



The Scoop

The Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society publishes this newsletter for its members and interested parties. Portions of this newsletter may be reprinted if credit is given to the writer and to CLAS. The opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the organization or members of this organization (but if they are, they'd be exceptionally good ones). For more information contact Penny Christy 12 Blue Grass Rd., Middletown, Ct 06457 Phone (860) 857-8757 e-mail pmchristy@earthlink.net

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February 2005

Freeze Your Buns

On Sunday, January 9th, 2005, the **211th anniversary of the first balloon flight in the U.S.** by Jean Pierre François Blanchard (1753-1809), three CLAS members flew.

It was a beautiful morning, and Mike Bollea, Jim Regan, and Bill Volk all took off from the Aqua Turf in Southington, CT

The target was at Steve Ushchak's farm, just about 2.5 miles to the south, in Cheshire.

No one was able to reach Steve's farm. Mike landed at Cheshire High School. Jim Regan landed across the street at Bartlem Park, and Bill flew on towards Hamden.

Blanchard had flown from Washington Prison Yard in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and landed in Gloucester County, New Jersey carrying the first airmail letter. President George Washington observed this flight.

CLAS Winter Dinner

The annual Winter Dinner was held at The Colonial Tavern, in Oxford, CT on the evening of Saturday, January 29th.

They served 41 dinners of prime rib, swordfish, chicken cordon bleu, or pasta.

The president's gavel was officially passed from Daryl Smith to Penny Christy. A hearty 'thank you' goes out to Daryl for a job well done.

CLAS competition results are listed on page 6.

Thad Burr nominated Lenny Mosher for the Judith Ushchak Crew Award.



2004 Officers

Erwin Dressel nominated Gary Guertin for the Art Laliberte Crew Award.

Ruth Salzberg was remembered.

5 Landowner cards were drawn from a total of 52 cards submitted by our pilots who landed on their property. The landowners will receive a \$50 gift certificate for dinner at their favorite restaurant.

A raffle for door prizes raised \$215.

Many thanks to Tony Roswell, Terri Rollinson, Dave and Polly Lasher for all their hard work and a fantastic Winter Dinner.



2005 Officers

Balloon Life Magazine, "the magazine for hot air ballooning", has been purchased by **CLAS** members, **William Armstrong** and **Michael Murphy**. The January issue has been mailed to subscribers.

2nd Annual CLAS Safety Seminar

will be held on **Saturday, February 26th, 2005** from 8 AM to 6 PM at the Pratt & Whitney Customer Training Center in East Hartford, CT

We have the best speakers and presentations planned for this year's safety seminar:

Paul Stumpf, Carroll Teitsworth, Daryl Smith, Jim O'Brien, Chris Mooney, and Mick Murphy, to name a few!!

Breakfast, Lunch and mid morning and afternoon snacks will be provided.

Contact Penny Christy at 860-857-8757 or pmchristy@earthlink.net

Another New Pilot: Jeff Ratcliffe's Check Ride

By **Santo Galatioto**

Saturday February 5, 2005 in the early afternoon, I received a call from Jeff Ratcliffe, who lives in the northeast corner of the state, asking if I was available to give his private pilot check ride on Sunday. I said I was and the coordination effort began. I was to meet Daryl in the am so he could show me the way to the launch field. Sunday, February 6, 2005 was a balmy 25 degrees with a slight breeze out of the northeast. I met Daryl and Cyndi near their house in Coventry around 6am and we proceeded to Woodstock CT where the test was to be given. Jeff in concert with Bruce Byberg, his instructor, selected a launch site in a bit of a valley to offer protection from the breeze.

There would be two balloons aloft this morning, Jeff on his quest for the Private Pilot certificate and Daryl who was giving a lesson to Brian Clark. Crewing for Daryl were Cyndi, Dave Curry and Alison Johanson, while Jeff had his wife Christine, Bruce and Chris Johanson. Just prior to the check ride, Jeff made a solo hop which allowed him to get a feel for the conditions of the day. He and Daryl flew off side by side into the crisp morning air and we followed. After a nice solo flight, I hopped in with Jeff for the test.

