

2024

Ohio Challenge

OPERATIONS MANUAL



Middletown, Ohio
July 19 – 21, 2024

This manual is part of the application process for issuance of a FAA Certificate of Waiver or Authorization (FAA Form 7711-2), with attachments and special provisions for a manned free balloon competition. This Balloon Competition handbook is for The Ohio Challenge Middletown, Ohio. The competition is under the direction of the Balloon Federation of America.

Table of Contents

Event Staff..... 3

Emergency Numbers 3

Duties of Personnel..... 4

Registration and Airworthiness Determination 4

Pilot and Event Flight Crew members..... 4

Pilot Crew Briefing Procedures 4

Event Documentation..... 5

Clear Areas 5

Crowd Control Requirements 5

Landowner Relations/Notification 5

Area of Operations 6

Types of Operations..... 6

Altitudes 6

Weather Requirements.....7

Communications Requirements / RECALL.....7

Air Traffic Coordination7

Site Map8

Cincinnati Sectional..... 9

Ohio Challenge Competition Map.....10

SCHEDULE - 2024.....11

Acknowledgement of Responsibility and Briefing.....12

Release of all Claims.....13

2024 Pilots Roster.....14

EVENT STAFF AND OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Balloon Competition Staff

Shawn Raya	Competition Director	248-762-5843
Ginger Bruggeman	Pilot Registration/Housing	513-594-1438
Mark Frazer	Pilot Committee Chairman	513-267-9947
Sean Askren	Safety Officer	513-594-9070
Andrew Nels	Weather Officer	937-270-6951
Amy Tasker	Chief Scorer/Back room	989-330-3031
Debbie Itel	Remote targets	513-479-7097
Vickie Withrow	Remote Targets	513-320-4343
Derek Fiessinger	Remote Target	513-804-8876
Amber Hyman	Volunteer Coordinator	513-435-7127
Mark Frazer	Volunteer Crew coordinator	513-267-9947
Bill (driver)	Miami Valley Propane	513-433-4265
Mark Frazer	Landowner Relations	513-267-9947

Event Staff

Kathy Stites	Manager	513-435-1199
Dave Pearce	Event Chairman	513-312-8984
Amber Hyman	Event Volunteer Coordinator	513-435-7127
Mark Frazer	Pilot Committee Chairman	513-267-9947

Emergency Numbers

Middletown Police	Emergency/Non-emergency	911/ 513-425-7700
Butler County Sheriff	Emergency/Non-emergency	911/ 513-785-1300
Deputy Doug Hale	Event Command Center	513-615-7675
Warren County Sheriff	Emergency/Non-emergency	911/ 513-695-1315
Duke Electric	Powerline Strike	800-543-5599

More Extensive Details are available in the 2024 Emergency Action Plan for this Hot Air Balloon Event.

SECTION I – PURPOSE

This manual is submitted as a part of an application for a waiver of Title 14 of the Code of federal Regulations (14 CFR) part 91, §§ 91.119(b) and (c), by The Ohio Challenge specifically, the waiver will allow officially registered balloons to operate at an altitude of no less than 500 feet above the highest obstacle within a 500 feet horizontal radius of a balloon in route to the target within a 10 nautical mile radius of the designated launch field or goal. It will also allow for officially registered balloons to operate at 75 feet AGL above spectators and to set goals and/or targets at a minimum distance of 200 feet from physical barriers provided for spectator control. The waiver will also allow officially registered balloons to descend to the surface over open water or sparsely populated areas including declared targets, but no closer than 200 feet from any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.

No waiver is requested nor is waiver required by 14 CFR for any mass ascensions or pilot choice launches.

SECTION II - RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

Duties of Personnel

Director	Shawn Raya
Competition Director	Shawn Raya
FAA Liaison	Shawn Raya
Safety Officer	Sean Askren
Weather Officer	Andrew Nels
Landowner Relations	Mark Frazer

Registration and Airworthiness Determination

Balloons flown at the event must have current certificates of registration and airworthiness, or in place of the latter, an equivalent document from the Federal Aviation Administration. Throughout the event, the Safety Officer or his designee(s), and appropriate FAA personnel, will be consulted as necessary. Updates for all pilot records will be reviewed by key Staff upon Registration of all Pilots and be available for FAA review.

