

AeroStats



June 2026

**The Monthly Newsletter of the
American Ballooning Community**

Volume 28, Number 6

The June ABC Meeting will happen in Prosser, Washington on June 13th.

Time TBD. Notification sent out soon.

We will meet at the Eastern Washington's Chapter Club House at the Prosser Airport.



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A Word From Your American Ballooning Community President

Dear Members,

Flying season is here, and I could not be more excited for all of the adventures that lie ahead! On behalf of the entire American Ballooning Community, I want to wish every one of you a season filled with smooth winds, stunning sunrises, and soft landings. This is the time of year we live for — so let's make every flight count.

Share Your Stories With Us!

We want to hear everything from you this season! Shari Gale and Justin Anderson are eager to collect your photos, stories, and memories from flights all around the country. Did you find a landowner who went above and beyond — welcoming you with open arms and maybe even a cup of coffee or a plate of bacon? We want to celebrate them! Did you face a challenging situation with a landowner and find a creative way to turn it around? Those stories are just as valuable and we would love to hear how you handled it.

And if you happened to touch down in a cul-de-sac and ended up giving tethers to 100 neighborhood kids — yes, please send us that story (and those photos)! Those magical, spontaneous moments are what ballooning is all about, and they remind us why we do what we do.

Send everything you've got to Shari and Justin via **email or text**.

No moment is too small; no photo is too blurry. We want it all!

Spread the Word

Flying season puts us in front of more people than any other time of year — curious bystanders, excited kids, landowners, and folks who have never seen a balloon up close. Please take every opportunity to spread the word about the American Ballooning Community. We have **information cards** available for you to hand out if you need some. Just reach out and we will get them to you. A single conversation or a card placed in the right hand could bring a wonderful new member into our community.

This Is Your Organization

I want to remind you — as I always do — that the American Ballooning Community exists because of **you**. Your ideas, your input, and your involvement shape what this organization is and where it goes. Please don't be shy about telling me what you want to see from us. What programs would serve you? What issues need our attention? What are we missing? I genuinely want to know.

And remember — the work doesn't stop just because it's flying season. We are still here, still planning, and still building. So don't

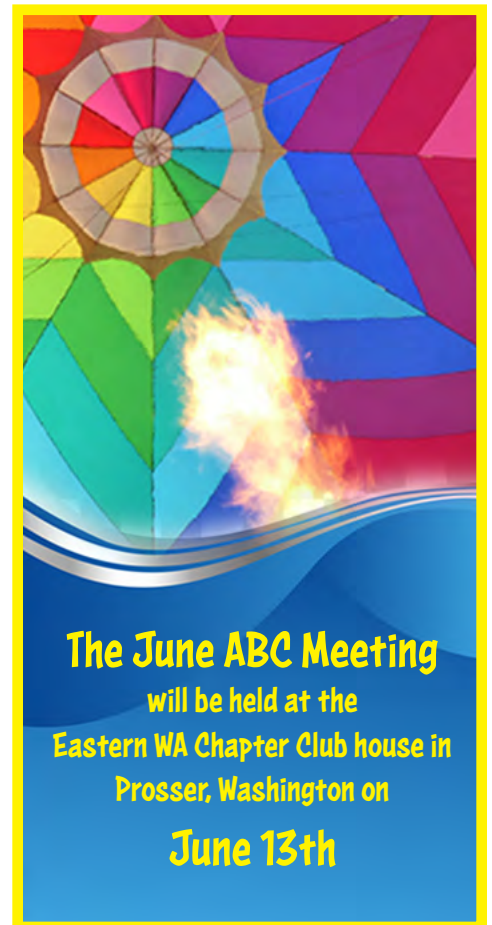
hesitate to reach out at any time. Whether it's a great idea, a concern, a story, or just to say hello, my door is always open.

Fly safe, fly often, and fly with joy. Here's to a fantastic season!

Warm regards and blue skies,

Sallie Loftin

President,
American Ballooning Community





Willamette Aerostat Society

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

ABC Meeting Minutes — May 16, 2026

ABC Executive Board Meeting/Willamette Chapter Meeting • <https://abcballoon.org/>

