

# AeroStats



**August 2022**

**The Monthly Newsletter of the  
Willamette Aerostat Society**

**Volume 24, Number 8**

**There aren't any WAS meetings  
scheduled during the summer months,  
instead join us for the**

**WAS Summer BBQ  
at Jack and Sallie Loflin's home!  
Saturday, August 6 at 2 PM  
35392 Gore Drive, Albany**

**It's a potluck.**

**Please bring a side dish or a dessert.**

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**Activities Director:**

Sallie Loflin

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Cory Miller

**WAS website:**

<http://www.wasballoon.info>

**Email: [ExecComm@wasballoon.info](mailto:ExecComm@wasballoon.info)**

# Happenings

in the Pacific Northwest and beyond



Event information in this newsletter is **not** to be considered as an endorsement by WAS, its officers, or its members.

**August 6, 2022, 2:00 PM**

**WAS Summer BBQ**

Jack & Sallie's House

35392 Gore Drive, Albany

It's a potluck. Please bring a side dish or dessert.

**August 20, 2022**

**Arlington Sky Fest**

Arlington, Washington

<https://www.arlingtonskyfest.com>

**August 26-28, 2022**

**NW Art and Air Festival**

Albany, Oregon

<http://nwartandair.org>

**August 31-September 4, 2022**

**Spirit of Boise Balloon Classic**

Boise, Idaho

<https://spiritofboise.com>

**September 9-11, 2022**

**Great Reno Balloon Race**

Reno, Nevada

<https://renoballoon.com/>

**September 23-25, 2022**

**Great Prosser Balloon Rally**

Prosser, Washington

**October 1-9, 2022**

**Albuquerque Int'l Balloon Fiesta**

Albuquerque, New Mexico

<https://balloonfiesta.com/>

**October 19-23, 2022**

**Walla Walla Balloon Stampede**

Walla Walla, Washington



**Hitchhike Your Way Into The Local  
Balloon Community!**

**Join WAS Today!**

**There's an application on  
page 10.**

# Ronald Purdum — A Pacific Northwest Ballooning Pioneer

*Ron Purdum was amongst the first people to fly hot air balloons in the Willamette Valley. He was the founding father of the Albany balloon rally. It has had many names over the years, but it will always be his baby. He was a fun and engaging individual. His son, Rod Purdum, contributed this obituary and many of the photos.*

Ron Purdum was born in Ekalaka, MT on May 9, 1932. He passed away on July 20, 2022 in Dallas, TX due to a stroke, exacerbated by Alzheimer's. His life had a hardscrabble beginning, but his natural leadership qualities, sense of self-assurance, work ethic, and desire to experience new things helped create opportunities that led to a long and fulfilling life.

For the first 14 years of his life, he and his family lived in a two-room homestead shack without electricity and running water. The family raised sheep in the SE corner of Montana, an iffy endeavor in that region during the Great Depression. As soon as he was old enough, he was expected to help out, when not attending the one room school house three miles away. When he was in his early teens his parents split up, left the homestead, and moved to Ekalaka (population 750), with the kids living with their mom. Ron's dad Price owned and operated the New Life Bar, while his mom Myrt dealt cards across Main Street at the Buckhorn Bar. Ron attended Carter County High School, and graduated in 1949. In 1951 he married Phyllis Taylor from the Belltower Community.

He joined the Marines during the Korean conflict, left the service as a sergeant, and tried cattle ranching near Ekalaka for a short time, but he soon decided to further his education by attending MSU in Bozeman, MT. Besides earning his degree, he also earned his private pilot's license, which was the beginning of a lifelong passion for aviation.

After college Ron started out as assistant administrator at the main hospital in Billings, MT, which led

to jobs as hospital administrator in Havre, MT and then Miami, AZ. In 1973 he became the hospital administrator at Albany General Hospital here in Oregon, where he remained until retirement. During this time he and his wife raised four children.

After Ron's first marriage ended, he met Carroll Barker of North Bend, OR and her two children. Ron and Carroll were married in 1982. Their first home together was a hobby farm in North Albany, which provided an excellent location for their blended family get togethers. After his retirement they moved to Charbonneau, OR, and the two traveled extensively throughout the U.S., Canada and overseas. Many an Oregon winter was spent at an RV resort just outside of Palm Springs, CA. Eventually they moved to St. George, UT. A few years later they settled in Frisco, TX, just north of Dallas.