The Practical Test Standards requires that I examine by having the applicant demonstrate their skills on most of the items in the PTS. I am permitted to test a few items through discussion since it is not always practical to test them through demonstration. On this day however, we would test winter flying and one more item by demonstration rather than discussion.

We flew over the beautiful snow covered Northeastern Connecticut countryside as Jeff gave me a tour of the area. His level of confidence was refreshing. We had a very pleasant flight. It became obvious during the flight that the wind had picked up a bit. We made an interim landing during the test that was on the quick side and surmised that the next one would be even quicker. What was once 5 on the surface with 10-15 aloft (16 at 3,000 according to FSS) became 22 at treetops. Jeff didn't even flinch. He selected his intended field for landing and proceeded directly toward it. Thankfully, this area had some very nice large fields. After a beautiful approach and more than 60 feet of dragging through the snow, Connecticut had its newest private pilot. The second permissible discussion item tested through demonstration was obviously **HIGH WIND LANDINGS!**

Congratulations go to Jeff and those that made this possible. Jeff and Christine got their start with Chris Mooney at the URI event in Rhode Island where they began crewing for him. In his more than 10 years of association with ballooning, Jeff has had the benefit of learning from Chris and Larry Fortin as well as many others I'm sure. More recently, Daryl and Bruce shared the remainder of Jeff's training.

Jeff was very fortunate to have such experienced, knowledgeable and dedicated instructors. I heard

rumors that his wife Christine won't be far behind in her quest to obtain the private pilot certificate.

Proposed Amendment to the Constitution of Connecticut Lighter than Air Society:

The position of EDUCATION CHAIRMAN to become a club officer

Purpose: to further emphasize the

importance of continual club education, and prevent dilution and erosion of same.

The Education Chairman shall:

- (a) Form an education committee
- (b) Schedule & plan the Club's Safety Seminar

- (c) Schedule & plan six educational club events per year.
- (d) Present the treasurer with a proposed education budget.

This formal proposal is being submitted by Erwin Dressel.

Giving New Meaning to the Term "Drop in Sometime!"

by Ellen Dressel

While teaching at Sheehan High School I had the opportunity to pinch hit as the school nurse, and when the new nurse was hired, I helped her out a bit. Cyndi's office was just a 'stones throw' from my room and we became good friends and had some good times together.

As most of you know, I retired from teaching in June, and before I left Cyndi asked me to drop in and visit sometime. Well, I haven't made it back to the school yet, so a few weeks ago I received an 'I miss you' card in the mail from her.

Later that same week, Erwin took off from our yard heading NE with a full load of paying passengers. As often happens, especially in the afternoon, the wind didn't cooperate. After blowing off

Timberland golf course and a little park in downtown Berlin, and with the sun getting ready to set, Erwin chose a spot in Kensington that looked like a scrub field.

Much to his surprise, the scrub turned out to be about 10 feet tall! The basket just kept settling down, down, and down!

Fortunately, our son Andy and I were just around the corner. We quickly parked, and Andy jumped the fence and fought through the brush to be 'Johnnie on the spot'. The passengers, not to mention Erwin, were sure glad to see him.

We needed to move the system to a neighboring grassy lawn. This meant unloading the passengers, letting the balloon up on a drop line, and avoiding a tall clothes line pole, a shed, and a giant oak tree. Some 30 kids from the neighborhood were also adding to the excitement.

Once we got this accomplished, I could here someone loudly calling of my name. I could not figure out who or why. Well low and

behold we had 'dropped' into Cyndi's beautiful back lawn.

Her lawn was just big enough so that when the envelope was on the ground the crown-ring was at one edge and the basket was at the other edge.

We had a warm but quick visit while packing up, and promised to get together under more normal circumstances.