1. **Call to order** 2:08
 2. **Approval of Minutes**
(April 14, 2026, as printed in the May edition of AeroStats) (m/s/c)
 3. **Treasurer's Report:**
 - a. Ending balance \$8,690.51
 - b. New action to link with ABC Eastern WA banking account
 4. **Correspondence:** null
 5. **News, Regulatory:** null
 6. **Upcoming events:**
 - a. ABC - Eastern WA crew school – May 23
 - b. Eastern WA Chapter Glow In Grandview – May 30
 - c. LBCC crew school – June 6-7 (taught by Tim) 4 enrolled, need 5 to stay
 - d. June Eastern Washington Chapter Meeting – June 13 – Prosser/Online
 - e. June ABC Executive Board Meeting – June 13 – Prosser/Online
 - f. Kongregation/Aviation Day – June 12-14 – Prosser
 - i. Add call for volunteers on social media (Justin)
 - g. Tigard Festival of Balloons – June 26-28 – Tigard
 - i. TFOB crew school June 20
 7. **Old and New Business**
 - a. Morning Glory update
 - i. Mandy is actively looking for a new bottom end. There are several ideas floating around on how to keep Morning Glory active and bring it into more modern equipment.
 - b. Newsletter announcements
 - i. Need content on Jim Smith tribute (send Shari articles) (Tim & Shari out until 5/26)
 - ii. Deadline drop-dead 5/27
 - c. Festival planning updates
 - i. Need many TFOB volunteers – reach out to Jack or Sallie
 - ii. Cricut available can decal safety vests (ABC specific for events)
 1. Request for \$150 for supplies (m/s/c) club expenditures
 - iii. Koh stole crew competition idea from another event
 1. Share other competition ideas to Sallie or Jack
 - iv. Need club inventory list (e.g., tables and chairs in Loflin shop)
 - v. Turnout at booth in Walla Walla (200 with a lot of engagement; more questions about the event; most engagement at Glow; got two new members Saturday; suggest event kit including – info cards were good; branded for inside the booth; swag like tattoos, QR code for info, merch for sale; member badges)
 - vi. Event budget
 1. \$2K for event promo/support (m/s/c)
 - d. Website & app updates
 - i. Jack trying to get iOS release (currently on Round 4); hopefully launch before TFOB
 - ii. David Brannan is working on revamping maps (Walla Walla and Tigard)
 - e. Tangent – September 19th (same date as Montague, CA)– no host fly-out (Harvest Festival)
 - i. Sallie is main contact – contact her for details
 - ii. Jack & Sallie, Tim & Shari plan to be there
 - f. Request to hire a tether for appreciation party in West Linn on September 12
 - i. Reach out to Sallie for information if interested
8. **Presentation**
 - a. Flying this summer – Sallie's article in Aerostat – fire prevention; share red/green zones
 - b. Jack presented at Independence EAA (Sallie attended)
 - i. Fundraising ideas:
 1. free registration to donate your vehicle 70% of proceeds;
 2. bottle deposit – join the blue bags \$50 to set up account;
 - c. Google Account now non-profit workspace
 - i. Free
 - ii. Unlimited time meetings
 - iii. Email addresses: qty 3000
 - iv. Recording meetings costs \$3.40/user/month - not yet – check other platforms
 - v. Moving Dropbox materials into Google Drive
 - d. What do you want from the Board? What do you want to see produced?
 - i. Let Sallie know ANYTHING (sale, products, events, education)
9. **Adjourn:** 3:30 pm

Happenings

in the Pacific Northwest and beyond



Event information in this newsletter is *not* to be considered as an endorsement by ABC, its officers, or its members.

June 13, 2026
Prosser Flag & Flight Festival
Prosser, WA
(see below)

June 13-14, 2026
Kongregation
Prosser, WA

June 13, 2026, Time TBD
June ABC Meeting
Eastern WA Chapter Club House
Prosser, WA

Tigard Festival of Balloons
June 26-28, 2026
Tigard, Oregon
<https://www.tigardballoon.org>

Teton Valley Balloon Rally
July 2-5, 2026
Driggs, Idaho
<https://tetonvalleyballoonrally.org>

Freedom Fest
July 3-5, 2026
Provo, UT
<https://www.freedomfestival.org/event/balloon-fest/>

July 11, 2026
Grandview 1776 Celebraton Night Glow
Grandview, WA
An Eastern WA Chapter Event

July 24-25, 2026
Balloons Over Bend
Bend, Oregon
<https://balloonoverbend.com>

August 1, 2026
Evening of Hope
Relay for Life, Glow at 9:30 PM
(More on page 17)

Northwest Art & Air Festival
August 27-30, 2026
Albany, OR

Spirit of Boise Balloon Classic
September 4-6
Boise, Idaho

The Great Reno Balloon Race
September 10-13, 2026
Reno, Nevada
<https://renoballoon.com>

The Great Prosser Balloon Rally
September 25-27, 2026
Prosser, Washington

October 3-11, 2026
Albuquerque Int'l Balloon Fiesta
Albuquerque, New Mexico
<https://www.balloonfiesta.com>

Kongregation is Back — and This Year It's a Konglomeration! June 13-14, 2026!

2026 marks the 5th Anniversary of the Kongregation — a gathering of balloonists from around the country who come together in flight and fellowship to honor the memory of our friend Kong (Jeff Shields). Kong was a man who inspired and supported so many in their ballooning endeavors,



and his dedication to the sport lives on in every flight we share in his memory.

