We congratulate Balloon Fiesta on 47 successful events. Our team is proud to lead the 2018 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta media relations team.
On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and hundreds of Navigators (volunteers), welcome to the 2018 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® Presented by Canon.

As a native of Albuquerque, New Mexico, I have had the great fortune to grow up around our great annual celebrations, starting with the one that started it all in 1972, when I was not yet quite old enough to walk on my own. It is a true honor to work with our wonderful community to ensure Balloon Fiesta will launch (and land!) for future generations to enjoy as much as I have.

I want to personally thank the thousands of people who selflessly volunteer countless hours throughout the year to ensure the continued success of our event. Thank you also to our corporate sponsors for their financial support that allows us to put on a world-class event while always striving to improve our guest experience. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to our dedicated pilots and crews who join us from all around the world each year to make our event so wonderful and unique.

Over the course of ten days, this year’s event offers a variety of magnificent events (even if you’re not a morning person). There is truly nothing like the unparalleled sight of the skies filled with balloons during the Mass Ascensions. The evening magic of the Balloon Glows and fireworks shows are also some of the most popular events. You never know what you might see during the 30th Special Shape Rodeo as new special shape balloons come to life for the first time. The flying competitions during the weekdays can be immensely enjoyable to watch as the pilots skillfully attempt to accomplish their particular task of the day. Music Fiesta™ has grown in popularity over the years and will be the second Saturday (October 13).

Whether you are a first-time visitor, a fellow native, or fortunate enough to return each year, we hope you thoroughly enjoy the City of Albuquerque, the State of New Mexico, and the 47th Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. CARRY ME AWAY!

Ty Young,
President, AIBF
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Schedule Of Events .................................................. 1
- Events Inside The Park .............................................. 4
- Getting To The Park .................................................. 8
- Cool Things To See & Do .......................................... 11
- About Balloon Fiesta ............................................... 16
- Staff And Volunteers ............................................... 17
- Sponsors & Economics ............................................ 18
- Media ................................................................. 19
- Balloon Fiesta Weather ........................................... 21
- History ............................................................... 24
- Facts And Figures .................................................. 28
- Ballooning History ................................................ 32
- Frequently Asked Questions ................................. 33
- 2018 News Release Summaries ............................ 35
- Story Ideas .......................................................... 40
- While You’re In Albuquerque ............................... 41
- Key Contacts ........................................................ 45

Photos courtesy of Angelina Peace, Bennie Bos, Marlon Long, and Victor Banta
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6

6:00 a.m.   Dawn Patrol Show, presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort
6:30 a.m.   Krispy Kreme Morning Glow and Laser Light Show
6:45 a.m.   Opening Ceremonies
7:00 a.m.   Mass Ascension, presented by Canon
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.   AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
10:30 a.m. - Noon   Public Safety Exhibition, North end of launch field
1:30 - 5:00 p.m.   AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
6:00 p.m.   Twilight Twinkle Glow™ presented by Albuquerque Journal
7:45 p.m.   Laser Light Show
8:00 p.m.   AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show, presented in part by the Albuquerque Journal

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7

6:00 a.m.   Dawn Patrol Show, presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort
6:30 a.m.   Krispy Kreme Morning Glow and Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.   Mass Ascension
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.   AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
9:00 a.m.   Fiesta of Wheels Car Show, located on Launch Field
11:00 a.m.   Balloon Fiesta Pin Trading (Group Tour Tent)
1:30 - 5:00 p.m.   AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
6:00 p.m.   Balloon Glow
7:45 p.m.   Laser Light Show
8:00 p.m.   AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show, presented by Sandia Resort & Casino

MONDAY, OCTOBER 8

PROPANE DAY (PRESENTED BY AIRGAS, AN AIR LIQUIDE COMPANY)

6:00 a.m.   Dawn Patrol
6:30 a.m.   Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.   Balloons Launch from Park
8:00 a.m.   Competition Balloon Flying begins
8:30 - 11:00 a.m.   AIBF Chainsaw Carving Demonstrations

[CONTINUED]
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 9 (COCA-COLA DAY)

6:00 a.m.  Dawn Patrol
6:30 a.m.  Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.  Balloons Launch from Park
8:00 a.m.  Competition Balloon Flying begins
8:30 - 11:00 a.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Demonstrations

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10

6:00 a.m.  Dawn Patrol, presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort
6:30 a.m.  Krispy Kreme Morning Glow and Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.  Flight of the Nations Mass Ascension
8:00 a.m.  Competition Balloon Flying begins
8:30 a.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Demonstrations

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11

KIDS’ DAY

6:00 a.m.  Dawn Patrol
6:30 a.m.  Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.  Special Shape Rodeo™
8:00 a.m.  Competition Balloon Flying begins
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
1:30 - 5:00 p.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
6:00 p.m.  Special Shape Glowdeo™
7:45 p.m.  Laser Light Show
8:00 p.m.  AfterGlow ™ Fireworks Show, presented by Sandia Resort & Casino

[CONTINUED]
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12
5:45 a.m.  Dawn Patrol
6:00 a.m.  Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.  Special Shape Rodeo™
8:00 a.m.  Competition Balloon Flying begins
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
1:30 - 5:00 p.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
6:00 p.m.  Special Shapes Glowdeo™
7:45 p.m.  Laser Light Show
8:00 p.m.  AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show, presented by Sandia Resort & Casino

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13
6:00 a.m.  Dawn Patrol presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort
6:30 a.m.  Krispy Kreme Morning Glow and Laser Light Show
7:00 a.m.  Mass Ascension
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
11:00 a.m.  Balloon Fiesta Pin Trading (Group Tour Tent north of Main Street)
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.  Music Fiesta™
1:30 - 5:00 p.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Invitational
6:00 p.m.  Night Magic™ Glow presented by Canon
7:45 p.m.  Laser Light Show
8:00 p.m.  AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show, presented by Sandia Resort & Casino

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 14
6:00 a.m.  Dawn Patrol Show, presented by Route 66 Casino Hotel & RV Resort
6:30 a.m.  Krispy Kreme Morning Glow
7:00 a.m.  Farewell Mass Ascension
8:30 - 11:00 a.m.  AIBF Chainsaw Carving Q&A

Event times may change due to field/weather conditions
EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

DAWN PATROL SHOW (October 6-14)
The Dawn Patrol Show is not only beautiful but practical. The Dawn Patrol began at Balloon Fiesta in 1978. Dawn Patrol pilots take off before sunrise and fly until landing sites become visible, giving other balloonists an idea of wind speeds and direction at different altitudes. On Mass Ascension days, the Dawn Patrol puts on a show with a choreographed inflation and launch set to music.

KRISPY KREME MORNING GLOW (October 6, 7, 10, 13, and 14)
A tradition established in 2010, balloonists will participate in a morning balloon glow. Immediately following the launch of the Dawn Patrol Show, a "baker’s dozen" balloons will light up the field with a balloon glow. They will then launch with the rest of balloons on the field at sunrise.

MASS ASCENSIONS (October 6, 7, 10, 13 and 14)
A breathtaking premier morning event, the Mass Ascensions feature hundreds of colorful hot air balloons launching to the skies in two waves. The dazzling and vibrant show can last up to two hours.

SPECIAL SHAPE RODEO™, GLOWDEO™ (October 11 and 12)
The most whimsical of all flying events, the Special Shape Rodeo™ and Glowdeo™ were started in 1989 and showcase captivating airborne works of art that include a penguin, frog, owl, fish aquarium and much more. Balloons take to the air for the Special Shape Rodeo™ and during the Glowdeo™ balloons stay grounded and inflate, giving Balloon Fiesta guests an up close and personal view.

[CONTINUED]
TWILIGHT TWINKLE GLOW™, BALLOON GLOW & NIGHT MÁGIC GLOW™ (October 6, 7 and 13)
Highly anticipated events, the Twilight Twinkle Glow™, Balloon Glow and Night Magic Glow™ light up Balloon Fiesta Park. Just before dusk, balloons are inflated and tethered, the Balloonmeister then orders ignition and the burners fill the balloons and the sky with a kaleidoscope of brilliant colors. Guests can walk amongst the balloons and take in the brilliance. The magnificent tradition, started in 1979, comes to a close with a spectacular laser show and fireworks show.

AFTERGLOW™ FIREWORKS SHOW (October 6, 7, 11, 12 and 13)
After the launch field is clear of balloons, on scheduled evenings, the AfterGlow™ Fireworks Show begins. Guests interested in seeing the fireworks show should arrive in time for the evening’s balloon event.

FLIGHT OF THE NATIONS MID-WEEK MASS ASCENSION (October 10)
This special ballooning event highlights the international flair of Balloon Fiesta; Flight of the Nations showcases all of the participating countries during a mid-week flight. Each country will be represented by selected pilots carrying their country’s flag in the flight that precedes the mid-week Mass Ascension. This year there will be 16 countries represented at Balloon Fiesta.

LASER LIGHT SHOW (October 6-14)
The laser show, in its fourth year at Balloon Fiesta, will take place each day during the morning and evening sessions. The shows will feature straight beams shooting out across the Launch Field, images projecting onto balloons and will be choreographed to music played over the public address system.

FASTRAX™ PROFESSIONAL SKYDIVING TEAM (October 6, 7, 11, 12, 13)
New to Balloon Fiesta is a remarkable skydiving show, performed by Fastrax™. This professional skydiving team has performed around the world in locations ranging from Moscow to France. They are also the only civilian parachute demonstration team to have performed over Ground Zero on September 11. The team is made up of Armed Forces veterans.

[CONTINUED]
JUDGE DECLARED GOALS
A competition where balloon pilots must fly to designated targets one mile away from the launch field. This event tests even the best pilots' skills. Judge Declared Goals may occur during the weekday morning flying events.

FLY-IN TASK
Ranging from drop heights of only inches to 200-feet above the ground, even the most talented balloon pilots are challenged when it comes to fly-in tasks. Pilots must drop a weighted marker on a specified target within Balloon Fiesta Park. Variations of these tasks are demonstrated in competitions like Balloon Fiesta Golf and Minimum Double Drop. Fly-in Tasks may occur during the weekday morning flying events.