This just goes to show that you never know whom you might meet when you 'drop in'. This is the fun part of ballooning that I really enjoy.



Ellen Dressel

Women Take Flight

by Kathy Wadsworth

The New England Air Museum at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, CT held its second event celebrating women in aviation on November 7, 2004 with additional sponsorship provided by Hamilton Standard, the Ninety-Nines and the American Institute of Aeronautics & Astronautics.

The first of such was presented the previous November as one of the Museum's many programs recognizing the 100-year anniversary of powered flight. The day opened up at 10:00 am with stations located through out the Museum hangars manned by women of all walks of the aviation experience who were ready and happy to share their enthusiasm with all the attendees.

In the Education Center each hour there was a presentation offered by women in their specialty which included a film; Above & Beyond, 100 Years of Women in Aviation as well as lectures from a NASA engineer, a captain for USAirways and a former WASP.

Strolling through the spaces the entire day were ladies representing aviation heroines, dressed in the flying costumes of their particular epoch and recounting stories of the early days in the sky. To further the education of the visitors the Museum mounted a photo exhibition showcasing the lady pilots participating and several kiosks scattered around the area offered a touch screen program about Women in Aviation.

There was a steady flow of people coming by the stations

with many Girl Scout troops in the mix.

Souvenirs and printed information was available for the taking from each of the lady participants who were all asked to autograph the programs by the girls visiting the NEAM that day.

The representation of aviation specialties was pretty impressive from Airline & Corporate pilots, Military pilots, both fixed and rotor wing, an Air Force mechanic, to a NASA engineer (last year there was an astronaut!), Skydivers and a Balloonist. Many of these women are also authors, two of which were WASP pilots in days gone by. Women Take Flight 2004 culminated with an interactive panel discussion that included several of the 15+ participants on the program.

All in all it was a fairly complete day celebrating ladies in the Air.

A Tribute to Ruth Salzberg

By Kathy Wadsworth

Mike Bollea said, "she was a kind and giving person" and that is so very, very true.

I remember the first time I saw Ruth. A small woman, she was sitting on the grass with her two beautiful, very little children, Tom

and Ann, in the park at Mamaronek, NY. They were little toe-heads and she had incredibly long, reddish locks way, way down her entire back, hair nearly as long as she was tall. Ruth was very much involved in children's books publication back then, as I recall. We were on hand for the first Long Island Sound hot air balloon crossing, a Balloon Regatta of sorts. It must have been 1974 or 75, I am forgetting. We were all pretty new starting out, although some pilots were well seasoned, like the Fairbanks, who seasoned with Gas.



Ruth Salzberg flying with Kevin Brielmann at Bristol in 1999: Photo by Annette Hockeler-Brielmann

Ruth Salzberg (Cont'd)



High Altitude Flight: Wearing O2 Masks, Ruth and Kevin Brielmann ready for ascent to 17.5K feet. Erwin and Ellen Dressel crew: Photo by Bob Salzberg

There may have been 8 or 10 Balloons, mostly Ravens, a couple of homebuilts, and a Western. After that kind of impromptu event our lives became more and more entwined, for within a few years she & Bob and the kids moved up to West Hartford from Elmsford, NY.

She had gotten her license, from Clayton after training with Bill Hughes (I believe) and soon after her first Balloon, Aladdin, a Cameron AX-6 came along. With the Salzberg's coming to Connecticut the area the certified Balloon pilots population was on the rise, the female number alone doubled on the spot... there were now 2 of us! We were all everywhere important together, Balloon Rally after Balloon Rally or with our small circle of Ballooning compatriots socializing at Ruth & Bob's on Hedwig Ct or our place on Lake Garda periodically through out the years.