Balloons will be flying at sunrise all weekend. Sunday, June 14th will remain our private memorial flight.

So what makes 2026 a Konglomeration? This year we're going bigger. For the first time, we're opening our doors to the public for a full Saturday of aviation on June 13th at Prosser Airport - the Prosser Flag and Flight Festival —

an airplane fly-in, helicopters, guest speakers, a farmers market, and of course, balloons...with a Mark Yonker special competition! Propane will be provided by Valley Wide Co-op, a sponsor of the event.

This is an event you truly won't want to miss.

Joey Hernandez, Balloonmeister
(206) 450-1747
paperlessjoey@gmail.com

A Beloved Member of our Ballooning Community: Jim Smith

Jim Smith was a legendary Balloonmeister, proud Veteran, and longtime pilot of Pacific Rainbow.

It is with a heavy heart that we share the passing of our beloved Tigard Festival of Balloons balloonmeister of many years, Jim Smith. Jim was a man whose passion for ballooning lit up our skies and inspired generations. A veteran, a devoted father, and a loving grandfather, his kindness and dedication touched us all.

Pacific Rainbow, Jim's cherished balloon, carried his spirit across our festival and skies for many years. Though he hadn't flown in over a decade, the legacy of Jim and Pacific Rainbow remains woven into the fabric of our celebration. He wasn't just part of our festival's history—he was a cornerstone of our legacy, and he will be deeply missed.

Fly high, dear friend. We will always look for you in the sky.

Cindy Murphy

Jim gave me my commercial checkride. After the checkride, he took me aside to stress how important it is for me as a newly minted commercial hot air balloon pilot to instill safety in every aspect of my flying and instructing. He left a permanent impression on me that day. A few years later I joined Jim at OSU doing tethered flights at the Quad. He was as excited to give those tethered rides as the people in line to get them.

Mark Trujillo

Jim Smith was a wonderful person and a big factor for me getting into ballooning as a crew person and a woman pilot. He encouraged me by letting me help with his ride balloon that he had here in Tigard and got me hooked on

it right off the bat. He let me actually fly a bit with him when he wasn't flying passengers. I truly enjoyed his kindness and acceptance of me to even give me time to play with his balloon. He is one of the reasons I am in ballooning now and why I ever became a pilot.

Jim was soft spoken and easy to like. I found him very accepting towards people and easy to talk to. Over the years we were very good friends, and I was sometimes his crew person. Jim made me feel that being a woman pilot was a good thing which gave me the strength to try it and I have loved it ever since.

I will miss him greatly,

Cheryl Isaacs



Shari and Tim Gale with Jim in 2022.



Jim in 2005



2017



Pacific Rainbow

Walla Walla Balloon Stampede

Celebrating 50 Years of Homegrown, Warm Welcomes

by Shari Gale

The town of Walla Walla celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Walla Walla Balloon Stampede on Mother's Day weekend. It was an absolute delight to once again drive into town. They even feature a hot air balloon on their welcome sign, so you know this is a balloon friendly town.

Our first experience at the Stampede was in 1979 as crew. By the next year we had a balloon and were officially part of the event. We've only missed one year due to work obligations. It's not an exaggeration to say that Walla Walla feels like home.

The weather did not start out well. The Kid's Day event was a bit windy, but several pilots did a static display. That still pleased the spectators.

Friday morning was even windier. No flights were allowed. Friday evening's night glow became a "candle stick," but with the Kid's Dance and the choreographed burner display still pleased everyone. The kids especially enjoyed getting out on the field to dance all around the Columbia REA balloon. This year there seemed to be more kids than ever before. One good thing about not putting the envelope up, we got packed up and refueled, and were still back at the hotel by 10:00 PM.

Saturday the winds were a little more cooperative. Balloonmeister, Laurie Spencer, declared it was up to each individual pilot if they wanted to fly or not. About half of the balloonists decided to fly. Tim was among them. The rest stayed on the field and either tethered or did a static display. There were a lot of spectators and they seemed quite happy with the situation.

We took up our sponsor riders. One of them was a firefighter, who had just gotten off duty. Luckily, the fire station is very close to the park. He just walked over and hopped into our waiting basket. The timing was perfect.

One of the best moments for me on Saturday was to hear the voice of long-time announcer, Jim Bock, who is now retired. He came back Saturday to proclaim "Welcome to the Walla Walla Balloon Stampede" in his big, booming voice. It was heartwarming to hear him again. (I got hugs from him on my way into the pilot briefing, too.)

Tim started Saturday's flight out at 2.1 mph. Within moments he was up to 18 mph. The chase was easy, but we never pulled over. We arrived at his landing site at the same moment he descended.