Pilot and Event Flight Crew members

Each pilot must hold the appropriate pilot certificate (Private or Commercial) with Lighter-Than-Air Category and Free Class Rating and have a minimum of 50 hours as pilot in command (PIC). Student pilots are prohibited from flying as PIC during this event. Each pilot must show evidence of current Flight review (14 CFR part 61, §61.56) and must show evidence of currency per §61.57.

Event flight crew members carried on board a balloon during the event must have been briefed by the pilot in command (PIC) of the balloon and must attend the pilot briefing for that flight. Each event flight crew member must sign the waiver form supplied by the PIC. Each event flight crew member must attest that they have attended the applicable pilot briefing(s) and have read and understand the conditions of the waiver. During competition and fiesta flights, the event flight crew members will be kept to a minimum and are limited to a maximum of two per balloon. As long as the number of event flight crewmembers specified does not exceed the respective balloon flight manual.

Pilot Crew Briefing Procedures

All pilots are required to sign a statement indicating that they have read and understand the provisions of the waiver and the official event operation manual prior to any flight.

Before each flight all pilots must attend the flight briefing & will sign in at the briefing.

Letter of Agreement / Statement of Responsibility

Each pilot will sign a letter of agreement and statement acknowledging their responsibilities under the FARs as related to The Ohio Challenge. Copies of all Records will be kept by the Event Organizer.

Event Documentation

All relevant registration files, pilot registration information, task data sheets, , etc. will be maintained by the organizer at least 60 days after the event and will be made available to the FAA Monitor upon request. Competition maps and task sheets will also be available at pilot briefings.

SECTION III - GROUND OPERATIONS

Clear Areas

Clear areas are established at each target site. These areas are kept clear of spectators and are frequently fenced. Scoring officials will police target sites to keep unauthorized persons out. In the Minimum Altitude Diagram, this is referred to as the Target Area.”

Certain competitive tasks have predetermined goals associated with the intersection of two minor public roads or a public road and a railroad where strict control by event officials must be maintained in the interests of public safety and preservation of results where markers are dropped.

Spectator Areas

The primary competitive spectator area is located at the main launch site located within the Ohio Challenge event at Smith Park Middletown, Ohio. Physical barriers around the launch site initiate crowd control, and target areas are controlled by scoring officials. Official and balloon recovery vehicles are parked in restricted areas. Traffic is controlled by local police as required. The use of existing and temporary barriers serves to restrict spectators from the potential low-level flight areas in and around goals/targets. It should be noted that the flight of a balloon occurs at sufficiently slow speeds that people have ample opportunity to move away and stand well clear from approaching balloons as directed by event safety officials.

Competitive goals/targets set outside the primary launch field in remote areas attract few, if any, spectators beyond those directly involved in event operations (officials and crew). Scoring and measuring officials control these areas as determined by conditions and will isolate the area surrounding the goal/target from any unauthorized personnel.

When goals are located on public roads extra caution will be taken by the officials on site to protect themselves, the motoring public, and all bystanders, particularly where markers are dropped and need to be accurately measured before they are moved.

Crowd Control Requirements

Local law enforcement as well as committee security personnel under the direction of the Safety Officer will provide crowd control.

Landowner Relations/Notification

Positive landowner relations are crucial to the continuance of competitive ballooning. There is an ongoing effort by all involved persons, prior to, during, and after a competitive event to maintain good landowner relations. Additionally, as per Rule 9.3, pilots must obtain permission to launch from private property; and per Rule 10.6, pilots are required to be extra vigilant and careful to minimize endangering livestock and avoid damaging crops. Landowners may request that their properties be designated as Prohibitive Zones (PZ) on the competition map, per Rule 7.3.

SECTION IV - FLIGHT OPERATIONS

Area of Operations

Flight operations will occur at altitudes up to 7,000' AGL within a 10 nautical mile radius of the primary launch field as identified earlier at Smith Park located in Middletown, Ohio. as indicated on the official competition map. Final landings may occur beyond this distance, but no goals/targets, pilot choice take-offs, or mass ascensions will exceed these boundaries.