Some time in the midst of all this Aladdin got worn out, after a mostly ideal flying career except for one notorious entanglement with Geraldo Rivera's sailboat mast during one of the many Long Island Sound crossings out of Norwalk. That is a story in itself, but she said that Geraldo was very much the gentleman & luckily there was no damage to mention to the vessel but Aladdin was gutted from stem to stern. We sewed the tattered envelope back together to fly another day. Ruth purchased her 2nd Cameron, Archangel, from us and I was in the basket with her when the new envelope got stabbed by a dead branch hidden in a fluffy looking Simsbury

pine tree shortly after delivery. A sad morning after a beautiful flight, but Ruth was philosophical later saying that she wouldn't have to be worrying about the first tear anymore.

Connecticut's balloon community was growing lots and flying more. At times we had to deal with the local authorities for various "minor infractions" generated by all this added activity that sometimes came to the attention of the Big Office in Windsor Locks. It was time to get ourselves organized so that we could deal with these issues on a more even playing field along with the rest of general aviation. The Balloon as a bona fide aircraft and Ballooning in general needed to be better understood and better received by the non-flying public, the rest of GA and the FAA...and more importantly better represented by ourselves, the Balloonists.

So a bunch of us got together and the Connecticut Lighter than Air Society was born over 15 years ago. Ruth and I were really pretty hot on the whole education and safety mandate that we felt the Club had adopted so for many, many years she and I were that Committee. Our team put together lots of programs to get the points across, from Landowner Relations... we made our debut as a cow, which Ruth constructed, to Clyde's farmer and Aaron Borkowski's errant Balloon pilot in the only CLAS theatrical production thus far, to a power-point communications workshop presentation for crew and landowner issues based on the best seller of the time, Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus.

Lots of time was spent at Ruth & Bob's new house in Farmington....thank God she was now even closer... working on these programs for the Club, constructing the Gorgeous collaborative piece that the Connecticut Lighter than Air Society donated to the Wadsworth Atheneum Festival of Trees of years ago. She & Bob always won the prize for the best costumes for the annual Black Tie Summer Solstice Celebration because they always were in the true spirit of it, always made an effort.

While doing all this and tons more for the Ballooning Community, which she dearly loved and supported, Ruth was still looking after her family, holding job after job at Aetna, taking care of her home and going through her first battle with cancer. Those two little kids, Tom and Ann, grew up, got married and became parents themselves. Being a Grandma was just the most wonderful thing to happen to her, next to being a Mom.

When she and Bob decided to head off to Williamsburg for the next phase of their life,.... Golf, it was a great loss to us but a well-deserved break for her.

Ruth Salzberg (Cont'd)

Her 3rd Balloon went to another home in Sandy Hook with Tony Rozwell. It was a great relief for her to know its new owner and be able to imagine Archangel II flying over the Connecticut skies with Balloon friends she knew well and cared about so much.

There are lots and lots more things to say about Ruth and what she meant to us.

Many in the tri-State Balloon community have their own recollections, their own happy thoughts about Ruth. Maybe over this next year we can all include an anecdote about Ruth in our newsletter each month as a tribute to her and her great contribution to Ballooning in the Northeast. We sure do appreciate that Bob Salzberg shared his wife with us over the 25 or so years that she was so deeply connected to Balloons and the people who flew them.



After the High Altitude Flight, Ruth in the balloon basket.
Photo by Kevin Brielmann



Ruth was an expert crew for Kevin on one of the last flights of "Candlelight" Photo by Kevin Brielmann



Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society - 2005 CLAS Officers

President:	Penny Christy	860-857-8757	pmchristy@earthlink.net
Vice President:	Charlie Perreault	860-536-7393	bythefireplace@earthlink.net
Secretary:	Mark Sand	860-426-0814	mdsand@snet.net
Treasurer:	Andrew Dressel	203-272-6116	andrewdressel@hotmail.com

CLAS Competition News - Thanks to Erwin Dressel and Mike Bollea for help coordinating these competitions in 2004.