He was joined by about four other pilots in a huge fallow field. It was a nice large brown target in a sea of green spring wheat fields. However, we could not immediately get in touch with the landowner to



It looked like it was going to be a memorable pack out — memorable in a negative way. Photo by Linda Heiser.



ask if we could drive on the field to retrieve our equipment. It was looking like a very long pack out. We all had to hike out to the balloon. Walking out the inflated balloon against the wind was not an option, so down it went.

After we'd started packing it up, we found out the landowner had finally called back and granted everyone the right to drive on his land. Whew. If we'd had to carry it out, it would have taken the rest of the weekend! I just love positive landowners.

Speaking of that, we met the guy who owns all the farm land around the motel we were all staying in. He had mowed the field across the street so we could all park on it without the need to disconnect the trailers. He approached us to ask if we were satisfied with the field conditions. I thought that was very kind of him. He also granted us permission to land on any of his other fields. I think he was disappointed when we told him the normal wind patterns would never take us in that direction. Again, I love positive landowners.

Sunday dawned with very favorable conditions. We'd already flown our sponsors, so we loaded up two crew members. This time the balloons hung around over town setting themselves up for good photo ops. It brought back a lot of good memories as we chased through town watching all the people coming

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2026 Walla Walla Balloon Stampede

Photos by Linda Heiser

out of their houses to wave and take pictures of the balloons flying overhead.

Tim crossed Mill Creek at a low altitude in order to land at the park on the other side. He scared up a flock of pelicans. In the 46 years we've been coming to this town, we've never seen pelicans before. A nearby resident told us they only come for a week or two each year. We were just in the right place at the right time.

It seemed the fitting ending to a wonderful weekend. A big thank you goes out to Gordy Plastics, our sponsor. They've been sponsoring this event for over 20 years! Another big thank you goes to Laurie Spencer and her crew, who put in a lot of work to make this event special.



Linda Heiser took these photos during her flight with Tim Gale on Sunday, May 10th from Howard Tietan Park. As they came into a park along side Mill creek, they scared up a flock of pelicans. Before the balloon was packed up they were back in their "spot."

2026 Walla Walla Balloon Stampede

Photos by Shari Gale



Former WWBS balloonmeister, mayor and pilot, Jerry Cumins, still is involved.



2026 Walla Walla Balloon Stampede

Photos by Jessie Quetschke



Balloon Science Comes Alive for Hamilton Creek STEM Students

The Knight-N-Gale Balloon Team visited Hamilton Creek School in Lebanon, Oregon at the end of April. The STEM class has been studying balloons. On Monday we made a PowerPoint presentation. On Wednesday we inflated our balloon, and demonstrated why big bags of air don't stand up easily in windy conditions.

The 6th graders were wonderful helpers. Their enthusiasm was infectious. Our "price" for this demonstration was for them to write a short essay on their impressions of working with a real hot air balloon. Those essays follow.



Pilot Tim Gale, used two crown lines. They were needed. The students helped pack up the envelope and the tarp. The pack up usually is not this smooth and quick.



Essays Written by 6th Grade Hamilton Creek School STEM Class Members

I am a student who had Tim and Shari Gale come to my elective at school and inflate their hot air balloon. I got to help with the mouth of the balloon and I learned about the things inside of the balloon and basket like propane, compass, and a bunch of monitors. The balloon was inflated with a propane fire coil rod looking thing and inside of the balloon there were cables and rope. We also learned about the Mongolfier brothers and how the first living things to fly in a hot air balloon was a chicken, a duck, and a sheep and the sheep stepped on the duck's wing and broke it other than that there was no casualties. The Mongolfior brothers first thought that smoke made things fly so they put a cloth on a box and lit the box on fire and it flew.

When Tim and Shari came to my school with their hot air balloon it was so big. I learned that the first to fly in a hot air balloon was in fact a rooster, duck and a sheep and there was one injury where the sheep stepped on the

ducks wing and it broke. I didn't like holding down the hot air balloon basket because I thought it was going to lift but it was cool seeing the gas go into the balloon. When we packed up the balloon we went in single file line which was smart. Tim and Shari Gale thank you for coming out to show us your balloon and your slideshow I really loved it.

By: Natalie`

Hi im a student from Hamilton Creek school and this is the experience I had with hot air balloons thanks to Mr. Gale and Mrs. Gale. I want to give a big thank you to the Gales because this experience will last me a lifetime and I loved every second of it. First off they created a slide for us and I learned the first living things to fly in a hot air balloon were a duck a hen and a sheep they all made it down alive there was only one casualty, which was the sheep stepping on the ducks wing and broke it

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Essays Written by 6th Grade Hamilton Creek School STEM Class Members

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on accident. Not only that we also learned that back then people thought that they could use hot air balloons for traveling but the thing about that is when you fly a hot air balloon there's no real way to steer it.