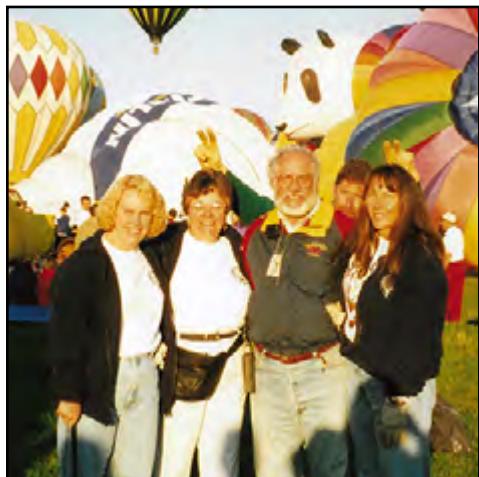
Ron was always interested in trying new things, but a few pastimes stand out. He hunted for most of his life, dabbled in photography, rode motorcycles, golfed and skied with family, and later in life became an expert in needlepoint. Ron's biggest love, outside of family, was aviation. Ron owned with a partner or outright a number of planes over time, including a Piper J-3 Cub, a Mooney M20, a Piper PA-12, and an Ercoupe. He had a sailplane rating, and considered that the purest form of fixed wing flying. In the late 1970s he became interested in hot air ballooning. He got his LTA rating in 1978, and during the 80s and early 90s was active on the Pacific NW rally circuit, first flying



*Ron Purdum's bright spirit shows in this photo as he searched for "an honest man."*

a 56,000 cubic ft Raven (*Chinook*), then moving up to a 105 (*Pacific High*). At the top of his crew list were his sons Rod and Russ, and he was Rod's flight instructor. He was a Raven/Aerostar dealer for most of this time. One memorable flight took place on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1980 near La Center, WA, when he and a number of other balloonists got to watch Mt. St. Helens blow its top. Also, in 1980 he flew at the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta and was inspired with the idea of starting a rally in the Willamette Valley. In 1983 his plans came together with the Mid-Summer Balloon Fling, which over time has developed into the NW Art and Air Festival. By the late 90s he felt he didn't have the time to keep proficient with balloons and decided to focus on his first love, fixed wing. He would come out to fly with Rod on occasion, and always made himself available to help at Rod's school tethers. More than once he did an early morning flyby of the Vista group near Newberg, and would invite himself to breakfast afterwards. He hung up his aviation spurs at the age of 80.

# Remembering Ron Purdum



Carmen Blakely, Edie Stooks, Ron and Rod Purdum and Laura Hancock enjoyed the Reno rally together in the early 90's.



Carroll, Rod and Ron Purdum flew in Reno together.



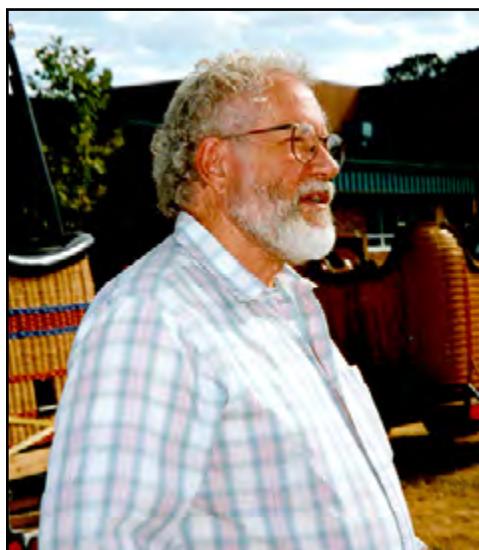
Pacific High flew in The Great Reno Balloon Rally for many years.



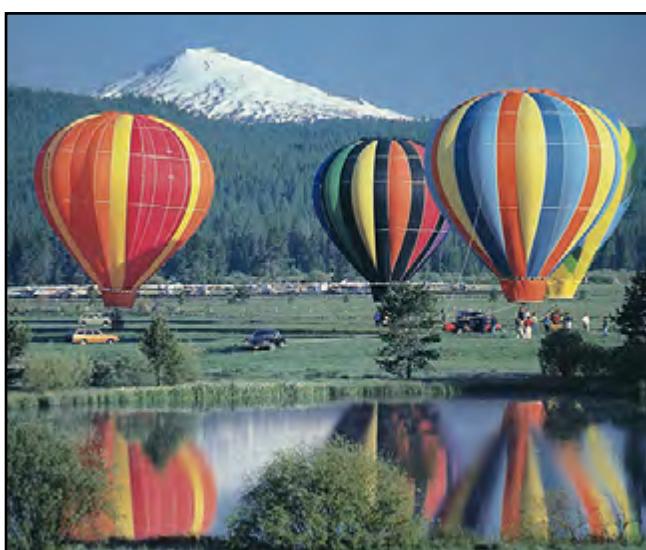
Ron enjoyed flying his plane past his son, flying for Vista Balloon Adventures.