Types of Operations

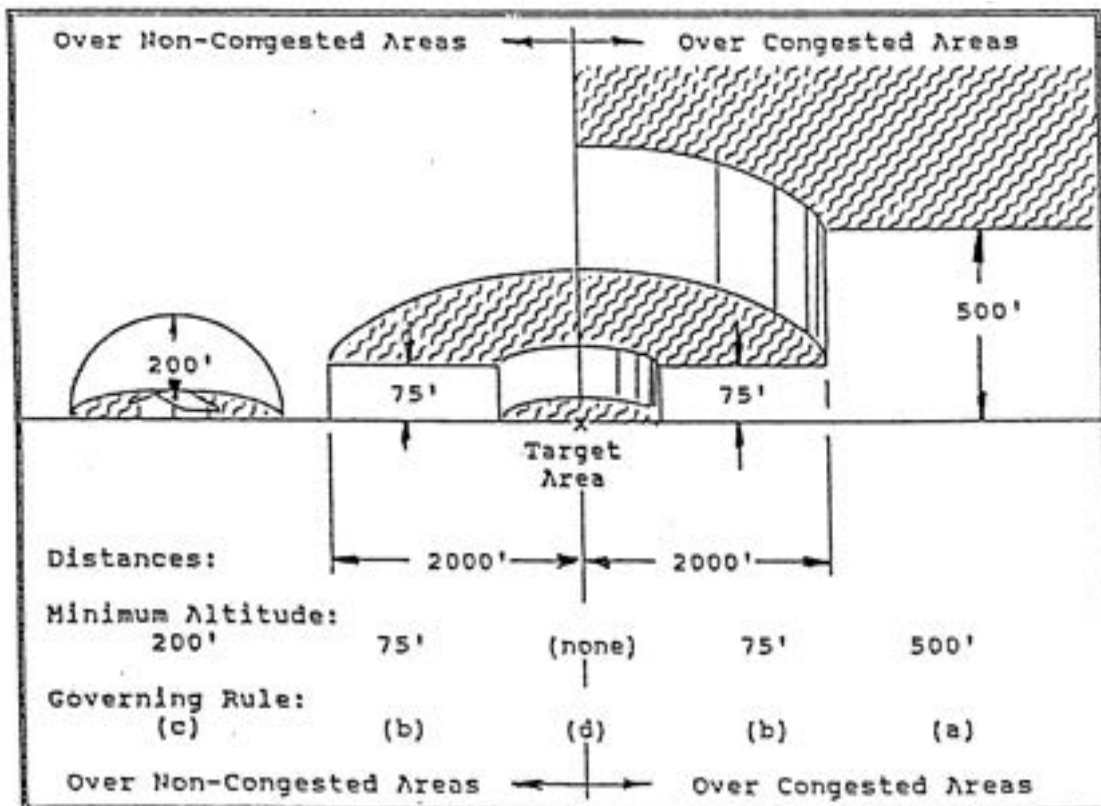
The event will consist of single and multiple tasks called by the Events Competition Director after consultation with other competition officials and the FAA Monitor, if available, considering present conditions and the forecast available to develop anticipated flight parameters. All task descriptions are explained in Chapter 15 of the 2023 BFA Rules, Regulations, Policies, & Procedures. This 60+ page document is posted for all competitors at www.bfa.net and is available upon request.

Altitudes

The registered balloons will be allowed to make approaches to targets and/or goals within the designated areas.

- a) Over congested areas, at altitudes of not less than 500 feet above the highest obstacle within a 500-foot horizontal radius of the balloon.
- b) Within 2,000 feet of a target or goal site, allow flight above, but not less than 75 feet from, any open-air assembly of persons (designated spectator area) under the direct control of the event organizer. The balloons must have attained a state of altitude equilibrium at this 75-foot minimum altitude and shall not descend while passing over spectator areas.
- c) To allow flight over open water or sparsely populated areas, no closer than 200 feet horizontally to any person, vessel, vehicle, or structure.
- d) No balloon shall descend faster than 300 feet per minute while below 200 feet above ground level
- e) At any altitude within a controlled target area or corridor cleared of spectators

In order to provide the highest possible level of safety for spectators, the scoring officials will be positioned among spectators to allow crowds to be shifted as necessary and to provide warning regarding any markers that may be dropped in spectator areas. Announcements over the public address system (if available) will also advise spectators of the possibilities of both low flying balloons and markers being dropped in spectator areas.



