

## Sam Parks, Biography

Former Owner-President, Parks Quality Air, Inc. (27 years), sold company in 2018  
Former Owner-President, Parks Balloon Aviation, Inc. (29 years)

Director of Operations, Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (2018-2022)  
Executive Director, Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (2023)  
Executive Director, Carolina Balloon Fest 2024-  
Executive Director, Carolina Balloon Museum 2024-

Obtained LTA private pilots license 1988  
Advanced to commercial rating 1989  
Advanced to gas balloon rating 2000  
1,650 total hours of flight time in all balloons  
180 hours in Gas Balloons

Founding member and past President, Iredell Aeronauts Society  
Past President, Carolinas Balloon Association  
Member, Balloon Federation of America  
Member, Hot Air Competition Division  
Member, Gas Balloon Division  
Member, National Aeronautic Association  
Member AAAA Balloon Club  
Past Board Member, National Balloon Rally Charities, Inc.  
Past Chairman, Balloon Federation of America Hot Air Competition Division  
Past Balloon Federation of America Southeast Region Board Member (elected 2012)  
Past President, Balloon Federation of America  
Alternate Delegate CIA (appointed in 2016)  
President and Founding Member Aero Club of America, North Carolina Chapter LLC  
(Gas Balloon Club with the goal of training pilots and promoting safe Hydrogen gas ballooning in America)  
Board Member THE BALLOON MUSEUM (Statesville, NC)  
Board Member Gas Balloon Division of the Balloon Federation of America (2021-present)  
Co-Chair NFPA-58 Committee (2017) To create new rules that would allow the continuation of LP refueling in Hot Air Balloon fuel cylinders  
Chair NFPA-2 Committee (2021) To create new rules that would allow hydrogen to be used to fill gas balloons.  
Member: Call to Action Committee. Formed after Lockhart balloon accident to communicate directly with FAA on regulation issues.

Director, 1989 Low hour pilots rally, Statesville, NC  
Director, 1990 National Balloon Rally, Statesville, NC  
Director, 1991-1996 Lowe's Balloons over the Blue Ridge, N. Wilkesboro, NC  
Director, 1993-1998 Alamance Balloon Fest, Burlington, NC

Director, 2006 Carolina Balloonfest, BFA Southeast Regional Championship Statesville, NC

Director, 2011-2017 Carolina Balloonfest Statesville, NC

Director, 2010-2014 Freedom Weekend Aloft, Simpsonville, SC

Director, 2015-2017 Freedom Balloonfest, Raleigh, NC

Assistant Balloonmeister, 2011 & 2012 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Balloonmeister, 2013-2018 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Balloonmeister, 2024-2025 Festival International Del Globo, Leon, Guanajuato, Mexico

Deputy Director, 2011-2017 America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race

Director, 2019, 2021 America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race

Competition Director, 2012-2014 Southeast Regional Championship, Simpsonville, SC

Competition Director, 2007 Southeast Regional Championship, Baton Rouge LA

Competition Director, 2007 Louisiana State Championship, Baton Rouge LA

Championship Director, 2021-2022 Jr. US Nationals Hot Air Balloon Championship Par

Championship Director, 2021-2024 Great Texas Balloon Race

Championship Director, Young Guns 2023-2024

Championship Director, US Nationals Championship, 2023-2024-2025 Longview Texas

Deputy Director, 2016-17 US National Hot Air Balloon Championship, Shreveport LA

Deputy Director: SW Region Championship-New Mexico State Championship 2023

Safety Officer, 1998-2005 & 2008 National Balloon Rally, Statesville, NC

Steward, 2010 19<sup>th</sup> World Hot Air Balloon Championships, Debrecen Hungary

Steward, 2012 20<sup>th</sup> World Hot Air Balloon Championship, Battle Creek MI USA

Organizer and Launchmeister 66<sup>th</sup> Coupe Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race 2023

Deputy Director: 67<sup>th</sup> Coupe Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race, Munster Germany 2024

Deputy Director: 68<sup>th</sup> Coupe Gordon Bennett Gas Balloon Race, Metz, France 2025

Committee Member, 2011 Balloon Federation of America Event Guidelines Manual

Co-Chair, BFA/FAA Call to Action Committee to develop action plan to improve safety in Ballooning.

Chair, BFA Safety and Education Committee

Member, CIA Competitors Sub-Committee

North Carolina State Champion, 1994,1995,1996,1997,2003,2004,2005, 2007, 2009, 2010,2013

Champion, 1994 Fools and Ghouls Balloon Race, Wilson, NC

Champion, 2000 National Balloon Rally, Statesville, NC

Champion, 2005 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Anderson, SC

Champion, 2006 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Anderson, SC

Champion, 2007 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Simpsonville, SC

3<sup>rd</sup> Place 2008 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Simpsonville, SC

3<sup>rd</sup> Place 2011 Great Texas Balloon Race, Longview TX

Runner-up, (Silver Medal) 2003 Balloon Federation of America Hot Air Balloon National Championship, Anderson, SC

Runner-up, 2007 Kentucky Derby Balloon Race, Louisville, KY

Member, 2004 United States team competing in the World Championships in Australia

Balloon Federation of America Award of excellence, 1995  
Balloon Federation of America, Distinguished Aeronaut award 2003 (highest award in the Pilot Achievement Award Program)  
Balloon Federation of America Director's Award 2007  
Balloon Federation of America President's Award 2017  
Balloon Federation of America Shields-Trauger Award 2022  
The Sid Cutter Award (AAAA 2019)  
Lindstrand Hot Air Balloons, US dealer of the year 1997  
FAI Group Diploma of Honor (Aero Club of America) 2015 For their significant contribution to the progress of Aeronautics through their significant contribution to the progress of gas ballooning in USA.  
FAI Montgolfier Diploma: For Contributions to the sport of Ballooning: 2025

Ballooning Safety Seminar Organizer and Presenter  
Balloon Event consultant  
Member Savannah Six world record balloon flight team 2005

Managed corporate balloon programs for such companies as: CargoLifter, Husqvarna outdoor equipment, Sagebrush Steakhouse and Saloon, First Union Bank, Lake Norman Magazine, City of Statesville, Stiles and Company/SEP Construction Company, Parks Quality Air

In addition, flown corporate balloons for the following: Pontiac, Burger King, Cadillac, Oldsmobile, Ball Park Franks, Archway Cookies, BFI Industries, Jeep Eagle, WJZY TV, WFMX Radio, Foxcroft Temporaries, Lowe's Hardware, US Postal Service, GMC Curves, Tran Orthodontics, Accent Marketing, Smokey Bear, Touchstone Energy

Flown balloons in Canada, France, Japan, Australia, Austria, Mexico, Switzerland and Germany

Personal:  
Born in 1960  
Native of Statesville, NC  
Residency: Statesville, NC  
Married 44 years Winna C. Parks  
Member: Monticello Methodist Church, Past Chairman of the Church Administration Board.

Past Chairman, Dale Beatty home project; a project to build a Handicap home for a local National Guardsman who lost both legs in Iraq

Past Board Chairman, Monticello Volunteer Fire Department

