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## Up and Away in the Land of Wonders

*For three days in May, the skies over Post Mills, Vt., are closed to store-bought balloons, and only homebuilts are welcome to fly. Experimental pilots from all over the U.S. and abroad lay down their scissors and thread, and gather to show off their creations. AVweb's Mary Grady was there, and filed this report.*

*Text And Images By Mary Grady*

"Nobody runs a balloon meet like Brian Boland," declares Norman Metivier, a white-haired gent who's been to many a meet in his day. "There's no structure to it -- it's a *happening*." And so it is: spontaneous, unpredictable, capricious, even a bit bizarre. During one weekend every May, Post Mills, Vt., becomes the center of a far-flung but small universe, as Brian Boland hosts the world's largest gathering of homebuilt, one-of-a-kind, lighter-than-air flying machines. "It's the little mecca," as Boland describes it, "for Experimental balloons and airships."

The experimental spirit -- down and dirty, nuts and bolts, figure-it-out-for-yourself kind of spirit -- is alive and well at Boland's sprawling grass-field airport. These aviators design their own aircraft, labor over them in basements and garages, and test-fly them from pastures and backyards. And every spring, just as the aviation faithful later in the summer migrate to Oshkosh, the experimental balloon builders feel that hint of warmth in the air, notice the days growing longer and the winds blowing gentler, and head for Post Mills.



They come from Alaska, Ohio, Texas, all around the U.S.; Canada, Switzerland, England. They arrive early and stay late, turning the three-day rally into a weeks-long affair. By the time it's over, maybe 50 different balloons have launched from the airfield -- not a lot by airplane standards, but a significant portion of the 400 or so homebuilt balloons in the whole world. The homebuilders gather to show off their creations and soar above the springtime hills. But mainly, they come to confer with like-minded souls, who know the pleasure and pain of giving birth to an idea, shrouding it in bright fabrics, and filling it with enough hot air to get it off the ground.

Reigning lord of this international band is Brian Boland, owner of the Post Mills Airport and keeper of the flame. Everything in the Boland domain has that homebuilt, experimental patina, from the house he lives in -- which ambles and segues into a sewing room, a balloon museum and a wide-open loft workspace -- to the vehicles he drives around the grounds. The airport fleet includes an ancient red fire engine, a picnic

table on wheels, an old minivan dressed up as a Viking ship, motorcycles and bicycles. At random moments these vehicles, loaded with diverse and boisterous crowds of balloonists, crew members, Brian and/or his wife Louise, visitors and kids, tear across the airfield and back, with no clear destination.

### Nowhere to go but up

But the lack of a destination is, after all, what ballooning is all about. Balloons drift with the wind, they can't be steered very effectively, and they can't fly if it's too windy or foggy. They symbolize aimlessness and anarchy, and to many who fly them, that's their appeal.

"We like to come to this rally because nobody takes it too seriously," says Carol Klein, of Alaska, who brought the small blue-white-and-red balloon she recently flew in Burma. No officials or launchmasters or walkie-talkies to be seen on this field. No competition, no prize money, no sponsors or vendors. No admission fees, no parking attendants. Every pilot and every visitor does exactly as they want to do, and it works out just fine.

*(Continued on page 3)*

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### 2001 CLAS Meeting Schedule

January.18	Budget and dues approval and committees.
February.15	Oxford Tower Tour & Audit committee report.
March.15	Business Meeting.
April.19	Wings Program.
May.17	Business Meeting.
June.21	Duats.
July.19	Business.
August.16	Navigation and GPS
September.20	Nominations.
October.18	Crew Training.
November.15	Elections.
December.20	Holiday Party

### Refreshments Committee

<i>July</i>	Pat Johannesen
<i>August</i>	Mike Bollea
<i>September</i>	"OPEN" and accepting a Volunteer!!!
<i>October</i>	"OPEN" and accepting a Volunteer!!!
<i>November</i>	Mick
<i>December</i>	Party

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[www.faa.gov/region/ane/flight\\_standards/index.htm](http://www.faa.gov/region/ane/flight_standards/index.htm)

### CLAS 2001 Competition Schedule

<b>June 23</b>	Goshen Balloon Festival
<b>July 21</b>	Ushchak Aerodrome
<b>August 25</b>	Plainville Balloon Festival
<b>September 15</b>	TBA

Newsletter On-Line Via the Net

For all club members that are willing to visit our web site at  
**[www.lighterthanair.org](http://www.lighterthanair.org)**

And log in and to download and print there own copy of the newsletter please e-mail Jack Perry with your current e-mail address.

(Continued from page 1)

Technologically, there's not much to a balloon: a basket to hold the pilot and passengers, a propane tank that fuels a sort of flamethrower, and an envelope -- the big bag that holds all that hot air the giant flame generates. Yet these basic components can be varied in infinite ways. Here at Post Mills, the baskets include classic woven wicker, padded metal frames covered in cordura, a plastic trash can, a pair of metal barrels. Some have luxurious seating, others are barely big enough for the pilot to stand up in. A few builders discard the basket altogether in their quest for simplicity -- they sit in a suspended chair or harness, or even straddle the fuel tank, like Slim Pickens on his way to the end of the world.

Saturday morning, it's misty and overcast, but as the wind dies down the burners heat up. It's chaotic yet casual -- pilots inflate, tether, and fly on their own prerogatives; nobody with a badge or a uniform or a loudspeaker is telling who to do what. A smiling Curtis Pack hangs on to the tether line of his homebuilt balloon, the Miss Kathy Ann Starship -- a smallish red-white-and-blue striped envelope with just a chair suspended below it, a fuel tank behind the pilot's back and a burner overhead. "Would you like a ride?" he asks all who stop to stare. They're strapped into the padded seat with a five-point harness, shown the emergency cutoff pull-ring and the blast trigger, and off they go, rising to just above rooftop altitude in the blink of an eye. Pack calls out the commands: "A three-second blast!" and you'll rise, "Two seconds!" and you sink down, nice and gentle.



**This antique submarine flew this year.**

Balloons of all sorts are dragged onto the field, and the roar of inflator fans fills the air. As the envelopes undulate and expand, burner blasts add to the cacophony, and one by one the balloons take shape, stand up, warm up for their flights. Pink, blue, yellow, big and small, round or cylindrical, squat or narrow, all colors, patterns, and shapes. One has pointy purple protuberances decorating its equator; Brian's fabulous new creation has the face, fins and tail of a giant green-and-orange flying fish. At the edge of the field, a bagpiper plays, the mist fades away, and graceful balloons gradually fill the sky.