Hot Air Balloon By:Everleigh

Thank you for coming out to my school and teaching us about hot air balloons. What I learned about when you guys came to my school is that when hot air balloon fabric catches on fire it doesn't just go up in flames it kinda just shrivels up because its not really fabric its nylon. Another thing I learned about was that the basket weighs 300 pounds. My experience with the hot air balloon was very cool. I got to hold down the basket so the hot air balloon didn't fly and I got to see the hot air balloon from up close. Thank you Tim and Shari.

I am a student who had Tim and Shai come to my school and blow up a hot air balloon for my STEM elective. My experience of learning about hot balloons and seeing them being set up and taken down has been fun and exciting. I learned about how hot air balloons are able to float because of the air which comes from a burner that Tim showed us. The baskets are weaved tightly with slim pieces of wood and the fabric of the balloon is made out of very soft and thin silk. We also learned that the first things to fly in a hot air balloon were a chicken, a duck, and a sheep and the inventors of the hot air balloon were the Montgolfier brothers, Joseph-Michel Montgolfier and Jacques-Etienn Montgolfier. We got to see a hot air balloon filled up with hot air and we got to put it away too, which was some work but still quite fun. I would like to thank Tim, Shari, and everyone else who gave us the experience of seeing a hot air balloon. Madelynn

Hot air balloon
By Abigaill

One thing that I learned is that it is hard to set up a hot air balloon. Also there are different types of baskets. The basket weighs 300 pounds which is crazy. Also Tim and Shari Gale gave us cards and stickers. They set up the balloon and it was cool that only us got to touch the balloon. It was the biggest thing I saw in the sky. I hope I get to see one again.

Hot Air Balloons [What I learned]

Before learning about hot air balloons, I knew practically nothing about hot air balloons nor how they functioned. Now my intellect has expanded to comprehend how hot air balloons function and the history behind them. It's almost absurd how much I was educated when it comes to hot air balloons. Not only that I also got to watch them in person, which I never did previous to that. For expanding my intellect, I am feeling immense gratitude for you, I would like to tell you thanks.

Hot Air Balloon
By:Ruthie

I am a student that is in a STEM elective at Hamilton Creek School.

When Tim & Shari Gale brought a hot air balloon to our school I was surprised at how big it was. I also got to help keep the hot air balloon on the ground so it wouldn't float and I also got to help put it away. I thought it was cool that the first passengers were a duck, a sheep, and a chicken. Another thing I thought was cool is that hot air makes the balloon float.

Thank you Tim & Shari Gale for bringing a hot air balloon to our school.

My Hot Air Balloon Experience

Having Tim and Shari Gale come to my school and show us their hot air balloon was a very exciting experience. I am a student in a STEM elective offered by my school. Tim, Shari and their crew came out to our school to blow up their hot air balloon after giving a presentation on the history of these incredible works of art. Tim did an amazing job blowing up his balloon even through the intense wind. Getting to experience the hot air balloon being blown up is something I will never forget, and probably will never be able to see again. From the presentation, I learned that Jacques-Étienne Montgolfier and Joseph-Michel Montgolfier were brothers who invented the first hot air balloon, but were not the first to ride in one. It might not have been the Montgolfier brothers to ride first, but a duck, sheep, and chicken. Mr. Tim and Mrs. Sheri were very welcoming and I would definitely recommend getting to see one up close!

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Essays Written by 6th Grade Hamilton Creek School STEM Class Members

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Hot Air Balloon By Chloe

I am a student in the STEM elective at Hamilton Creek. When Mr and Mrs Gale brought the hot air balloon to our school on Wednesday. I was shocked at how big it was. I was so happy that I got to touch the fabric of the balloon. We also got to hold down the hot air balloon so it didn't fly up and help pack it up. In the presentation on Monday they told us about the first passengers being a duck, a chicken, and a sheep. Apparently the sheep stepped on the duck's wing and broke it. I also learned that the first person in the air on a hot air balloon was supposed to be a prisoner but they wanted it to be someone famous. That's what I learned so thank you Mr and Mrs Gale for bringing the hot air balloon to Hamilton Creek.

So Wednesday In Elective (STEM) we all got to see a hot air balloon shown by: Tim & Shari Gale and other professional balloon workers. The hot air balloon was really big in my perspective and the heat in the balloon was about 140 degrees. I'm pretty sure it was that hot. Personally I thought it was great to see and when we all had to hold the basket down so Mr.Gale didn't fly off. It was also cool to hold down and it looked cool to see and feel the balloon while it was being blown up and I thought it would feel not what I was expecting like I thought it would be slippery and silky and what I felt was soft kinda and squishy. It was fun to see and I thought that was the best part of the day. What I would say is that people who have never seen a hot air balloon I would suggest you should find it fun to see.

What did I learn on Monday and Wednesday?