KEY (PRIZE) GRAB A.K.A. RING TOSS
Definitely one of the most difficult competitions, the Ring Toss is one of the most popular and exciting to watch and compete in. Balloons launch from at least one mile away and fly to the field, once there, pilots must navigate to one of five tall poles. Each ring is worth a fabulous prize if the pilot can place it over one of the poles. The Ring Tosses occur during morning flying events.
EVENTS INSIDE THE PARK

MUSIC FIESTA
Three different country music acts will perform at this year’s Music Fiesta™. Kicking off this year’s show is New Mexico rock blend group, The Noms. Michael Ray will then take the stage, followed by headliner Old Dominion.

THE GONDOLA CLUB
The Gondola Club is a reserved area with special parking, private seating, delicious food and private bathrooms just for members. The Gondola Club is located at the southwest corner of the launch field. For more information or to purchase tickets contact the Balloon Fiesta office at 505.821.1000 or 888.422.7277.

THE CHASERS’ CLUB
Chasers’ Club members receive access to the Chasers’ Club Hospitality area including the outdoor “Chase Lounge,” both located at the north end of the launch field. Delicious beverages, pastries and hot food are available to Chasers’ Club members. Guests can also purchase alcoholic beverages from the Chase Club bar. Guests pay an additional fee for access to the Chasers’ Club.

CONCIERGE PROGRAM
The Concierge Program will be offered for the first time this year and provides guests with access to a tour guide via golf cart. It is perfect for first-timers, photographers or guests with mobility issues, as this package enables guests to see all there is to see in one session. Stops include vendor booths, chainsaw carvers, the Artisans Tent, Balloon Discovery Center and the Balloon Museum.

GLAMPING
New to Balloon Fiesta this year, Glamping tents are now available in an exclusive location near the Launch Field. Guests will enjoy spectacular views of the balloons flying high against a stunning background of the Sandia Mountains from the tent village. In this exclusive location guests will have access to restroom and shower trailers, as well as a hospitality area with grills, games and lounge chairs.

MAIN STREET
A thrilling one-third mile of food, merchandise and exhibits await Balloon Fiesta guests on Main Street. A foodie’s dream—Main Street has it all; from traditional New Mexican cuisine to festival favorites. Guests of all ages will enjoy learning about the history and sport of ballooning at the Balloon Discovery Center, also
GETTING TO THE PARK

WEBSITE - www.balloonfiesta.com

Get the latest event schedule, information on hotels, balloon rides, maps and tickets at www.balloonfiesta.com. Photo galleries, news releases and updates are also available.

OFFICIAL APP – download the official Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta app for important event and schedule information.

ADMISSION

General admission tickets for all balloon sessions will be available at the Balloon Fiesta Park entrance gates, online at www.balloonfiesta.com and the Balloon Fiesta office for $10. Children 12 years and younger are FREE when accompanied by an adult. No refunds are available, but tickets for cancelled sessions may be used for future sessions.

Advance admission tickets are available in packs of five (5) as a Five-Session Ticket for $45, a $5 discount. An All-Session Parking Pass is available for $100. View maps of the Balloon Fiesta Park for directions, parking information and getting around the Park. These items can be purchased at Balloon Fiesta offices during normal business hours.

Music Fiesta™, occurring October 13 and beginning at 1:00 p.m., provides different levels of access. Premier Lawn Seating is available for $30; reserved seats are $65 if purchased on the day of Music Fiesta™ at the gate. Advance tickets are available on the Balloon Fiesta website ranging from $10-$70. Guests who are 12-years-old and younger do not need a ticket for the Premier Lawn Seating, but all guests sitting in the reserved seats must have a ticket. Guests who attend Music Fiesta™ can stay and enjoy that evening’s Night Magic Glow and AfterGlow fireworks. The 2018 Music Fiesta™ features a superstar lineup with performances by The Noms (1:00 p.m.), Michael Ray (2:30 p.m.) and Old Dominion (4:00 p.m.)

PARKING

Parking is $15 per vehicle per session. Parking passes and packages are available from the Balloon Fiesta office or can be purchased online. There are no in-and-out privileges. General parking lots are located on the north, east and south ends of the Park. Each parking lot is color-coded and the gates are numbered, so please remember the color and number of the gate through which you entered the field.

[CONTINUED]
BIKE VALET
Balloon Fiesta guests who enjoy riding bikes have access to free parking, an easy access bike trail and safe storage at the south end of the Launch Field next to the Albuquerque International Balloon Museum. Bike Valet is staffed by volunteers from Bike ABQ, NM Touring Society and City of Albuquerque Parks and Recreation Bike Safety Program. Cyclists can take the bike trail that runs along the AMAFCA North Diversion Channel that crosses underneath Paseo del Norte and Alameda, ending just north of the Balloon Museum, in the Bike Valet parking station. Balloon Fiesta Bike Valet hours of operation: Morning Sessions: 5:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.; Evening Sessions: 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Bike Valet is available all Balloon Fiesta sessions.

FIESTA EXPRESS PARK & RIDE
Sponsored by Visit Albuquerque
There are four convenient locations available for Balloon Fiesta guests to park their car and get a bus ride to Balloon Fiesta Park. Balloon Fiesta guests that opt to arrive by way of Park and Ride should arrive at parking lots early to ensure that they will arrive at Balloon Fiesta Park in time for planned events. Tickets include admission into the park. Advance tickets are priced: Adults $15 (13-61), Seniors (62 & Older) $12, Children (6-12) $7, children 5 and younger are free. Tickets are available at the remote lots at a higher price. There are NO CASH sales at the remote lots. Pricing, locations, schedules and discounted tickets are available online at http://www.balloonfiesta.com/guest-guide/park-ride . There is no Fiesta Express Park & Ride service on Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday but traffic is usually lighter those days and there will be plenty of parking.

Fiesta Express Park & Ride Locations:
Eastside: Hoffmantown Church and Coronado Mall (southwest corner near San Pedro)
Westside: Cottonwood Mall (northeast parking lot) and Intel (Rio Rancho)

RAIN CHECK POLICIES
General Admission Tickets: Retain the ticket for re-admission at a future session this year in the event the session is cancelled.

Gondola Club Tickets: Once your order has been processed there are no refunds. Your ticket may be used as a raincheck for general admission to an alternative session. The Gondola Club does not necessarily close if a flying event has been cancelled. It is still open and guests can still attend for the buffet and entertainment.

Park & Ride: No weather refunds. Your ticket from the weathered out session can be presented at the remote lot to purchase a bus only ticket for $10.00. When combined with your original ticket you’ll be able to ride to the park for another session.

[CONTINUED]
GETTING TO THE PARK

BALLOON RIDES
Taking a balloon ride during the most celebrated ballooning event in the world is truly a once in a lifetime experience. Rainbow Ryders is the official Balloon Fiesta ride company and the only company from whom guests can purchase a balloon ride from Balloon Fiesta Park during Balloon Fiesta. Rainbow Ryders: 800.725.2477, www.rainbowryders.com.

TRAVEL AND HOTEL RESERVATIONS
The Balloon Fiesta website has plenty of travel tips and hotel suggestions on its website – www.balloonfiesta.com.

RV TRAVEL
RVing is one of the major components of Balloon Fiesta, every year thousands of joyful RVers occupy the Balloon Fiesta Park RV section. Balloon Fiesta Park gladly welcomes RVers, for more information call 888.422.7277 or 505.821.1000.

VISITOR INFORMATION
Between Balloon Fiesta sessions there is a lot to see and do in Albuquerque. For more information, reach out to Visit Albuquerque and the New Mexico Department of Tourism.

Visit Albuquerque
800.284.2282 www.visitalbuquerque.org

New Mexico Tourism Department
505-827-7400 www.newmexico.org
COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

7-ELEVEN BALLOON DISCOVERY CENTER

Balloon enthusiasts of all ages can get hands-on experience at the 7-Eleven Balloon Discovery Center. Located at the north end of Balloon Fiesta Park, the Center draws more than 30,000 guests each year.

Interactive exhibits illustrate the principles of lighter than air flight, the history of the sport and safety aspects of ballooning. Experience the challenge of launching and landing a hot air balloon in a state of the art flight simulator, learn about the Albuquerque Box effect, and enjoy many other hands-on exhibits while you are there.

The Balloon Discovery Center also features installations by Ideum, which gives visitors a hands-on ballooning experience with a table top, touch screen game. The interactive game allows guests to fly a balloon and participate in a target competition.

The 7-Eleven Balloon Discovery Center is open from 6:00 a.m. to 11 a.m. during the morning sessions and from 3:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. during evening sessions. Visiting the Center is free with admission to the Balloon Fiesta.

BALLOON FIESTA PINS

Balloon pins have become an important tradition within Balloon Fiesta. These yearly emblems are the most collected, most traded and most talked about merchandise at the Balloon Fiesta. There are 60,000 pins sold every year, and they come in all shapes and sizes—just like the balloons themselves. There are official event pins, commemorative pins, special event pins, gas balloon race pins and collectible pins from previous Balloon Fiestas.

On the first Sunday and the second Saturday Balloon Fiesta hosts “Trading Only” sessions in the Group Tours Tent near the north end of Main Street with no selling of pins allowed. It gives pin traders a chance to meet with fellow collectors and admirers from all over the world. For the pin traders in training, a brief discussion is presented with an overview of the pin trading phenomenon and an introduction to the hobby.

[CONTINUED]
COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

HERITAGE PINS

In 2005 the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta Heritage Committee established the Heritage Pin, a limited-edition commemorative pin honoring pioneers in ballooning, and the Balloon Fiesta in particular. The Heritage Pin is awarded every year in recognition of those who have perpetuated the legacy they’ve helped to create.