### **Art, science, and aerostation**

Launch windows for the Experimental Balloon & Airship Meet are early morning, around 6 or 7 a.m., and just be-

fore sunset, around 6 or 7 p.m., when the winds are gentlest. Flights rarely last more than an hour or so, and are often even shorter, depending on the availability of good landing spots and the fuel supply. Which leaves big



chunks of the weekend to fill with other activities.

Flyers bring their families, their crews, their friends, and erect tents around the edges of the airfield and under open-front hangars. Some camp in RVs or in one of the tiny summer cottages that nestle in the woods. Barbecues and tailgate parties go on nonstop. Saturday and Sunday mornings, a local theater troupe serves up a tasty pancake breakfast with all the fixings, plus real Vermont maple syrup. A jazz band plays on the porch after the morning flight, and the theater people entertain with folk dances and other revelry. When there are no balloons to watch, the sky is still lively, with powered parachutes and ultralights buzzing in and out all day. Tiny balloon models, about 15 feet tall, fly by remote control. Saturday afternoon, a couple gets married on the field, then launch their new life with a balloon ride.

Saturday night, a sheet suspended from the side of the museum becomes the screen for a double feature. The first movie is a poetic visual journal telling the story of a half-dozen or so pilots who flew in Burma recently, on a goodwill tour to boost a national tourism campaign. The second is a hilarious

home movie by Phil MacNutt, of Austin, Texas, who chronicled his adventures at last year's meet -- including an imaginary balloon trip to the edge of space, and a tour of Brian's shop

and museum, with such highlights as "63 pairs of scissors -- that's 126 scissors, altogether," and a mysterious collection of worn-out light bulbs, each of them labeled "dead" and stored in a plastic bag.



The museum and loft invite hours of exploration. With the atmosphere of your eccentric uncle's dusty attic, this is a

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

collection of collections and obsessions -- there are no real exhibits, no labels or explanations. Here you'll find a wild assortment of contraptions that Brian has at one time or another flown beneath a balloon -- from a Volkswagen bus to a glass-bottomed basket to a lawn chair. They hang from the rafters and crowd in the corners. This year's contribution was a rusty old device that Brian thinks might be a Civil War-era submarine. Whatever it is, he rigged it to hang below a balloon, climbed inside, and flew it briefly over the field -- thus qualifying it to be added to the display.

## An experimental life

Brian Boland has built more than 100 balloons and airships, and helped many other pilots to give form to their dreams at his balloon-building camp at Post Mills. He's accumulated about 6,000 hours of flying time, and flown in far-flung parts of the world. He's also the overseer of the loosely organized **Experimental Balloon & Airship Association (EBAA)**, which has no dues, no bylaws, and no forms to fill out. Anyone, anywhere in the universe, who builds or owns an experimental lighter-than-air ship is automatically a member, whether they know it or not.

The EBAA literature, however, does define the goal for building an aircraft: "The joy of flying one's own creation." And at this little airfield in Vermont, for a few days in May, all are welcome to share in that enchantment.



# 91.119

**Great news from the BFA**, the FAA has agreed to a study revising 91.119 to lower minimum altitudes. In the May Skylines Rick Jones acknowledges some of the people who have made this possible and outlines the qualifications for participation in the program. As he says this is something that can make a real difference in our sport, so let's support it. Thanks to Rick and all who got this program this far. Tony

## AVIATION LOSES A HERO, A TEACHER, A GOOD GUY...

One bona fide hero and two good guys are no longer with us and they will be missed. Glenn Greenhalgh, the publisher of Air News New England magazine, was killed in a canoe accident in New Hampshire in late April. His fiancée and business partner, Beverly, plans to continue on with the magazine. 66-year-old Glenn Edward Frick, director of the International Aerobatic Club (IAC), passed away on May 16, after a struggle with leukemia. Frick served multiple roles in the club including captain of the 1999 Advanced Team.



### Rain Washes Out Balloons

By AMANDA LEHMERT,  
Herald Press Correspondent

## BRISTOL -- There were almost no signs of life on Memorial Boulevard Saturday, as rain washed out the annual Balloons Over Bristol festival.

"We've lost a day before, but we've never lost the whole event," said event organizer Vicki Donaghy.

Although four or five balloon owners managed to inflate and tether their balloons during the morning event, only one left the ground, according to Donaghy. Ride operators and food stand owners packed up and went home early in the day, leaving only a few craft booths to greet any passersby during the afternoon. The rain cleared up a bit by 6 p.m., but the evening's balloon launch was canceled.

While the Weather Channel is predicting rain and thunderstorms for Sunday and the Bristol Jaycees lose money from the poor weather, Donaghy said they are not ready to end the event yet.

"After everything we went through for this event," she said. "We will not give up until it is over."

Donaghy said she was pleased to see people show up Friday night and Saturday morning and the balloonists stick around despite the bleak forecast.

"We really, really appreciate their support," she said.

A half a dozen craft booths stayed open throughout the afternoon -- just in case a few soggy customers braved the down-pour and 8-foot puddles along Memorial Boulevard.

Artist Les Mor sat under his tent surrounded by the portraits he creates with chinks, charcoals and crayons. Mor said a few stragglers came by throughout the day.

"When the rides are up, the people are attracted," he said.

(Continued on page 5)

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Over all, with the rides not running, business was slow and wet.

"This is a great little event every year," said Mor, who has been a part of the festival for five or six years. "But you can't control the weather."

Richard and Carole Lapierre, owners of Grandpa's Kettle Korn in Spencer, Mass., had the plastic shades pulled tight around their popcorn booth on Saturday afternoon. Although they travel to craft fairs and events all over New England, this was their first Balloons Over Bristol.

"We paid to be here," Richard Lapierre said. "We didn't pay for the weather."

Although some business people who bought booth space wondered if they could get their \$100 returned, Donaghy said the event is weather permitting with no refunds.