Weather Requirements

Flight operations will be conducted during the period from published Sunrise to Sunset, under Visual Flight Rules (VFR) and weather conditions as specified in 14 CFR part 91 §91.155. The maximum demonstrated surface winds must be 10 knots or less.

The decision to fly is the sole responsibility of the PIC and the decision of whether to hold a task is the sole responsibility of the Events Assistant Director, which will result from consultation with appropriate event officials and the FAA Monitor (if available).

Communications Requirements / RECALL

Primarily by the required pilot briefing! Most pilots carry either FM, CB, or aircraft radios and some communication is possible by radio.

Pilots will be asked to provide their cell phone number and that of their crew chief at registration. The number should be one that is always operational during the event. While the primary use of the number is for Emergency RECALL, we may also use the number to make contact to resolve flight and scoring issues, follow up on missing markers or loggers, and propane refueling status.

Air Traffic Coordination

A NOTAM will be requested from Lockheed-Martin Information Technology at 877-487-6867 advising air traffic of numerous balloons in the area at varying altitudes from **Friday July 19 4PM** to July 21 10 AM. during the three hours immediately after sunrise and three hours prior to sunset. Middletown Airport will be closed from 4 PM to 10PM to non-event traffic.

ATTACHMENTS

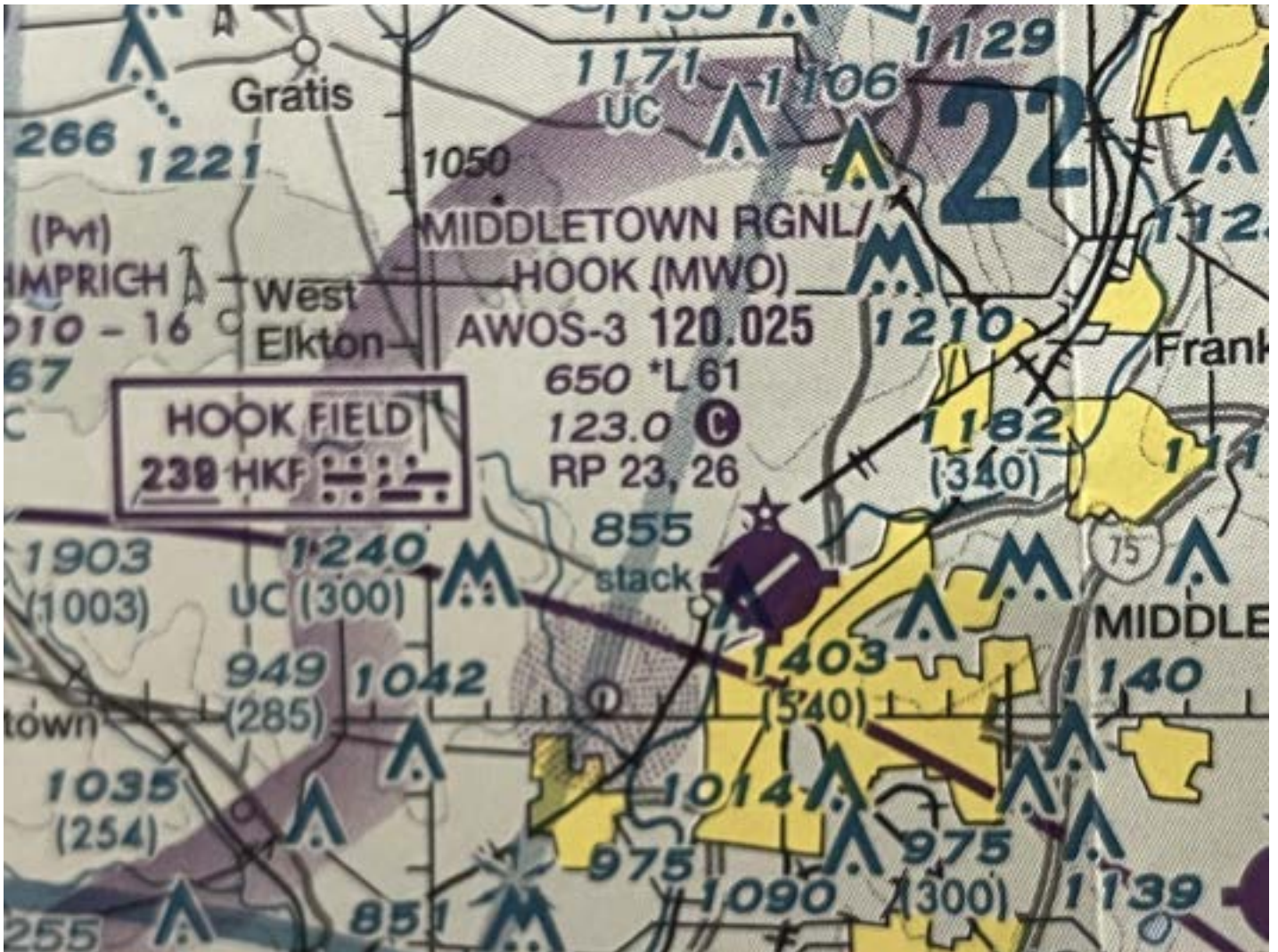
Attachments are specific to this event.