Rod, Ron, and Russ Purdum surrounded by balloons in Reno.



Ron had a love for all forms of aviation.



In 1984 four balloons tethered in Sunriver, Oregon with Mt. Bachelor as their backdrop. Chinook, Ron's first balloon, was the Raven Rally on the right in the foreground. His sons, Rod and Russ, were there as crew. The other balloons (left to right) were Sundance, owned by Bob and Marianne LeDoux; Odyssey, owned by Brick and Joyce Morgan; and Basket-Case (partially obscured), owned by Tim and Shari Gale. This photo was featured in a Sunriver calendar the next year.

# A Farmer's Daughter Fulfills Her Dream

Karalyn Mumm had just earned her private certificate when she hatched the plan to fly her father over his own farm land in Minnesota. On a visit in the summer of 2016 Karalyn walked around the section for weeks visualizing the flight. The flight did not work out for a multitude of reasons. Every year since that summer, Karalyn has come back for a visit. The weather was never kind enough to make her dream come true. The morning of July 17, 2022 that changed. The weather was perfect for a flight with her 92-year-old dad.

First, she flew her nephew for 40 minutes, then she put her dad in the basket. She flew for an hour, skimming his corn and bean fields, and going up to 2500 AGL so he could get a good look at the countryside around his land. He loved spending a Sunday morning "checking out the crops."

Karalyn waited six years for this flight. It was worth the wait.



# My Journey to a Second-Class Medical

by Tim Gale

Remember the fuss over NPRM FAA 2021-1040? Well, having a couple of issues that may be problematic, I decided to go after it as a pre-emptive measure in November of 2021.

First off, you'll sign up through MedXPress as a candidate. To get started, go to: [https://www.faa.gov/about/office\\_org/headquarters\\_offices/avs/offices/aam/ame/guide/](https://www.faa.gov/about/office_org/headquarters_offices/avs/offices/aam/ame/guide/).

You'll find directions to build a log-in, medical evaluation criteria and a section on the evaluation process. Filling out an application covers your various health issues. Dig into your records, this can take a bit of time, all depending on your personal health situation. Since it's a Federal application, be rigorous, accuracy is important and you will sign the application while with the AME to make it valid. The signature will also permit the Fed to access your driving record.

Be cautious, if you have an issue that will be costly to analyze, you can't just walk away from this process. Once your Aviation Medical Examiner has filed the application, walking away is considered a failure. Your "no known limitations"

statement becomes moot, if your exam comes up with a major issue that cannot be resolved. The choice to proceed or not can be made without repercussions if you ask your AME not to file the application, since at that point the FAA AeroMed folks won't know about your issues. I went ahead with the application process and the effort took six months — two cycles for AeroMed evaluation and three visits for testing.

Regarding letters from Oklahoma City, the FAA AeroMedical guys, read them carefully. They will ask for specific tests and data. I made the mistake of firing the request off to my physicians to decipher. Their response came back to me and was forwarded to Oklahoma City. Three months later, I received another letter with essentially the same request. This time I was more direct with the physicians. After the requested testing and waiting, it all went back to Ok City. After another wait, I received my medical certificate as "Special Issue." After November, the renewal starts again,

yet with a far less stringent and very specific set of data from my physicians.

My cost: The AME charged \$150, which is the normal rate. The testing was a bit more expensive: a \$30 co-pay for the specialist visit and \$230 for my part of the nuclear medicine work. The rest of the testing was covered by my insurance. If it had been out of pocket for all of the work, including the AME, I'd be out \$9,000.

Next year will be most likely around \$200, including the AME, as there is little testing required outside of normal annual evaluations.

My message: Check the website and look into the various conditions that require special issuance and see if you'll be directed along that path. Check their pharmaceuticals lists, some medications are prohibited and some are indicative of prohibited conditions. Once you start and the form is sent to Oklahoma City, there's no turning back without losing some privileges. Depending on the outcome of the proposed rule, your flying privileges may be impacted significantly.

## Congratulations, Julianna and Mikey Naber!



On July 23, 2022 Cory Miller got to walk his oldest daughter, Julianna, down the isle. Mikey Naber is now part of the Miller family, and therefore the ballooning family. Julianna, of course, has been involved in ballooning from the very start of her life.

Photo on right: Cory and Angela Miller, Mikey Naber, Meyghan Miller and Julianna Naber.

Photos by  
Angela & Cory Miller.

# The Training Is Under Way!

If Mandy Johnson has her way, there will be a bunch of new LTA pilots in the Pacific Northwest.