Heritage Pin Honorees

2018 – Charlotte Kinney first flew in Balloon Fiesta in 1977 and began volunteering soon after. By the early 1980s she was a member of the Balloon Fiesta’s Board of Directors. In 1981, Charlotte served as Assistant Balloonmeister, second-in-command of the Balloon Fiesta’s flight operations. The next year she assumed the top post of Balloonmeisterin (a feminine form of Balloonmeister), the first female in the Balloon Fiesta’s history to direct and oversee all flying events. She also played a large role in developing a Balloon Fiesta daily newsletter and is an award winning co-author of the Balloon Fiesta Heritage Committee’s book Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

2017 – Matt Guthrie and the Balloon Fiesta literally grew up together. As a youngster growing up in Albuquerque, Matt took his first balloon flight in 1974, just the third year of the Balloon Fiesta’s existence. He was hooked and began spending as much of his time around balloons as he could. Matt joined the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors in 1996 and this year takes on additional responsibilities as the Board’s Secretary. He continues to be an inspiration to every starry-eyed youngster who dreams of becoming a balloonist.

2016 – Jacqueline was one of the earliest members of the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors, becoming the event’s treasurer in 1978. She served on the Board for 25 years, during which time (and to this day) she not only oversaw corporate hospitality but many of the Balloon Fiesta’s biggest private parties for sponsors, pilots, and guests. Originally from France, Jacqueline, with her fluent command of French, continues to make pilots and visitors from abroad feel especially welcome in Albuquerque.

2015 – Dick Rice
Dick Rice is a hot air balloon pilot and longtime Balloon Fiesta supporter; having joined the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta board of directors in 1977. He has served on the board as president and treasurer, currently serving as treasurer. As a retired successful CPA, his knowledge of all things fiscal have made his contributions to the Balloon Fiesta invaluable. Dick flies the “Hearts ‘A Fire” balloon.

2014 – Wally Book
Wally Book, one of Albuquerque’s earliest balloon pilots and staunchest advocates for flight safety at the Balloon Fiesta. He has volunteered for every Balloon Fiesta in one official duty or another. For more than 30 years Wally has been a Safety Officer or Chief Safety Officer, with a brief hiatus to serve as Assistant Balloonmeister in 1999-2000 and Balloonmeister in 2001-2002. Wally speaks fluent French and has long served as an ambassador to the Balloon Fiesta’s international pilots and guests.

[CONTINUED]
2013 – Scott Appelman
Every Balloon Fiesta guest who enjoys the Balloon Glows and Special Shape Rodeos™ can thank Scott for the pivotal role he played in creating these signature events. Scott served on the Board of Directors of the Balloon Fiesta for five years and has also served the Albuquerque Convention and Visitors Bureau as a board member and as Chairman. As past President, Competition Director and Safety Officer of Top Gun, Albuquerque’s competitive ballooning organization, he has worked hard to promote ballooning safety and healthy competition. Scott is the owner of Rainbow Ryders, the official hot air balloon ride concessionaire of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.

2012 – Dick Brown
Few have played such a pivotal role in documenting the history of ballooning in New Mexico. For several years Dick edited the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Associations (AAAA) Cloudbouncer newsletter and during the period of 1974-1979 he was the Editor of the Balloon Federation of America’s (BFA) Ballooning Journal. Dick earned his commercial balloon pilot license in 1973 and flew his balloon Blue Dragon in many of the early Balloon Fiestas. Dick is also a former Navy submariner and played a key role in the commissioning of the USS New Mexico (SSN-779) fast-attack nuclear submarine. He serves as chair of the USS New Mexico Committee of the New Mexico Navy League.

2011 – Jim Shiver
Jim Shiver’s many contributions to the Balloon Fiesta can be appreciated by every Balloon Fiesta guest. As a longtime Balloon Fiesta board member and three-term past President, Jim Shiver quietly contributed his labors and those of his construction firm, to the tune of tens of thousands of dollars, to building the considerable infrastructure – supporting a temporary “town” with a population of almost 100,000. The 2011 Heritage Pin shows Jim with his first balloon, Four Corners, which he first flew in the Balloon Fiesta in 1979.

2010—Tom Rutherford
In 1972, Tom Rutherford was an aspiring young politician with a golden radio voice at the radio station 770 KOB (now KKOB). When the station asked Sid Cutter to organize a balloon race as a part of the radio station’s 50th anniversary celebration, Tom was assigned to assist with the “balloon” portion of the event. He fell in love with balloons and ballooning and joined Sid’s corporate and events promotion company called World Balloon Championships. For many years Tom flew balloons for corporate clients—most notably Budweiser—at events around the country. As Tom’s balloon career took off, his political career did too. He served as a State Senator for 24 years and was Majority Floor Leader at the time of his retirement. He served two terms on the County Commission of Bernalillo County and is now focused on administrative law and governmental affairs.

2009 – Kim Vesely
Kim Vesely has been writing about balloonists and ballooning as a former TV news reporter and freelance writer for more than 30 years. She has covered many of ballooning’s great “firsts” including the Double Eagle II trans-Atlantic crossing, Double Eagle V trans-Pacific crossing, and the Kitty Hawk flight across North America. Since 2002, Kim has served as editor of the Balloon Fiesta program; additionally, her work has appeared in Ballooning, Balloon Life, and other publications. She has written more articles for the AIBF program than any other person, often without byline. She served on the Balloon Fiesta Board in 1988-89 and currently serves on the AIBF Heritage Committee and on the Board of Trustees for the Anderson-Abruzzo Albuquerque International Balloon Museum.
COOL THINGS TO SEE & DO

2008 – Dr. Tom McConnell
Dr. Tom McConnell, is known by most as “Father Time,” and is best known as the pilot of “Zia” (the New Mexico State Flag balloon) that has in itself become a widely recognized symbol of the Land of Enchantment. Tom is one of Albuquerque’s earliest balloon pilots, part of the second “class” of balloon pilots trained through the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA) in 1973.

2007 – Bob and Marge Ruppenthal
This dynamic duo has often been referred to as “long-time” supporters of Balloon Fiesta. They both served as President of the Board of Directors for Balloon Fiesta. Marge was president in 1980 and 1981; Bob was president in 1989 and 1990. Marge took the helm of the organization as Executive Director in 1989, and served in the capacity for eight years until 1996. The Ruppenthals caught the “ballooning bug” in the 70s, bought a balloon, became pilots, and the rest is history.

2006 – John Davis
John Davis’ longtime involvement with ballooning and Balloon Fiesta is legendary. John is the longest serving active member of the Balloon Fiesta Board of Directors (1976-present). John has served as Balloonmeister and as President of Balloon Fiesta. He has also served on the board of the Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA) and as Balloonmeister of several national and international events including the US National Balloon Championships twice – 24 years apart.

2005 – Sid Cutter
Sid Cutter’s vision put Albuquerque on the map as the hot air balloon capital of the world. Sid had no idea that a little birthday party surprise for his mother would evolve into the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Thanks to Sid’s sense of adventure and tenacity, the Balloon Fiesta has grown from a modest gathering of 13 balloons in 1972 to the largest gathering of hot air balloons in the world.

BALLOON FIESTA HALL OF FAME
Hall of Fame inductees have contributed to the success of Balloon Fiesta through their gifts of time, energy and talent.

Sid Cutter 1983 Mark Sullivan 1999
Tom Rutherford 1983 Jodi Baugh 1999
Harry Kinney 1984 George Hahn 2002
Ben Abruzzo 1985 JW Byrd 2004
Maxie Anderson 1985 Frank Mezzancello 2004
John C. Davis IV 1985 Carol Rymer Davis 2005
Sheri Moore 1987 Steve Yazzie 2006
Marge Ruppenthal 1988 Al Tetreault 2007
Bob Ruppenthal 1991 Harry T. Season 2009
Jacqueline Hockey 1992 Pat J. Brake 2010
Jim Shiver 1993 Bruce King 2010
Al Kinney 1994 Sam Baxter 2011
Thomas McConnell, MD 1995 Richard Abruzzo 2011
Bruce W. Hale 1997 Ray Bair 2012
Jim "Badtoe" Benson 1998 Rodney A. May 2012
Jim Baca 1998 Kim Vesley 2012
Betty Perkins 1998 John R. Sena 2013
Aubrey Cookman 1998 Dick Rice 2016

Scott Appelman 2017
The 2018 Balloon Fiesta Poster is by artist Daniel Killen who was born and raised along the coast of Southern California. Beginning his artistic career in theatrical backdrop design, he transitioned to animation. Killen has worked on films such as Space Jam, Osmosis Jones, and The Quest for Camelot. He currently works with the Chuck Jones Gallery, known for Warner Bros. properties, including Bugs Bunny, The Wizard of Oz and A Christmas Story. This year’s poster is part of a four-part series leading up to the 50th Balloon Fiesta.

To get a copy of this year's poster go to www.balloonfiestastuff.com.
ABOUT BALLOON FIESTA

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is an event internationally recognized as the sport's premier event and is produced by a private, non-profit corporation.

In its 47th year, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta event has brought a sense of fun and adventure to Albuquerque and the world that is unmatched. It has grown from a quaint launch of 13 balloons in 1972 to the massive nine-day celebration it has become today. During Balloon Fiesta, guests can expect to see more than 500 balloons participating in early morning Mass Ascensions, enchanting Special Shape balloons filling the skies and in the evening, 200 balloons light up the evening sky with Balloon Glows and spectacular fireworks. All of the balloons launch from Balloon Fiesta Park, a 78-acre grassed field – the size of 56 football fields – that serves as the launch field for all flying events.

ALBUQUERQUE INTERNATIONAL BALLOON FIESTA MISSION STATEMENT

To conduct the world's premier ballooning event, while promoting the sport of ballooning, the City of Albuquerque and the State of New Mexico, nationally and internationally.

BALLOON FIESTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Balloon Fiesta is managed throughout the year by a volunteer board of directors of 24 members. In addition to event planning, they address complex policy, administrative, safety and traffic issues. Each year, the board elects officers; the 2018 Officers are President Ty Young, Vice-President Matt Guthrie, Secretary Al Tetreault and Treasurer Richard (Dick) Rice.

