



Reno or BUST!

It's almost time to load the wagons and head west for the 2015 BFA National Convention, "Spirit of the West," being held in Reno, Nevada April 16—19, 2015. Registration remains open but time is growing short even as the days are growing longer! The Convention offers a variety of educational seminars, trade show, optional citywide excursions, and an unbelievable keynote speaker, aviation icon, Dick Rutan. Rutan's narration about his career in the Air Force, Voyager's flight around the world, a second world flight in a homebuilt, record setting in a rocket powered airplane, being stranded on the North Pole, and many other adventures will keep you on the edge of your seat. For more information, visit the convention website at www.bfaconvention.com.

Fresh from the record breaking flight of "Two Eagles", the BFA convention will also feature Troy Bradley. In his presentation, Bradley will recap his historic and record-setting flight with partner, Leonid Tiukhtyaev, across the Pacific Ocean in a helium-filled balloon. During the BFA Convention, Bradley will discuss what goes into safe long distance flying in either a gas or hot-air balloon. Whether your desire is to go 60 miles or 6,000 miles, this session will address what goes into a flight of this magnitude.

The BFA Convention is also offering a special Ground School course for individuals who are new to the sport or need a refresher course to complete their commercial/private certificate. The course will be taught by pilot and experienced instructor Bill Hughes, of Liberty Balloon Co. BFA Convention attendees will receive a discounted price of \$250 (\$365 value) for the course and \$100 (\$215 value) for the convention. Register today, as space is limited. For more information or to register, email Katie@bfaconvention.com.

Ted Watts Joins BFA Board of Directors

The BFA Board has named Ted Watts of--- as Director at-Large of the BFA. Watts was selected from an impressive group of 17 applicants to fill the remainder of the term of Drew Egerton, who recently resigned for personal reasons. Watts brings to the Board an extensive array of experiences as a balloon pilot, event and safety seminar organizer, and speaker. He is a practicing attorney who has volunteered his legal services to previously. He is especially well versed in dealing with regulatory agencies that will no doubt be of great benefit to the BFA moving forward. He has twice before stood for election to the Board.

To learn more about Watts you can read his 2014 election statement [here](#)...

BFA President Sam Parks and the entire Board of Directors wish to thank all who volunteered and stepped forward to offer their services to the organization. Having 17 candidates to select from for any post in the BFA is unprecedented in the recent history of the organization. The Board expressed hope that those not chosen will find other avenues to serve the BFA membership.

QR Editor Pending

Drew Egerton's resignation from the Board of Directors also opened up the position of Editor of this BFA e-blast. Sam Parks was tasked with reaching out to those on the candidate's list who had also expressed interest in the position and an appointment is pending. BFA Publications Editor Glen Moyer volunteered to fill-in on a temporary basis. Watch this space for further announcements.

Youth Camps Expanded

Thanks to increased demand, the BFA's two summer youth camps have each been expanded to a maximum of 25 campers. Youth Director Mike Shrum discussed with the Board the option of hosting a 3rd camp but it was felt the time was too short adequately prepare, so the better option was to expand the existing camps. The BFA will again provide a pilot logbook to each camper. You can still support the BFA camps by Taking the Pledge! (See below)

BFA Seminar Webinar

The 2015 BFA Online Continuing Education Seminar Webinar will be presented live from the BFA Convention in Reno, Nevada on Saturday, April 18th. The BFA Seminar Webinar is designed for those balloonists that can't get to a face-to-face seminar, but still want to maintain their education, especially regarding flying safely. The user will need a computer and a stable Internet connection to access the site.

To attend "on-line", you will need to register in advance of the session. Once payment is received, you will receive a registration number by email that will be used on the day of the event to check-in. You will be provided information on how to access the site where the Seminar Webinar will be hosted. After the Seminar Webinar has completed, you will need to complete a short, on-line test to verify your attendance.

The seminar will be broadcast from the Silver Legacy Convention Center in Reno, Nevada from approximately 7:30 am to 5:00 pm Pacific Time. The Seminar Webinar is fully sanctioned by the BFA and should qualify for most insurance company discounts. Complete information, speakers and topics and registration at <http://bfa.net/seminar/>

Canadian Sandra Rolfe Wins Montgolfier Diploma

The [2015 Mongolfier Ballooning Diploma \(Best Performance, Hot Air Ballooning\)](#) was awarded to Sandra Rolfe from Canada.

