



AeroStats

**The Monthly Newsletter of the
Willamette Aerostat Society**

Volume 22, Number 10

October 2020

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Zoom Meetings Keep Us In Touch!



Our next virtual meeting is set for

Wednesday, October 14, 2020 at 7:00 PM

All you need to join the meeting is a computer, pad, or phone plus the Zoom app to participate. Pasha Lubber will be hosting the meeting again. A link will be sent to all current WAS members.

A reminder will go out again closer to the meeting. To get on Zoom just click on that link provided in the email.

We are all looking forward to checking in with you on Wednesday!

Note from the Editor

First and foremost, I want to thank the WAS membership for supporting this newsletter by allowing me to continue to use the page layout program I know inside and out. It makes putting together this newsletter so much faster. I did not have to reinvent all the standard features such as the membership application page. Little things like that take a long time to create from scratch. Besides, I think I can produce a better newsletter with better software.

I also want to thank Jeanne Anson, Cory Miller and Mandy Johnson for contributing to this issue. Jeanne sent in an article and photos for the Vernal, Utah rally. Cory sent me over 300 photos from the non-rally weekend in Prosser. It was hard to choose which ones to use. Lastly, Mandy Johnson helped me fill in all the blanks for the article about the Prosser fly out from their property. I had the added bonus of being able to catch up with her. It was a win-win moment.

Oh, and finally you will notice I deleted the Happenings page, since there aren't any rallies for the rest of the year. As soon as something is scheduled you will know it!

2020 WAS Officers

<p>President: Shari Gale</p> <p>Vice President: Marianne LeDoux</p> <p>Secretary/Treasurer: Dale Justice</p> <p>Email: ExecComm@wasballoon.info</p>	<p>Others:</p> <p>Newsletter Editor: Shari Gale</p> <p>Activities Director: Pasha Lubber</p> <p>WAS website: http://www.wasballoon.info</p>
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Willamette Aerostat Society Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Willamette Aerostat Society General Meeting on ZOOM Wednesday, September 16, 2020

Present:

Shari Gale, President & Newsletter Editor
Marianne LeDoux, Vice President
Dale Justice, Secretary/Treasurer
Pasha Luber, Activities Director
and approximately 15 additional members.

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:04 p. m. by Shari using Zoom on the internet.

2. Moved by Carmen Blakely, seconded by Marilyn Barnhart, to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2020 meeting as printed in the September, 2020 Aerostats newsletter. Motion passed.

3. Treasurer's report — from Dale, as of September 16, 2020.

2020 Members	52 (31 memberships paid)
Checking	\$ 999.85
Savings	105.00
Cash	7.00
Total	<u>\$1,111.85</u>

4. Correspondence – None

5. News – A balloon accident in Hungary was reported recently.

6. Events – An unannounced fly out was held in Albany on the last weekend of August. 16 balloons attended.

Several balloons flew from Jefferson on Labor Day.

Most of the events for the rest of this season have been canceled due to the pandemic, including Albuquerque.

7. Discussions –

1. The Facebook WAS page needs a notice about limits and rules for content.

2. Morgan Everett wants videos from previous Prosser rally participants, expressing our feelings about missing it this year.

3. Next month there will be a discussion regarding the annual Christmas party.

8. Old business –

1. Dale did talk to Chuck Coussens about getting on line memberships available. She is hoping to work on that later this fall.

2. Newsletter—Shari needs a way to continue composing the newsletter. The software she uses is currently only available on a rental basis. Moved by Marianne and seconded by Carmen for WAS to pay for the subscription to continue using the current software. Motion passed.

9. New business – None

10. The next meeting will be using Zoom on **Wednesday, October 14, at 7 p.m.** More information will be in the newsletter.

11. Shari adjourned the meeting at 7:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale T. Justice

/signed/dtj/9-19-2020

Jefferson Lift Off 2020 Style

By Shari Gale

After the very successful Albany Fly Out people were asking Marianne LeDoux if there was going to be a similar event in Jefferson. Traditionally, local balloon pilots and crew gather in Jefferson on Labor Day. People were clamoring for another chance to fly together since so many rallies have been canceled this year.

Luckily, Marianne was able to put it together very quickly. She set up a launch site at the middle school athletic fields. She has a key to the gate, so that makes a lot less hassle. We were told to be there by 6:30 AM. Tim and I got there ten minutes early and found the field was already full. In fact, we ended up being the last balloon to arrive. Luckily, there was room to squeeze in beside Andrea McEvoy and the west side fence.