Directors include JR Allison, Ray Bair, Gary D. Bennett, Chuck Clark, Jay Czar, John Davis, Barbara Fricke, Jim Garcia, Neil Jackson, Steve Komadina, M.D., Cheryl Lété, Rod May, Tom McConnell, M.D., Frank A. Mezzancello, Judy Nakamura, Doug Schwebach, Harry T. Season, Jr., John Sena, Mark Sullivan and Bill Walker.

The Balloon Fiesta Board members work tirelessly behind the scenes; it is a tremendous commitment, requiring more than wearing the official Balloon Fiesta jacket. Our community is fortunate to have such dedicated neighbors who are committed to providing the City, the State, the country and the world the greatest ballooning event year after year.
STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

STAFF
A small professional team works throughout the year to produce each Balloon Fiesta. They serve in one of six primary areas:

Event Production: Oversees all ballooning events, social events and pilot registration
Merchandising: Poster series, official merchandise, balloon pins
Marketing: Advertising, corporate sponsorships, ticketing and membership programs
Field Maintenance: Grounds preparation and maintenance during the event
Communications: Publicity, media relations and social/digital media
Administration: HR, finances, legal

2018 AIBF STAFF
Executive Director: Paul R. Smith
Director of Operations: Sam Parks
Controller: Alice Hanson
Field Manager: Janie Jordan
Associate Event Director: Jennifer Garcia
Sponsorship Sales: Laurie Riedle
Merchandise Manager: Lisa Mulder
IS Manager: Mike McKnight
Transportation Manager: Dennis Christiansen
Navigators-RV Manager: Kim Judge
Assistant Field Manager: Vince Saiz
Concessions-Artisans Manager: Erica Hahn
Sponsorship Sales Manager: Stephanie Prendergast
VIP Hospitality Manager: Shamaine Giannini
Bookkeeper: Susan Dunn
Receptionist: Lynda Crispino
Merchandise Assistant Manager: Jayne Thurman
Event Assistant: Liz Spielman
Director of Media Relations: Tom Garrity, The Garrity Group
Public Relations
Media Relations: Amanda Molina, The Garrity Group Public Relations

VOLUNTEERS
More than 3,000 volunteers including chase crew members are needed to produce the nine-day ballooning event each year. Their work begins months before the first balloon is sighted floating in the October sky and they share a wide variety of skills and talents on the field and in the Balloon Fiesta office. They do everything from managing temporary RV lots, which includes laying out the vacant field, taking registrations, scheduling move-in and move-out, managing traffic, to painting gates, flagpoles, and ticket booths, installing flags, rolling and mailing event posters, counting pins, directing traffic and being member of chase crews. Most of these balloon-loving folks have been volunteering for a number of years and are very much part of the widespread ballooning community. There are also a number of nonprofit organizations providing many of the above mentioned roles as a fundraiser for their organization. Volunteers and assistance from nonprofit organizations are always needed and appreciated.
SPONSORS & ECONOMICS

Many of the magnificent events presented at Balloon Fiesta are due in large part to the local and national businesses that sponsor them. Balloon Fiesta sponsorships demonstrate commitment to the event and community and provide an opportunity for employees to get involved. The cost of sponsoring an event varies based upon the visibility and promotion a sponsor receives from its association with the event as well as the magnitude of the event.

There are currently more than 165 organizations from small local businesses to international corporations that find Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta a worthwhile investment. Representing a significant portion of the Balloon Fiesta’s funding, sponsors are vital to the success of the community celebration. For a complete listing of sponsors, visit www.balloonfiesta.com/sponsors or email sponsors@balloonfiesta.com.

ECONOMIC IMPACT
The 2017 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta attracted an estimated 887,970 guest visits during the nine-day event. According to a 2017 economic impact and guest research study commissioned by the Balloon Fiesta, it is estimated that 64.4 percent of visitors to Balloon Fiesta are from outside of New Mexico. Balloon Fiesta guests generated an estimated $172.98 million of total economic impact for businesses in the Albuquerque metropolitan area, $101.75 million of that amount being direct economic impact. The company Forward Analytics was commissioned by the Balloon Fiesta to conduct the 2017 economic impact survey.

FINANCING BALLOON FIESTA
Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is self-sustaining and receives no direct monetary subsidies from any taxing authority. It must privately raise more than $7 million each year to produce the nine-day festival that includes multiple events. Funding comes from five primary sources.

- RV Space Rentals
- Admission and Parking
- Sponsorships
- Concession Fees
- Merchandise Sales
MEDIA

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta is a regular favorite of local, national, and international media organizations. Over the past five years, more than 36,745 stories have featured the event, our pilots, sponsors, and guests.

Working media at Balloon Fiesta are provided the opportunity for a hot air balloon ride (based on availability), complimentary parking, event entry, access to a photography tower, wireless internet access, logistical support from our professional media team, entry into the media hospitality tent and invitations to media receptions and dinners.

A Balloon Fiesta Media badge allows easy access for coverage of most official Balloon Fiesta events. Applications for credentials are accessible online and must be accompanied by a letter of assignment. Media credentials provide access to most of the areas on Balloon Fiesta Park. However, there are a few areas for which additional permission must be granted before entering. These areas include:

- **Corporate Village Tents, Fiesta Tents, Gondola Club, Chasers Club**
  Rented by and restricted to Balloon Fiesta sponsors, guests or members.

- **Officials’ Compound, Official Towers**
  These are areas central to Balloon Fiesta flight operations. The Officials’ towers include the pilot briefing tower and balloonmeister tower.

- **Public Safety Compound**
  This area is restricted to official personnel only due to the multi-agency integration of public safety organizations.

- **President’s Compound**
  A very attractive area for reporters, photographers and videographers because of its location above the Launch Field as well as the accompanying views. Those views also make the area very attractive to the RV guests who rent the area well in advance each year. If you are provided access to the President’s Compound please be respectful of the RV guests who have paid for the location and view.

  *A media committee escort is required for access to the President’s Compound and a safety vest must be worn.

- **Field During Competitions**
  During all days of flying competitions, access in the competition area requires an official media escort. Requests need to be made in advance and safety vests must also be worn on the field.

Reporters covering the event must have permission and proper vehicle identification to conduct live reports from the field.

[CONTINUED]
MEDIA

Any special requests must be pre-approved by the Director of Media Relations.

Credentials do not allow the ability to set up in RESTRICTED AREAS for any purpose. Restricted areas include: Safety command center, fireworks staging area, propane, hydrogen refueling areas, or photographing from the top of buildings on the south end of the field.

BROADCAST GUIDELINES

All two-way, marti, microwave and satellite frequencies used to provide live coverage of the Balloon Fiesta must be registered with Balloon Fiesta Media Relations well in advance of Balloon Fiesta.

Broadcasts must not interfere with the Balloon Fiesta public address system, field operations, communications related to the safe operation of hot air or gas filled balloons and broadcasts of official media.

For local radio broadcasters, please be aware that Balloon Fiesta sponsorship agreements restrict live radio broadcasts to the Albuquerque market to phone reports no longer than two minutes in length when they are on the Balloon Fiesta field.

MEDIA TENT

Location – Hours of Operation – Activities

The AIBF Media Tent is located on the southeast corner of Balloon Fiesta Park, adjacent to the launch field. The schedule is as follows:

- October 4 & 5: 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. – Media Registration/Credential Pick up
- October 5: 5:30 p.m. – Media Welcome Party (Media Tent)
- October 6 (Opening Day): 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 7: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 8, 9 & 10 (Monday - Wednesday): 5:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
- October 11: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 12: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 13: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. & 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
- October 14: 5 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

Weather is always a factor as is with any outdoor event. Balloon Fiesta’s primary concern is safety when making decisions concerning cancellation or postponement. News organizations will receive any cancellation notices from the Balloon Fiesta media representative immediately after the Pilots’ weather briefing approximately 6:30 each morning.

MORNING MASS ASCENSIONS/ SCHEDULED FLYING COMPETITIONS
Winds faster than 10 knots (approximately 11.5 mph), less than 3 miles visibility, clouds below 1,500 feet and rain will postpone or cancel the launch.

EVENING BALLOON GLOWS/FIREWORKS
Wind faster than 11.5 mph or rain will cancel or delay static illumination of inflated balloons. Fireworks can still be displayed with wind up to 20 mph.

DELAY AND CANCELLATION PROCESS
The Balloon Fiesta will make the first announcements about any delays or event cancellations to the balloon pilots. The announcement will be made as part of regular Pilot Briefings. The initial briefing is held before each event at the Pilot Briefing Tower on the west side of Balloon Fiesta Park except the briefings for Glowdeos will be in the Pilots’ Pavilion. Pilot Briefing is open for the public to listen in; please keep any conversation and radio communication to a minimum. Information will be announced and posted in the Media Tent as well as via official Balloon Fiesta text message, Twitter and Facebook accounts. Unless the weather creates a dangerous situation, Balloon Fiesta Park will remain open even in the case of a balloon flight cancellation.

FLAG POLE NOTIFICATIONS
Because mobile phone and wireless access can be hampered with so many people at Balloon Fiesta Park, the Balloon Fiesta created a flagging system to notify guests about the status of flying events based on the color of the flag. The flag pole, located adjacent to the Stage in the center of Main Street will fly one of three flags: GREEN means all flying events are on schedule; YELLOW means flying events are on a delay or a flight decision has not yet been made; RED means flying events are cancelled for this session.

RAIN CHECK POLICY
The Balloon Fiesta offers no refunds for unused tickets. However, rain checks will be issued if an individual flying session must be cancelled due to weather or other safety considerations, and the tickets can be used for any other flying session at the 2017 Balloon Fiesta. The 2017 Music Fiesta™ is exempt from the Balloon Fiesta rain check policy because Music Fiesta™ is a “rain or shine” event.

