

2009 MidFirst Ohio Challenge Balloon Pilots

The following hot air balloons, flown by licensed balloon pilots, will take to the air over Middletown, Ohio on July 17-19, 2009. All flights are weather permitting. Balloons can fly only when the air currents are less than 10 mph aloft. Conditions for hot air balloon flights generally are only in the time immediately after sunrise until about 9 am and again in the evening from about 6 to official sunset when all balloon craft must be on the ground.

After dark on Friday and Saturday nights, weather permitting, many of the balloons will “glow” on site for the guests in Smith Park. See the balloons flicker in the night like giant fireflies.

Flights are scheduled Friday evening, Saturday morning and evening and Sunday morning.

(Even when balloons cannot fly, there is still much to see and do at Smith Park in downtown Middletown.)



1

Boojum
Robert Mihaly
Lakewood, OH
2008 Champion

After flying during the Nationals in Middletown, he returned for the very first Challenge event and has flown each year since. He expresses his appreciation to the farmers who allow balloon pilots the use of their land for launch and landing sites by helping the Ohio Farm Bureau raise money for scholarships.

3 & 32

Lily & Joey
The Little Bees
Bob Romaneschi
Wayne Bond
Peoria, Arizona

2

Butter Knot
Jim Cusick
Westerville, OH





4
Atrium Medical Center
Francies Son Dancer
Sean Askren
Middletown, OH
Sean has been flying in the Mid-First Ohio Challenge event since its beginning. An experienced pilot, he has flown in 48 states and has piloted a balloon at the Winston Cup NASCAR race for 10 years. His most memorable flight was flying over the Continental Divide in Colorado for the World Record.

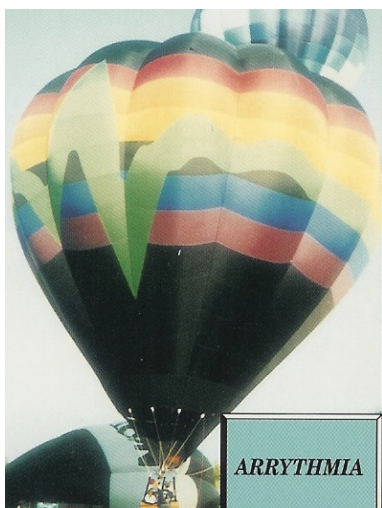
5
Sunshine
Meredeth Bennett
Hilliard, OH



6
Who Cares
Jim Birk
Defiance, OH
A long-time balloon pilot, Birk flew in the U.S. National Hot Air Balloon Championships in 1992-94. He has also been a geology professor and chair of the department at both Defiance College and Ashland University. His list of awards and balloon chairmanships is long and distinguished dating back to 1975



7
Conglomeration
Zachary Burgess
Ashland, OH



8
Arrythmia
Rick Cusick
Lima, OH
2005 Champion



9
Acolus
Chase Donner
Indianapolis, IN

10
NIKE
Nicholas Donner
Fishersville, KY





11

Release
Dr Mark Frazer
Middletown, OH

Dr. Frazer is a member of the MidFirst Ohio Challenge executive committee, a private practice family physician, Middletown High School sport team physician and former president of the Middletown Board of Education.



14

IMTS
Patrick Fogue
Columbia, MO

12
Blue Grass Racer
Ray Donner
Fisherville, KY



15

Bell'Aria
Michael Gliatti
Lebanon, OH

A member of the event planning committee. His wife gave him a balloon ride gift in 2004—which turned out to be the most expensive ride he's ever taken. He bought a balloon. Owners of Bella Balloons, the couple now are now a full-time professional balloon team.



13

Second Wind
Michael Emich
Akron, OH

A Lieutenant with the Akron Fire Department, expert skydiver with 1200 jumps, scuba diver, sailor and designer of balloons, Emich is also a fixed wing aircraft pilot.



16

Wind Trek
Rick Kohut
Louisville, OH

The 2001 Rookie of the Year for NOBPA ballooning association, he serves as a Clinical director of Pastoral Counseling Services.