In all, nine balloons flew from the school Labor Day morning. Tim and I chose to take up Barbara Duvall who has attended more than one balloon rally in years past which were all weathered out. In fact, I'm not sure she had ever seen a balloon

out of a trailer before that morning. She was thrilled to watch all the balloons inflating, but was over the moon when we offered her a ride. She took some great photos, which are featured in this newsletter. Just about everyone took off towards the southwest and crossed I-5. Not Marianne. She decided to drop in low over the North Santiam River and shoot the rapids. To those of us giving chase, she seemed to just disappear. The trees along the river hid Sew Happy II quite well. Tim landed in a huge harvested field just south of Millersburg. Eric Reid in Just in Kace was already there, and his crew had figured out how to get into the field. In fact, one of Eric's crew members was walking Knight-N-Gale over to an area closer to the edge of the field. We appreciated his help!

Several of the pilots and crew came back to the park next to the school for a bit of socializing after the flight. It was so good to feel "normal" again. Our flying season is coming to its end, but maybe we can get together

once more— if Mother Nature with her smoky skies as well as wind/rain will give us a break. We can all hope for flyable weather in the next few weeks!



Photos on this page by Barbara Duvall.

Left: Andrea McEvoy and Greg Miller prepare to take off. Center: Chris Whitfield lowers his balloon into the North Santiam River. Above (top): Marianne LeDoux comes out from behind the trees to find a wide open field ready for a balloon touch down. Above (lower): Eric Reid chose a nice landing spot outside of Millersburg.

Jefferson Lift Off Photos by Shari Gale



Clear blue skies greeted the balloonists in Jefferson.



This was Barbara Duvall's first time aloft in a balloon.



Left: Carmen Blakely looked like she was trying to touch the moon.

Right: There was a "new" balloon in town. You will read more about this student pilot in next month's newsletter.



Left: Tim Gale and Carrie Thacker enjoyed flying together, especially since it has rarely happened this year.

Right: One of Eric Reid's crew members walked Knight-N-Gale to a better spot in the field. Eventually, Tim's own crew member, Kim Boyle, took over the job.

*It is time to get your brain in gear!
It is time for AoY and CMoY nominations*

Please make a nomination for the WAS Aeronaut of the Year and Crew Member of the Year for 2020. The award will be presented at the WAS Christmas Party or virtually if the party can't be held.

With so few ballooning events happening this year you will need to consider who has worked for the good the of ballooning community in the past as well as during this difficult time. It may be that no one comes to mind for 2020. That's OK. This has been/is a weird year. We can always skip these awards this year.

If you have a nomination please send it by e-mail to ExecComm@wasballoon.info



Job Well Done

A shout out needs to go to two of our younger Oregon ballooning community members. During the recent fire storm at the beginning of September Janna and Grace Ingram raced *towards the wild fires* in the Santiam Canyon.

In the past both Janna and Grace have volunteered for spring trail rides to bring over a hundred horses from Butte Creek Ranch to Camp Baldwin, a Boy Scout camp. Those same horses were now suddenly in danger as high winds drove the fire towards the ranch.

Janna and Grace joined a lot of fellow volunteers who took their own horse trailers to Scotts Mill, filled them with as many horses as they could and drove down to the Linn County Fairgrounds in Albany. The fairgrounds offered a safe space for the horses. They luckily got the horses out before the roads were closed.

Janna and Grace weren't done until late at night, but they did not stay in Albany. Instead they raced

back home because they were afraid the Chehalem Mountain wild fire might impact their own Yamhill home and their own horses.

The Canyon fire destroyed some buildings at the ranch, so their efforts were very valuable. It was a job well done. The ballooning community is proud of these two young ladies.

**The WAS Zoom October meeting is set for
Wednesday, October 14,
2020 at 7:00.**

A meeting notice will be sent out to all current WAS members beforehand.

It's Fall

**It's the Season to Nominate
New WAS Executive
Committee Members for 2021.**

**If you want to run for President,
Vice President or Secretary/Treasurer
please contact the current board right away.
Their e-mail contact info is on page 2**

Dinah “Soar” Days and Balloon Festival— Vernal, Utah

by Jeanne Anson

For the past several years, the Vernal Utah balloon event was held on Mother’s Day Weekend. The weather was usually good. Unfortunately the first year, the launch field was in a bad spot, so we were unable to fly... the wind would have taken us to what I affectionately call “never neverland” — Bureau of Land Management sage brush and steep canyons with few roads of questionable quality. I flew after the rally from the airport and had a lovely hour plus flight.

This year, Covid-19 put the kibosh on out of state balloons coming to Utah, so they had a fun fly, no sponsors or spectators and they moved the event to August 28, 29 & 30th. Since most other rallies were canceled it was not a problem.