Many people learn stuff from presentations, but what did I learn from the time these lovely people named Tim Gale, Shari Gale, their friend, and their crew? First, on Monday during electives, we already knew briefly about hot air balloons, however when they came to give us a presentation I learned a whole lot more. I learned stuff like how hot air is less dense, causing the balloon to rise up in the air. Another thing I learned was what would happen if the balloon would catch on fire, since some videos we see online are false about hot air

balloons catching fire. Next, we learned a bit about our presenters' balloons, some examples being Checkmate and Night'n'Gale. After Monday's presentation we got to see an actual balloon and how long it takes to transfer the hot air inside. The whole process was a lot of work since the first time we tried it was a fail. So, we tried again making the skirt of the balloon a bit wider so more air could enter. When I took a look inside the balloon you could see all the fabric, all sewed together. It was such a mesmerizing sight, it was like a symmetrical piece you would see in art. Putting the stuff away was hard work, but it showed how much time these lovely people had to use in their day just to put a hot air balloon away. Not only was the basket heavy, but the bag full of the tarp and the bag stuffed with the balloon was pretty heavy as well. It was amazing how these people came from their home, all the way to us, the whole experience was a blast and I would definitely want to experience it again. Thanks to all of these people that came to show us their wonderful balloon. From Monday to Wednesday I have learned a lot more about hot air balloons thanks to these people. Thank you for coming to our school.

Hot Air Balloon

When Mrs. Gale & Mr. Gale came to my school to teach my STEM class a few things about hot air balloons and brought their own, I learned that hot air balloons are kinda scary, but are pretty cool. I loved the adrenaline rush I got while watching the team and I work together to make it swell up with hot air. Another thing I learned was that there are ropes in the hot air balloon in the balloon part. Also, Thank you for the help for the extra pilots and crew.

I'm a student from Hamilton Creek School, a part of the STEM class, and I'm so grateful for the amazing opportunity of helping set up a hot air balloon with Tim and Shari Gale. It was an unforgettable learning experience, the first day we met the sweet couple and we went over a slide show to teach us about the safeties we should know and the history of how the hot air balloon was invented by the Montgolfier brothers. That Wednesday we set up the hot air balloon. I had one of the dangerous jobs, and that was holding down the fan to blow up the hot air balloon. When the balloon was off the ground the whole class held the basket.

The Oregon Duck Goes Aloft!

The University of Oregon recently contacted Sallie Loflin with a fun request: could their balloon, Emerald, help promote Ducks Give? With its black envelope accented by two shades of green, it was the perfect match for Duck colors.

The morning started under foggy skies, but the weather soon cleared enough for takeoff. Before long, Jack and his newest feathered passenger—the Oregon Duck, Puddles—were airborne, making the trip from Timber Linn Park to Albany Regional Airport.

The short-lived social media video encouraged donations to support UO students, programs, research, and the opportunities that make the university community thrive.

Puddles was reportedly delighted to discover that one of his ancestors was among the first hot air balloon passengers back in 1783. Apparently, ducks can still lift off.

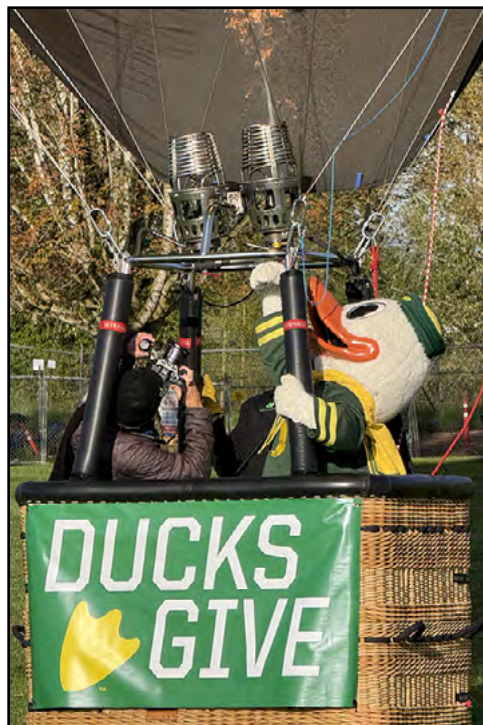


Jack Loflin gave instructions to the Duck.



Even though the promotion was short lived, the video can be found on Facebook and Instagram, if you have an account. The Facebook link is:

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1001122215591656>



More photos on the following page.

Heave Ho! New Chapter Swag Has Arrived!

Avast, ye scurvy dogs and salty sea-dogs of the **ABC Club**! The winds have shifted, and a rich bounty has finally washed ashore. Our long-awaited chapter-specific **T-shirts and stickers** are officially ripe for the taking! Whether you're steering the ship or just along for the rum, it's time to fly our colors with pride.

The Main Spoils: Chapter T-Shirts

Crafted from the finest fabrics in the Seven Seas, our shirts come in three distinct shades to suit your pirate's soul:

- Maroon: As deep as a sunset on the Caribbean (see the pictured treasure!).
- White: Bright as a bleached skull on a desert isle.
- Heather Grey: For those misty mornings on the high seas.