"No one involved is getting their money back," she said. "I would love to give them their money back. I don't know

# Safety-Fest

The FAA sends it's thanks for all those that helped in making Safety-Fest a success. This annual event was an opportunity for all who attended to explore the many facets of aviation. CLAS was a prominent participant in this years event. Many thanks to Daryl and Cyndi for brining their systems for tether and display as well as staffing the club booth during the day. Our booth was visited by many during the day. The main contributors to the set up and staffing were Ellen Dressel, Penny Christy, Mike Bollea and Kevin Brielman. Jim O'Brien did a fine job at the registration table as well as lending a hand during the inflation. Bruce Byberg lent his expertise on the inflation field and well as many others. Luckily there was no incident during the inflation with all those pilots around. The Pratt staff are very safety conscious. Before they would let us start the inflation fan they wanted the fire safety crew standing by. Fire Safety took one look at our professional operation and said: "These guys do this all the time and don't need me, I'm going back to stand by for the helicopters!"

The format changed slightly this year to allow balloonists to interact with others in aviation. In addition

to four balloon specific topics, there were many other topics of a general nature from which balloonists could learn. Initial feedback is that the members enjoyed this opportunity. My thanks to Kathy Wadsworth for beginning the process and preparing me to continue the coordination of the event in her absence. She arranged for Mark West to be our keynote speaker. The FAA and FSS folks came through with informative presentations.

This was truly a club event that called for the participation of many individuals, including the participants. The interaction in the classroom provided an opportunity for new and experienced pilots to share with one another, an opportunity that we don't often have. Through all their efforts this was a very successful event. Safety is what it is all about and the statistics show that seminars such as these help to reduce the number and severity of accidents. We are fortunate to get insurance discounts for our participation, not every aspect of aviation is so lucky.

I am looking for suggestions for topics and speakers for next year's event. We have to start early if we want to get quality speakers. I especially would like to see an increase in the number of crew members in the club and would like to develop some topics for their benefit at Safety-Fest. Thanks again for all of your help and cooperation.

Santo Galatioto  
CLAS Safety-Fest Coordinator

## **GOLDEN KNIGHT TO JUMP FROM 130,000 FEET**

The first female member of the U.S. Army's famed Golden Knights parachute team told "The Washington Post" that she will attempt next spring to jump from a balloon flying at 130,000 feet. If Army reservist Cheryl Stearns is successful, she will exceed the highest known jump to date of 102,000 feet by Air Force Capt. Joe Kittinger Jr. in 1960. Stearns, a member of the current Golden Knights team, is also a pilot for U.S. Airways. After jumping from a balloon that she will pilot, Stearns will accelerate to 695 knots, exceeding the sound barrier. Stearns told the newspaper that she hopes her efforts will help scientists design escape mechanisms for astronauts.



# New Bionic Balloonist / Farmer

A **Special Thank You** to Darrell and Cindy Smith for opening up their home (and their rather elegant garage) for entertaining the masses last month in lieu of the scheduled flyout from Willimantic.

Also to Hope Richardson for donating her puzzles to the 50 / 50 drawing at the last club meeting.



Regular proficiency training is essential to the safety of all pilots and their passengers. The objective of the Pilot Proficiency Awards Program is to provide pilots with the opportunity to establish and participate in a personal recurrent training program. Join your fellow pilots who recognize the need for recurrent flight training. Congratulations to this month's recipients.

### PHASE VII

**Robert Zirpolo**

### PHASE IX

**Kevin Brielmann**

### LANDOWNER CARDS

Attention all Pilots and more importantly Crew — please remember to use the CLAS Landowner Cards whenever and wherever you fly. I plan on publishing a monthly update of all cards returned and any comments from the landowners when possible. These cards help us promote CLAS to the surrounding communities where we fly and also promotes ballooning as a friendly sport. It also helps to reduce **Red Zones!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Please fly safely and respect our landowners at all times.

Buoyant Regards,

Mick

New and improved Bionic man Steve Ushchak is recovering from hip replacement surgery last week. I checked the data plate on the artificial hip and it lists the rated maximum gross weight allowable as 5000 lbs on his right side only.



The surgery went off without a hitch and Steve is once again capable of leaping over tall buildings in a single bound and setting off metal detectors in airports. In his post surgery consultations with his doctor both the Dr. and Steve surmised that in another 20-30 years we will no longer bury people but will just bring them to Schivones junkyard in Meriden for scrap.

Two observations by the patient while hospitalized were:

1. The coffee in hospitals is worse than wallpaper remover.
2. They never send in young nurses to perform sponge baths.

Welcome home brother.....RZ

JUNE			JULY	
SUN-RISE	SUN-SET		SUN-RISE	SUN-SET
05:21	08:19	1	5:23 AM	8:30 PM
05:21	08:20	2	5:23 AM	8:30 PM
05:21	08:21	3	5:24 AM	8:30 PM
05:20	08:22	4	5:24 AM	8:30 PM
05:20	08:22	5	5:25 AM	8:29 PM
05:19	08:23	6	5:26 AM	8:29 PM
05:19	08:24	7	5:27 AM	8:29 PM
05:19	08:25	8	5:27 AM	8:29 PM
05:19	08:25	9	5:28 AM	8:28 PM
05:19	08:26	10	5:29 AM	8:28 PM
05:19	08:26	11	5:30 AM	8:27 PM
05:18	08:27	12	5:30 AM	8:27 PM
05:18	08:27	13	5:31 AM	8:26 PM
05:18	08:27	14	5:32 AM	8:25 PM
05:18	08:28	15	5:33 AM	8:25 PM
05:18	08:28	16	5:34 AM	8:24 PM
05:18	08:28	17	5:35 AM	8:24 PM
05:19	08:29	18	5:35 AM	8:23 PM
05:19	08:29	19	5:36 AM	8:22 PM
05:19	08:29	20	5:37 AM	8:21 PM
05:19	08:30	21	5:38 AM	8:21 PM
05:19	08:30	22	5:39 AM	8:20 PM
05:19	08:30	23	5:40 AM	8:19 PM
05:20	08:30	24	5:41 AM	8:18 PM
05:20	08:30	25	5:42 AM	8:17 PM
05:20	08:30	26	5:43 AM	8:16 PM
05:20	08:31	27	5:43 AM	8:15 PM
05:21	08:30	28	5:44 AM	8:14 PM
05:21	08:30	29	5:45 AM	8:13 PM
05:21	08:30	30	5:46 AM	8:12 PM
		31		8:11 PM

# Congrat's

On a beautiful June 9th morning Jim O'Brien earned his Commercial Pilot Certificate. Several balloons took off from the Kat Balloon Port, flying south down the Southington Valley and all but two landed at Southington High School at the Cancer Relay for Life.

