly named due to it looking like a ball of sunshine in the sky. It's all yellow with black trim. She received her pilot's license in 2006 and feels that her greatest accomplishment is winning second place at the Coshocton Balloon Race and remembers thinking she had missed a target but was able to work her way back and drop almost into the center of the "x." It's Meredith's second year at Ashland BalloonFest.



Meredith Bennett
Hilliard, OH



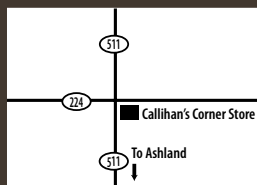
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The Flying Dolphin

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Pilot Kenneth Myers takes The Flying Dolphin to the air, showing to the sky the balloon's yellow and green stripes, which run up and down the middle of the balloon, as well as its checkered top of black and yellow. It's named for the fact that the couple loves scuba diving. He said his greatest experience would be hard to choose: either winning a car while flying their first dolphin balloon, flying over the Serengeti in Africa, or perhaps flying over the pyramids in Mexico! His crew chief is Dian Myers and his crew is the Sanchutz family. He received his pilot's license in 1982 and has been flying at Ashland BalloonFest for three years.



Kenneth Myers
Akron, OH



Pilot Autograph



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Wildfire

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Wayne Gibbons pilots Wildfire. He said the balloon was already named when he bought it. It has yellow, red, and black vertical stripes making it a striking balloon against the sky. His crew chief is Ryan Lengel and his crew members are Tyler, Angela, and Lukus Stricker, as well as Kirsten and Aubrey Lengel and Bill Grafton. His most memorable moment was his flight with instructor Bob Zanella. He obtained his pilot's license in 2002, though 2014 was his first year at Ashland BalloonFest.



Wayne Gibbons
Stow, OH



Pilot Autograph

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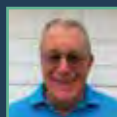
"Weather" to Fly or Not to Fly

2015 BALLOON COMPETITION OFFICIALS

This year's balloon officials were all pilots or crewed the Balloon Race in 1990 as part of the 175th Celebration, and for many years after. The Ashland BalloonFest Committee is honored to have these gentlemen join us for our 25th Birthday Celebration.



Balloonmeister
Don Hamilton



Safety Officer
John Gill



Weather Officer
Fred Muffet



Scoring Officer
Roger Hamilton

The Balloonmeister is the head balloonist or competition director. His job is to direct the pilots to safe and successful flights. He leads the pilots in briefings before each flight, advising them of the conditions they will face flying and of any potential obstacles they may face. The Balloonmeister has a team of advisors, who work with him to make the best decisions they can on topics like weather conditions and landowner issues. If conditions are not safe to fly, he makes the decision to cancel the flight. You can imagine the pressure when 28 pilots are sitting there ready for you to give them the word to fly, as well as an anxiously awaiting crowd of up to 20,000 ready to cheer them on. The Balloonmeister and his team's number one priority is safety. The Balloonmeister, Weather Officer, and Safety Officer look at wind, winds aloft, visibility, rain, storms and temperature to determine "weather" to fly or not to fly.

WIND

Words to look for in a forecast within a 100 mile radius: *gusty, breezy, windy, blustery, small craft warnings, high wind warnings*

Wind is the most critical factor in safe ballooning; it affects every phase of a flight. More balloon flights are cancelled due to wind than for any other reason. Balloons fly best in light and stable winds of 4-6 miles per hour. Maximum safe winds are 8-10 mph.

WINDS ALOFT

The winds on the surface are just one of the concerns. They have to think three dimensionally and consider what the wind is doing at different altitudes as well. This is perhaps the most confusing aspect for passengers and spectators. For example, there is not even a hint of a breeze on the ground and the flight has just been cancelled due to wind, how come? They look at winds at the surface (the wind you can feel) and the winds at 1 to 9,000 feet. They are not going to 9,000 feet, but it tells them if they might encounter issues such as wind shear, turbulence, or strong surface winds later on. Even if there are no winds to speak of at the surface, the winds aloft may drive the decision not to fly. Winds aloft of 18-20 knots or 20 miles per hour will be sufficient to cancel a flight.

