

# The Quick Release



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS ELECTIONS



### BFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS POSITIONS UP FOR ELECTION

At-Large  
Western Region  
Northeast Region



**To vote in this election cycle you must be a BFA member by July 9, 2023.**  
**Voting begins on July 30, 2023, and ends on August 29, 2023**

- July 30, 2023:** Paper ballots mailed and electronic voting opens at 6:00 am CT  
**August 29, 2023:** Electronic voting closes at 10:00 pm CT and Paper ballots must be postmarked by  
**September 5, 2023:** Ballots counted (date adjusted for the Labor Day holiday)  
Notification of President and Division Chairs of results by telephone  
Notify candidates of the results by the President or designated individual by telephone.  
Division Chairs to notify their division candidates.  
**September 6, 2023:** Announce the results of the election by BFA email system, social media, and website.



## UAS Beyond Visual Line of Sight Operations proposed rule

President Pat Cannon has shared a letter to the balloon community about the UAS Beyond Visual Line-of-Sight Operations proposed rule. Read it here: <https://tinyurl.com/BFA-uas>

Read the BFA's official comments to the BVLOS proposed rule here: <https://tinyurl.com/BFA-UAS-Response>



# **BFA Camp season has begun!**

## **ENROLL NOW!!**

### **2023 BFA Youth Balloon Camps**

**Hot Air Balloon Traditional Overnight Summer Camps**  
**Rio Grande Camp** - Albuquerque, NM  
July 8th - 13th, 2023  
CAMP FULL - ENROLLMENT CLOSED

**High Sierra Camp** - Reno, NV  
July 16-21, 2023  
**ENROLL NOW!!**

**Hot Air Balloon Event Camps**  
**DinahSoar Camp** - Vernal, UT  
Aug 24th - 26th, 2023  
**ENROLL NOW!!**

**Spirit of Boise Classic Youth Camp** - Boise, ID  
September 1&2, 2023  
**ENROLL NOW!!**

*All dates & details are subject to change.*

To inquire about how you can contribute,  
Please contact Katie Griggs at [youthprogram@bfa.net](mailto:youthprogram@bfa.net)

### **Balloon Experience not required.**

We have four camps remaining this year, offering plenty of opportunity for children 13-17 years old to learn all aspects of ballooning safely, including what is required to become a pilot!

Please go to [Junior Balloonists - Balloon](#)



## **2023 BFA Southeast Camp**



## BFA Southeast Balloon Camp 2023

Written by Kay West

Our balloon camp was held at a large church camp property in the Georgia countryside. The campus facility was large and easily accommodated all 34 staff and 21 campers with a large kitchen and dining hall, command center, dorms and even a swimming pool. The rate was fixed so, we did not have to limit the number of staff members. Pretty perfect in every way.

Our exemplary leadership with Duncan Dunavent and Tara Grogan kept everything running smoothly even with many changes to accommodate the weather. Tara, a US Marine, not only had the skills to work with teens, but provided them with some pretty impressive activities including tie dying shirts and model balloon building. Duncan's leadership, decision-making and close connection to teens created a perfect formula for a successful camp.

As Lead Flight Instructor, I had two goals:

1. Every camper leaves camp with the best ballooning experience ever and with the knowledge and confidence to pursue a dream.

2. A camp for flight instructors to work as a team sharing knowledge and experiences.

Lesson plans and a training syllabus were created especially for camp. Our team consisted of 11 pilots to train 21 students.

The accumulation of pilot hours exceeded 15,000 LTA. Add to that, some pilots had thousands of hours in fixed-wing and CFI. Every instructor brought their own expertise, from rides, repairman, corporate, long jump, high altitude, sky diver drops, entrepreneurship, experimental balloon builder, mountain flying .... Some with over 40 years of experience. Some fairly new to the sport. Additionally, three DPEs were in attendance. Tethering and flying came late in the week after dealing with the Georgia mud. The comments from students and flight instructors let us know that we were on the right track. The students were engaged during debriefs and discussions while we filled out logbooks and the training syllabus. The students were sponging for knowledge and ready for hands-on learning. As typical in any ballooning adventure, things don't always go as planned. A week of rain before camp and into the first few days delayed our flight operations, but not our enthusiasm. The staff worked flawlessly to provide a memorable experience for all. Our kitchen staff led by Cindy Wall was akin to being on a cruise ship with fresh-made meals, Georgia peaches and watermelon, even homemade key lime pie.

If you ever have the opportunity to volunteer at a BFA youth camp, make the time and the commitment. The staff, counselors, crew, pilots, maintenance and even the clean-up crew will tell you how amazing the experience is to bond with the youth of ballooning.

It won't be long before we meet up with our campers/students on the launch field flying their own balloons. The camp experience is key to the growth of our sport. Please support BFA Youth Camps.