**Editors Note.** If possible when flying, I recommend that Pilots whenever possible, land near Santo and Jim because they will deflate your balloon on their rather large "ground tarps" to keep you nice and dry. It works like a charm... their crew takes care of your balloon for you!!





## CLAS 2001 PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

### DATE CHANGE!

### COMPETITION WILL BE HELD

September 20, 2001

FOR SEVERAL REASONS THE PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST WILL BE HELD AT THE SEPTEMBER 20<sup>TH</sup> MEETING RATHER THAN THE JUNE 21<sup>ST</sup> MEETING

AS ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED. THAT GIVES EVERYONE ALL SUMMER TO GET SOME GREAT PHOTOGRAPHS (PHOTO'S DO NOT HAVE TO BE TAKEN THIS YEAR).

SIZE LIMITATION HAS CHANGED: MINIMUM SIZE 5X7, MAXIMUM 11X14

PRINTS FROM COLOR COPIES MAY BE SUBMITTED BUT WE WILL NEED AN ORIGINAL NEGATIVE, SLIDE OR GOOD QUALITY 8X10 PRINT TO SCAN FOR THE CALENDAR.

KEEP IN MIND THAT HORIZONTAL FORMAT PHOTOGRAPHS WORK BEST FOR THE CALENDAR.

CALENDARS WILL BE READY FOR THE NOVEMBER 15<sup>TH</sup> MEETING.

**QUESTIONS CONTACT JACK PERRY**



# Highways in the Sky

**The age of a flying car in every garage may be dawning.**

**By Tom LeCompte**

**"Mark my word: A combination airplane and motor car is coming. You may smile. But it will come."**

**-- Henry Ford, 1940**

It's 11 in the morning and traffic is still crawling along Interstate 84 between Hartford and Waterbury. A fender-bender has closed two lanes of traffic, forcing everyone to squeeze into the remaining lane and causing several miles of stop-and-go traffic. At this rate, I am sure to be late for my appointment. Muttering as I try to find a radio station to soothe my frazzled nerves, I find myself wishing my earthbound Dodge could grow wings and take flight.

Robert E. Fulton Jr. of Newtown knows the feeling. During World War II, Fulton traveled to military bases to train pilots in the use of his Gunairstructor, a simulator he created to teach pilots air-to-air combat. As one of the few civilian pilots then authorized to fly his own plane, Fulton would land at some remote air base only to find himself stranded there. This was wartime, after all, and few taxi drivers would waste precious gas coupons to drive out to the airport to pick him up.

"I had a terrible time getting around the country," recalls the 90-year-old Fulton. "I'd end up kicking my airplane and say, 'Why the hell can't you take me down the road? You have an engine, you have wheels, you have controls, all the same things as an auto-

mobile, so why can't you take me down the road?'" So, after the war and many a thumbed ride or long walk, Fulton's solution was as obvious as it was ingenious: a plane that could convert to an automobile.

From 1945 to 1952, without any training or experience designing aircraft and using information he got out of an "Aeronautics for Pilots" pamphlet, Fulton conceived, designed, built, tested and logged more than 100,000 miles in his dream machine: the Airphibian.

Forget flights of fancy such as Ian Fleming's *Chitty-Chitty Bang Bang*, James Bond or movies such as *Blade Runner*. Fulton's Airphibian is the real deal. And while far from alone in his vision of "roadable aircraft" or flying cars, Fulton's Airphibian was the first such vehicle certified for production by the government (the only other, the Aerocar, was created in 1959 by Moulton Taylor, who credited his inspiration to having met Fulton and having seen his Airphibian).

Fulton's two-seat prototype consisted of two basic components: a small, four-wheeled vehicle and a separate wing and tail assembly. Rather than try and devise a complex system of collapsible wings and tail, Fulton designed the Airphibian so that, once on the

ground, the passenger compartment could simply be detached from the wings and tail and

But if getting the Airphibian into the air was one thing, getting it past government inspectors was another. Before it was even completed, Fulton says, one government official pooh-pooed the idea altogether, saying the compromises made to create such an elaborate machine would make it both a poor airplane and a poor automobile. Never one to shirk a challenge, Fulton set out to prove everyone wrong.

"What happened was really interesting," Fulton says. "The government sent inspectors to inspect everything. They inspected the wings and the tail and the engine and the wheels and the landing gear and everything under the sun. All these people got involved in the thing. There were dozens of them, with books and books of rules and what-have-you." The rules, however, all dealt with flying machines.

"They finally said, 'We have a problem here. This is all fine for aviation, but you're going to be driving this thing down the road, and what effect is that going to have on the airworthiness of it? You've got to prove to us

*(Continued on page 8)*

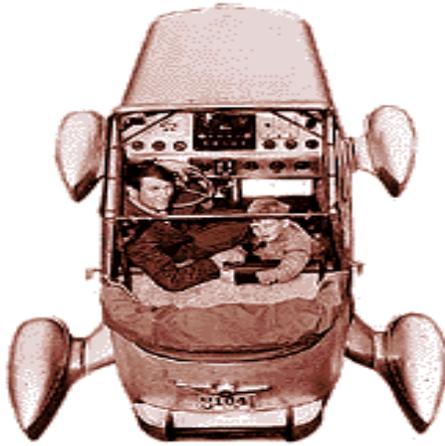
(Continued from page 7)

that running your landing gear against a curb isn't going to make it unsafe [to fly]."" So, Fulton says, the inspectors would think up another test, and another, and another. And every time he made any modification to the engine, or the wings, or the structure, the whole certification process would start again from scratch, with all the paperwork and thousands of hours of expensive testing. "I had to destroy about 10 airplanes in the process of proving to them that the thing was safe and eventually I ran out of money," Fulton says.

But he found a wealthy backer who bankrolled more tests in exchange for control of the company. By December 1950, the Civil Aeronautics Administration not only had certified the Airphibian but had ordered 10 of the machines. Fulton flew to Washington, D.C. in the Airphibian and drove it straight to the CAA offices to pick up the certificate.

In hindsight, Fulton can say it was no wonder he considered himself an "inveterate optimist."

However, the Airphibian's success was short-lived. Fulton's financial backer switched to a new adviser, one who had little faith in such high-flying ideas, and Ful-



ton could only watch as the company was shut down, its development costs used as tax write-offs.