So, we packed up and headed to Utah... arrived the Sunday prior to give us a chance to hang out with our fantastic crew and see the sights of the area. We rafted the Green River (a little over an hour from Vernal), spent time at their cabin near Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area and took the 4-wheelers for a spin to see Moonshine Arch. Our crew makes this rally even more special.

I flew a couple crew members on Thursday as a warm-up since we never know if there will be a chance during the race. We met the new airport manager, Ben. He showed us the launch site. 20 minutes later we were airborne. After 45 minutes of light and variable, we found a nice field and tethered all the kids and adults so everyone got to experience the joy of ballooning!

We checked in for the evening dinner. We were treated to a guest speaker, one of the actors of Disney’s “Night Crossing”. What a treat. We were social distanced and wore masks except to eat. And didn’t



hang out too long after gathering all our check in items.

Covid-19 Protocol: The first morning we filled out a form asking about contact, symptoms, etc. Temperature checks were conducted each morning. No spectators on the field, only pilots, crew and sponsors. Many sponsors were wearing masks. There have been only a dozen or so cases in the county.

Each day the flight direction was different, much of the time light and variable until the end of the flight on two occasions. With 25 balloons it was easy to get great views of the region dotted with our colorful craft scattering like thistle seed upon the wind.

We had sponsor rides for two flights and the last flight we were able to take more crew up! Our sponsors were thrilled with seeing their city from the air and thoroughly enjoyed the speedy landing after our slow and meandering flight over crops and farms.

Our last flight was forecast to be a tad windy on landing, so we were advised to make it a short flight. A couple pilots chose not to



fly. And...drum roll, please! Nope, it was slow and got slower as the morning progressed. (RyanCarlton.com forecasted calm winds.) We meandered high to catch views of the far-off mountains, and low, over corn fields, a cemetery, lovely alfalfa fields, a few herds of steers and horses, many who completely ignored us. The goats were a little more active, so we learned to spot

Continued on page 7



*Ballooning ties us together.
Strengthen those ties by joining WAS.*

*You will find an application
on page 11*

Dinah "Soar" Days

continued from page 6

them and avoid disturbing their morning. As we sauntered across the valley, we spoke to the locals in their farms and back yards. We saw several deer and heard turkeys along with many song birds. I do love the trill of the meadow larks.

At last we found a dirt road behind a neighborhood; the passengers knew many of the residents... so our last day was the biggest crew of the weekend. We are looking forward to returning to Vernal next year, though they moved the date to August which will conflict with Albany Art and Air Festival! We'll go early and may even stop on our way back from the west coast because they have so many flyable days, with a balloon friendly airport, awesome crew and landowners.



Photos for this article contributed by Jeanne Anson

Mini Non-Rally in Prosser Worked Out Perfectly

by Shari Gale with a lot of input by Mandy Johnson



Once again, the vast majority of balloonists stayed home rather than attend The Great Prosser Balloon Rally in Prosser, Washington. It was not by choice. The rally had been canceled due to the pandemic. It was a hard hit for this small town.

Luckily, Prosser now has permanent residents who are long time members of our ballooning community. Vic and Mandy Johnson moved to Prosser full time just the week before the rally. They bought property in Prosser along with Dawne Smith Rushkarski back in 2007. For years they would stay in their large motorhomes while flying out of their big green pasture during the fall. The property quickly became a mecca for several Seattle area balloonists.

The Johnson's connections to Prosser now run even deeper. Their youngest son, Andrew, married a Prosser native, Makenzie Wiser. Their daughter Shara got married the same year in Prosser, although she married a guy from the west side of the state. Both Andrew and Shara met their partners through ballooning. Shara and Matt now

live full time in Prosser and bought a five-acre lot next door to the Johnson-Rushkarski property. The weekend of the Prosser rally the Johnson's had a lot of company. Of course, Dawne was there with her husband Martin and their son, Alexander. They were joined by Andrew, Makenzie and their young son, Rowen, plus Vic and Mandy's oldest son Nic, and his wife, Krysti and their three sons, Rylie, Logen and Hunter. They were joined by Krysti's parents and her brother, Brandon.

Larry and Gail Simberger were there, along with Nick Shirron, who started his ballooning career crewing for Vic and Mandy when he was three years old. Mark Yonker came along to continue pilot training with Nick, and Doug Fifield rounded out the pilot roster.

Friday the weather was not friendly for balloons, but Saturday and Sunday were. Saturday was "a little iffy with that fast wind aloft that we've had the past few years, but it was high enough and improving enough we felt comfortable flying, especially without sponsors or other official passengers" said Mandy. Sunday the weather was perfect — picture perfect as you can see from the photos Cory Miller contributed to this article.