2004 CLAS Final Standings

- 8th place with 3 pts: Amy Goodyear, Kevin Brielmann, Jim Regan, and Bill Vold
- 7th place with 4 pts: Santo Galatioto and Steve Goodyear
- 6th place with 5 pts: Jim O'Brian
- 5th place with 6 pts: Charlie Perrault
- 4th place with 7 pts: Mark Sand and Erwin Dressel
- 3rd place with 10 pts: Cindy Smith
- 2nd place with 15 pts: Penny Christy
- 1st place with 24 pts: Mike Bollea

CLAS Long Jump

- 3rd place with 23.14 miles: Jim O'Brian and Santo Galatioto
- 2nd place with 24.04 miles: Mike Bolea
- 1st place with 55.34 miles: Erwin Dressel from Cheshire to Woodstock, CT

The FireFly Tribune

November / December 2004

Member of FireFly Publishing

Incredible Deals Spark Interest in Ballooning!

This just in. In a surprise move, FireFly managers have decided to slash prices for the next two months. Sales Manager Burton Freebish was contacted by our reporters for his reaction to this startling new development and all he could say was, "I'm completely flummoxed!". We've reproduced the Price List below so you can see why. Flummoxed Freebish stated, unequivocally, that the balloon systems did include the 6 year 1000 hour envelope fabric warranty and the 10 year burner warranty. Keep tuned to the FireFly Tribune for further developments.

Complete System- Ready to Fly

	System	Envelope only
FireFly 6B	\$17,500	\$11,500
FireFly 7B	\$18,600	\$12,500
FireFly 7	\$22,500	\$14,600
FireFly 8B	\$24,500	\$15,300
FireFly 8	\$29,750	\$18,500
FireFly 9B	\$31,500	\$19,500
FireFly 9	\$34,500	\$21,000
FireFly 10	\$36,400	\$23,800
FireFly 11B	\$38,700	\$25,000
FireFly 11	\$39,900	\$25,900



It's a FireFly 45°
Check for other styles on the following page.

Flytec Promo,

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Want a new Flytec but wondering what to do with your old instruments? Trade them in for a new Flytec 3040 before the end of the year for just \$1000!

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You will have the best new technology for sensing temperature, measuring altitude, rate of climb, barometric pressure - and much more! No more tapping on the glass, no more broken knobs, no more broken wires. Send the old junk to us and we will send you a shiny new Flytec 3040 as your holiday present to yourself. We will even gift wrap it for you!



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Minutes of the CLAS Meeting January 20, 2005

CLAS President, Penny Christy, called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM at the Plainville, CT Municipal Building.

Members in attendance were: Charlie Perreault (VP), Santo Galatioto, Lisa Huck, Kevin Brielmann, Andy Dressel (Treas.), Garry Guertin, Ellen Dressel, Erwin Dressel, Mike Bollea, Pauline Baker, Matt Dutkiewicz, Tony Roswell, Jack Perry, Cindy Smith, Daryl Smith, Penny Christy, and Mark Sand (Sec'y).

The minutes for the December 16, 2004 meeting were approved as written. A budget meeting for 2005 will be set up before the Winter

Dinner. The intention is to leave the annual dues at \$20.00.

Treasurer's Report: Checking account: \$4050.00. CDs: \$5596.00

Committee Reports:

A Committee sheet for 2005 was circulated among the members for them to sign up for the activities they will support this year.

Sunshine: A card will be sent to Dan King. We will make a \$100.00 donation to the Mattaponi Healing Eagle Health Clinic in Ruth Salzberg's name. The members signed a picture of Tony's balloon from last year's

CLAS Calendar. This used to be Ruth's balloon. The picture will be forwarded to Ruth's family.

Products: Lisa reported no sales last month. Gary Guertin will help Lisa out on the Products Committee. See Gary for embroidered products. We can get CLAS embroidered tote bags from Gary's contact for \$20 each (24 order minimum). We will look into procuring the bags at a less expensive price and having them embroidered via Gary.

Lisa and Mark will get quotes for the production of CLAS tee shirts featuring members' balloons. They will be similar to shirts we had produced in the past.