While the future of the flying car may have been temporarily grounded with the failure of the Airphibian, the dream lived on, albeit with mixed success. In addition to Moulton Taylor's federally certified Aerocar (TV celebrity Bob Cummings bought one), there were many just as ambitious but less successful experimental hybrids.

In the 1950s and '60s, Leland Bryan produced a series of highway-certified folding-wing "roadables" that used their pusher propellers for both air and road power. The project ended when Bryan died in the crash of one in 1974. And in 1973, Henry Smolinski fastened the wings, tail and aft engine of a twin-engine Cessna Skymaster to one ill-fated Ford Pinto. The wing struts

(Continued on page 9)

# Balloon Festivals

Dates	City/State	Name/Location	Contact	Balloons
Jun 15-17	Quechee, VT	Hot Air Balloon Festival & Craft Fair	407-870-0031	25
Jun 15-17	Gasburg, VA	Lake Gaston Resort Hot Air Balloon Classic	904-247-1241	
Jun 15-17	Milton, DE	Delmarva Hot Air Balloon & Craft Festival	302-684-3400	25
Jun 22-24	Goshen, CT	Northwest Connecticut Balloon Fest	203-2551929	20
Jun 29-Jul 1	Forks Twp, PA	Balloons Over Northampton County	908-454-1981	20
Jul 20-2	Harborcreek, PA	Harborfest	814-899-9173	15
Jul 27-29	Canton, OH	Pro Foot Ball Hall of Fame Rally	330-456-7253	
Jul 27-19	Readington, NJ	Quick Check NJ Festival of Ballooning	973-882-5464	100
Aug 3-5	Binghamton, NY	Spiede Fest Balloon Rally		30
Aug 17-19	Greenville, NY	Great Northern Catskills Balloon Fest	518-966-5050	25
Aug 17-19	Shirley, NY	Waldbaum's Balloon & Music Festival	973-882-5464	75
Aug 24-26	Baltimore, MD	Maryland State Fair Balloon Classic	301-881-6262	30
Aug 31-Sep 3	Dansville, NY	New York State Festival of Balloons	716-335-8885	75

What a wet and soggy Memorial day weekend! The competition scheduled for, BALLOONS OVER BRISTOL Saturday morning, May 26th was canceled due to wind direction, terrain, and the low ceiling. The wind was blowing out of the South East, over the hills of Burlington and Harwinton, and due to their elevation we would have flown into low lying clouds of about 1200 feet.

Those CLAS members gaining a point for being in attendance are as follows:

**Pilots:** Diane Tomassetti, Mick Murphy, Jim Regan, Penny Christy, Frank Bart, Chris Mooney, Daryl Smith, Randy Riley, Pete Hyslop, Kevin Brielmann, Bill Colyer, and Erwin Dressel.

**Crew:** Barbara Bart, Jeff and Christine Ratcliffe, Diana Riley, Crystel Marccrelli, Peg Hyslop, and Cindy Smith.

The dinner Saturday night at 6:00PM was outstanding. The location change to the Elks Club, with a live band no less, added a touch of class and I'm certain all in attendance had a great time.

Regards, Erwin Dressel

*(Continued from page 8)*

collapsed on its first test flight, killing Smolinski and the pilot.

Creating the dual-purpose machines presented a number of technical problems, to be sure. "It's tricky to build," admits Fulton. "It's not easy to design this thing with all the requirements of the government."

Despite futuristic visions and the industry's promise to create "the aircraft for the masses," the flying car and private aircraft, in general, never caught on for a variety of reasons. One is the absolute requirement that the operator have the training and physiological capability of being a pilot. And certainly, cost has been a major factor, precluding most Americans from considering private aircraft as anything other than toys for the very rich or the very crazy. Besides, Americans love their cars.

But this romance may be diminishing. The number of cars on the road, the hours wasted in traffic (can you say, "road rage?") and the government's losing battle to patch up the current highway system have started to sour this relationship.

According to federal transportation figures, while the U.S. population grew 29 percent between 1970 and 1995, the number of automobiles and light trucks grew three times faster. Yet, since the early 1960s, federal spending on transportation infrastructure declined from 6 percent of the total non-military budget to 1.2 percent in 1990. By the year 2005, the government estimates motorists will waste 12 billion working hours stuck in traffic.

Given this and technological advances in aircraft construction, navigation and operation, the age of flying cars and personal aircraft is not only a possibility in the near future, argues Dennis M. Bushnell, chief scientist at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Langley Research Center in Hampton, Va., but a necessity.

Visionaries such as Fulton, he says, were merely ahead of their time. "They just needed the technology to catch up to the concept."

A 35-year NASA veteran who worked on the Apollo and Space Shuttle programs, Bushnell grew up in Westbrook and graduated from Old Saybrook High School. He has an imagination that pushes, in his words, "the frontiers of responsible conjecture." Rattling off sentences peppered with numbers, specifications and acronyms, Bushnell has an optimistic and romantic affinity for technology. The flying car, or "converticar," Bushnell argues, is a viable transportation concept only a few decades away. And if it succeeds, the automobile as we know it will go the way of the telegraph

and the eight-track tape.

Working in conjunction with NASA's Advanced General Aviation Transport Experiments (or AGATE) project, a consortium of government, industry and universities formed to develop technologies to increase small aircraft safety, affordability and ease of use, Bushnell has been on the leading edge of plans to make flying small aircraft an efficient alternative to automobiles for travel over 50 miles.

In Bushnell's vision, cars will be replaced by converticars, personal aircraft that can land and take-off vertically, hover, cruise at 425 miles per hour, and then drive into the city and parallel park. These machines will travel along multilevel highways in the sky, controlled and monitored by inexpensive electronics. It is, he figures, a potential \$1 trillion market, bound to change both automobile and commercial transportation industries forever.

But if the idea of taking hordes of crazed, angry, drunk, inattentive or downright dangerous motorists and letting them loose in the sky seems a sure-fire recipe for mass destruction, Bushnell has the answer: the autopilot.

The converticar, as Bushnell sees it, will be fully automatic, requiring the operator to merely tell an onboard computer where he or she wants to go -- and presto! -- sit back and enjoy the view. This machine will fly itself, with an onboard computer monitoring and controlling engine functions, and an integrated satellite communication and navigation system automatically guiding the vehicle to its destination. The system will also ensure the flying car avoids terrain, weather and other aircraft -- ultimately bringing the craft to a perfect touchdown.

