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Committee:

Chair-Maria Langendorf
Event Manager-Paula Hale
Treasurer-Scott Richardson
Past Chairs/Operational Logistics:
-Rodney Hale
-David Pearce
-Dan Sack

Balloon Pilots-Dr. Mark Frazer
Pilot Services/Past Chair-
Ginger Bruggeman
Team Fastrax Skydivers-David Hart
Publicist-Ann Mort

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
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5.3.2011

MIDUSA HOT AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL ADDS COMPETITION LEVEL

It will be possible to claim two championships at one event this year at the MidUSA Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival to be held July 15-17, at Smith Park/Middletown Regional Airport in downtown Middletown.

The Balloon Federation of America has sanctioned the Ohio Challenge since its beginning with all pilots competing for points toward their national standing and the possibility of landing one of the 50 slots in the annual national competition as they compete for the Ohio Challenge trophy.

In 2011, for the first time, pilots from Ohio will have an added incentive, a chance to become the Ohio State Champion with automatic qualification for the Nationals.

Balloonmeister for the Challenge and BFA competition official Maury Sullivan of Canton, Ohio said, "Adding the Ohio State Hot Air Balloon Championship to the MidUSA Ohio Challenge IX is extremely exciting for all Ohio pilots. The addition of the State Championship will be seamless and transparent-- running simultaneously with the weekend event."

"The highest finishing pilot residing in Ohio will be declared the Ohio State Champion and will earn a coveted spot in the US National Hot Air Balloon Championship to be held August 23-27, 2011 in Battle Creek, MI."

According to Dr Mark Frazer, a hot air balloon pilot and member of the Ohio Challenge executive committee, about half the field will be from Ohio at this year's event.

The MidUSA Ohio Challenge is now in its 9th year of operation and presents top hot air balloon competition along with balloon glows, Team Fastrax Skydiving demonstrations, a circus workshop and aerial acrobats, arts and crafts, festival foods, music, car show and much more.

Hours for the event are Friday, July 15 – 4-10 pm; Saturday, July 16 – 7-11 am, and 4-10 pm; Sunday, July 17 – 7-11 am. Parking is \$8 at the airport which includes free admission and shuttle for everyone in the vehicle. Walk in guests pay \$3 per adult (children under 13 free) via the Tytus Avenue entrance.

For more information visit www.midusaohiochallenge.com, email info@ohiochallenge.com or phone 513-705-1770.

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