She is working with Eliav Cohen, Seattle Ballooning, on training a big group of people to fly. Eliav has the balloon that was used to promote the movie "Aeronauts." The purpose of that balloon is to introduce/train young pilots who might not get the opportunity otherwise. Mandy asked him if he needed help. Just guess what his answer was??!

Mandy now finds herself supervising about 15 students. Some are very active. Some aren't. They are using the online ground school developed by Albuquerque Aerostat Ascension Association (AAAA), who partnered with them. They made the online video for a big discount to all the students. Mandy receives notifications from AAAA when a student starts slacking off during the online training. She will then call them to see if they are stuck, and if they need help.

Most of Mandy's involvement happens on the east side of the Cascades, in Prosser, Washington. However, she occasionally travels back to Seattle on the west side of the state. Mark Yonker, McKenna Secrist and Eliav Cohen, who are based in Seattle, do some training there as well. On one recent rainy-day Eliav opened his balloon barn up to the students. They then checked out a variety of baskets from Firefly, to Cameron, to Lindstrand. So even rain does not stop the learning process.

On top of all this activity, Mandy has some of her own students. Dave Wiser recently passed his check ride during the Kongregation event in Prosser in June. Jessica Geib has soloed recently. She is now ready for

her check ride.

The ballooning community salutes Mandy, the rest of her family and all of her loyal crew. They are creating a legacy.



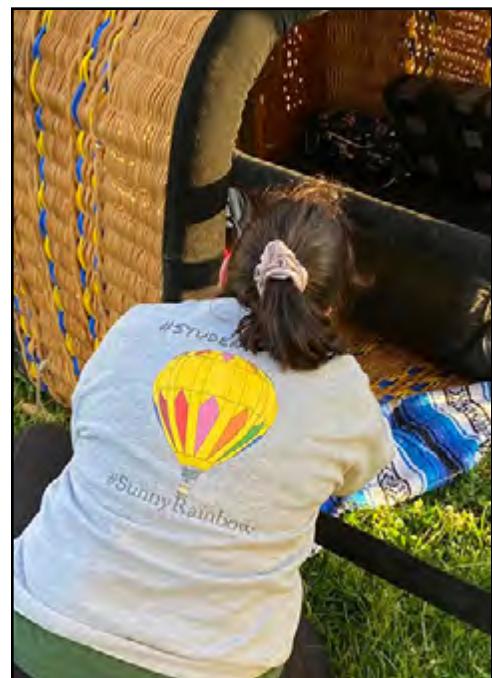
Mark Yonker (center) was the PIC/Instructor the day this photo was taken. The student pilots were Anna Horner (left) and Griffin Matthews (right).



Mandy Johnson, (lower left) and Junior Balloonist, Heidi Thompson were out crewing on this flight with student pilot Jessica Geib.



The balloon used to promote the movie, Aeronauts, is called Mammoth. It's seen here flying over the Seattle area. Its primary use now is for student pilot training.



Student pilot, Jessica Geib, was setting up her basket prior to flight. Jessica recently flew solo. She's now ready for her check ride.

# Fog Forecasting With Drones

FAA Safety Briefing - Dr. James Pinto, National Center for Atmospheric Research

<https://medium.com/faa/fog-forecasting-with-drones-eaf310cabdc>

Over the last ten years, weather-sensing drones have become a new proven technology for gathering weather data in the lower atmosphere. At the same time, weather-related commercial applications for drones have grown rapidly. Some commercial drones carry weather sensors to provide operators with situational awareness of environmental conditions. Weather-sensing drones can conduct observation flights multiple times an hour to collect profiles of temperature, moisture, and winds at much greater frequencies than traditional sensors. In addition, they're environmentally friendly and more cost-effective.

A mix of targeted flights by weather-sensing drones and observations collected by commercial drone flights could provide unprecedented weather observation capabilities that would improve model predictions of fog, low ceilings, low-level wind shear, wind-shift boundaries, and convection initiation.

These weather hazards are disruptive to both traditional airport operations and low-altitude drone flights. According to Dr. James Pinto, Science Deputy of the Aviation Applications Program at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), drone observations can be a game-changer to improve aviation weather hazard guidance for low-altitude flight operations. He believes that as drone technology and capability continue to evolve, they will substantially improve their weather guidance as well as guidance for commercial and general aviation.

The FAA, NASA, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are currently sponsoring research to study the potential benefit of drone observations to im-

prove the prediction of low-altitude flight hazards. In partnership with the Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International (CVG) Airport, NOAA Wilmington Ohio Weather Forecast Office, NCAR, and the University of Kentucky, the FAA Aviation Weather Research Program (AWRP) is funding a study called FOGMAP — Frequent in-situ Observations above Ground for Modeling and Advanced Prediction of Fog — to assess the benefit of drone observations in predicting the occurrence, timing, and severity of fog at major U.S. airports.