[CONTINUED]
BALLOON FIESTA WEATHER

IDEAL FLYING CONDITIONS
Since balloons move with the air, information about the weather is imperative when deciding whether to fly. Before launching, pilots will contact one or more weather services to find out about weather and wind conditions in an area. Pilots only fly when the weather is close to ideal—when skies are clear and wind conditions are favorable.

Balloons need stable air to operate effectively and the atmosphere is most stable during the hours just following sunrise and they are the best for finding calm gentle winds. In some parts of the world this also applies to the hours just before sunset. Additionally, the temperature is usually cooler in the mornings and the balloon flies better in cooler weather since the hot air gets a better “lift”. The only control a pilot has over a balloon is vertical so they don’t want to fly around the middle of the day when different pockets of air are rising and falling.

THE “ALBUQUERQUE BOX”
The fall weather in Albuquerque is known for its clear days and cool morning temperatures. This weather and what is known as the Albuquerque “box” will help this year’s Balloon Fiesta to become another spectacular spectator event. When the “box” is working, guests are able to see hundreds of balloons create a kaleidoscope of color in the Albuquerque sky – there is nothing like it anywhere else in the world.

The “box” is a combination of upper and lower level winds created by the Rio Grande Valley and enhanced by the Sandia Mountains. The box enables balloonists to back-track their flight pattern and land close to their launch sites conjuring the impression of flying inside a box. Cool air from the north near the surface will take pilots one direction while higher winds blow in the opposite direction. Pilots need only to change elevation to fly back along their original course. Some wind patterns will allow a pilot to dip their gondola in the Rio Grande for a “Splash and Dash” other patterns will move balloons toward the Sandia Mountains.

This unique relationship of mountain formations and wind characteristics has brought many balloonists back to Albuquerque year after year to enjoy beautiful ballooning weather. This “box” allows the hundreds of balloons that lift off from the field during Balloon Fiesta’s Mass Ascensions to remain close to the field, creating a colorful visual display found nowhere else in the world.

[CONTINUED]
THE SCIENCE OF THE “ALBUQUERQUE BOX”
This wind pattern for which the Albuquerque area is well known occurs under stable conditions during the fall season when no strong weather systems are affecting the area. A local study found that on average the “box” circulation occurs 30 percent of the time in early October. Even on days when the “box” occurs, it dissipates by mid-morning as the sun heats the ground, resulting in thermal turbulence which mixes the separate layers of air and eliminating the low level inversion.

During the nighttime hours, the air near the ground surface is cooled by the process of radiational cooling. This process is most efficient with clear skies, low humidity, and light wind. Cooler, and therefore denser air flows downslope and pools at lower elevations along arroyos and river valleys. The cool air that pools in the Rio Grande valley is shallow (generally no more than a few hundred feet in depth). During the early morning hours this air flows southward down the valley from higher to lower elevation much as any fluid flows downhill. A north wind generally less than 10 mph results in the middle Rio Grande Valley.

The stable “river of air” occurs below a temperature inversion which separates it from warmer, less dense air above the inversion, just as vinegar is separated from oil by differences in density. The wind direction in the air mass above the shallow inversion can be different than that below the inversion. In an “ideal” box pattern, the wind blows in exactly the opposite direction with a north wind at the surface and a south wind above the surface. A skillful pilot can sometimes bring a balloon back to near the point of takeoff by changing altitudes to ride wind currents in different directions. Upon takeoff the pilot first heads south towards downtown, then ascends higher where the winds will then take the balloon back north towards Balloon Fiesta Park.
HISTORY
45 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

1972 was the first year of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Events included the 1st Roadrunner-Coyote Balloon Race, the Balloonist Ball, and tours of the surrounding towns and pueblos.

1973 hosted the First World Championships, crowning of the Balloon Fiesta Queen, the first mass ascension and Balloon Fiesta parade.

1974 was the third annual Balloon Fiesta and a new Balloon Fiesta Queen was crowned.

1975 marked the introduction of the AAAA Cloudbouncer Balloon Rally, and the Balloon Fiesta was permanently moved to October. It also saw the introduction of the Air Force Thunderbirds, as well as the balloon seminar and the trade show.

1976 was the year that the AIBF became incorporated, and introduced the KODAK Giant Film Box Drop, the Tumbleweed Drop, helicopter performances, a parachute drop and the sunrise prayer service.

1977 encompassed not only the traditional Mass Ascension, but also the Annual Balloon Bash, a parade, and flying competitions.

1978 marked the first Zoo party, the “Natural Light” Chicken Flying Contest, as well as balloon dances, Mass Ascensions, the KODAK Film Drop and the Blue Angels Flying team from Kirtland Air Force Base.

1979 was the first year of the official Balloon Fiesta poster—and still had all of the traditional events like the Mass Ascension, parade and sunrise prayer service.

1980 was the year that the US Navy Leapfrogs joined the festivities, and the Balloon Fiesta started the Key Grab as well as the Best Dressed Balloon Crew Contest. The Kiwanis club also joined and sold VIP parking for $0.25.

1981 was the tenth Balloon Fiesta and featured the first video briefing, the first air show, road run, gas race and Jim Franklin’s Wild Waco air show. The Thunderbirds preformed at Kirtland Air Force Base, and the US Navy Leapfrogs also joined the celebration.

1982 marked the first unfortunate event in the history of the Balloon Fiesta—there was a fatality at an official event. The 11th annual Balloon Fiesta included the Mule Balloon Bust, the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra, the Morgan Horse and Carriage Show, and a costume ball as well as a new kite flying contest.

1983 incorporated a 10k run, radio controlled aircraft and performances from high school bands around the state.

1984 included MusicFest, a kite flying demo, the first Park and Rides, the US Army “Golden Knights” Parachute Team and a picnic in addition to all of the traditional events.

1985 kept up with the times and included a bike and trikes/BMX race team demo, a Frisbee demo, the Albuquerque Vaulters, the Masters of the Universe, the Bob Sears Air Show, NASA Aerovan and a toga party.

[CONTINUED]
1986 presented a tremendous weather surprise—it snowed on the last day. That didn't stop the festivities though—there was a picnic at Spanish Village on the state fairgrounds, and the Otto the Airshow Helicopter performance.

1987 started an event which is now one of the biggest events at the Balloon Fiesta—the Balloon Glow, which was started to commemorate 75 years of statehood. The Balloon Glow was joined by the Misty Blues All Female Sky Divers, the Leapfrogs, picnics, Mass Ascensions and parades.

1988 was the last year of the Balloon Fiesta gas race. The Balloon Fiesta also brought in the Oktoberfest at Civic Plaza and the dance and BBQ at the Sundance Saloon. It was also the first year that featured a commemorative coin.

1989 started another tradition—the Special Shape Rodeo. The Air Show, the International Mariachi Fiesta, and the first Dawn Patrol were also celebrated that year.

1990 had pop stars Three Dog Night perform, a special shapes event as well as including the US Navy parachute team and the Enchantment Sky Divers.

1991 was the 20th Balloon Fiesta, and included all of the established traditions—sky diving, bands, dawn patrol, a parade, and the Special Shape Rodeo.

1992 saw the first special shape balloon based on the “Simpson” characters, and included large scale fireworks. KODAK became the official title sponsor.

1993 hosted the 37th Gordon Bennett Gas Race, and started the first midweek Mass Ascension as well as the Manfred Radius Gilder Show.

1994 Included the 8th World Gas Balloon Championships and the special shape mass ascension.

1995 was the First America’s Challenge Race, and included the Leapfrogs, Mass Ascensions and glows.

1996 added the first Dawn Patrol Show, Sivage Thomas “house grab” and new flying events.

1997 started the Flight of Nations, the Cool Cut Showcopters, Fiesta Stand Up Parachute Accuracy Open, Sky Dive New Mexico-State Parachute Accuracy Championships and the USAF Pararescue School Demo Team.

1998 was the year that special shape balloons had grown to be so popular that they were the only balloons to launch from the field on Thursday and Friday mornings and glow on the same evenings.

1999 was the second year the Balloon Fiesta hosted the Gordon Bennett Cup, and included the American Flyer Powered Parachutes Demo, and the kite expo.

[CONTINUED]
HISTORY

47 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

2000  set the balloon launch record, with the largest number of balloons attending in the history of the Balloon Fiesta. Helicopters from the TV stations helped out by drying the field so the Special Shape Glowdeo could happen.

2001  opened the Balloon Discovery Center, the Balloon Fiesta was limited to 750 balloons, the blackjack race was started and grass was added to the rest of the launch field.

2002  raised the cost of admission and parking to $5.

2003  was the year that the Balloon Fiesta created the Gondola Club, and started the Fiesta del Vino.

2004  was the first year of the Fiesta Challenge, and it was the last year for the New Mexico Challenge. The Balloon Fiesta also included a salute to veterans.

2005  marked the 49th Gordon Bennett Gas Race and the third time it was hosted in Albuquerque, included Bunnies and Balloons for Easter and was the first year for the Albuquerque Aloft program at local elementary schools.

2006  was the first year for the Balloon Fiesta brick program and the chainsaw carving contest.

2007  was the year for $1 admission for Albuquerque Residents on the first Saturday. It was also the beginning of the Twilight Twinkle Glow and was Fiesta del Vino’s last year. There was a record number of attendees that year.

2008  had the 52nd Coupe Aeronautique Gordon Bennett, performance from Josh Gracin, and expanded Park and Ride.

[CONTINUED]
HISTORY
47 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA HISTORY

2009 included the beginning of the Chasers’ Club and Patron and Crew Chief memberships were established. America’s Challenge Gas Race canceled due to weather after inflation had been completed—there was a lot of helium and hydrogen used without flying anywhere.

2010 was the first year for the popular Bike Valet was made available for Balloon Fiesta guests.

2011 was dedicated to the “Father of Fiesta” Sid Cutter and was the year that the Balloon Fiesta received a Guinness World Record for the Greatest Mass Hot Air Balloon Ascent.