17

Miss Niagara
Charlie Mays
Williamsburg, OH
A balloon pilot since 1988, he owns a commercial balloon ride company, Balloon Impressions.

When not ballooning he is a busy father of seven, grandfather of eight and still finds time to scuba dive. He flew the balloon carrying Middletown's first female post master as she was sworn into office

20

Tuscan Sunrise
William Meserth
Springboro, OH



18

Big Little Red
Matt McClinton
Prospect, KY



21

Hot Flash
Socrates Rettos
Liberty Twp, OH
A pilot for 14 years, Soc got involved as an official "Observer" and debriefer for National events. He is proof of an old ballooning cliché—the first balloon ride is usually free, the second one costs thousands of dollars because you've bought a balloon of your own.

22

Indian Summer
Robert Rhodenbaugh
Cincinnati, OH

19

Twisted Charlie
Scott McClinton
Prospect KY



23

Last Gasp
Shannon Rote
Doylestown, OH



McClinton **26**

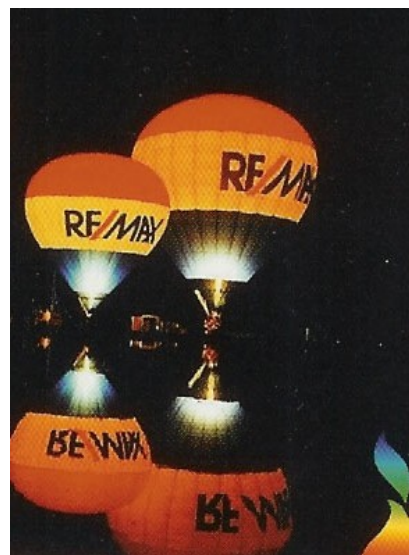
Celtic Cross
David Troutman
Louisville, KY



24

Adam's Nirvana
Ron Terranova
Fairfield, OH
2004 Champion

Architect by day, super-balloon pilot by dawn and dusk, he was the very first Champion of the MidFirst Ohio Challenge. (The first year of the event, 2003, high winds prevented competition flights—no champion was crowned.)



25

Station USA
Floyd Thornton
St Louis, MO



27-28

Brian Trapp—Remax I
Laurie Givin—Remax Hopper
Oregonia, OH



30
Balloon
Travis Vencel
Bloomington, IN

34
Mariah
Mark Yeakle
Springboro, OH
Pilot Yeakle placed 4th
in the Challenge event in
2006 and 3rd in 2007.



31
Legal Eagle
Theodore Watts
Meadville, PA
A balloon rally chairman
himself since 1988, pilot
Watts enjoys flying in other
events around the country.



35
Dulcinea
Debbie Young
Newbury, OH
One of the few fe-
male balloon pilots,
Debby set the Femi-
nine World Record
for Distance Dura-
tion in 2001.

36
Tether Balloon

No Photo Available



33
Wayward Wind
James Wannemacher
Middletown, OH
One of the first balloon
pilots to call Middletown
home, James flew in the
U.S.National Hot Air Bal-
loon Championships held
in Middletown in 1992-93-
94 and is a regular sight in
the Middletown area skies.

37
Tether Balloon
Al Hansen





It's not just hot air!



Car Show

**Middletown OH
Saturday
July 18, 2009**

Car Show

Awards/Split-the-Pot/Door Prizes

Registration—2-4 pm

Car Show 4-8 pm

\$15 Registration Fee

Contact—Larry Herron -513-464-1107

Smith Park, 500 Tytus Avenue

Middletown, OH 45042

513-705-1770

www.MidFirstOhioChallenge.com

Admission:

4-10 pm \$5—on-site parking **OR**

\$2 walk-in admission (12 years and older)

No parking/admission fee for vehicles registered in car show

Morning activities—FREE admission

Hot Air Balloon Festival July 17-19, 2009

Friday, July 17 – 4 to 10 pm

Saturday July 18, 7-11am—Balloons& Breakfast

Saturday, July 18 – 4-10 pm—Car Show

Sunday, July 19 –7-11 am-Balloons

**FESTIVAL ENDS AFTER
SUNDAY MORNING EVENTS**

Come for the weekend . . .

