

Brian Hoyle, Raleigh, NC - Southeast Region**Brian Hoyle, Candidate for BFA Board Member At-Large,
Candidate Statement:**

Many thanks to our volunteers for their efforts on behalf of ballooning. There are many recent successes to recognize. Our BFA member volunteers have worked proactively with NFPA code developers to help them better understand our equipment, pilot training and continuing education programs in order to secure continued access to fuel we need to continue to enjoy ballooning.

BFA board members and others were asked to meet with the FAA as a result of recent tragedy in Texas. As a result, our volunteers have used these sad circumstances to educate the FAA and establish new lines of communication. One positive outcome might be to take another serious look at the safety benefits of treating LTA the same as rotorcraft under minimum altitude requirements; yes, it's just a possibility, but new relationships are in place because of these BFA efforts. We continue to grow our wonderful BFA youth programs. And, there is the needed revision on our BFA website. Many thanks to all who have volunteered on behalf of the BFA membership as board members and to those behind the scenes as well, for these and many other important accomplishments.



I'd like to help build on these successes. We've done a good job of evolving our BFA resources and relationships to serve those of us already in ballooning. And, while we must remain vigilant with government affairs and modernizing our member infrastructure, I believe the future of ballooning is rooted in an outward facing, consumer-focused strategy with two key tracts. First, let's engage the population with the youth and finances most likely to become involved in ballooning in the now (as crew, pilot, and sponsors) – the adult, professional millennial. Second, develop a consumer fan base/audience for ballooning that draws more sponsors to events and advocates for ballooning. Here are some ideas to build on these core strategies.

Let's target the tide of adult millennials (a population comparable to the Baby Boomers in size). Many are searching for an outdoor, team-oriented hobby, which requires skill to master and continuing education. We should focus on this huge potential next generation of balloonists while we still have an active, Baby Boom population of pilots to mentor them.

I would like to see our BFA research and produce video content to educate the next generation of event consumers. The BFA could deploy such content via social media channels at relatively low risk dollars to stimulate interest and click through to long format, BFA branded content with the mission of getting more young adults engaged in the sport and developing a ballooning fan base.

Let us consider more content on our re-imagined BFA site as well by targeting the newcomer or potential fan of ballooning. There's enough bad reporting in the world; let's have easy-to-understand material available for those interested in learning for themselves. Our content is currently technical, "inside-the-game" of ballooning. I believe we should focus some effort on developing and distributing content, which educates the basic consumer.

As a resource to festivals and events working to educate the general public about ballooning, I recommend our BFA make available a transportable, engaging tradeshow booth concept to be shared at BFA-recognized events around the country with the mission of providing general education about hot air ballooning and the BFA.

If elected, I will do what I can to add my voice in support of ballooning as a creative endeavor, which uplifts the human spirit by challenging us as individuals and as teams. These are principals I believe have led to past successes of the BFA and which will lead the organization into the future. Many thanks in advance for your support. Safe flying and soft landings.

About Brian Hoyle

Brian is Managing Member of Hot Air Marketing, LLC, a marketing consulting firm specializing developing promotions, experiential marketing, public relations and social media marketing strategies with partners at the agency and brand levels. Brian has been involved in some form of flying since his early teens in the 1980s when he was a Civil Air Patrol cadet. He has been involved in lighter-than-air since the mid-90s and has been a pilot since 2005. He holds a commercial pilot certificate.

Brian founded the WRAL Freedom Balloon Fest in 2014, backing it with resources from Hot Air Marketing, a handful of sponsors, and personal funding. After the dramatic growth of the festival's second year, he negotiated a five-year "Host Community" agreement with the Town of Fuquay-Varina located about 25 miles south of Raleigh, NC. In the three years since inception, the WRAL Freedom Balloon Fest has drawn attendance of more than 246,000 and re-introduced the joy of hot air balloon festivals to one of the fastest growing markets in the nation.

In 2016, Brian founded Project Uplift USA, Inc., a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation, to take over long-term funding and management of WRAL Freedom Balloon Fest. He serves as the volunteer board president and executive director of the organization. This all-volunteer group is committed to producing the event, promoting Americanism and volunteerism, as well as providing hot air balloon experiences for military families and children living with mobility challenges, and providing free, K-12 STEM-based educational enrichment programs using hot air balloons as a teaching tool. To date, Project Uplift USA volunteer pilots have presented to more than 15,000 school children and at-risk youth through its outreach programs.

Brian is the managing member of The Hoyle Company LLC, a marketing consulting and coaching firm organized to serve the marketing needs of businesses in the retail, retail healthcare, and consumer services sectors. Prior to launching his consulting firms, Brian served as director of marketing at North Carolina-based Eye Care Associates. As part of the practice's executive management team for more than 15 years, he developed and directed the marketing and brand strategy transforming the practice from being a local leader to being among the fifteen largest optical businesses in the United States.

Brian began his career in the broadcasting industry. His vocal talents have been used nationally and internationally for television, radio, training and corporate branding videos, as well as for corporate presentations, IVR systems, and "explainer videos." From 2005-2015, Brian served as the voice of PNC Arena, home of the NHL Carolina Hurricanes. He's known for other sports as well including USA Rugby and World Rugby. He is often asked to emcee business, community and charity events throughout the region.

Brian has balanced his professional career with a commitment to service to others and his community. He served three terms as a member of the Triangle Regional Chapter of the American Red Cross, as the board development committee chair, communications chair and blood services committee member. He is a Clara Barton Society Member. In 2016, Mr. Hoyle was recognized for his commitment to strengthen our nation and communities through volunteer service with "The President's Volunteer Service Award" from President Obama.

Brian is past president of the Triangle Radio Reading Service, a service for reading to those with visual impairment. He served on the 25th Anniversary Triangle Heart Ball Executive Committee for the American Heart Association. He served as a public relations and special market advisor to the Games Organizing Committee and Special Olympics International developing the 1999 Special Olympics World Summer Games, the world's largest sporting event that year.