POOR VISIBILITY

Words to look for in a forecast within a 100 mile radius: *foggy, hazy, misty*

How far can we see? Hot air balloon aircrafts are designated by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) as Visual Flight Rules (VFR) certified. That means they must have a certain amount of visibility to fly legally. The visibility must be 1 to 3 miles, depending on where they are flying. If they don't have it, they can't fly!

RAIN & STORMS

Words to look for in a forecast within a 100 mile radius: *thunderstorms, rain, chance of showers or storms*

The decision not to fly in rain or storms seems a simple one - of course they don't! What isn't so simple is why the flight may be cancelled when no storm or rain actually happens in the area. Storms can be significant events to any type of aircraft, but a balloon is perhaps the most weather sensitive aircraft there is. An airplane can turn and run from a storm whereas a balloon is drawn into a storm. The winds will accelerate and head toward a building storm and flow out of a decaying storm. These gust fronts can occur 75 to 100 miles away from the actual storm and create winds that are dangerous to a balloon. Once again, it's the wind! If storms are forecast or there are storms within 100 miles they will cancel flights.

TEMPERATURE

Since hot air balloons fly by changing the temperature inside the balloon with heat, it stands to reason that outside air temperature is going to affect balloon flights, and it does! When the air in the balloon is heated, it becomes hotter and thus less dense than the surrounding outside air. This hotter air is "lighter" and the balloon will float upward. The more heat, the higher up you go. A balloon will fly when its temperature is around 140 degrees above the outside air temperature (generally). So, the colder it is outside, the less heat it takes to fly and conversely, the hotter it is outside, the more heat it will take to fly. Can't wrap your head around this? Here is an example:

Outside Air Temperature	+	Heat it Takes to Fly (140 F)	=	Temperature Inside the Balloon
Cold day of 30 degrees F	+	140 F	=	170 degrees
Hot day of 95 degrees F	+	140 F	=	235 degrees (more heat if it's hot out)

This is of particular concern to pilots operating smaller balloons. The smaller the balloon, the less lift capacity it will have and the hotter it must be inside the balloon for it to fly. The maximum continuous operating temperature for most hot air balloons is 250 degrees Fahrenheit. That leaves little margin for safety and for maneuvering on a very hot day.

Exerpts from Fun-Flying.com

Look for the colored flag near the pilots' tent, east of the Main Stage, to find out status of current flight.

Flags will be raised following pilots' briefing which starts approximately 30 minutes before each flight or glow.



No inflation or take-off permitted. Previous permission to take-off cancelled.



General permission to all balloons to begin hot inflation.



Permission to 'blue' wave (odd numbered balloons) to begin hot inflation.



Permission to 'white' wave (even numbered balloons) to begin hot inflation.



Five minute warning.



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2015 Committee

Mindi Cantrell, President – Serving since 2007 - Business Banker Huntington Bank. Mindi had the honor of a Saturday morning flight with Steve Lachendro in 2008. Steve announced as they were taking off from the Ashland County Airport that they would land on the front lawn of the Holiday Inn on 250. Knowing that hot air balloons have no steering wheel and fly where the wind takes them, she said, “there is no way you can be that specific”. She recalls that morning was a beautiful flight and sure enough they landed just where Steve had predicted.

Joe Robinson, Vice President – Serving since 2011 - Owner of Global Product Solutions Inc. Joe got involved because he thought it would be a good way to get a free Balloon ride!!! He moved into Ashland City in 2010 and wanted to get involved with a nonprofit organization that would be fun and also help promote Ashland. “I have held a private pilot’s license for 35 plus years, so flying is close to my heart, shall we say.” Combining a long time hobby and helping the community, BalloonFest was a natural fit.

Misty Miller, Public Relations – Serving since 2008 - REALTOR® Haring Realty., she remembers an early morning balloon flight in 2010 that just happened to take a path over several houses that she had sold the year previous. She was able to take pictures of her clients’ houses from above and was even able to talk to a few of them while flying over head. “It was really neat to have both of my passions come together in that one flight.”

David Boyer, Treasurer – Serving since 2003 - Self-Employed in Financial Services. Started serving as a Leadership Ashland Intern. He fondly remembers his first hot air balloon ride, so smooth, quiet and peaceful.