- Hot Air Balloon Competition
- Team Fastrax Pro Skydiving
- Balloon Glows
- Arts & Crafts
- Musical Entertainment
- Festival Foods
- Carnival Rides & Games
- Many new and exciting family experiences

Directions: Smith Park, downtown Middletown
Exit I-75 at SR 122 (Exit 32) and follow signs to the
Middletown Regional Airport parking. Free shuttle
provided. Middletown is mid-way between
Dayton and Cincinnati, just off I-75 with easy access to many area attractions.

Check for the latest additions to the schedule:

MidFirstOhioChallenge.com



**Primary Sponsor
MidFirst Credit Union**

MIDFIRST
CREDIT UNION
taking TRUST to new heights

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Information: Ann Mort, 513-649—4506, RMort@cinci.rr.com, media@ohiochallenge.com, 513-705-1770

March 12, 2009

MIDFIRST OHIO CHALLENGE BALLOON EVENT TO COLLABORATE WITH OTHER LOCAL GROUPS

Middletown Regional Airport, Middletown Aviation Foundation and Broad Street Bash will be important collaborators at this year's MidFirst Ohio Challenge hot air balloon festival July 17 to 19.

Several changes to improve the operation will be the result.

All public parking will be on the airport with free shuttle service to a point inside the Smith Park event site. Parking will remain at \$5 per vehicle with all occupants admitted free. RV parking on site will be \$20 per vehicle per night. Only pedestrians will enter at the former Tytus Avenue entrance. Pedestrians over 12 are \$2 each. No vehicle traffic will enter at Tytus. This should make a safer entry and exit for all concerned.

The limited on-site parking lots will serve sponsors, special guests, vendors, entertainers and volunteers.

Rich Bevis, airport manager, has also invited the balloon committee to use a hangar at the airport for its Saturday morning Flying Flapjack breakfast featuring Chris Cakes.

A collaboration with the Broad Street Bash committee will combine efforts to attract the best of regional musical entertainment. Tim Lewis of the Broad Street Bash will coordinate music performances at both events.

The MidFirst Ohio Challenge organizing committee, led by chair woman Maria Langendorf, constantly seeks ways to include other area groups to present Middletown events at the highest possible level. In the past, several groups have been "hired" to provide services necessary to the event or have been food vendors on site. The collaborations serve to add to the treasuries of various non-profit groups and make the event top notch.

This year's MidFirst Ohio Challenge hours will be:

Friday, July 17 – 4-10 pm

Saturday, July 18 – 7-11 am – Free admission

Saturday, July 18 – 4-10 pm

Sunday, July 19 – 7-11 am – Free admission

Festival ends after Sunday morning events.

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

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NEWS RELEASE

Information: Ann Mort, 513-649—4506, RMort@cinci.rr.com, 513-705-1770

May 20, 2009

FLYING BEES TO PERFORM AT MIDFIRST OHIO CHALLENGE FESTIVAL

Joey and Lily, The Little Bees, will be flying together during morning flights and glowing after dark at the 7th Annual Mid-First Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival on July 17, 18 and 19, 2009.

The Little Bees are the world's only tandem flying special shape hot air balloons. They have appeared all over the world since their "birth" in 2003 at the Victoria Balloon factory in Brazil. They each hold 98,000 cubic feet of hot air, stand 110 feet tall and reach 110 feet from finger tip to finger tip.

Besides the crowd-pleasing special shape balloons, there will be 35 other hot air balloon competitors in the sanctioned flying contest.

As the MidFirst Ohio Challenge has matured it draws the top notch pilots from across the country. The 2009 field includes 3 winning family teams. Ray Donner and his two sons Chase and Nick will be competing against each other. Nick is a three-time U.S. National Champion. Jim and son Rick Cusick will compete along with Scott McClinton and his son Matt. Scott won the 2007 MidFirst Ohio Challenge flying a special rocket-shaped balloon. Rick Cusick won the 2005 MidFirst Ohio Challenge.

Pilots converge on Middletown, Ohio from six states. Five of the balloons will represent corporate sponsors, Atrium Medical Center, Bella Balloon Hot Air Balloon Company and Remax represented by three balloons including a brand new one-passenger Hopper balloon.