Site map

This is the schematic diagram of the event field. The grey area measures 780ft east to west and 250 feet north to south. It has restricted access by the audience during active skydiving landings and hot air balloon inflation and deflation. Vendors line the southern "V" of this diagram and audience is south of the grey launch/target area. Grey area is located 2350/7840 on competition map.



Cincinnati Sectional



Competition Map

Full size competition map with UTM grid using WGS 84 Map Datum available to all registered pilots and officials at registration.



Ohio Challenge 2024 Competitive Schedule

Pilot/Crew Schedule

Friday July 19	sunset 9:00 PM	
3 to 5 PM	registration FAA review	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality
5 P.M.	event info/safety briefing	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality
5:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.	pilot/crew meal	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality
6:30 P.M.	weather briefing	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality Tent
7:00 P.M.	fly out flight/key grab	Smith Park
9:15 to 9:45 P.M.	glow (1/2 balloons)	Smith Park (card distribution)
10:00 to 11:00 P.M.	propane refill	Water Works Entrance Off Columbia Ave.
Saturday A.M. July 20	sunrise 6:28 A.M.	
6:00 A.M.	flight briefing	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality Tent
6:30 A.M.	Competitive Flight	
8:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.	propane refill	Miami Valley Propane 6675 Chrisman Ln Middletown
Saturday P.M. July 20	sunset 9:00 P.M.	
4:30 to 5:30 P.M.	Pilot meet and greet	Launch Field balloon cards
5:30 P.M. to 6:30 P.M.	picnic meal	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality Tent
6:30 P.M.	weather briefing	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality Tent
7:00 P.M.	fly out flight/ key grab	Smith Park
9:00 to 9:45 P.M.	glow (1/2 balloons)	Smith Park (card distribution)
10:00 to 11:00 P.M.	propane refill	Water Works Entrance
Sunday July 21	Sunrise 6:29 A.M.	
6:00 A.M.	flight briefing	Smith Park Pilot Hospitality Tent
6:30 A.M.	Competitive Flight	
8:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M.	propane refill	Miami Valley Propane 6675 Chrisman Ln Middletown

Use of launch area 7 to 10 PM – Balloons have priority access during this time.

Fly Out balloon launch window 7 to 8:15, Fly In balloons can land as late as 9 PM,

Special Shapes start set up once fly out completed in launch area

Parachute jumps :

- 6 P.M. Opening jump with American Flag landing in drop zone/ balloon launch field
- 8:30 P.M. Flag jump landing on airport (May use launch field if no balloon activity due to weather)
- 9:45 P.M. Pyrotechnics night jump landing on airport

Flight Crew Acknowledgement of Responsibility

Please Print:

Pilot Name: _____

First

Middle

Last

date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY AND BRIEFING

Provisions permit crew to be carried during competition but require that the number be kept to a maximum of two (2). Please have all crew sign the Flight Crew Acknowledgement of Responsibility form. Have all your crew sign the enclosed form and maintain this form throughout the weekend. You may be asked to produce this document by an FAA representative. I hereby acknowledge that:

