



Ted Watts, Meadville, PA - Northeast Region INCUMBENT

CANDIDATE'S STATEMENT
BFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Background Private pilot certificate 1995
 Commercial pilot certificate 2007
 630 hours PIC
 Participated as competitive pilot in various balloon rallies in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia 1998 -2016 Including Ashland Ohio, Middletown Ohio, Hall of Fame Canton Ohio, Flag City Findlay Ohio, Coshocton Ohio Morgantown W.Va. and New Castle PA.

Flying Experience

Event Director

Thurston Classic, Meadville Pa, 1988 - Present

Safety Officer

Officiating Experience Thurston Classic, Meadville PA. 1998 -2011 Flag City Balloonfest, Findlay Ohio 2009,2010, U.S.A Nationals, Battle Creek MI. 2011, FAI World Championship 2012 Steward, US Nationals, Shreveport LA. 2016 Organized and initiated the Thurston Balloon Classic in 1988 and served as its Chairman 1988- 2017.

Event Organization Experience

Affiliations Board Member BFA and BFA HACD
 BFA member since 1995
 NABA member, 1999 – 2005
 NOBPA: Member since 1995

Awards and Recognition Annie Pryne Award 2016, Legal Consultant on the drafting of the Balloon Event Guidelines published 2011 and the BFA Competition Rules

Safety Seminar Participation Presenter NOBPA Safety Seminars on Ballooning and the Law 1998 – 2014, Presenter Cheyenne Wyoming 2016 Mock Trial Participant, NOBPA Safety Seminar, 2006, BFA National Convention, 2007 Attended BFA Convention Des Moines IA 2011,

Personal

Captain, U.S. Army JAGC, 1971-1976

Attorney, Private Practice 1976- Present

Candidates Statement:

I am running for an At Large position on the BFA Board of Directors. I am an incumbent since I was selected by the sitting Board of Directors out of a list of 17 candidates to fill a vacant position on the Board in May of 2015. At the time the Ballooning Magazine article which announced my appointment read:

"He is a practicing attorney who has volunteered legal services to the BFA previously. He is especially well versed in dealing with regulatory agencies which will no doubt be of great benefit to the BFA moving forward"

I feel that I have lived up to that prediction. Since I came on the Board there have been a number of legal issues which have confronted it among which has been the challenge to commercial ballooning brought on by the Lockhart Texas accident. I participated in discussions with the NTSB and the FAA regarding the potential impact on commercial ballooning. I assisted in drafting the position statement of the BFA that was presented to the NTSB investigators and I continue to be involved in discussions with the key members of the Board regarding the BFA's communication with the NTSB and the FAA. Likewise, I have consulted with members of the PRO division regarding the standards they are developing for membership in their organization.

Together with Maury Sullivan I co-authored and negotiated the contract between the BFA and the Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission for the 2016 to 2019 US Nationals.

Virtually every month I am in contact with the Board President regarding the potential legal impact of Board decisions and on matters that arise on a day-to-day basis. I have drafted Board policy regarding a number of issues and have advised the Board on the appropriate procedure for amendment of the BFA Bylaws. I have drafted the suggested amendments to the Bylaws that the members will be voting on.

I have over forty six years of legal experience. During those years I have been a trial lawyer in both civil and criminal cases. I have appeared and argued successfully before all of the appellate courts of Pennsylvania and I have represented clients before numerous Pennsylvania and United States regulatory agencies. Given my experience, I believe I bring something of value to the BFA Board and I believe that I have used my experience to assist it in its decisions.

Since I have become involved in ballooning I have contributed to the sport. I have been an event chairman for 29 years. I have delivered legal presentations whenever requested. Many of them have been in balloon safety seminars for the Northeastern Ohio Balloon Pilots Association. I have also presented in Cheyenne, Wyoming and at the Des Moines, Iowa National Convention. I am proud to say that as a result of my efforts I received the Annie Pryne award in 2016.

I am not a competition champion and I will not win any awards for piloting skills. I am an ordinary balloonist who competes, who flies for fun and who, above all, promotes safety in our sport. I do not run a commercial ride operation but I appreciate the challenges that a ride operator faces these days, particularly since Lockhart. I am a member of the Gas Division and a proud founding member of the Aero Club of America NC Chapter; the first gas balloon club in the United States since the 1950's. I drafted that club's organization documents and continue to update them as needed.

I am not a single issue candidate. My goal is to do everything I can to promote and preserve the sport of ballooning. I believe I have demonstrated that I have been valuable contributor to the BFA Board and I am asking for your vote so I can continue the effort. Since I am from Meadville, Pennsylvania you probably don't know me because you won't find my name in the headlines. If you want to know who I am and how I have contributed to the Board, ask my fellow Board members. Ask my fellow Competition Division Board members. I believe they can attest to my efforts.