



# THE SCOOP

Next CLAS Meeting: Thursday, November 18, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.  
Plainville Municipal Building, Plainville, CT

## Christmas Flight in Memory of Mike "Santa" Bollea

Saturday, December 18th and/or Sunday, December 19th, 7:00 AM

Aqua Turf Club on Mulberry St., Southington, CT

Pilots & crew wear Xmas garb and bring along candy canes in both the balloon & chase vehicles to pass out along the way. I'll also throw together a competitive flight task that will be holiday themed too just to make it interesting. Let me know if you'll be joining us and I'll keep you posted with updates as the dates get closer.

Hope to see you there!

Jim Regan

## CLAS Photo Contest Results

A big thank you to all the 2010 CLAS members for their photo entries. Every year the photos entered into the contest truly get better and better. This year was no exception. All of the 60 photos entered were worthy of winning but the membership did a great job of completing the hard task of picking only 12 photos out of the 60 entered. Thank you again to all who get out there, take these pictures and take the time to submit them.

Congratulations to the winners of the 2010 CLAS Photo contest.

Place	Name	Description
1st place	Charlie Perreault	Winter balloons
2nd place	Libby Richardson	Robert over reservoir
3rd place	Carol Silva	"Cool" Balloon
4th place	Mark Sand	Jan. Aqua Turf
5th place	Ellen Dressel	Stoweflake 6 balloons inflating
6th place	Charlie Perreault	Bill C. in front of Rick's balloon at Plainville
7th place	Paul Stumpf	Stoweflake; aerial view of 20 Balloons on the launch field
8th place	Charlie Perreault	Burner View
9th place	Paul Stumpf	Balloon over field, Portageville, NY
10th place	Mark Sand	Balloon with Light House
11th place	Carol Silva	URI Glow 2010
12th place	Paul Stumpf	Glens Falls, NY 2 Balloons in flight

Prizes for 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winners will be awarded as follows.

Charlie Perreault	1st place	(2) Tickets to the 2011 CLAS Winter Dinner
Libby Richardson	2nd place	(1) Ticket to the 2011 CLAS Safety Seminar
Carol Silva	3rd place	(1) 2011 CLAS Membership

Connecticut Lighter Than Air Society, PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053

# Everything you ever wanted to know about ballooning—all in one place!



Join us for the BFA's  
50th Anniversary Convention!  
April 7-10, 2011  
Des Moines, IA

**Keynote speaker: Joe Kittinger**

*Best known for his record-setting parachute jump from a high-altitude balloon at over 102,000 feet, Kittinger was also first to cross the Atlantic Ocean solo by balloon.*

Whether you're interested in getting the competitive edge, running a successful ride business, exploring the history of ballooning or simply attending a top-notch safety seminar, this convention is for you. You'll have the opportunity to hear from some of the best, most experienced balloonists and have some fun, too!

**bfa50.com**

## **From The Scoop Editor, Libby Richardson**

**Annual Mooney Holiday Party will be Saturday, December 11th at 5 pm.** Be there or be square!

A reminder from **Mark Schilling** that the weather site [www.claswx.com](http://www.claswx.com) is still live and available to club members. It was designed and tailored specifically for CLAS members as part of his CLAS Safety Seminar presentation in 2009.

**Robert Zirpolo** wrote in about the glass bottom balloon in last month's Scoop. He said that the first glass bottomed balloon basket was actually built by Paul Stumpf in the early 1980's and was featured on the cover of Balloon Life magazine. That's for the info Robert!

This October my mom and I went to **Baton Rouge, LA** for a wedding and guess what happened--we ran into two hot air balloons being launched from a field adjacent to my hotel! Of course, we couldn't stay away, so after returning to my hotel to put on sneakers and grab my camera, I went over and introduced myself and my mom and we were quickly welcomed to join the crew. The balloons were piloted by Leslie Jeansonne and John Wood, both pilots for over 20 years each who when flying, usually fly their balloons together. They participate in the Baton Rouge Balloon Festival each year. Leslie is particularly interested in flying in the Canada balloon festival, so perhaps you'll bump into her in the coming years. What a fun time we had, and thanks to both of you for your Southern hospitality!