Allen Lifer, Vendor/Field Setup Chair – Serving since 2010 - Human Resource Director, West View Healthy Living. A few years ago, his wife was able to go up in a balloon on a Sunday morning flight. “Since then, my wife and kids began to crew and have crewed for the same pilot. It is an awesome experience to have the entire family involved.”

Heather Herrick, Sponsors – Serving since 2013 - Proprietor, Housekeeping by Heather & Company. Started serving as Leadership Ashland Intern. Heather first moved to Ashland in 1998 and had never attended Balloonfest. That summer was particularly hot and humid so they slept with the windows open in their 100 year old house. At sunrise, she was awakened by the “ssshhh” sound of a hot air balloon. She ran to the attic and watched from the tallest perch where, for blocks, it seemed as though she could have reached out and touched the balloon. “I was hooked from that point forward”, she recalls.

Sue Kelley, Pilot Liaison – Serving since 2006 - Sue first became involved because her dad was a Hot Air Balloon Pilot and flying Ashland Balloonfest. Dave Bishop asked for her help a few years ago because she always recruited great crew for her dad and would host a Saturday morning brunch for pilots and crew. Since she was already doing the work, Dave told her she should join the committee. That was three years ago.

Kathy Goon, Entertainment – Serving since 2013 - Executive Director, Ashland Economic Development. Kathy has been a long time fan of Balloonfest, attending for many years. When the opportunity arose to join the committee, she jumped at the chance. Last year, Kathy helped crew and took her first flight. She recalls the awesomeness of flying over the city and how quiet and peaceful it was.

Vickie Swander, Entertainment – Volunteer 2015 - Account Executive, 93.7 Super Q WQIO/ 1300 WMVO/ BAS Broadcasting. “Ashland BalloonFest is tons of fun, so when Misty Miller asked me to become involved, I was eager to help.” She enjoys bringing friends to the event; people of all ages are fascinated by these larger-than-life balloons.

Mike Dorgan, Parking Coordinator Since 2008 – Retired Machinist, Custom Hoists. Mike started his volunteering parking cars in the early 90s. He is the liaison for the BalloonFest committee and the Ashland Wayne Holmes County Central Labor Council Volunteers, who have been parking cars for the event for many years as their community involvement initiative.

Jim Park, Cornhole Chair – Serving since 2014 - LPTA, Crystal Care Center. Jim is an avid cornhole player and BalloonFest champion for last few years. When Jim heard that the committee was looking for new organizer for the Cornhole Tournament, he gladly volunteered.

Mary Dorrel, Souvenir Chair 2015 – Teacher, St. Edward School. Mary started volunteering in the Souvenir Tent in 2012 with Boy Scout Troop 214.

Joe Reep, Leadership Ashland Intern 2015 – Ashland Comfort Control - Joe has enjoyed BalloonFest for many years as a spectator but last year taking his son for the first time at 1 ½ years-old was even better. “To see the awe and pure amazement on his face when the first balloon lifted off the ground was really something special,” Joe said while sharing a photo of his son capturing that moment in time.

Donna Gilmore, Volunteer 2015 – Title Agent, Southern Title of Ohio. She enjoys people and being involved. She heard what a wonderful event BalloonFest is and when Mindi Cantrell asked her to get involved, she wanted to help.

John Emser, Volunteer – Serving since 2009 - Packaging Corporation of America. Started serving as Leadership Ashland Intern. John moved to Ashland in 1990 and remembers going to Ashland County Children’s Home Field to see a handful of balloons launch. He recalls there was not a snow fence and you could walk around the balloons as they inflated.

Liz Rogers, Volunteer 2015 – Hair Stylist, Studio 42. Liz is what you would call a SUPERFAN. She has attended every year as a spectator and has even helped pilots land. If the wind blows right, they have seen as many as four land on her family’s properties just south of Nankin. The pilots are always so gracious to the kids and let them help put the balloon away.

Selena Grimwood, Volunteer 2015 – Branch Manager, Home Savings.

Vince Bugara, Volunteer 2015 – Account Executive, LAMAR

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A special **THANK YOU** to all Ashland Balloonfest committee members and volunteers past and present for **25 YEARS OF A JOB WELL DONE!**

Your time and efforts make a difference and The Ashland Balloonfest makes Ashland a better place to live.



A BALLOONIST'S PRAYER

May the winds welcome you with softness.
May the sun bless you with its warm hands.
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