Modern airliners already have the capability to take off, fly and land without a human at the controls. The military has been perfecting the use of satellite positioning systems, autopilots capable of terrain following (or nap-of-the-Earth) navigation, remotely piloted vehicles and automatic drones (often used for target practice). Using such advances, the same technology that today guides a cruise missile into downtown Baghdad, Bushnell says, can take you to Grandma's house for dinner, even if Grandma lives three states away.

Bushnell admits the concept of a flying car has the status of a cult, with a long, long history of attracting techno-zealots and garage tinkerers, but over the years, "It's gotten more real. It's almost scary."

According to Bushnell, "All of the infrastructure is there." What is needed is for private industry or government to take a major interest and make it possible. Citing

the same theory Henry Ford used to revolutionize the automobile, Bushnell says mass production will not only bring the cost of the converticar down but fuel the next transportation revolution.

One major windfall, he says, will be the approximately 48,000 lives saved each year -- lives currently lost to traffic accidents on America's roadways. Alcohol-related crashes, which account for about 41 percent of all people killed in highway accidents, should decrease as well. Converticar occupants may end up in the wrong city if they code in the wrong destination, but they will arrive safely.

Whether or not the public is ready to accept the idea of a robotic flying car, however, is another thing. There's an old joke among those in aircraft automation, Bushnell says: Passengers want a pilot behind the controls, so designers will make it so you need a person and a dog to fly the plane -- "The dog is there to bite the person if he touches anything."

What shape will this vehicle take? One possibility already exists -- the helicopter. But helicopters are complicated, tricky to maintain and relatively slow, with airspeeds generally under 200 miles per hour.

Paul Moller thinks he has a better idea. After earning a graduate degree in aeronautics and a subsequent stint as a college professor at the University of California at Davis, Moller founded California-based Moller Aircraft Company, which later became Moller International Inc. While the company initially earned money manufacturing exhaust systems, every technology Moller acquired, every technology he developed, has been dedicated to the ultimate goal of creating a machine he calls the Skycar.

Using "powered lift," the same technology used by the military's vertical take-off and landing Harrier "Jump Jet," Moller has spent the better part of his life designing the "volantor," a craft capable of a vertical take-off and landing, hovering, and cruising speeds at nearly 400 miles per hour. If he has his way, the vehicle of the future will look a lot like the Batmobile.

Shiny, bright red, with a large bubble canopy, four jet engines and a huge airfoil on the back, Moller's M400 Skycar would make George Jetson envious. After 30 years, 700,000 man-hours of work, and more than \$45 million (more than \$100 million in current dollars, figures Moller), the Skycar is ready for its first test flights this June. The four-seat craft, using a "fly-by-wire" system (computers will actually "fly" it, responding to inputs provided by the pi-

*(Continued on page 11)*

**CLAS Meeting, May 17<sup>th</sup> 2001** Called to order at 7:50 P.M. Tony Roswell, Terri Rollinson, Pat Johannesen, Al Theodore, Penny Christy, Kevin Brielman, Erwin Dressel, Jim O'Brien, Santo Galatioto, Carlos Kebe, Donna Gore, Mike Bollea, Ellen Dressel. A letter will be written to Daryl and Cindy Smith as a Thank You for the breakfast they provided after the 'fly out' in Willamantic on April 28<sup>th</sup>.

Treasurer's Report: \$3442.40 income

\$2289.01 outgo

Checking account balance: \$1854.55

CD balance 5266.33

Membership: budget based on 80 members equaling \$1600

To Date membership income is \$1530

**Sunshine:** Nothing to report

**Products:** This is a listing of inventory value.

T-shirts =\$1034 no sales

Pins =\$785 \$20

Land/pin=\$170.82 \$21.95

Mugs =\$762 \$50

Calendars=\$37 no sales

**Membership:** We have almost reached our goal. To date there are 75 members. This does not count the two life members or newsletter only. **Flight Manuals:** Four new areas are being listed. They have been known to most. Some areas have changed hands and are no longer on the 'red zone' list. We just need to be aware of the sensitive areas. **Education:** We had a successful 'Safety Seminar' on Saturday the 12<sup>th</sup> of May. Many were in attendance. Everyone en-

joyed the 'freedom' to mingle with the fixed wing pilots. Kathy had passed the ball to Santo in November, as she was not going to be in the area to work on the set up of the seminar. Santo did a great job. To additional attendees, Steve and Judith Ushchack arrived so that a quorum is met if a vote was needed. **Competition:** To date we have not had a fly out. The weather (winds) has prevented all activity.

**Winter Dinner:** The thought was mentioned of doing a potluck format again. Maybe something that will be more casual. (We need input into this idea) Penny offered to secure a place in Middletown that would accommodate us, if this were the way we want to go this year. **BFA-FAA:** They were pleased with the attendance at the seminar. **Old Business:** Landowner Cards. We need to get a cost figure from Randy as to the new format. We need to establish the new design and try to get the cards printed. We should have a final copy and prices by the July Business Meeting to vote upon.

**New Business:** Donna Gore was our guest and she is representing BESB. (Board of Education for Services to the Blind) She is hoping to enlist our services as balloonist to help promote their program on education of the youth and other not to smoke. Many ideas were discussed but no conclusions were arrived at. We will be talking to Dona again.

Katherine Young, manager of the Groton-New London airport stated at the seminar that they would still like to have balloons appear at their function in the future. This would be part of their open house display.

Meeting adjourned 9:10 p.m.

Respectively submitted, Ellen Dressel, Secretary.

CLAS Meeting

March 15,2001

Those present: Ellen Dressel, Pat Johannesen, LisaTueh, Macarena Parra, Santo Galatioto, Jim O'Brien, Gloria Koczera, Erwin Dressel, Mike Bollea, Cindy Smith, Bill Costen, Al Theodore, Mick Murphy, Daryl Smith, Penny Christy, Tony Roswell, Kevin Brielman, Dave Lasher, Polly Lasher, Jack Perry, Randy Riley, Dianna Marcarelli, Carlos Kebe.

President Tony Roswell called meeting to order @7:40 P.M.

Treasurer's Report: Ed Yost Memorial, \$100 was donated.