- a) I have received appropriate training concerning my duties relative to the event; **Initials:** _____
- b) I have attended the pilot and crew member briefing before each event; **Initials:** _____
- c) I have been designated Event Flight Crew member for the purpose of this event. **Initials:** _____

RELEASE OF ALL CLAIMS

In consideration of the agreement to permit me to be a designated flight crew member, on behalf of myself, my heirs, successors, executors, administrators, and legal representatives (collectively "I") do hereby release and forever discharge the The Ohio Challenge, financial sponsors of the balloons, race officials and their respective officers, event directors, trustees, agents, members, employees, successors and assigns, and each of them, from any and all claims, demands, damages, actions and causes of action of every name and nature, anticipated or unanticipated, which I may have against any of the aforementioned organizations and persons, which may arise out of or result from or in any manner be connected with the balloon flight or activity in which I participate as a designated flight crew member. Balloon flight or activity includes but is not limited to the preparation, take-off, flight, landing, and boarding, pack-up or travel to or from the take-off or landing areas, including ground transportation thereto.

I certify that I am at least 18 years of age, and that I have no medical or mental condition that prevents me from participating in the ballooning activities or from executing this Agreement. Further, I understand and acknowledge that ballooning activities are hazardous activities and that there is a possibility that those participating could be injured and/or killed while participating. Finally, I understand that I am being permitted to be a designated crew member only on the condition that I grant a full and complete release of all claims that may arise against the organizations and persons designated herein as a result of any injuries (including death) or damages that I may suffer as a result of or arising out of the balloon flight or activities.

This Agreement was entered into in Ohio and shall be enforced and interpreted under Ohio law. Should any clauses in this Agreement be in conflict with state law, then only that clause shall be null and void while the remaining clauses shall remain in full force and effect

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I hereunto set my hand at Middletown, Ohio, this ____ day of July, 2024

_____	_____	_____
PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	Date
_____	_____	_____
PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	Date
_____	_____	_____

Crew Pre-Flight Checklist:

- No Smoking around the Balloon
- Listen for instructions from pilot, Crew Chief, or another Crew
- Don't walk on the balloon
- Stand Clear of ropes and the fan
- Be aware of the balloon's movements while inflating.
- Be ready to go when the balloon is upright, board carefully
- Do not interfere with ropes, tanks, or instruments on board
- Feel Free to point out obstacles to the Pilot during flight

Crew Landing Checklist

- No smoking around the balloon
- Listen for directions from the Pilot
- Stow any loose gear securely
- Use a firm handhold as directed
- Bend your knees and keep your joints flexible, not locked.
- Be prepared for the balloon to "bounce two or three times" or skid upon landing.
- Stay in the basket and hold on until instructed to exit
- Be Respectful of property owners
- Remember to take your personal belongings with you.