# *From Pat Cannon, BFA President*



## **The Summer doldrums.**

As pilots and crew, we can't help but become a little lethargic during these particular summer months, with record setting heat throughout most of the country. Having just come from Longview, Texas and having participated in the Great Texas Balloon Race, we not only fought the excessive heat, but also storms that rendered Longview and many other neighboring cities without electricity for days during the event, and to my understanding, there are still parts of East Texas that are without power. These conditions, during the BFA National Championships, even affected many of the hotels that housed pilots and crew. Electrical companies and personnel were dispatched from all over the country and are slowly bringing power back to the area. They were able to bring back most of the areas that immediately affected the event and it continued and was managed exceptionally well by all involved.

However, the point of my article reverts back to the first line. When we are faced with continuing to fly, especially those of us that are out there every day providing rides to the public, we can tend to be affected by the heat to the point of losing both efficiency and ability to stay sharp. This can be experienced by any pilot, no matter how much you prepare yourself for wave after wave of excessive heat. We lost concentration, get dehydrated, and then make mistakes. Not big mistakes in most cases, but small, subtle mistakes that can lead to an Error Chain effect, ultimately causing an incident or accident. None of us wants or needs to bring more attention to ballooning by the FAA or NTSB so we need to take extra care to be sure that we are fully engaged in and completely ready for the days flight. Your passengers depend on that. Use the tools, especially the PACE model to be sure that you are firing on all cylinders, especially the P or Pilot portion of that. Heat can have a devastating effect on your body's ability to function, both physically and mentally, so be pay attention to what's going on with you. I have seen many heat stroked pilots toiling away at trying to get ready for a flight and then getting behind the burner and subjecting themselves to burners reflective heat that can exceed 200 degrees momentarily. It can take that to upset the apple cart of your stability, which can lead to making mistakes during the takeoff and climb out.

Water, water, water, and shelter from the heat prior to takeoff is the key to keeping in front of things that can cause problems, especially in the unusual summer we are having with temps well in excess of normal in many parts of the country.

Stay safe out there!!



**The Great Texas Balloon**



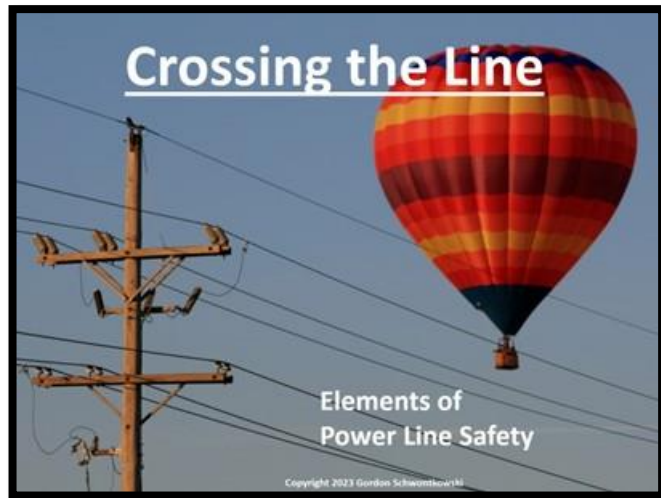
# BFA Member Recognition



## Recognizing Balloonists Respecting Landowners

Gary Brossett attended the first-time event Sikeston Hot Air Balloon Festival in Sikeston, MO. Gary flew the event organizer and her right-hand helper, making a nice landing on the edge of a mowed lawn next to a bean field. Gary hopped the balloon over the into the bean field to streamer the envelope. His crew was diligent to protect the crops and walked the envelope to the grass. A local man commented on how impressed he was that they went to such efforts to safeguard the crops.

*Thank you, Gary & crew for setting a positive example!*



## Gordon Schwontkowski writes:

If you liked the power line safety video "Crossing the Line," the real kudos and thanks go to Emelia Bernava (pictured above). For years she saw our industry had no current power line safety standard or protocol for pilots and crew. In 2022 she called me (Gordon) with a project and plan – a turnkey FAA WINGS program. She single-handedly coordinated everything – messaging, planning, accreditation, rollout, even tech fixes. My role – script, voice and optics – was plug n play. It's rare when MY safety is someone else's top priority, but that was Emelia's vision and reality. In 40+ years of flying, I've never seen everyone agree, unite and rally around a safety cause like this. "Crossing" went global – reaching Europe and Australia – within days of its May 9<sup>th</sup> premier.

*Congratulations, Emelia – well done!*

To view Crossing the Line click here [CROSSING THE LINE](#)

Do you have a story or want to recognize a BFA Member?  
Please send story and photos to [tamieshrum5@gmail.com](mailto:tamieshrum5@gmail.com) for consideration to be featured in the BFA Quick Release.