*Leslie's balloon above a Gonzales, LA neighborhood  
Photos by Libby Richardson*



*John's balloon, at left, Leslie's on right, just after takeoff.*

**Thanks to for your contributions to The Scoop this month: Garry Guertin, Ellen and Erwin Dressel, Jim Regan, Mark Schilling, Penny Christy, Chris Mooney, and Robert Zirpolo.**

### Publishing Information

*The Scoop* is published on a monthly basis prior to the club's monthly meeting on the third Thursday of each month. Submissions for *The Scoop* are preferred by email to Editor Libby Richardson at [libby\\_rich@yahoo.com](mailto:libby_rich@yahoo.com). Photos, articles, and ideas are always welcome. Information may be mailed to 380 Hitchcock Road #258, Waterbury, CT 06705 or can be brought to any CLAS meeting. All materials should be to the Editor at least two weeks prior to the club meeting for inclusion.

*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.*

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## **BFA Crew Membership Update**

The BFA board met for a face to face meeting in Albuquerque Sept 30-Oct 1. The board has been working to create a new category geared toward crew members.

This new category will be a non-voting membership type and will cost \$30.00 per year. This would be from Jan 1- Dec 31 per year. You can sign up now and begin receiving the benefits of membership come Jan 1. Benefits of a crew membership will be:

Crew T-Shirt with the BFA logo on the front and design on the back

- Electronic newsletter geared toward crewing that will be published 4 times a year
- Electronic Calendar that will list events across the country
- Crew Member Database that pilots from across the country can access
- 1 issue of Ballooning Magazine electronically
- With the holidays just around the corner why not get a membership for those valuable crew members. Call the BFA office to sign up

## **Online Safety Seminar**

The 2010 online safety seminar was a huge success and the BFA would like to offer once again the 2011 online safety seminar. This will be held Feb 5th 2011. Payment can be made by calling the BFA office and soon there will be an option to pay online. Cost for the seminar is \$25.00 if paid and registered by Dec 1, 2010. After Dec 1, \$35.00 and for non BFA members \$125.00.

Please use the form below to register for the seminar. You will receive further instructions within 24 hours of registration. Please visit [http://www.bfa.net/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=756:2011-online-safety-seminar-registration&catid=92:bfa-news&Itemid=88889169](http://www.bfa.net/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=756:2011-online-safety-seminar-registration&catid=92:bfa-news&Itemid=88889169) to register.

## **In The News**

### **2,000 Feet Above Ground, Hot Air Balloon and Paraglider Collide**

COTTONWOOD, Ariz. - Caught on film -- a paraglider flies into a hot air balloon hovering over central Arizona, sending both plummeting to the ground. Remarkably, no one was killed during the weekend's accident in Cottonwood, Ariz. But the paraglider and the three people inside the balloon were hurt.

Jamie Biddulph-Seman is the daughter of one of the victims. Her father, John Biddulph, is at John C. Lincoln Hospital. Saturday, he had just finished another dose of chemotherapy and was allowed to go on the hot air balloon ride to get away from the hospital.

2,000 feet in the air, a paraglider careened into the balloon, ripping it. Biddulph and two others were in the hot air balloon basket and everyone tumbled to the ground together. Now, Biddulph-Seman is sharing her dad's story.

To read more, visit <http://www.myfoxphoenix.com/dpp/news/local/hot-air-balloon-collision-10-18-2010>

## Remembering the Free Life Balloon

By Genie Chipps Henderson

(September 23, 2010) Sept. 20, 1970, was a perfect day. Sunny, deep blue skies, an easterly breeze. Hundreds of people were gathered in a field in Springs to witness the launch of a seven-story-tall hot air balloon about to embark on a flight across the Atlantic Ocean. If it succeeded it would be the first such attempt to do so. The name of the balloon was the Free Life.

The balloonists were perfectly cast in their roles — young, attractive, and bursting with anticipation for their great adventure. For the English pilot, Malcolm Brighton, this would be his 100th ascent. The navigator, Rod Anderson, had originally conceived of the idea and brought it to fruition over four years of planning. His wife, Pamela Brown, would be the chronicler and on-board photographer. Her family had financed the better part of the venture.

Rod and Pam came to East Hampton from New York looking for a launch site in the early spring. Via talks with townspeople and Town Hall they met George Sid Miller of Springs, who granted them permission to use his field. Soon the Springs community embraced the personable couple and their fantastic idea as their own.

Housing, food, volunteer brawn, and mechanical expertise were offered gratis. All summer long the community buzzed with nothing else but the Free Life.

By September, the details (there were many), the delays (quite a few) were all somehow surmounted and the launch date was set for Sunday morning at dawn. People came from all over the East End to watch the hours of inflation, in itself a spectacular sight. A large yellow gondola kitted out with food, ballast, radio and navigational equipment, emergency beacons, and a raft was attached.