This year's event will see several changes and improvements.

Hours and entrance changes are:

Friday, July 17 – 4-10 pm,

Saturday morning 7-11 am – balloons and a pancake breakfast by Chris Cakes (catch you breakfast on the fly),

Closed in the middle of the day

Saturday evening, July 18 - 4-10 pm

Sunday morning, July 19 - 7-11 am

Festival closes after the Sunday morning flight. Individual balloon pilots may fly prepaid passenger rides Sunday evening.

The parking entrance has been changed from Tytus Avenue to the airport entrance off Germantown/SR4. A free shuttle system will take guests from their parking area to the Middletown of the festival area. Pedestrians may still enter off Tytus.

The MidFirst Ohio Challenge committee, led by Chairwoman Maria Langendorf, decided to hold the parking fee to \$5 as a way to add a reasonably priced entertainment option. All passengers in a vehicle are admitted free. Walk-in adult guests pay \$2. Children and adults are free.

A full festival with carnival rides, arts and crafts, festival foods, live music, a car show and much more will surround the daily balloons. Featured performers will be the Fastrax Skydiving team with their spectacular aerial acrobatics.

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

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2008 Economic Impact Report MidFirst Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

\$3.8 million to local economy

Method:

Volunteers using mechanical hand-held counting devices tabulated data from those entering the main gate from Tytus Avenue into Smith Park. No actual counts were taken at the other entrances: Wilbraham Road, Hook Field Airport, the footbridge from Tytus, Columbia Avenue, the bike path or for those observing from airport hangars, the Car-mody Blvd area, Forest Hills Country Club or the businesses on Hook Drive.

Based on data collected and estimates from organizers, a figure was established for each of the three days of the event. Totals include volunteers, vendors, performers, etc, all of whom spend money while in Middletown and on-site. Additional volunteers asked a sampling of guests where they lived, how they heard about the event and what they enjoyed most.

Attendance:

	2003	2004	2005	2005 %	2006	2006 %	2007	2007%	2008	2008%
Friday	17,550	24,000	15,730	28%	12,113	16.5%	21,250	29%	13,154	22%
Saturday	24,855	38,500	32,650	58%	37,980	52%	39,150	53%	40,099	68%
Sunday	12,306	9,000	7,960	14%	23,107	31.5%	13,400	18%	5,844	10%
Totals	54,711	71,500	56,340		73,200		73,800		59,097	

People came from:

Butler County	58%	39%		52%		43%		58%	31%
Warren County	16%	30%		15%		11%		12%	17%
Montgomery	12%	13%		6%		11%		8%	12%
Hamilton County	4%	4%		6%		13%		3%	2%
Preble County	1%	4%		6%		3%		3%	4%
Within 1 hour drive	91%	90%		85%		81%		84%	72%
Beyond 1 hour drive	9%	10%		15%		19%		16%	28%
Ohio	96%	98%		95%		97%		97%	88%
Other States	4%	2%		5%		3%		3%	12%

People heard about Ohio Challenge from:

TV		4%		7%		3%		7%	1%
Newspapers		42%		43%		52%		59%	36%
Magazines		5%		6%		2%		1%	0%
Radio		33%		5%		2%		4%	2%
Website		8%		6%		12%		8%	24%
Other		8%		33%		29%		21%	27%

(Word of Mouth, Vendors, Decals on Truck, Car Show Flyers, Signage, Family Tradition)

Website statistics www.midfirstohiochallenge.com	2006	2007	2008
Website Hits during July	175,687	217,170	
Visits July 1-23 (Change in data reporting 2008).....			7,283
Page Views	30,518		

Economic Impact 2008:

Method:

In the first two years, a 1990’s multiplier figure of \$35 per person was used to determine the economic impact on the Middletown community from events. In researching other nearby or similar events in Indiana, Michigan and other states, multipliers currently in use ranged from \$67 per person, per day for day-trippers to \$171 per day for those staying in motels. One state used an average of \$115 per person per day. Another \$104 per day. We have chosen to remain conservative but take into account inflation over the past 15 years and have raised our multiplier figure for all local events to \$65.