2012 was New Mexico’s centennial and the first year that hydrogen was used exclusively to provide lift to the teams participating in the America’s Challenge Balloon Race.

2013 was the year of the first Music Fiesta, featuring country music superstar Darius Rucker.

2014 will welcome the Blue Sky Pavilion, a space at Balloon Fiesta Park solely dedicated to hosting guests’ milestone events like weddings, reunions and anniversary parties.

2015 the world famous sky racing team, Parabatix flew at Balloon Fiesta Park. A daily laser show was also featured for the first time and this year also introduced the 12,000-square-foot Sid Cutter Pilots’ Pavilion and a bronze statue of Sid welcoming pilots, crews and guests.

2016 will be the first year the Balloon Fiesta will host the Balloon Federation of America’s US Women’s National Championship

2017 was the year Balloon Fiesta introduced the Candlestick show to the opening ceremonies.

2018 marked the year that Balloon Fiesta introduced two new guest programs to the event; Glamping and the Concierge Program
2018 THEME

Carry Me Away—the 47th Balloon Fiesta
This year’s theme is Carry Me Away. Balloon Fiesta is the perfect place to let your imagination get carried away – with countless colors and shapes, the possibilities of fun and exploration are endless. There is a new theme to Balloon Fiesta every year; the theme is reflected in merchandise, printed and digital artwork.

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED
There will be 16 countries participating in this year’s Balloon Fiesta including: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Columbia, Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Mexico, Netherlands, Russia, Spain, Taiwan, Thailand, United Kingdom and United States. This year will mark the first year of participating in Balloon Fiesta for Columbia.

International balloons will enjoy their moment in the spotlight on Wednesday, October 10, during Flight of the Nations, an event that honors all the countries represented at Balloon Fiesta. Up to two balloons from each country will launch while carrying their country’s flag to begin the Mass Ascension.

LAUNCH FIELD BY THE NUMBERS

- 47 YEARS OF BALLOON FIESTA
- 887,970 ESTIMATED GUESTS VISITS IN 2017
- 547 REGISTERED PILOTS
- 96 SPECIAL SHAPES
- 22 NEW SPECIAL SHAPES
- 208 LAUNCH SITES
- 78 ACRES OF GRASS
- 60,000 PINS ORDERED
- 250 GOLF CARTS
- 375 PORT-A-TOTTIES
- 200 PARK AND RIDE BUSES
- 286 PICNIC TABLES
- 43 MERCHANDISE CONCESSIONS
- 45 FOOD VENDORS
- 56 FOOTBALL FIELDS CAN FIT INSIDE
- 2 CONSECUTIVE WAVES TO LAUNCH HOT AIR BALLOONS DURING MASS ASCENSIONS
FACTS AND FIGURES

MAIN STREET BY THE NUMBERS
- 35 Food Concessions – everything from famous New Mexican breakfast burritos to funnel cakes
- 36 Merchandise Concessions – official Balloon Fiesta merchandise, pins, art and crafts, and more.

2018 FOOD CONCESSIONS
Baskin Robbins
Blake’s Lotaburger
Chavez New Mexican Foods
CCs Catering and Concessions
Chile Traditions
Collins Concessions
Cruising Cones LLC
Dunkin Donuts
Fry Factory
Funnel Cake of New Mexico
Hacinda del Rio
Hatch Chile Shack
Hello Deli
Heydi’s Latin Grill
Indonesian Satay
JJ Enterprise
JQ Concession
Just Squeezed/Just Brewed
Krispy Kreme
Mac’s Steak in the Rough
Native Café
New Mexico Pinon Coffee Company
Pablo’s Hot Dogs-N-More
Pars
Perico’s Tacos and Burritos
Q’s Cakes & Sweets
Rex’s Hamburgers
Romero’s New Mexican Kitchen
Seafood Cajun Concessions
Street Food Blvd
Sun Mountain Concessions
Tall’as
Tom Thumb Mini Donuts
Williams Concessions

2018 MERCHANDISE VENDORS
Albuquerque Journal
Alpaca Connection
arloom
Amazing Lights
Arizona Tube Art
Badlands Jerky LLC
Best Selection Jewelry
Click Heat
Common Market
Cutco
Discover Balloons
Goodgets-US
GQ Distribution
Great Balloon Chase 5K & 1/2 Marathon
Guatemala Imports
Inka Gold Arts
KOB
Mayan Art
Montgolfier Balloon Gift Shoppe
N&D Sports
NM Quilters Association
Native Gems
Old Barrel Tea Company
PANDORA
Peruvian Inkas Art
Plano Pin Company, Inc
Reflections in Metal
ShannieGirl
Scooter/Wheelchair/Stroller Rentals
Southwest Sky
Team Hot Sports
Toadland
Traeger Wood Pellet Grills, LLC
U.S. Jaclean, Inc
Ultimate Comfort
Zeppelin
FACTS AND FIGURES

OFFICIAL BALLOON FIESTA PINS
60,000 pins ordered

BALLOON FIESTA VOLUNTEERS
More than 1,000 wonderful and dedicated volunteers make Balloon Fiesta happen year after year. Additionally, more than 2,000 chase crew volunteers will help get the balloons into the air!
The first gathering to watch a flying machine began in France in 1783, in part to satisfy the curiosity of the Montgolfier brothers, Joseph and Etienne. The two enterprising paper manufacturers entertained the King and Queen of Versailles, along with a crowd of 40,000 people, by sending aloft a smoke-filled balloon carrying as passengers a duck, a rooster and a lamb.

The first human passengers (Pilatre de Rozier and Marquis d'Arlandes) were carried aloft some 3,000 feet in the first manned, untethered balloon flight ever recorded on November 21, 1783. Two weeks later, a Frenchman, J.A.C. Charles and his friend, Monsieur Robert, launched a hydrogen gas balloon near Paris for a two-hour, 27-mile flight.

One year later, the first hot air balloon ascent in the United States occurred when a 13-year-old boy, Edward Warren, ascended over Baltimore in a tethered hot air paper balloon.

All through the 19th century, American ballooning featured two different types of aerostats. For lengthy flights, hydrogen or “mixed gas” was preferred. For rapid, briefer ascents, smoke-filled balloons proved to be more viable. During the Civil War, balloons were used for spotting and reconnaissance and occasionally were used to carry the U.S. mail and aerial photography.

In 1859, John Wise (with three passengers) inflated his gas balloon “Atlantic” in St. Louis and flew eastward in an attempt to cross the Atlantic Ocean. After an 800-mile adventure, a severe storm forced him to land in Henderson, New York.

The next aerostat flight of any importance was also the same year. A huge balloon of rubberized silk with a 725,000-cubic-foot hydrogen capacity was inflated by “Professor” Thaddeus Lowe, a balloonist. His balloon, “The Great Western” (originally called the “City of New York”), suffered a major tear in the crown caused by deterioration from weather exposure and too much handling, immediately before launch.

Two years later in a smaller balloon “Enterprise,” Lowe flew from Cincinnati over the Appalachian Mountains, landing in South Carolina where startled officials arrested him for being a Yankee spy.

For the next 100 years, very little progress was seen in the world of ballooning. A few would-be aeronauts performed tethered ascensions at state fairs around the country.

One such ascension occurred in Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1882. Saloon keeper P.A. Van Tassel owned and operated a balloon called the “City of Albuquerque.” It was highly touted as an attraction for the 4th of July celebration on the Territorial Fairgrounds. After numerous delays to his much talked about “lift off,” Van Tassel’s craft finally reached an altitude of 14,207 feet and flew over the Rio Grande River before it came to rest in a cornfield near the Fairgrounds.

[BALLOONING HISTORY CONTINUED]
BALLOONING HISTORY

There were other similar adventures, but nothing of real historical significance until 1906. At that time, James Gordon Bennett, Jr., publisher and owner of the New York Herald, organized the Gordon Bennett Cup Race. The first trophy was won by an American aeronaut, Frank P. Lahm, and his co-pilot Henry Hersey, who flew their balloon 395 miles from Paris to Whitby, England.

In 1907, a Chicagoan, Joseph A. Blondin, came to Albuquerque, and attempted to inflate a 25,000 cubic foot balloon envelope of rubberized silk. His "mixed-gas" three-hour flight was fraught with problems, as was another attempted ascension by Blondin in 1909.

A mild amount of interest persisted for many years, but it wasn’t until 1960 that a steady interest in ballooning began. Hot air balloon manufacturing firms began “popping up” in the U.S., most of them in the west and southwest. During the next decade, various balloon flight records for altitude, distance and duration aloft were set by several pilots, among them Ed Yost and Don Piccard.

In 1971, Albuquerque’s Sid Cutter celebrated the 42nd anniversary of his family’s flying service company and his mother’s birthday, with a Raven balloon inflated as a centerpiece in the Cutter Flying Service hangar. This family social event has become a part of ballooning history because of its impact on the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta which was first organized as a 13 balloon rally the following year.

In February 1973, the first World Hot Air Balloon Championship was held in Albuquerque and again in 1975 before it was shifted to other sites in Europe and the U.S.

In 1978, well-known Albuquerque balloon adventurers Ben Abruzzo and Maxie Anderson, along with Larry Newman piloted the first balloon ever to cross the Atlantic Ocean. Their helium filled balloon, the Double Eagle II, landed on August 17th in Miserey near Paris, 137 hours and 6 minutes after leaving Presque Isle, Maine.

In January of 2015 gas balloon pilots Troy Bradley and Leonid Tiukhtyaev, the “Two Eagles” team completed their 7,000-mile journey across the Pacific from Japan to Mexico, surpassing the previous distance record (5,209 miles) for gas balloons.

Today, the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta has expanded to an over 500 balloon event, with more than 800,000 guest visits over the course of nine days.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Everything You Wanted To Know About Hot Air And Gas Balloons

WHAT ARE HOT AIR BALLOONS MADE OF?
The bag – or envelope, as it’s more properly called – is made of a reinforced fabric called rip-stop nylon. Polyester and other fabrics are sometimes used. The materials are very lightweight and very strong. The fabric is coated on the inside to prevent leaks. The fabric used at the lower portion of the balloon is a fire resistant material like Nomex, which is what firemen and race car drivers wear.