Dues collected to date, \$890

Winter Dinner: \$1103 income / \$1235 expenses. Checking Balance: \$544.59

Motion by M. Bollea to accept the report, Seconded by E. Dressel

**Sunshine:** Cards were sent to the following: Mary Wadsworth, Hope Richardson, Judith Ushchak

**Products:** We will be giving out the remaining 'Landowner Cards' to use up the supply. 6 were drawn at the Winter Dinner, for \$50 each. Tony Roswell, Matt Dutkiewicz, Erwin Dressel, pilots

**Cindy Smith** will be handling the products.

**Flight Manual:** Penny Christy is looking for any and all up-dates on the 'Red Zones'.

**Membership:** About 52 at this count. E-mail; phone calls and post cards to go the non-renewed members.

**Education:** Daryl Smith spoke of the Safety

Seminar to be held at Brainard Air Port on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. Change in the April topic. Was maintenance, changed to the 'Wings' flight review.

Bill Costen attended GEBA Seminar. Felt it was a good time but a very slow ride home in the snow. Jack Perry attended John Wise Seminar in Millersville, PA. Also a good time.

**Competition:** March 24<sup>th</sup> a Skylark Air Port, meet ½ hour before sunrise. Breakfast will be at the Windsor Dinner, fly or no fly. Question was raised if there would be enough pilots interested in the BFA sanctions. This would include getting the card from the BFA for \$50 and would necessitate all the regulations with a minimum of 6 pilots participating.

**BFA-FAA:** Santo stated there was nothing to report. Stated the FAA is thinking about a sport license for the pilots of the ultra-lights.

**Winter Dinner:** Thanks to Polly & Dave Lasher for a great time. The 'Sh\*t Happens' plaque is full and will go to the first winner as a new one is now being circulated.

**Sectional Maps** are due to come out in May for the year.

**Audit Report:** the books balanced and there is a net worth of \$8956, Penny Christy headed audit. A special thanks to Erwin Dressel as out going treasurer.

**Calendars:** still a few remain, \$5 each.

**Nominating** Erwin and Carlos to be on the committee.

**CPR:** Southbury Training School, Saturday

the April 7<sup>th</sup> at 10A.M. RSVP to Tony if interested in being re-certified.

**Newsletter** will be available to any that would like it on line. This will save the club postage as well as the time to get it printed and mailed. Please let Mick know if you want to go this way.

There was additional discussion on the membership by-laws.

Motion was made to lower the age to 14 for any one interested in joining the Club.

Please see the page for your ballot and mark your vote and mail to the P.O. Box.

Bill Costen spoke of the Brian Jones Award and was wondering about the possibility of hosting something like this in the future at the Bradley Air Museum. We have the New England Hall of Fame and maybe something like a black tie auction would draw attention to the area.

Ron Loomis is still trying to get the ballooning community involved in the Air Fest at Groton. This would take place in September. April fly out will be in Willamantic and there will be breakfast at the Smith's regardless of weather. Please RSVP the Smith's if you plan to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 P.M.

Additional news:

Dianna and Randy Riley were married on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2001

(Continued from page 9)

lot), is projected to operate at altitudes up to 30,000 feet, cruise at 350 mph and have a 900-mile range.

The Federal Aviation Administration had to create an entirely new category of aircraft for the certification and licensing of the Skycar. The ducted-fan engines will be custom-built by Moller, using a variant of the Wankel-type rotary engine. To ensure reliability, the Skycar will have multiple redundant systems in case of a breakdown. If all else fails, a parachute will deploy, allowing the Skycar to float safely to the earth.

If successful, Moller could be commuting to work in the Skycar in the next few years. For the rest of us, it could be a decade or more until both the vehicle and the requisite automatic controls and navigation systems fall into place. Once certified for production, Moller figures that if at least 500,000 Skycars are produced each year, the cost of the Skycar will fall to about \$80,000, the same as a luxury automobile. Not bad, considering the cost of a new single-engine airplane today runs at about \$200,000.

For Moller, who grew up on a chicken farm in British Columbia, flying has been a lifelong dream. He started building a helicopter from scratch when he was 14 (his father ended up using the tail rotor to help circulate the air in the family's hatchery).

Moller's first machine, the XM-2, was a round, flying saucer-shaped craft using a pair of engines to keep the vehicle hovering a few feet off the ground. Subsequent variants of the same basic design followed, culminating in the M200X, which hovered 70 feet over awestruck reporters in 1989. Not until the Skycar, however, could Moller's inventions reach beyond the category of aviation novelty.

"It's been a longer-term vision for this to become a reality than I originally anticipated," says Moller, before confessing, "I'm not so certain I was being very practical when I started out with this whole thing. For me, it was sort of a personal drive to build it." Does he expect the Skycar to return its investment? "Money for me is not the issue," Moller says. "Never has been...The real issue here is achieving the goal of putting my vision and making it work and vindicating the support of so many other people. The payoff for me is flying safely."

### Fulton FA-3-101 "Airphibian"

In 1950, the Fulton Airphibian became the first roadable aircraft to be certificated by the Civil Aviation Administration. Roadable aircraft had already been built, for example Waldo Waterman's Arrow/Aerobile and William Stout's Skycar, both of which are in the NASM collection--as well as other designs. In 1945, Robert Fulton Jr., developed his Airphibian as a flexible means of business and personal transportation. Fulton flew his own aircraft around the country for government contract work, and quite often he had been

left at airports with no or slow means of transportation into towns. The roadable aircraft would provide air travel to an airport and, with the disengagement of the wings and tail, it would become a car, capable of being driven to the final destination. To acquire the funding for design,



<b>Wingspan</b>	<b>36-ft 5 in</b>
<b>Length</b>	<b>22-ft 2 in</b>
<b>Height</b>	<b>7-ft 9 in</b>
<b>Weight</b>	<b>1,500 lb. Empty</b>

certification, and production, Fulton formed Continental, Inc. at the Danbury Airport in Danbury, Connecticut, and became president of the company.

Fulton designed the Airphibian as a high-wing monoplane, similar in appearance to a Stinson Voyager but with a distinctive four-wheel undercarriage with fairings/fenders. It had a conventional fabric covered steel tube aft fuselage and empennage, straight tapered cantilever wings of metal rib and fabric construction, and a semi-monocoque forward fuselage that is detachable and roadable. The first prototype flew in 1945 and the first production prototype test flight was May 21, 1947. Ground handling was considered excellent in both the roadable and airplane configurations. Normal turning of the steering wheel provided steering. The right rudder provided normal brake operation with the right rudder pedal and the left pedal operating the clutch. An accelerator provides power. The rear wheels of the four-wheel undercarriage were driven by the engine through a torque converter, drive shaft, combined transmission and differential, and universal joints. All four wheels could be braked for ground operations; only the rear two wheels could be braked for taxiing. Normal speeds were 110 mph in the air and 55 mph on the ground.