The balloonists were able to easily spread out using both pieces of property. According to Mandy, "We weren't going to let a canceled event deter us. We were all very careful with COVID and everyone was good at distancing, wearing masks, and respectful of each other's space." The loss of the rally did have a profound effect on the town merchants. As you probably know getting a motel room or an RV space in Prosser the weekend of the rally is nearly impossible. You

have to make reservations a year in advance. Winery tasting rooms are always packed, and there is usually a waiting line at most restaurants. That certainly was not the case this year. Traffic in town was light. Wineries had lots of seating, and the big hotels had rooms available for \$82-\$86 a night. Mark and Larry were able to get rooms at the Holiday Inn at the last moment. Merchants across town took a big hit that weekend. That was especially true for smaller merchants that rely on foot traffic.

Luckily, the Washington balloonists were able to at least give the people of Prosser a good show. They flew over town and several touched down in the Yakima River. Everyone had a great time, but Mandy did say "We missed the rest of our Oregon and Idaho and other friends for sure!" Rest assured that everyone is looking forward to 2021!



Photos by Cory Miller

Prosser Photos by Cory Miller



Photo above: Andrew Johnson, balloon in foreground, took a first ever family flight with his wife Makenzie and their three-year old son, Rowen. After lift off Rowen commanded his father to land at the airport. That's exactly what Andrew did. It will be a memorable flight for all of them.

Photo right: Dawne Rushkarski owns two balloons, Upsa Daisy (left) and Fired Up (right). Dawne wanted to have both balloons fly together so Mandy Johnson flew Fired Up while Dawne flew Upsa Daisy. It was a special moment for these two long time friends.



Photo below (left): Cory and Angela Miller took some time to visit Prosser and record all the fun. Thanks, Cory for sharing your photos with the rest of us.



WAS Membership Application



Name: _____

Pilot Crew Interested in hot air ballooning

Birthday: Month _____ Day _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Home Phone #: (____) _____

Cell Phone #: (____) _____

E-Mail Address: _____ @ _____

BFA Membership #: _____

Pilot/Crew Achievement Awards

BFA Crew Level: _____ BFA Pilot Level: _____

FAA Wings Level: _____ Other: _____

Family Member Information

Name: _____ Pilot Crew

Name: _____ Pilot Crew

Name: _____ Pilot Crew

Name: _____ Pilot Crew

Name: _____ Pilot Crew

Membership Type

Charter (\$20) Single or Family (\$20) Newsletter Only (\$10 outside Oregon & SW Washington)

Membership

The Willamette Aerostat Society communicates via e-mail, the WAS Facebook page and the website. We recognize and respect our member's privacy. If you do not wish personal information about you shared with other members, please indicate below. Your personal information will *never* be published on our website. It might be shared with other club members if a request is made unless you prefer to opt out.

- Do Not share name
- Do Not share address
- Do Not share phone number
- Do Not share cell phone number
- Do Not share e-mail

Please use a 2nd page if there are two pilots in the family, or if you have family members with additional information such as cell phone # and/or BFA #'s.

Mail completed form with fees to:
Willamette Aerostat Society
c/o Dale Justice
2902 E. 2nd St. Unit 76
Newberg, OR 97132



Willamette Aerostat Society

Willamette Aerostat Society Mission Statement

- ➔ To promote the sport of Hot Air Ballooning
- ➔ To educate new balloonists and the public
- ➔ To embody safety in all aspects of Ballooning
- ➔ To do all we can to support and encourage land owner relations
- ➔ To support our fellow balloonists and crews personally and in our sport

To obtain Member Contact information, send an e-mail to the Secretary/Treasurer.

For Privacy reasons, *AeroStats* will not publish member contact information without their express permission.

Contact and Submissions

Submissions of articles and photographs are encouraged and welcome! The editorial staff reserves the right to determine the suitability of a submission for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please email your pictures, articles, and comments to:

sharigaleOR@gmail.com

Advertising Policy

Club member's ballooning related or event information is published on a space available basis at no charge.

Business Advertising by Club members is considered Commercial Advertising, subject to fees shown below.

Material must be submitted in computer word processing format with pictures in JPG format.

AeroStats reserves the right to decline publishing submitted information.

Commercial Advertisement Space Rates

Full Page — \$30	1/2 Page — \$20
1/4 Page — \$15	Business Card — \$10

Ads will be published for 3 consecutive months, or until withdrawn, for the fee shown above.

The publishing of advertising in *AeroStats* does not imply an endorsement of the ad or its contents.

Text and images will be printed as submitted by advertisers.

Front Cover Photo:

Carrie Thacker and Chris Whitfield enjoyed flying out of Jefferson, Oregon on Labor Day. Photo by Barbara Duvall.

Waiver

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Publication deadline is the 2nd Saturday of each month.

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