The Ransom:

- Adult Sizes (S–XL): \$24 per shirt.
- Extended Sizes (2X–4X): Add a mere \$3 to the chest (Total \$27).

The Small Loot: UV-Resistant Stickers

Need to mark your territory? Our chapter stickers are built to withstand the harshest salt spray and brightest sun. They are **UV-resistant**—guaranteed not to fade even if you're marooned for a month.

- **Cost:** Just \$3 per sticker.

How to Claim Your Bounty

Don't be a landlubber—these items are **manufactured to order**, meaning we only make 'em when you claim 'em! Head over to the **ABC Club Online Store** to place your order. Once the master tailor finishes your gear, it'll be shipped straight to your port of call. Keep a weather eye open—more gear be coming soon!

Set sail for the online shop today and deck yourself out in the finest gear in the fleet!



Here's one of the Maroon T-shirts.



The stickers will make your water (rum?) bottle standout in the crowd.



*Some of the crew:
Sallie Loflin,
LaRetta Albin, Tim
Gale, Patti McCarter,
the Duck, and Shari
Gale.*

New Ways To Connect — the ABC Member and Spectator Apps

ABC Member App Available

The ABC Member app is now available for download in both the Apple App Store and (soon) Google Play Store! For now, the Android version can be downloaded from abcballoon.org/app. You will need your ABC login information to utilize the app. The app currently has the following features, and more features will be added in the future.

- Automatic download and display of Aerostats.
- Automatic download and display of red/green zone maps.
- Flight tracking and position sharing between pilot/crew during flights.
- Flight logging for both crew and pilots, including accomplished crew tasks
- Display of upcoming ABC events and information.
- Push notifications of ABC news and, if selected, flight notifications (get notified when other members are flying)

ABC Spectator App Available

In addition to the Members app, an app specifically designed for spectators at ABC balloon events has been developed. The spectator app allows anyone to view balloon positions, speeds, altitudes and ground tracks. We are hoping this will improve the public's experience at balloon events by allowing people to remain engaged in flights after launch.

The spectator app will be supported on both Android and iOS devices. It will only display balloon positions during certain events authorized by ABC. The ABC Members app will be available to all pilots (even non ABC members) during authorized events.

(A huge thank you goes to Jack Loflin for spending untold hours developing these applications, not to mention, explaining them so well to the rest of us!)



Tell your family, friends, co-workers — even random strangers — about **Albany's Art & Air Festival, happening August 28–30, 2026.** Timber-Linn Park will be buzzing all weekend with activities, entertainment, and fun for everyone. They are looking for additional pilots and crew volunteers.

Evening of Hope

Relay For Life of the Mid-Valley begins on **August 1st, 6-10 pm** at Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm. This first event will focus on remembering those who have lost the fight to cancer. There will be a band, food trucks, survivor activity, luminaria ceremony, hot air balloon night glow and more! This will take place during the Summer Flowers on the farm. Acres of sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos and more beautiful flowers to wander through and enjoy.

The Luminaria Ceremony will take place at 9:00 PM. Hot air balloons will set up around 9:30. **Portland Rose Balloons** plans to attend. They are hoping other local pilots will join them in creating an unforgettable experience.

Save the date and join us for an evening of hope, remembrance, and celebration.

Curiosity Takes Flight at EAA Balloon Presentation

On May 9th, Jack Loffin presented to the Independence, OR chapter of the EAA (Experimental Aircraft Association) a robust program on all things hot air balloons. The response from the presentation was great. Jack fielded a heckler in the audience (it wasn't even Sallie!) and answered lots of great questions.

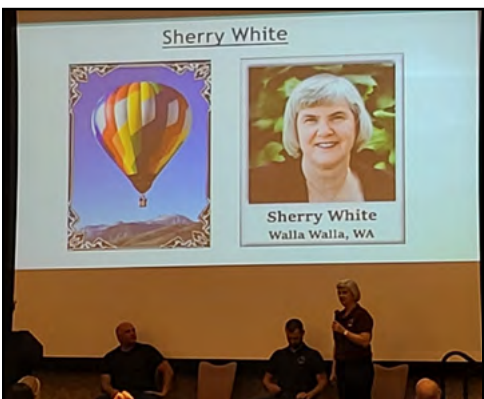
Many people in the audience were amazed by how little control balloons had and started drumming up ideas on how to attach fans and motors to balloons. Jack and Sallie both politely let them know that defeats the purpose of a hot air balloon.

Jack let the audience know that we have the Tigard Festival of Balloons and the Northwest Art and Air Festival coming up soon. ABC will make sure that the EAA members know they can fly in to the Albany airport during the balloon festival and watch the balloons launch.