The propeller, rear fuselage and wings were removed for road operations. Attachment to the aircraft was accomplished by backing the car to the fuselage, leveling the tail and wings, moving three locking levers that inserted and locked large pins into fittings. The spar and tail parts slid into horizontally inclined U-fittings. After locking in place, the two outrigger wheels that support the wings and the retractable tail wheel were cranked up into storage position. The propeller was removed from its bracket on the side of the fuselage, the prop spinner was removed, the propeller screwed on with a built-in wrench, and the spinner replaced again. The engine would not start if everything was not properly connected. In December 1950 the CAA approved the FA-2 with a strut-braced wing and 150 hp electric drive engine. The first production model, FA-2-101, N74153, flew in 1950. It had an Aircooled Motors 6A4150-B-3 modified engine. A cantilever wing model, the FA-3 was certificated by the CAA in June 1952 and the production model, FA3-101, was flown shortly thereafter. This aircraft, N74154, is NASM's aircraft. Robert Fulton received an order for eight production models, to be used by CAA inspectors themselves. The other company officers, however, did not feel that this was enough of a return after the considerable amount of money spent on the certification process. In 1953, they pulled out of the deal, taking the financial backing and several Airphibian with them.

A total of eight were built; N74154 was donated to the Museum in 1960 by Joseph J. Ryan, a former Continental officer. Three other Airphibians remained near Charlottesville, Virginia, for many years; one went to Europe, and one is in New Jersey. The Airphibian represents a technical success as a flying car, however, it was not a marketable design. The prototypes were driven over 200,000 miles and made over 6,000 car/plane conversions. The conversion process, however, was judged to be too complicated and lengthy. Performance in the air was considered sluggish due to the weight penalty of automotive parts, a perennial problem in aerocars. Therefore, the search for a practical, light flying car continues today. Nonetheless, the Airphibian was

(Continued on page 12)

**CLASSIFIED**



**1987 Cameron DP-70 Airship.GBNXG.** 22TT.Complete w/box trailer, 2/10-gal.alum.cyls.,2-cylcc/4-cyl.Konig radial engine 570cc, banner areas 2 sides, all very good/excellent condition, one private owner.\$25,000. Contact 860-678-7921 or delano120@aol.com



**1984 Cameron A-140.N9024B.** 10TT s/n1067,dbl MKIV burners,42x70 Aristo.basket w/cover, 4/10-gal alum.cyls.,6 banner areas, good amt repair fabric,pull test ok 3/2000,flat bad trailer 4x8ft. \$15,500. Contact 860-678-7921 or delano120@aol.com



**1990 Head AX-88, N45088, 325TT,** spiral multi-color staircase design, current annual, new parachute top, Ball instruments, 4-10 gal recertified SS tanks, basket w/covers, box of fabric, inflator fan, 150' drop line, very good cond., \$4500. Trailer \$650 extra. Call 203-262-6493 or e-mail: FLYGONE@AOL.com



**1999 Firefly AX-8.N7053Z,** 45TT.5.basket,dual Mirage,DT-21,turning vent,two master tanks 25,000.



**1997 FireFly AX-9.N3085Z,**140TT.5.5.basket dual T3s,DT-21,6 tanks, \$27,000. Both can be viewed at www.Berkshireballoons.com



**1994 AURORA S-49A N9130C 3 HRS TT,** (NOT A TYPO). 36x42 BASKET BANNER VELCRO, INFLATOR FAN, LOTS OF EXTRAS \$9000. OR BEST OFFER. OWNER NEEDS TO SELL. 203 250-8441 OR EMAIL RZIRPOLO@JAVANET.COM

**Miscellaneous Items**

**30" wooden prop with the hub.** Hub fits a one inch shaft. The prop and hub where used one season an are in very good condition. Contact Steve Goodyear 401-789-4062 or Skydancerballoons@yahoo.com

**French Provincial Maple Double Bed Frame.** Price \$50.00 Call 203-255-1929 or E-Mail cyballoons@aol.com Bill & Pat

**Wanted**

**Collectibles:** If you are looking to sell or just get rid of any LTA memorabilia or unique collectibles please contact Mick @ Blarney007@aol.com.

*(Continued from page 11)*

the first aircar to receive FAA certification and only the Taylor Aerocar, which was inspired by the Airphibian, has received certification as well.

The Museum received Fulton Airphibian FA-3-101, with a Franklin 6A4-165-B3 engine, in 1960. The aircraft was stored at the Silver Hill facility in Suitland, Maryland. The car portion was briefly displayed in the new National Air and Space Museum's General Aviation gallery in 1976.

**Scoop Advertising Rates**

ADVERTISING RATES

FULL PAGE	\$20.00	8" X 10"
1/2 PAGE	\$15.00	5" X 8"
1/4 PAGE	\$10.00	4" X 5"
1/8 PAGE	\$ 5.00	(business card)

CLASSIFIED RATES

Classified ads are \$3.00 per line. Each line is approximately 50 spaces. "N" numbers and Total Time are required for all listings. Classified ads are free to CLAS members in good standing!!!

If you have an article or advertisement for the "Scoop", please submit it to the PO Box Address or send via E-Mail to: [Blarney007@aol.com](mailto:Blarney007@aol.com). by July 8th for the July Newsletter.



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**CONNECTICUT LIGHTER THAN AIR SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society is a club for anyone interested in learning about, participating in and improving the sport of ballooning. Pilots, crew, and enthusiasts alike are welcome and ALL can contribute to the safety, enjoyment and education of the sport. Meetings are scheduled during the months of Jan, Feb, Mar, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov and Dec on the third Thursday of the month at the Plainville Municipal building at 7:30 pm. For more information, contact any of the officers listed inside this newsletter.

CLAS 2001 dues are \$20.00 for new and renewing members.

Newsletter Subscription \$ 10  
Pins \$ 5. (\$3 for members)  
Decals \$ 2 (\$1 for members)  
Landowner pins(members only) \$ 21.90 (15 pins)  
CLAS T-Shirts \$ 12. And up-Various Styles (Add \$3.00 for shipping)

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