All that was needed now was a favorable wind. Dawn came. The wind was wrong. The crowd waited. Frisbees and picnics came out. The local press and national TV networks were there in force, adding to the excitement. At about noon the wind shifted to the east, champagne was uncorked, American and British flags were unfurled in the rigging, and the three balloonists climbed into the gondola.

The Springs volunteers, who had never done anything like this before, were instructed to lean heavily on the gondola's rim while others released the tethers. At last came Brighton's shout to "Let go!" The giant orange-and-white Free Life soared up into the spotless blue sky over Accabonac Harbor. A perfect launch.

Laughing, cheering, and crying, we all watched the sight in awe. Thirty hours later, the Free Life went down in a storm somewhere off the coast of Newfoundland. After radioing an SOS, Brighton



*Jack Graves Photos*

*Exuberant children chased after the Free Life balloon as it lifted off from George Sid Miller's field. Rod Anderson, with cigar, Malcolm Brighton, and Pamela Brown died when the balloon crashed into the Atlantic a little more than a day later.*

signed off to prepare for landing on water. It was 7 p.m. over a turbulent sea. Nothing was ever heard from the balloon again — the three adventurers were lost without a trace.

In 1971 friends and families gathered at Ashawagh Hall to plant a tree and mount a plaque. In 1972 a film premiered at Guild Hall documenting the launch. There were interviews with Clarence and Dorothy Barnes of Barnes Store, who had supplied all the food; Jean Stafford, who lived directly across from the field; the electricians, carpenters, and mechanics who lent a hand, the volunteer firemen who had helped at liftoff, even Willem de Kooning, who had bicycled over on many occasions.

In 1995 Anthony Smith, a noted English science and travel writer, and mentor to Malcolm Brighton, himself a balloonist, published “The Free Life,” weaving that story around other improbable and daring exploits. In 1998 the teachers at the Springs School mounted a 10-foot-tall replica of the balloon as their entry in the town’s 350th anniversary parade.

Years later I stumbled quite by accident on a passage in Peter Matthiessen’s 1976 book “The Snow Leopard,” finding it perhaps the most poignant reminiscence of all. He wrote:

“Liberation, freedom — unaccountably I think about a girl I talked to once in a marine-supply store where she was buying rope, just a few years ago. The next day, with her young husband and a British companion, she rose in a balloon from the Long Island farmland, and headed eastward, bound for England over the Atlantic Ocean. None of the three was ever seen again. At this moment I feel moved, not by the disappearance of that girl (which was no tragedy, only a brave essay that was lost) but by the name of their great adventure — the Free Life Balloon.”

Forty years later, I think of “that girl,” who was my closest childhood friend, I think of that heady summer in Springs as we prepared for the flight, not knowing then that Springs would eventually become my home — but most of all, this year and every year, I remember my friends and their great adventure — the Free Life balloon.

## **Daredevil jumps from hot air balloon wearing rocket wing, flies loops**

I can trace my lust for a personal jet pack back to a single specific event from my youth. The episode of *Fall Guy* where Lee Majors used a jet pack really got my attention. Since I saw that show, I have wanted one and I honestly expected by the time I was this old, we would all have them.



A dude named Yves Rossy has made his jet pack dreams come true, but it’s not like most of the jet packs we see. The Jet Man has a quartet of nozzles fastened to a wing strapped to his back. He flies around hands in front Superman style. You can see how bad-ass his suit is in the video below.

The dude jumped from a hot air balloon at 7,874 feet recently in Switzerland over Lake Geneva. After firing up his jet engines, he proceeded to do a couple loops marking the first time he has done aerobatics. After he runs out of fuel he pulls a parachute and floats down. If the folks at the TV studios ever get wise and bring *Fall Guy* back, they should use this thing in an episode.

For video of this, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLdV1obgPj8>

## **Why you should love, Camille du Gast**

By Kate Walker

There are ground-breaking women, and then there's Camille du Gast.

Entirely in a class of her own, France's Camille du Gast was the first woman to compete seriously in motorsport, the first woman to make a parachute jump, an athlete in a range of disciplines, and an accomplished concert pianist.

Born in 1870, du Gast embodied the spirit of the pioneering Victorian adventurer. She claimed the parachute jump record in 1895, when French balloon crews were testing early versions. Du Gast managed to convince Senor Capazza to let her try one out, and she jumped from his hot air balloon at an elevation of 2,000 feet.

In 1901, Camille du Gast entered herself in the Paris-Berlin race. As the only woman competitor, and piloting an under-powered car, race organisers decreed that du Gast would start last. She finished the race 33rd out of more than 100, determined to better the result next time. By the time of the infamous 1903 Paris-Bordeaux race, du Gast was behind the wheel of the ultra-competitive De Deitrich.