Pilot Roster

As of 6/25/2024

#	First Name	Last Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Email	Cell Phone	Crew Chief Phone	PIC Hours	Ins coverage	N #
2	Mark	Frazer	1809 Schirm Drive	Middletown	OH	45042	mefvcf@gmail.com	(513) 267-9947	(513) 267-2631	669	RPSALZ22330370	8069F
3	Joey	Strutz	2031 Pine Hollow Trl	Brighton	MI	48114	joeytstrutz@gmail.com	(810) 986-6118	(517) 294-4246	176	RPSALZ22400061	31010
4	William	Sterner	5950 Conner Ct, 5950	Oxford	MI	48371	beneficialbill@gmail.com	(248)969-8800	(248) 421-8885	1024	RPSALZ22200623	910NZ
5	Chad	Crabtree	5375 Wakley Dr	Delton	MI	49046	Balloonman911@yahoo.com	(269)804-1926	(269) 908-0370	165	RPSALZ22300680	780HS
6	Benjamin	Miller	1015 HARTSHORN ST	Alliance	OH	44601	bjmille2@kent.edu	(330)936-6401	(330) 812-4187	400	HAB005269702	270SS
7	Robert Ryan	Duff	23220 CHAGRIN BLVD APT 395	BEACHWOOD	OH	44122	rrduff11@gmail.com	(505) 269-3071	(616) 255-2457	160	HAB005291901	933RD
8	Ben	Leatherman	10781 3 Mile Road	East Leroy	MI	49051	Leathermanlawncare@gmail.com	(269) 274-7041	(269) 274-7041	113	HAB005294501	665ZL
9	Elizabeth	McClurg	1065 Two Rd 803	Ashland	OH	44805	hotairhullaballoons@gmail.com	(567) 215-6965	(419) 651-8733	52	HAB005285202	5313S
10	Lori	Nowak	1763 Arapaho Dr	Xenia	OH	45385	lori.nowak@gmail.com	(937) 269-6716	(937) 546-0697	63	HAB005277202	3079K
11	Ken	Draughn	2834 McKinney Street	Burlington	NC	27217	kendraughn@aol.com	(336) 260-4725	TBD	1700	RPSALZ22300196	612KD
12	Andrew	Nels	3487 Vikings North Way	Smyrna	GA	30080	ajnels88@gmail.com	(937)270-6951	(678) 427-4362	400	RPSALZ22300389	316AN
13	Chris	Jessee	6548 Michael Road	Middletown	OH	45042	cjessee@miamivalleyits.com	(513) 997-9512	(513) 571-4286	210	RPSALZ223301214	6102C
14	Sean	Askren	217 Kenwood Dr	Middletown	OH	45042	aironut1@yahoo.com	(513)594-9070	(513) 594-1601	3000	HAB ?	6951A
15	James	Cusick	16649 County Home Road	Marysville	OH	43040	jfcusick1@gmail.com	(614) 204-3982	(440) 413-6700	560	RPSALZ22300244	377JL
16	Mike	Gliatti	1945 N Waynesville Rd	Oregonia	OH	45054	mike@shipexpressdelivery.com	(513)616-7911	(513) 850-3737	1160	RPSALZ22300302	105HM
17	Dan	Steeley	3578 crab orchard ave	Beavercreek	OH	45430	dsteeley@sbcglobal.net	(937) 477-3872	(937) 573-1834	333	HAB00522302	65632
18	Dean	Clodfelder	507 Glen Oaks Dr	Marysville	OH	43040	dean.clodfelder@gmail.com	(513) 910-9314	(937) 239-1088	130	HAB005274001	766DS
19	Nick	Donner	16410 Donnington Ct	Louisville	KY	40245	pibal1984@gmail.com	(502) 802-9153	(502) 802-9153	2000	RPSALZ6397611	9005N
20	Shawn	Raya	659 Inverness	Highland	MI	48357	n1308r@gmail.com	(248)762-5843	(248) 496-3620	2346	RPSALZ22300439	430SR
21	Steve	Shute	1067 woods road	Richmond	IN	47374	Shute44@aol.com	(765) 967-7902	(765) 967-7902	47.7	RPSALZ22101382	2083K
22	Philip	Garver	1367 Barton Ln.	LEBANON	OH	45036	phil.garver@gmail.com	(937) 974-3097	(614) 296-3932	47	HAB0052642	3110E
23	Randy	Wells	139 Sylvania Dr	Beavercreek	OH	45440	randy@r-wells.com	(937) 474-0422	(440) 225-4491	35.8	RPSALZ223301243	203HD
24	Jonathan	Hodge	1394 maureen ave	Madison Heights	MI	48071	hotairballooner56@gmail.com	(248) 850-0441	(248) 379-8239	170		665DL
25	James	Hodge	17807 se 84th sheldon ter	The Villages	FL	32162	gymhodge@gmail.com	(248) 420-2104	(248) 797-2104	916.7	STARR1000643831-01	63682
26	Richard	Cusick	2825 YOAKAM RD	Lima	OH	45806	cusick.rj@gmail.com	(419) 303-1411	(419) 303-1411	1200	RPSALZ223301403	5313R
27	Jerry	Copas	2012 Perry Crossing Rd	Sellersburg	IN	47172	imagesalft@aol.com	(502) 645-4370		1000	RPSALZ	101CF
28	Jack	Semler					pilot@indyhotair.com				RPSALZ22300667	315LL
29	Jack	Semler									RPSALZ22300667	905LS
30	Andrew	Brindley					acbrindley@gmail.com				Acrisure	
31	Michael	Stinson					michael@xclusiveballoons.com				RPSALZ223300865	120SM
	Michael	Stinson										5007P