While no general multiplier figure will be completely accurate, it is a best estimate we can use to fairly indicate the importance of an event to the local economy. The daily multiplier rate takes into account the dollars actually spent by the guest at an event and on gasoline, retail, medical, food, motel and other direct purchases in the community as well as those dollars spent in presenting the event they attend, the jobs generated, supplies purchased, insurance arranged, taxes paid and other ripple-effect spending.

Impact on the local economy due to the MidFirst Ohio Challenge in 2008:

\$3.8 million

Local non-profit treasuries also grew as a result of MidFirst Ohio Challenge:

One of the results of the event is that several local non-profit organizations add much-needed dollars to their treasuries. The MidFirst Ohio Challenge organizers “hire” local non-profits for specific duties on-site. Others choose to become food/drink vendors for the weekend. The Middletown High School Football Team, Fenwick LaCrosse Club, Knights of Columbus, Middletown Police Explorers, Butler County Police Explorers, Springfield Township Police Explorers, Middletown Christian Boosters, Middletown Little League, Middletown Youth Soccer, Middletown Board of Realtors, Edgewood High School Cheerleaders, Family Services of Middletown, Trenton Lions Club.

Prepared by Ann Mort based on data collected during the event by volunteers, 7/23/08



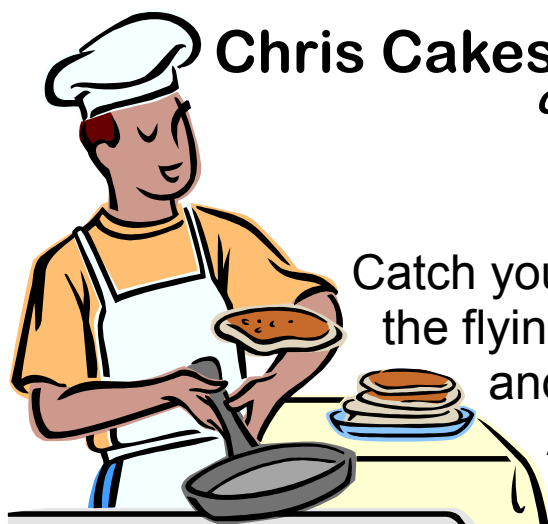
Chris Cakes Pancake Breakfast

7-11 am
Saturday, July 18

Smith Park Festival Area
Downtown Middletown, OH



\$5—all you can eat—pancakes,
sausage links, coffee and orange drink



Chris Cakes brings you breakfast by air.

Guinness World Record - "Fastest Flipper"
Featured on the Food Channel
Served 4 Presidents

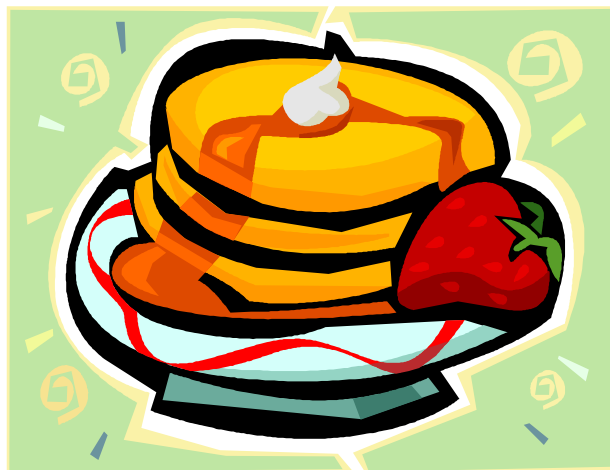
Catch your breakfast in mid-air as the master of the flying flapjacks zings one your way. Miss it and he sends another and another.

As you eat, watch the balloons overhead as the pilots try to hit a target in the Smith Park/Airport festival site with a small bag of beans.

It's a most unusual way to spend a Saturday morning.
Tethered Balloon Rides—6:45-9am weather permitting—
\$10 adults \$5 kids

Free park admission
to morning events.

