

From: Sallie Loflin
Sent: Friday, January 2, 2026 9:18 PM
Subject: American Ballooning Community

Dear Members,

I'm excited to share an important update about the future of our organization. As many of you know, our club has grown far beyond its original footprint, bringing together pilots, crew, enthusiasts, and supporters from across the country. With that growth has come an opportunity to better reflect who we are—and who we aspire to be.

After thoughtful discussion and input from members, we have officially adopted a new name: **American Ballooning Community**. This name change isn't just cosmetic. It represents a shift toward a more inclusive, collaborative, and nationally connected organization. We wanted a name that welcomes everyone who shares a passion for ballooning, regardless of where they live or how they participate. "Community" captures the spirit we value most: a place where people come together to learn, fly, volunteer, and support one another.

As part of this transition, we are also introducing a new structure that will allow **chapters** to form within the American Ballooning Community. This is a direct response to something many of you have expressed: while our club is national in scope, our meetings and activities often center around one geographic area, unintentionally leaving out members in other states. Chapters will help us change that.

Here's how the chapter system will work:

- **Local connection:** Members in any region may form a chapter to support balloonists in their area, host meetups, and build relationships with nearby pilots and crew.
- **Shared identity:** Each chapter will operate under the umbrella of the American Ballooning Community, ensuring consistency in values, safety, culture, and mission.
- **Flexible structure:** Chapters will have access to our Chapter Toolkit, a guide to being a successful chapter.
- **Support from the national organization:** We will provide guidance, resources, and recognition to help chapters thrive while still allowing them the autonomy to shape activities that fit their local needs.
- **Improved access and participation:** Members who cannot regularly attend national meetings will now have a meaningful way to stay engaged, contribute, and feel represented.

Our goal is simple: to make ballooning more accessible, more connected, and more fun for everyone involved. By embracing a name that reflects our shared identity and creating a chapter structure that supports local engagement, we are building a stronger foundation for the future of ballooning in America.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your enthusiasm, your ideas, and your commitment to the sport are what make this community so special. I look forward to seeing new chapters take shape and to watching our community grow in ways that honor both our history and our future.

Warm regards,
Sallie Loflin
President, American Ballooning Community