HOW IS A HOT AIR BALLOON INFLATED?
During the inflation process, ballooning becomes a group sport. Since a balloon is quite unwieldy on the ground, it takes about four people to get a balloon inflated. Of course, the more people there are the more fun you can have. To start off, the envelope is stretched out on the ground and attached to the basket, which is lying on its side. A small gasoline-powered fan blows air into the balloon envelope. Then the burner is turned on, and the air in the balloon is heated. The hot air rises, lifting the balloon upright.

WHAT ARE THE BASKETS MADE OF?
The baskets are usually woven out of wicker since it is strong, lightweight and flexible. Wicker is also very easy to maintain and holds up well under the stress of repeated landings.

HOW BIG ARE HOT AIR BALLOONS?
The typical sport balloon ranges in size from 65,000 to 105,000 cubic feet in volume, and when inflated stands around 70 feet tall (or equivalent in height to a building with seven floors).

HOW DO BALLOONS FLY?
Hot air balloons fly because hot air rises. When the pilot heats the air inside the envelope, it becomes lighter than the air around the envelope and floats up into the sky. The pilot can control the balloon’s altitude by adjusting the temperature of the air inside the envelope. To make the balloon come down, the air inside the balloon is allowed to cool. To climb, more heat from the propane burner is added, increasing lift.

HOW DO YOU STEER THE THING?
Strictly speaking, you don’t. The balloon goes where the wind takes it. However, the winds at varying altitudes may blow in different directions and at different speeds, so the trick is to climb or descend to an altitude where the wind is blowing the direction you want to go.

HOW FAST DOES A BALLOON GO?
As fast, or as slow, as the wind. Since the balloon has no forward propulsion system, its speed is determined entirely by the speed of the wind. That’s why balloon races are events of accuracy, not speed.

[CONTINUED]
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHEN IS THE BEST TIME TO FLY A HOT AIR BALLOON?
Conditions are usually the best just after sunrise and one or two hours before sunset. This is the time of day when winds are calmest and the air most stable.

HOW HIGH DO HOT AIR BALLOONS FLY?
Most balloon flights occur between 500 and 2,000 feet above the ground. But balloons can fly at treetop level or go much higher. The world record for altitude in a hot air balloon is 65,000 feet.

HOW LONG CAN A HOT AIR BALLOON STAY UP?
It depends. Normally, the balloon carries enough fuel to remain aloft for two hours, but factors like outside air temperature, weight being carried in the basket, and weather determine the duration of the flight.

WHAT KIND OF FUEL IS USED FOR A HOT AIR BALLOON?
Propane is the most common fuel, but butane is sometimes used in remote areas where propane is not available. The fuel is carried in aluminum or stainless steel tanks that range from 10 – 25 gallons in size. The average fuel consumption for a sport size balloon is about 15 gallons an hour.

HOW DO YOU GET THE BALLOON BACK?
With the help of friends who drive a van or pickup truck. This chase crew is usually in contact with the pilot by means of two way radios, and follows the flight of the balloon (as well as the existing roads allow) and should be on hand to make the recovery when the balloon touches down.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A GAS BALLOON AND A HOT AIR BALLOON?
A gas balloon is completely enclosed and is filled with helium or hydrogen gas. A hot air balloon gets its lift from heating the air within. Hot air balloon flights usually last about an hour, while gas balloon flights can last for days. Gas balloon flights require much more preparation for cold weather, high altitudes, and flying at night. Gas balloonists also pack enough food and water for several days.

HOW DO YOU ARRANGE FOR A RIDE IN A HOT AIR BALLOON?
Reservations for a hot air balloon ride can be made with Rainbow Ryders Inc., the official ride concessionaire for the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. The Rainbow Ryders tent is located near the North end of the field and near Gate 9. For reservations, call: 1-800-725-2477.
The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta celebrates its 47th event with 550 hot air balloons representing 16 countries. The 47th event will occur October 6-14, 2018 at Balloon Fiesta Park, in Albuquerque, NM.

Key dates, events and facts:

- Opening day at Balloon Fiesta Park will kick off with the Opening Ceremonies, beginning at 6:45 a.m.
- Hot air ballooning competitive flying takes place on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, with pilots competing to win prizes.
- Flight of the Nations, held October 10 in advance of the mid-week mass ascension, will honor countries participating in the 47th event. This year, there are 16 countries represented in the 2018 Balloon Fiesta.
- Special shapes Nearly 100 amazing special shapes will be flying at Balloon Fiesta this year, 22 shapes will make their inaugural appearance. Special Shape balloons will take to the skies for their own mass ascension and balloons glows on Thursday and Friday at Balloon Fiesta Park.
- 550 primary pilots have registered to fly in this year’s Balloon Fiesta, many of them bring more than one balloon.
The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® Announces New Special Shapes and a New Twist for the 2016 Event

The 47th Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta presented by Canon will host international special shape balloon teams as a part of the world’s premier balloon event, October 6-14. This year’s event will include 93 special shape balloons representing nine countries; 22 of those shapes will make their first Balloon Fiesta appearance.

Special shape hot air balloons (and home country) making their inaugural appearance at Balloon Fiesta include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Balloon Name</th>
<th>County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Submarine</td>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woozi</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bidu Balloon</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ratcheese</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cristo Redentor</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jupiter Men</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saxon Balloon</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Ball Bell</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koala</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owl</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wes The Wolf</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buster the Bulldog</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emojii</td>
<td>Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van Gogh</td>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pirate Jack</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocket the Flying Squirrel</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bila</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pigasus</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Chair Bay</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off Your Rock’r</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cynthia the Seal</td>
<td>United States</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pxmart Doll</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[CONTINUED]
In addition to these new flyers, many Balloon Fiesta Special Shape favorites will also be making a return. These include Creamland Cow, Airabelle of Canada; Buddy Beaver of the United States; and Darth Vader Balloon and Master Yoda Balloon of Belgium.

While many of the special shapes will be flying all week long, Balloon Fiesta has two events that feature only special shape balloons. The Special Shape Rodeo™ and Glowdeo™ events will take place Thursday, October 12 and Friday, October 13. Check out a preview of this year's Special Shape list: http://www.balloonfiesta.com/pilots-and-crew/special-shapes-directory.
Kickoff program schedules lift off from 111 schools

The Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® will launch from the playgrounds of schools throughout Albuquerque and Rio Rancho Friday, October 5. Albuquerque Aloft, creates an innovative teaching experience, taking place since 2001. This year, 111 school yards will serve as a temporary launch site for Albuquerque Aloft.

The balloons and their pilots will go to selected schools first thing in the morning, and will either launch from the school grounds, or remain inflated at the site. Schools are encouraged to invite friends and family to these events which is the only Balloon Fiesta flying event that will be conducted outside of Balloon Fiesta Park.

The 111 schools participating are:

A. MONTOYA          GREIGOS
ALAMEDA             HODGIN
ALAMOSA             INEZ
ALVARADO            JANET KAHN
APACHE              JOHN BAKER
ARMIJO              KIT CARSON
ARROYO DEL OSO      LA LUZ
ATRISCO             LA MESA
BANDELLER           LOS PADILLAS
BEL AIR              LOS RANCHOS
BELLHAVEN           LOWELL
CARLOS REY           M.A. BINFORD
CHAMIZA              MACARTHUR
CHAPPARAL           MARIE HUGHES
CHELWOOD            MARK TWAIN
COCHITI              MISSION AVE
COLLET PARK          MITCHELL
COMANCHE             MONTE VISTA
CORRALES             MONTEZUMA
DENNIS CHAVEZ        NAVAJO
DOLORES GONZALES    NORTH STAR
DOUBLE EAGLE         OSUNA
DURANES              PAINTED SKY
EG ROSS              PAJARITO
EAST SAN JOSE        PETROGLYPH
EDWARD GONZALES      REGINALD CHAVEZ
EMERSON              RUDOLFO ANAYA
GEORGIA O’KEEEF      SUSIE R MARMON
GOVERNOR BENT        SY JACKSON
2018 NEWS RELEASE SUMMARIES

SAN ANTONITO STEM
SOMBRA DEL MONTE
TIERRA ANTIGUA
TOMASITA
VALLE VISTA
WHERRY
WHITTIER
ZIA
ZUNI TECHNOLOGY AND COMMUNICATION
CORRALES INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
MONTESSORI OF THE RIOGRANDE
COYOTE WILLOW FAMILY SCHOOL
DESERT WILLOW FAMILY SCHOOL
TRES VOLCANES COMMUNITY SCHOOL
SHINING STARS PRESCHOOL
CIELO AZUL
COLINAS DEL NORTE
ENCHANTED HILLS
ERNEST STAPLETON
MAGGIE CORDOVA
MARTIN LUTHER KING J.R.
PUESTA DEL SOL
RIO RANCHO
SANDIA VISTA
VISTA GRANDE
CONGRETATION ALBERT SANDIA VIEW CHRISTIAN SCHOOL
CHRIST LUTHERAN SCHOOL
NORTH VALLEY ACADEMY
ST CHARLES BORROMEO SCHOOL
STORY IDEAS

- Albuquerque Aloft – over 100 balloons launch from select Albuquerque and Rio Rancho schools prior to the start of Balloon Fiesta.
- Best wedding proposals at the Balloon Fiesta
- Cost to buy and operate a balloon
- Craziest memories/events from the balloon fiesta
- Favorite special shapes
- Fireworks shows and the people behind them
- Flying Competitions
- History of ballooning in Albuquerque
- Games for balloonists
- How special shapes balloons are manufactured
- How a balloon is built
- Why Albuquerque for the Balloons? -Weather
- How ground crews get the field in shape and ready
- Launch field watered with recycled water
- 78-acre field – size equal to 56 football fields
- Meteorologists
- Montgolfier Diplome – the most distinguished ballooning award
- New/foreign pilots
- Official photographers
- Oldest/newest sponsors
- Oldest/newest food concessionaire
- Oldest/youngest pilot
- Oldest/youngest volunteer
- Prizes and competitions
- RV cities on and near Balloon Fiesta Park during Balloon Fiesta
- Safety – what it takes to make a safe Balloon Fiesta on the ground and in the air
- Smallest/largest balloon
- World records set at Balloon Fiesta
- X Marks the Spot landing spaces
- Zebras – personalities and responsibilities
WHILE YOU’RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

Visitors to Albuquerque are treated to an authentic Southwestern experience. As one of the oldest cities in the U.S. (founded in 1706), Albuquerque boasts a unique multicultural heritage and history where Native American, Hispanic, Latino, Anglo, Western and other cultural influences are a part of everyday life. Nowhere is the confluence of past and present more dramatic than here in Albuquerque, where the modern city skyline is set against a backdrop of the ancient Sandia Mountains and an endless blue sky.