During the field phase of FOGMAP, which began in January 2022, drones will be deployed on days predicted to have localized airport-impacting fog. FOGMAP scientists from NCAR and the University of Kentucky will evaluate the potential of weather-sensing drones to improve fog predictions near airports that often experience local weather effects.

The FOGMAP study will assess the benefit of drone observations in predicting the occurrence, timing,

and severity of fog at major U.S. airports.

The FOGMAP study will continue through May 2022. FAA project lead Jenny Colavito says that she is very interested to see if drones can significantly reduce model uncertainty in the prediction of fog. Simply improving the forecast of fog duration by an hour could result in major cost savings for commercial airlines and reduce delays for the flying public.

Opportunities for fog-forecasting drone flights are looking more promising as research and development efforts on sense and avoid technologies mature. As coverage of weather-sensing drones expands, this observational gap-filling technology will enable improved situational awareness and safety of all low-altitude flight operations and will provide a critical data service for supporting the Advanced Air Mobility of tomorrow.

*Reprinted from Colorado Balloon Club Newsletter, July 2022*



# 2022 WAS Membership Application



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pilot  Crew  Interested in hot air ballooning

Birthday: Month \_\_\_\_\_ Day \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone #: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

BFA Membership #: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pilot/Crew Achievement Awards

BFA Crew Level: \_\_\_\_\_ BFA Pilot Level: \_\_\_\_\_

FAA Wings Level: \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Family Member Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  Pilot  Crew

## Membership Type

Charter (\$20)  Single or Family (\$20)  Newsletter Only (\$10 outside Oregon & SW Washington)

## Membership

The Willamette Aerostat Society communicates via e-mail, the WAS Facebook page and the website. We recognize and respect our member's privacy. If you do not wish personal information about you shared with other members, please indicate below. Your personal information will *never* be published on our website. It might be shared with other club members if a request is made unless you prefer to opt out.

- Do Not share name
- Do Not share address
- Do Not share phone number
- Do Not share cell phone number
- Do Not share e-mail

Please use a 2nd page if there are two pilots in the family, or if you have family members with additional information such as cell phone # and/or BFA #'s.

## Mail completed form with fees to:

Willamette Aerostat Society  
c/o Dale Justice  
2902 E. 2nd St. Unit 76  
Newberg, OR 97132

You may also join on line.  
The URL is: <https://www.wasballoon.info/membership-ap/>



# Willamette Aerostat Society

## Willamette Aerostat Society Mission Statement

- To promote the sport of Hot Air Ballooning
- To educate new balloonists and the public
- To embody safety in all aspects of Ballooning
- To do all we can to support and encourage land owner relations
- To support our fellow balloonists and crews personally and in our sport

**To obtain Member Contact information,  
send an e-mail to the Secretary/Treasurer.**

For Privacy reasons, *AeroStats* will not publish member contact information without their express permission.

## Contact and Submissions

Submissions of articles and photographs are encouraged and welcome! The editorial staff reserves the right to determine the suitability of a submission for inclusion in the newsletter.

Please email your pictures, articles, and comments to:

[sharigaleOR@gmail.com](mailto:sharigaleOR@gmail.com)

## Advertising Policy

Club member's ballooning related or event information is published on a space available basis at no charge.

Business Advertising by Club members is considered Commercial Advertising, subject to fees shown below.

Material must be submitted in computer word processing format with pictures in JPG format.

*AeroStats* reserves the right to decline publishing submitted information.

## Commercial Advertisement Space Rates

Full Page — \$30      1/2 Page — \$20

1/4 Page — \$15      Business Card — \$10

Ads will be published for 3 consecutive months, or until withdrawn, for the fee shown above.

The publishing of advertising in *AeroStats* does not imply an endorsement of the ad or its contents.

Text and images will be printed as submitted by advertisers.

## Front Cover:

Pacific High was flown by Ron Purdum. He was a big part of the early ballooning scene in the Willamette Valley, and the founding father of the Albany, Oregon balloon rally.

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**Material to be considered for publication should be mailed or e-mailed to the Newsletter Editor at [sharigaleOR@gmail.com](mailto:sharigaleOR@gmail.com)**

**Publication deadline is the 2nd Saturday of each month.**

**AeroStats reserves the right to deny publication of submitted material for any reason.**

**Material published in AeroStats does not imply endorsement by WAS, its officers, newsletter editor, or its members of an event.**

**Nor does it imply agreement with opinions, comments, or endorsement of any product.**