[On 2014.02.09 Ms. Sandra ROLFE \(CAN\) set the Female Duration Record for AX-03 balloons.](#) The new (and still current) record of 4h 17min 42sec exceeded the previous record (3h 35min, set in 2007) by almost 20%! Ms. Rolfe has been a hot air balloon pilot since 1995 and is actively involved in the Canadian Balloon Association. She has participated in the Canadian Hot Air Balloon Championship on several occasions, and attends events internationally. She is the current President of the Canadian Balloon Association, a position she has held since 2012. Beginning in 2001, Ms. Rolfe consciously set out to increase the participation of women in ballooning and specifically in record setting activities. Ms. Rolfe is much more than just a pilot - she is the leader in all phases of each record attempt, including the design and construction of many of the aerostats used for her record attempts. Her team includes women in all aspects of record flight attempts - from construction of her balloons, through flight planning, observation and retrieve.

Take the Pledge!

The BFA Youth Program invites you to Take the Pledge To Support Youth in Ballooning! With your help, we can introduce the sport to thousands of kids across the Country and ensure the future of ballooning.

Below are some ideas of how you can Take the Pledge:

---Pledge to print and hand out or share on your Facebook page the brochure and/or flyer (located [here](#)) promoting the 2015 BFA Youth Summer Camps to teenagers that show an interest in the sport. The BFA Youth Summer Camps are a fantastic opportunity for teenagers interested in ballooning to learn about the sport!
Pilots, crew, observers, event organizers and event officials can all have copies printed and ready to hand out!

---Pledge to invite local youth and their families to join your chase crew and experience what ballooning is all about!
With parental consent, take the teen under your wing and mentor him /her to their license. Be there to provide guidance and support for them. Give the teen knowledge and flight lessons to prepare them for their check ride.

---Pledge to encourage a youth member of your crew to participate in the BFA Crew Achievement Program and/or Pilot Achievement Program and allow them opportunity to advance in that program.

---Pledge to pay for a youth member of your chase crew to attend a BFA Continuing Education Seminar.

---Pledge to bring your balloon to a local school or youth church group for a presentation and demonstration!

---Pledge to pull a family with children from the crowd at your next balloon event and offer for them to join your chase crew.

---Pledge to give tethered rides to youth and their families at landing sites before packing up the balloon.

---Pledge to donate to the BFA Youth Program Summer Camps. Any amount is greatly appreciated and helps the Youth Program fulfil its mission of supporting youth in ballooning. Without the generous support of the ballooning community, the Youth Summer Camps wouldn't exist!

Help us encourage youth to join the great sport of ballooning!

More information available on the web at <http://www.bfacamps.com/take-the-pledge.html>

New Members

The BFA is only as strong as its members and volunteers. We would like to welcome the following new members! Please contact these folks if they are in your area and welcome them into the club. Our goals for growth are high for 2015 so please help us spread the word and grow our strength in numbers.

Phil Wells, NV

Brian Dial, AL

Joey Scarpinatto, LA

Dean Hammack, FL

David O'Leary, TN

Pam Wood, CO

Robert Pelt, TN

Dan Droege, TX

Greg Schofield, OR

Terri Schofield, OR

Matthew Hurst, AZ

Marie Smith, CA

Robert Prinslow, OR
Mike Murray, MN
Joshua Cool, MN
Darrin Fall, MN
Ken Tuley, NM
Brian Loomis, OH
Bill Lundgren, WI

If you are not currently a member, please consider joining today. We would also ask that all members take the time to share the benefits of their membership with their ballooning communities and encourage any non-members or lapsed members to become a part of the organization. The BFA is your one and only national representation of the ballooning community and we need member support!

*Reminder, the Quick Release can be signed up for by non-members as well so please [SHARE!](#)

New Achievements

Duncan Dunavent, NC – Crew Achievement Level I
Gary Brossett, GA – Crew Achievement Level II

Congratulations on your achievements from the BFA! If you see any of these folks around, congratulate them for taking another step in their ballooning endeavors! If you want to find out more, see our website about the [Pilot](#) and [Crew](#) Achievement Awards Programs.

Featured Corporate Member

The BFA is proud to promote its Corporate Members.

Our March Corporate Member of the Month is FireFly Balloons

FireFly is one of the largest manufacturers of sport and commercial hot air balloons in the world. The company is dedicated to the research, development, manufacture and marketing of sophisticated state-of-the-art forms of mankind's oldest and safest method of flight.

For more information on FireFly, visit their website [here](#).

Thanks for your continued support of the BFA!

For a complete list and more information on all of our Corporate Members, [click here!](#)