# WELCOME new members

Kristopher Braden  
 Aaron Cockrell  
 Mary Makhlof  
 Todd Spicer  
 Archibald Miller-Bakewell  
 Nestor Pena  
 Nicholas Quinn  
 Paul Dodge  
 Tammy Uhler  
 Tim Riordan  
 Zac Bramble  
 Collierville Balloon Festival

Rio Rancho, NM  
 St. Louis, MO  
 Hurdle Mills, NC  
 Danville, IL  
 Brechin, Scotland  
 Rio Rancho, NM  
 Fort Edward, NY  
 Santa Fe, NM  
 Maplewood, MN  
 Fishkill, NY  
 Lindon, UT  
 Collierville, TN

Michael DeBellis  
 Victor Johnson  
 Jason Ruppert  
 Benjamin Eakes  
 Tarynne Mingione  
 Donnette Ford  
 Cyndi VandeHoef  
 Marshall Cleiman  
 Brian Chase  
 Emily Cory  
 Nathan Richeson

Granite Springs, NY  
 Kent, WA  
 Miamisburg, OH  
 Mississippi  
 San Diego, CA  
 Albuquerque, NM  
 Broomfield, CO  
 Clarkesville, GA  
 Moscow, PA  
 Sedona, AZ  
 Massillon, OH



## BFA US NATIONALS



The 2023 US National Champion Bruce Wood (above center) with Johnny Petrehn 2nd place and Third place Jeremy Rubin.

Finishing out the top ten Chase Donner 4th, Joe Zvada 5th, Nick Donner 6th, Blake Aldridge 7th, Rhett Heartsill 8th, Phil Clinger 9th, and a tie for 10<sup>th</sup> place with Elisa Talbert and Paul Petrehn. (Pictured below)





# BFA US NATIONALS (cont.)



Natasha Stanke  
Rookie of the Year



Elisa Talbert  
Top Woman Finisher



Al Nels  
Top Senior Finisher

## GTBR's YOUNG GUNS

- First place: Ben Leatherman
- Second Place: Spencer Copas
- Third Place: Zackey Maxwell

Special thanks to GTBR & Dr. Bill Bussey for promoting and encouraging the youth of ballooning.





# Awards

The BFA Award program has many awards that are open for nominations with deadlines approaching quickly. Including information on **NEW** and **UPDATED** awards.

You can find details on all the awards here:

[Awards - Balloon Federation of America \(bfa.net\)](http://www.bfa.net)

## *BFA Safety Coin*



The Balloon Federation of America is launching a new member recognition initiative designed to honor those who have made significant contributions or demonstrated a long-term commitment toward the BFA's mission of promoting safety in the sport of ballooning. Those so honored will receive a newly designed and minted BFA safety coin.

The first of these coins was just presented to Mike Emich of Ohio. Mike Emich is well deserving of such recognition. A veteran pilot who received his LTA certificate in 1974, he is to be inducted into the Ballooning Hall of Fame this summer. Emich has earned the FAI Gold Sporting Badge with one diamond. He is a founding member of the gas ballooning Aero Club of North America, North Carolina chapter.

The BFA is thrilled that Mike Emich is the first to be honored as part of this new initiative.

Throughout his nearly 50-year career as an aeronaut, Emich has been a presenter on issues of safety in hot air, gas, and homebuilt balloons at numerous seminars and BFA conventions throughout the decades. He is the author of a book on gas ballooning. The award was presented recently by former BFA Director and now Awards Committee Member Mark MacSkimming at a recent NOBPA event.

Unlike other traditional BFA awards there will be no formal criteria for qualification, no official nomination process. Any BFA member is eligible, and each potential honoree will be judged on a case-by-case basis with an eye to their actions or performance that exemplifies a "safety first" attitude in their approach to the sport of ballooning. The BFA Board plans to entrust these coins to a handful of representatives who will be empowered to present the award at a time and location they deem appropriate. While there is no formal nomination process, any BFA member may recommend a person for consideration through their regional or at-large director. Look for more on this new safety recognition award in the President's PiRep in the coming July/August issue of *Ballooning*.



# BFA Domont Safety Award

BFA Domont Safety Award was given to Mark Robinson with AEP Swepeco. He is on the Great Texas Balloon Rally board of directors but was not at the event this year because it was "all hands-on deck" for the utility company with the power being out all over the county.

This award is presented annually at the US National Balloon Hot Air Championship awards ceremony. It recognizes the pilot who, in the judgment of the highest race official, best exemplifies the highest degree of safety whether such pilot be competitive or not. This memorial fund was established in 1981 in memory of Elizabeth J. Domont, an Indiana pilot.



## Crew Achievement

The campers attending the BFA Camps all achieve Level I Apprentice Crew while attending camp, we hope that the campers continue in the CAAP program as well as working towards their LTA certification.

### Southeast Campers Level I Apprentice Crew

Nickolaus Allen  
William Broemmer  
Sophia Gwin  
Ethan Neldon  
*Avery Traywick\**  
Kierstynn Wehner

Sy Bartlett  
Nicholas Curry  
Cody Justice  
Riley Plumadore  
Max Walter  
Sydney Woodward

Brock Boehm  
Addison Duncan  
Jenna Litton  
Lauren Sawin  
Mason Warren

Mackenzie Bonner  
Fletcher Gwin  
Moirra Madden  
Heather Smith  
Katalin Watkins

*\*Avery Traywick earned this level CAAP prior to camp*

For more information in participating in the PAAP or the CAAP please go to: [www.bfa.net](http://www.bfa.net) under the education tab.

**BFA HAS A NEW MAILING ADDRESS,  
See below for new address!!**

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