513-705-1770
www.MidFirstOhioChallenge.com



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ann Mort, RMort@cinci.rr.com, 513-649-4506

July 3, 2009

FLYING PANCAKES COMING TO BALLOON FESTIVAL

Pancakes will be flying through the air along with the hot air balloons at this years' MidFirst Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival. Pre-sale tickets are now available at Broadway News – Main St and First Ave in downtown Middletown.

Chris Cakes will be serving an all-you-can-eat pancake and sausage breakfast from 7 to 11 am for \$5 per person in Smith Park while the balloons fly overhead. On Saturday, July 18. (Balloons will probably fly over about 7-9 am – weather permitting.)

Chris Cakes is famous for throwing pancakes at the breakfast crowd. Catch your breakfast as it flies past. If you miss the first one, he will gladly zing another your way and another until you are full. Chris Cakes is in the Guinness World Books of Records as the “Fastest Flipper” and was featured on the Food Channel. He has also served four Presidents. There is no word on which President caught the most pancakes.

The Saturday morning balloon flight will be enhanced with several additional activities at the Smith Park/Middletown Regional Airport site. Thirty-three balloons will attempt to reach a target at the festival site as a part of their competition as the Little Bee special shape balloons will be flying out of the park.

Besides the airborne breakfast and balloon activity, there will be tethered balloon rides available at \$10 adults, \$5 kids – 7-9am.

The Mega Arena will be up and running all day Saturday allowing participants to play a version of paintball. Admission to the Mega Arena is \$10 per person. Each player receives 100 or more rubber balls as ammunition (less mess than paint) and the game is on.

For more information about the activities available during MidFirst Ohio Challenge, July 17-19, visit www.midfirstohiochallenge.com, call 513-705-1770 or info@ohiochallenge.com.

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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Information: Ann Mort, 513-649—4506, RMort@cinci.rr.com, 513-705-1770

July 6, 2009

FLOATING SMILES KIDS TO ATTEND MIDFIRST OHIO CHALLENGE FESTIVAL

The Floating Smiles organization will be sponsoring fifty Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center cancer patients to go up in a tethered hot air balloon at the MidFirst Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival on Saturday, July 18. The patients and their families will have the opportunity to take balloon rides from 6:30 pm until 8:30 pm.

A special handicap-accessible balloon basket will be available exclusively for the Floating Smiles guests to ride up to about 50 feet in the air while still tethered to the ground with a sturdy cable.

Floating Smiles is a non-profit group organized for the sole purpose of making it possible for young cancer patients to go up in a hot air balloon for a ride they will forever remember. Julia Ossipov-Grodsky, one of the founders of Floating Smiles said, "We had this idea to give young cancer patients an opportunity to forget their troubles and concerns for a day, to have fun, and be adventurous by floating up in a hot air balloon. We wanted to create a truly memorable experience for them to enjoy with their families. We had this vision of the children floating up in mid-air and smiling. This project was conceived out of my involvement in a leadership course with Landmark Education – an international training and development company."

The public and festival sponsors will also have the opportunity to take tethered rides in a separate balloon.

The MidFirst Ohio Challenge festival is now in its 7th year at the Smith Park/Middletown Regional Airport complex in downtown Middletown. Running 4-10 pm on Friday and Saturday, July 17 and 18, the event includes not only 35 hot air balloons, but skydivers, foods, arts & crafts, live music concerts, a car show, carnival and much more. This year, a crowd pleasing flying duo, the Little Bees, will entertain the crowd with the special 110' tall bee-shaped hot air balloons flying together during the morning flights and glowing together in the evenings.

Parking admission is via the airport entrance near 1800 Germantown Road. A \$5 parking fee also admits all occupants of the vehicle. Those who choose to walk in pay \$2 for adults. Children with adults are free.

The competition balloon event continues during the mornings of Saturday and Sunday. Saturday morning will include a pancake breakfast by Chris Cakes –master of the flying flapjacks. The festival ends after the Sunday morning flight. Admission is free to the festival grounds during morning flight times for balloon competition viewing.

For more information visit the www.midfirstohiochallenge.com website, email info@ohiochallenge.com or phone 513-705-1770. #####