The EAA has their annual STOL Wars event the weekend of August 21st. Go check it out! These fly-in events are a hoot!



ABC Brings Ballooning Expertise to Airport Management Forum



On May 19th, ABC Members Dave Brannan, Devin White and Sherry White participated in a round table discussion for the Washington Airport Management Association. They briefly spoke about hot air balloons and how they operate in and around airports. It was a short 30-minute program, but the audience was engaged and excited to learn more about balloons.

Sallie Loffin's cousin, Angel, was in attendance and provided these photos.

May Planning Meeting Notes

Here are my notes (augmented with much help from the notes Joy provided). Action items in **BOLD**.

- Sallie bought a Cricut and is willing to let the club use it to cut vinyl graphics for the Morning Glory trailer. That should be cut here in the next week, and that cut material, along with the printed logos (design has been completed on those) will get to Prosser at some point for Joey to re-decorate the trailer.
- Welcome emails sent to TFOB pilots & hotel reservations completed by Sallie
- Unknown if POW Balloon (Luke) will attend either event.
- FAA waiver has been issued. No TFR as the FAA requires a crowd size of 100,000 persons to issue a waiver for an aviation event like these.
- Caroline went through the pilot/balloon documents. Jack sent follow up emails to those pilots that had missing documents/expired annuals/etc. All are looking good.
- Jared has been pressured into Launch Director for Tigard. Thanks, Jared!
- Contracts for commercial ride balloons and special shapes are mostly finished. Contract for Lindy/TFOB to be completed shortly.
- We gained a couple more pilots from “hitting the phones”. Need to work on another round here soon for Albany, specifically - **Jack will coordinate**. Sounds like a lot of pilots have either sold their systems, are not flying much, etc. and the price of gas is certainly not helping this situation. Tim/Shari spent almost \$300 just in gas going to Walla Walla.
- Tigard crew school is set for June 20th at 10am at cook park. **Cheryl is master of ceremonies and will get printed material to Sallie. Tim/Shari to bring their system. Sallie to get snacks for crew school.**
- Shari agreed to help set up launch field/buckets.
- **Jack to work with Koh and F1 offspring to make sure we're all on the same page regarding competitions.**

- We will have audio equipment for night glow at TFOB. **Joey to develop audio for the glow.**
- Tether pilots: Eric, Joey, Justin, Bryan. **Bryan working to figure out what system he can utilize for tethers. Cindy to print the “regular” material — “tickets”, waivers, etc. Jack and Tim to bring their tether ropes for use.**
- Pilot gift bags are coming along. Joy secured gift certificates for Miller’s and Lugano’s. TFOB to provide the bags. **Sallie/Joy/Jared are still working on the “big” pilot gift.**
- Joy/Sallie purchased a button machine Saturday evening and are working to get Cindy the printing requirements for the buttons.
- **Caroline to coordinate TFOB ABC presence, possible both set up, possibly Panda, etc.**
- Dale is unable to static Morning Glory at TFOB. **Jack to see if Laura is willing to do it.**
- Any material that needs to be printed for TFOB needs to go through Sallie and be submitted by end of May — or if not, coordinate with Sallie.
- I think there was commitment from Jared/Joy to help set up/tear down TVs each morning. Correct me if I’m wrong.
- ABC will host a pilot/crew potluck at Albany Saturday.

Other things not directly related to the events:

- The club allocated \$150 to purchase colored safety vests for various positions (tether, crew boss, pilot herder, flight director, launch director, safety, etc.) to make these people more visible/prominent at the event.
- ABC also allocated up to \$2,000 for “advertising” to include some sort of tent/table throw/banner/etc. and possibly a trailer to haul everything (including TVs in). This could be used at TFOB/Albany, as well as other ABC events (Prosser Aviation Day, etc.) to promote ballooning and the club.

Next meeting set for **1:00 pm on May 30th**. Online only, although if you want to head to Jack/Sallie’s house, we’ll be here.

Contributed by Jack Loflin

American Ballooning Community

American Ballooning Community Mission Statement

- ➔ To promote the sport of Hot Air Ballooning
- ➔ To educate new balloonists and the public
- ➔ To embody safety in all aspects of Ballooning
- ➔ To do all we can to support and encourage land owner relations
- ➔ To support our fellow balloonists and crews personally and in our sport

To obtain Member Contact information, send an e-mail to the Secretary/Treasurer.

For Privacy reasons, *AeroStats* will not publish member contact information without their express permission.

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Submissions of articles and photographs are encouraged and welcome! The editorial staff reserves the right to determine the suitability of a submission for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please email your pictures, articles, and comments to:

sharigaleOR@gmail.com

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Material must be submitted in computer word processing format with pictures in JPG format.

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Front Cover:

Several ABC members attended the 2026 Walla Walla Balloon Stampede. Can you spot them in the cover photo?

Photo by Shari Gale

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