In the world of motorsport, Camille du Gast is probably best known for her actions in the 1903 race, which was cut short by the French government following a number of accidents that killed and injured spectators and racers alike. One of those injured was De Deitrich driver Phil Stead, who was pinned under his car when it rolled into a ditch. Du Gast passed the injured Stead, and stopped to offer assistance. Her racing mechanic was able to move the car enough for Du Gast to nurse the injured man until an ambulance arrived on the scene. According to the doctors who later treated Stead, Du Gast's first aid probably saved his life.

Once Stead was in the doctors' care, Du Gast rejoined the race. But her impressive efforts would bear no fruit, and when she arrived in Bordeaux, the French racer was told that the race had been cancelled by the government.

In the aftermath of the Paris-Bordeaux race, the last European capital-to-capital road race, the Benz factory team offered Camille du Gast a race seat on the strength of her performance. But in 1904 the French government barred women from competing in motorsport, and the offer came to nothing.

With motorsport closed to her, du Gast turned her hand to motorboat racing. In her first year of competition, Camille du Gast was caught up in a violent storm during the 1905 Alger-Toulon race. Six of the seven boats were put out of action by the storm, and du Gast was declared the winner as the competitor who had come closest to finishing.

But Camille du Gast was more than just a fierce competitor. She was also a woman who gave a lot of time to charity. In addition to serving as president for the French Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, du Gast helped provide health care to disadvantaged women and children, campaigned against bull-fighting, and worked with orphans and the poor until her death in 1942, undeterred from her good works by the German occupation of Paris.

## Hot Air Balloon Safety Awareness Session Held

By Garry Guertin

A Hot Air Balloon awareness session with the Southington Fire Department and CLAS members was successfully completed on Sunday, October 24, 2010. Charlie Perrault and Garry Guertin brought their balloons to the session to be used as visual aids. Additional CLAS members that participated were Ellen & Erwin Dressel and Penny Christy.

Charlie and Garry set up their baskets and burners to help demonstrate how they function. It was good to have more than one configuration of burner and basket to help let the firefighters know that there are various configurations that they may encounter. Awareness discussions with the firefighters concentrated on how to better prepare them for what to expect if or when they get a call regarding a hot air balloon. A single handout sheet (see next page) was provided as reference information for the firefighters.

At the end of the one hour session, it was very clear that the Safety Awareness Session with the Southington Fire Department was a success. We received very positive feed-back from the firefighters and they appreciated that they could see the equipment. As a result of the session, a good relationship is being built between CLAS and the Southington Fire Department. The firefighters suggested having another session in the spring and also suggested that they come and observe/help with a full setup and launch. A suggestion was made that they could come to a CLAS fly-out from the Aqua Turf and those firefighters that participate could be spread out among several balloons to help crew. We are also seeking to have additional awareness sessions with other fire departments.



*Photos by Ellen Dressel*



# CLAS & Southington Fire Department



## **On-Board Fuel Properties:**

<u>Fuel Type</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Pressure</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Liquid Propane (C <sub>3</sub> H <sub>8</sub> )	20 – 45 gal.	75 -150 psi	4.2 lb/gal.

- Liquid state 44<sup>0</sup>F (boils at -44<sup>0</sup>F)
- Atomic Weight is nearly double the typical air mixture which causes propane gas to pool on the ground
- Ignition Temperature: 900 <sup>0</sup>F -1,100 <sup>0</sup>F
- Fuel Tank Properties:
  - Steel, Aluminum or Titanium
  - Fuel Tank Pressure valves set to 375 psi (165<sup>0</sup>F)

- Hazards:**
- Inhalation – dizziness, headache, & nausea
  - Asphyxiation
  - Fire
  - Explosion
  - Burns
  - Freezing

## **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**

- Contact protection – Gloves

## **Contact the Pilot when arriving on the scene**

- Ask to speak with the pilot, as anyone else may not be experienced enough to provide accurate information of the landing status.

## **CLAS Contact Information:**

CLAS Secretary: Garry Guertin 860-919-4175

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 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month at the Plainville Police Department, 19 Neal Court, Plainville, 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 CLAS Member Pins \$5 (\$3 members)

Decals \$2 (\$1 members) Landowner Pins \$4 (\$3 members – limited quantity)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
TELEPHONE (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_  
(Default will be electronic newsletter 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) \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to CLAS and mail to: CLAS, PO Box 53, Southbury, CT 06488-0053**



**The Scoop/CLAS**  
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[www.lighterthanair.org](http://www.lighterthanair.org)

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