WHAT’S NEW

While exploring Albuquerque, you’ll notice the more than $300 million in hospitality investments reshaping the city’s skyline. Recent developments have brought several new hotels—including luxury property Hotel Chaco in the up-and-coming Sawmill District and the renovated historic El Vado Motel on Central Avenue (Route 66), the openings of Innovate ABQ—a 7-acre research and innovation center—and the One Central entertainment district, and a revitalized Civic Plaza downtown. With increased service at the Albuquerque International Sunport and a rapid transit system on the horizon, there has never been a better time to connect with this vibrant Southwestern city.

CULTURAL ATTRACTIONS

Albuquerque is home to more than 20 museums and cultural centers, featuring everything from art and history to turquoise and nuclear science. Historic Old Town offers more than 150 shops, restaurants and galleries. www.VisitABQ.org/culture

NATIVE AMERICAN PUEBLOS

Albuquerque is the gateway to Native American pueblo culture. The state is home to 23 Native American tribes comprising 19 pueblos, three Apache tribes (the Fort Sill Apache Tribe, the Jicarilla Apache Nation and the Mescalero Apache Tribe), and the Navajo Nation, which spreads through New Mexico, Arizona and Utah. For more information, visit the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. www.indianpueblo.org; (505) 843-7270

HISPANIC CULTURE

Explore an extensive collection of traditional and contemporary Hispanic art or experience an outdoor concert, dance performance or Spanish film at the National Hispanic Cultural Center. While there, don't miss the 4,000-foot Torreón Fresco, which celebrates 3,000 years of Hispanic history and is North America's largest concave fresco. www.nhccnm.org; (505) 246-2261

ARTS

Albuquerque’s incredible arts scene offers a vibrancy and color that mirrors the city and its residents. A multitude of cultures have inspired remarkable art and architectural styles in the city—including stunning public art installations. Galleries and museums showcase a range of artistic styles, offering a thriving arts scene with exhibitions featuring visual arts technology and new media, performance poetry, jewelry and much more. www.VisitABQ.org/art
WHILE YOU’RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

PERFORMING ARTS
More theatrical performances take place every weekend in Albuquerque than in any other U.S. city of its size, many with tickets ranging from $10-$15—even on weekends. Albuquerque's thriving arts community offers the chance to catch amazing live theater, dance, music, poetry and other performing arts at one of Albuquerque's many venues.

OUTDOOR RECREATION
With 310+ days of sunshine per year and an average altitude around 5,500 feet, Albuquerque and its neighboring two-mile-high Sandia Mountains provide excellent terrain for hiking and biking in the summer, and skiing or snowboarding in the winter. The city's location in a high desert rift valley also lends itself to hot air ballooning, cycling, affordable golfing, rock climbing, bouldering, geocaching, bird watching, fishing, rafting, kayaking, paddle boarding, llama trekking, horseback riding and much more throughout the year. www.VisitABQ.org/outdoors

CULINARY
New Mexican food is truly unique. The star ingredient is the chile pepper—our state vegetable. Harvested in the late summer while still green, the long, narrow peppers are served freshly roasted and peeled, or frozen for use throughout the year. Most often you'll find green chile made into a spicy sauce that's ladled over enchiladas, burritos and stuffed sopapillas. Red chile peppers, left on the plants to ripen to a deep garnet color, are strung into ristras to dry. These dried red chile peppers are rehydrated and pureed into a velvety smooth sauce that adorns huevos rancheros, tamales and enchiladas—served stacked, not rolled. Our state question is “red or green?” If you want both, answer “Christmas” to order like a local.

Aside from traditional New Mexican food, the city's culinary scene is a cultural melting pot with Italian, French, Brazilian, Indian, Chinese, Thai, Latin and more. A blend of upscale establishments and casual comfort food is sprinkled throughout the city, allowing for a scene that's always deliciously accessible. www.VisitABQ.org/cuisine

WINE & BEER
New Mexico is the oldest wine-growing region in the country, and area wineries offer tastings and tours. The city is also home to an ever-growing number of local microbreweries and taprooms, and the nation's first officially designated Brewery District. www.VisitABQ.org/wine-beer

[CONTINUED]
WHILE YOU’RE IN ALBUQUERQUE

MAJOR ATTRACTIONS

ABQ BioPark
The ABQ BioPark is an award-winning environmental museum comprising four facilities: Aquarium, Botanic Garden, Zoo and Tingley Beach. The Aquarium is now home to a brand-new River Otter exhibit, the new Butterflies and Bees exhibit just opened at the Botanic Garden, and the Zoo will soon house a new Penguin Chill exhibit. Combo tickets can be purchased which include admission and train rides between applicable locations. www.cabq.gov/biopark; (505) 768-2000

SANDIA PEAK AERIAL TRAMWAY & SKI AREA

Sandia Peak Aerial Tramway & Ski Area
North America’s longest aerial tramway travels 2.7 miles from the base of the Sandia foothills northeast of Albuquerque to the 10,378-foot Sandia Peak. During the winter, the Sandia Peak Ski Area is a popular destination. In the summer, enjoy the cool temperatures and fresh mountain air while riding a chairlift, mountain biking or hiking on top of the peak. www.sandiapeak.com; (505) 856-7325

PETROGLYPH NATIONAL MONUMENT

More than 20,000 images are carved into black rocks at Petroglyph National Monument, providing an opportunity for people today to share the cultures of those who long ago inhabited the Rio Grande Valley. The monument provides a variety of hiking opportunities from basic, nearly flat hikes to moderate hikes of several miles. www.nps.gov/petr; (505) 897-8814

GOLF IN ALBUQUERQUE

Green fees are considerably less expensive on our golf courses than at comparable courses around the country. The Albuquerque area offers a plethora of public and private courses in varying levels of difficulty, several of which are on Native American land. www.VisitABQ.org/golf

FILM PRODUCTION IN ALBUQUERQUE

MovieMaker magazine has ranked Albuquerque as a “Top 10 Movie City” several times. “Breaking Bad” and “Better Call Saul” have put Albuquerque in the spotlight in recent years and have drawn visitors from around the world. A snapshot of recent film and TV projects includes:

- The Goldfinch
- Whiskey Tango Foxtrot
- Independence Day: Resurgence
- Sicario
- The Avengers
- Terminator Salvation
- Transformers
- The Book of Eli
- In Plain Sight
- The Lone Ranger
- Crazy Heart
- and many more!

www.VisitABQ.org/film

AROUND THE CITY DURING BALLOON FIESTA

Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® presented by Canon
During the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta® Presented by Canon, the city is a flurry of activity. After you have covered every inch of the festival, check out VisitABQ.org/BalloonFiesta2018 for additional events and activities. Thank you for visiting Albuquerque!
NOTES
KEY CONTACTS

TOM GARRITY
Media@balloonfiesta.com
tom@garritypr.com
Twitter: @tom_garrity
Instagram: @tomgarrity
Mobile Phone: 505-710-6567

AMANDA MOLINA
Media@balloonfiesta.com
amanda@garritypr.com
Twitter: @ABQAmanda
Instagram: @abqamanda
Mobile Phone: 505-610-0753

ABQ TRAVEL EXPERTS

BRENNA MOORE
Visit Albuquerque
Media@VisitABQ.org
Office: (505) 222-4349

TRACY COX
Visit Albuquerque
SocialMedia@VisitABQ.org
Office: (505) 222-4340
Recognized as one of the most culturally diverse cities in the country, Albuquerque’s ethnic tapestry is reflected in its architecture, artwork, cultural centers and cuisine. Countless customs and traditions are a vibrant part of daily life in the city, making Albuquerque the cultural capital of the Southwest.

1. The Albuquerque metro area has just over 900,000 RESIDENTS.

2. The city spans 187 square miles at elevations ranging from 4,500 TO 6,500 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL.

3. The BREAKFAST BURRITO is said to have originated at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta in the 1970s.

4. The Sandia Mountains on the city’s east side rise to more than 10,600 feet in elevation and turn a WATERMELON PINK COLOR AT SUNSET.

5. The official New Mexico state question is, “RED OR GREEN?” referring to red or green chile when ordering New Mexican cuisine. For those who want both red and green chile, tell the server, “Christmas.”

6. Albuquerque is home to MORE THAN 20 MUSEUMS AND CULTURAL CENTERS, a HISTORIC OLD TOWN area featuring more than 150 shops, galleries and restaurants, and a NOSTALGIC STRETCH OF ROUTE 66 that combines ancient and modern for an exciting visitor experience.

7. The biscochito, a small anise-flavored cookie, is THE OFFICIAL NEW MEXICO STATE COOKIE.

From balloon-filled skies to neon-lit streets, give your best shots the chance to be featured on our @VISITABQ social pages by tagging your photos with the hashtag #TRUEABQ.

Did you know that the Balloon Fiesta is the world’s most photographed event? Commemorate your visit with a photo inside Albuquerque’s life-sized picture frame. IT’S FREE! The frame is located midfield at the ALBUQUERQUE VISITOR INFORMATION BOOTH.