Minutes of the CLAS Meeting January 20, 2005 (Cont'd)

Membership: Letters will be sent out to all new and renewing members. Andy will handle membership affairs, since as treasurer he has ready access to all membership records. There are 18 paid members for 2005. There were 80 paid members for 2004.

Flight Manual: There has been no new compilation done on the flight manual. The maps are available on the CLAS web site. Matt reported that the Hinze Farm, a former Red Zone, is now a Green Zone. The state has acquired the property. Kevin stated that flights over the Cheshire Correctional Facility should be at a minimum altitude of 500 ft AGL and should be in an unmistakable climb as the facility is crossed. This action will serve to assure facility personnel that the pilot is not contemplating landing at or near the jail.

Education: We need 6 Educational Meetings/year according to the bylaws. The Safety Seminar will serve as an Educational Meeting.

Competition: The 2004 results have been tallied. The winners will be announced at the Winter Dinner. With Erwin's departure from the Competition Committee, Mike needs help for 2005. Contact Mike if you want to help.

BFA/FAA Liaison: The FAA has approved the new Light Sport Aircraft Category. They are giving seminars to explain the provisions of the category. Subscribe to their email announcements at www.faasafety.gov.

The TSA is supposed to provide on-line training to all CFI's. To date, the training is not available. Commercial balloonists fall into a gray area, since they are not CFI's but can provide instruction. It was probably not the TSA's intent to include balloons as potential terrorist threats, but again, we may be included because we are not specifically excluded.

Winter Dinner: Tony needs a final count by this coming weekend. So far, 26 people have registered. Tony needs nominations for the crew awards and donations for door prizes. The dinner starts at 7 PM on Jan. 29, at the Oxford Tavern.

Audit Committee: The annual financial audit will be held this coming week.

Nominating Committee: No report.

Scoop: Andy will aid Penny in editing the Scoop.

Calendar: Jack reported that all 200 calendars have been sold. When everyone pays up, we should clear approximately \$200.

Old Business: Erwin will forward a proposal for publication in the Scoop that would make the Education Chairman a CLAS Officer. After publication, the members will vote on the proposal, which would entail a change to the bylaws.

New Business: Members who have signed up to bring refreshments to the meetings are:

Jan: Penny/Mike
Feb: Andy Dressel
Mar: Gary Guertin
Apr: Ellen Dressel
May: Mike Bollea
Jun: Terri Rollinson/
Tony Roswell
Jul: Charlie Perreault
Aug: Mark Sand
Sep: Cindy Smith
Oct: Mike Bollea
Nov: Matt Dutkiewicz
Dec: Everyone
Jan: Jack (changed from DEC, when we all bring goodies)

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM.

The next meeting will be held on Feb. 17, 2005, at the Plainville, CT Municipal Building.

Respectfully submitted,
Mark Sand
CLAS Secretary

Remember, all club members are invited to submit articles and pictures for inclusion in the Scoop. After all, it is your news letter.

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 monthly on the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Plainville Municipal Building at 7:30 PM. For more information, contact any of the officers listed in this newsletter.

CLAS DUES \$20 include membership privileges and newsletter.

Extra voting family member add \$5

Newsletter Subscription Only \$15

Decals \$2 (\$1 members)

CLAS Member Pins \$5 (\$3 members)

Landowner Pins \$4 (\$3 members – limited quantity)

NAME _____

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(Default will be electronically unless notified otherwise.)

CLAS Membership Info:

Single (\$20) ___ Family (\$20) ___ Extra Vote (\$5) Name: _____ Newsletter Only (\$15) ___

New ___ Renewing ___

Crew ___ Student Pilot ___ Private Pilot ___ Commercial Pilot ___ N# _____

BFA # _____ BFA CAAP Level _____ BFA PAAP Level _____

FAA Wings Level Completed _____

Pilot Certificate # _____ Type(s) of Certificate(s) _____

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2nd Annual CLAS Safety Seminar

1-day Saturday,

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