



DOWNWIND CHASE

Official Newsletter of the Pacific Coast Aeronauts

♦ OCTOBER 2025 ♦

Save the Date!
PCA Holiday Party
Dec. 13 - 1PM

WHAMOBASS
OCTOBER 18 — 19
TURLOCK CA



IMPORTANT INFO!

CLUB MEETINGS

HELD ON THE FIRST WEDNESDAY OF
ODD-NUMBERED MONTHS PLUS
DECEMBER

**4TH MEETING
OF 2025**

**Wed. Nov 6th
@ 7PM PDT**

BOARD (BOD) MEETINGS

**4TH MEETING
OF 2025**

**Thurs Oct 16th
@ 7PM PDT**

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:
20th of each month

View from the Board

April Turner, President and Board Secretary

The weather this spring was not friendly, and for many of us we didn't start flying much until June. Since then, however, there has been so much to do! Regular flights, rally flights, even when weathered out, there have been glow shows or at least candlestick opportunities. September is always a great time to fly, and of course October brings Albuquerque for the adventurous among us. It has been fabulous to connect with so many members at these events, and I look forward to enticing more of you to attend our meetings.

October is also the new month for WHAMOBASS. While originally held the week-end before Thanksgiving, to be closer to Montgolfier Day, several years of rain forced us to move the event earlier in the season, which has worked well. We also had a long tradition of having the event in Coalinga CA, however circumstances brought us back to our roots of moving the event around. In the early years, the event moved between Bay Area towns, and has been in Tracy more than once. For 2025, we are lucky enough to have Alta and Don Fernandes help to host WHAMOBASS again



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in Turlock on October 18-19. Several pilots have indicated willingness to attend, so please get your forms in soon! I believe we still have 2 or 3 launch sites available. Claire Lucas will be our Chief Judge and I'm sure she will have something inventive for us to do as our Saturday task! Even if you don't bring a balloon, please join us for tailgating and stories as we reflect on

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this season and other wild stories as we are wont to do.

Lastly, the comment period for the **FAA ruling** on unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) at low altitudes beyond visual line of sight (the delivery drones) ends on October 6th, 2025. If you have not yet sent in your thoughts, considerations, or recommendations, please do so before the close of comments. All information can be found here: <https://www.regulations.gov/document/FAA-2025-1908-0023>

LINCOLN WINGS & WHEELS, AUGUST 2025

By April Turner

Friday August 22 kicked off the weekend with an evening filled with gourmet food trucks, a live local band and what announcers called “a hot air balloon moonglow”. Dave Wakefield was our Balloon Meister and started off the five balloons that lit up the evening to the oohs and aahs of the crowd. The families were super excited to see the spectacle and get an up-close view of the balloons. Thanks to Jana Couch for the photos!



Saturday we started the morning with good weather for six of us flying from the airport, and ReMax hosting tether rides at the field. Even at our early hour we could watch the skies come alive with flybys and aircraft coming in for display. Good flights had by all, with safe landings among the hay fields and cattle pastures. My passenger was a local and able to point out likely open gates, which is always a blessing. Back at the airport there were hundreds of classic cars, hot rods, and specialty vehicles among the aircraft



One of the rotorcraft participating early took some fabulous video of all the balloons. Enjoy! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DWSGVzOhuIM>
Photo below right by Dave Wakefield.



Great Reno Balloon Race 2025

By Melanee Scarborough

In an annual tradition, the weekend after Labor Day balloonists from all over came into the Biggest Little City in the world – RENO, NV; for the Great Reno Balloon Race (GRBR). This time was slightly different for me as Nevada is now where I call home.

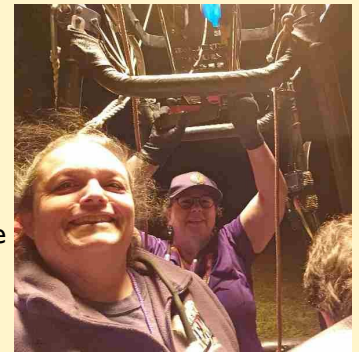
No more hotel rooms, no more worrying about being displaced for several days and no more making sure you packed everything before leaving home – but still having to get up before the crack of dawn to head down to Rancho San Rafael Park didn't change.

This year I served as Crew Chief for Karalyn Mumm who served as one of two “Beacon Balloons.” What is a Beacon Balloon you ask? A crazy person who has to get stood up in the dark, on a hill, way away from everyone else, every morning - just kidding; mostly!

Way up on the further point of the park, the organizers of GRBR decided to place two balloons (one on either side of the hill, the other beacon was Kylee Reader) to get set up prior to the mornings glow shows to show the crowds of patrons where they could go to sit to encourage them to go up on the hill and watch from up on the hill. Kind of like a marker, or a signifier of “going to the light” our teams had to be up and standing by 4:30 a.m. every morning of the event.

Three days of Glow, Dawn Patrol and Mass Accension (and a bonus Media day), this years GRBR was a wonderful weekend! Bonus specials included the addition of RC balloons to this years event; a lovely tribute to Dave and Kim Lynch and a special announcement that next years GRBR will be expanding to a 4-day event! All the balloons gave spectators a wonderful show all the days of the event. In true fashion, Saturday was the busiest and most filled day but surprisingly Sunday I think was just as busy. One of the days our team landed in a wonderful neighborhood where everyone came out and we were able to tether everyone that wanted to experience the balloon. They offered us their home, their bathroom, their food and their mimosas. You never know what you might get at GRBR!

I would like to say it felt different being a Nevadan now, okay I will, it was nice to go home to my own bed! Until next year.



Congratulations to our hot air balloon **Nevada State Champions**

Ryan Evans 1st, **William Vavra** 2nd, Zoe Swenson 3rd
Well deserved as all are excellent pilots!

(from Lori Anderson's FB page)



Great Reno Balloon Race

Remote Controlled Balloons (RCBs) – Our first year

Where to begin... I haven't been back to GRBR since 2019. A lot has happened since then which included selling our Aerostar balloon Rainbow Dream to Brent Rolland, now renamed "Iridis". Just before selling Rainbow Dream (aka mama) she had an off-spring. She just happens to be an identical twin to Mama. She is named R3D2 (yes that is correct) and it is an acronym for the three balloons we've had (or have) named Rainbow and two with Dream in the name... suffice to say we named her R3D2. A remotely piloted 2,800 cf hot air balloon.

There are numerous RCBs being built, some by experts in the craft, some by novices. Ours was built by Remotecontrolledballoons out of Texas.

GRBR had never had RCBs until this year. There was a need to fill a sizeable time gap between when Dawn Patrol being over and the Mass Accession. Event Organizer Melissa Ung and Flight Operations Katie Griggs thought about using the RCBs to fill that gap. Katie reached out through two local pilots to ask if I would be interested. A lot had to happen in a relatively short period of time as they were well into the normal pilot registration timeline. Suffice to say, Katie and Melissa pulled it off. They had a total of five RCBs lined up and ready to go. Mike Muang with Porthole, Moriah Sewell with Colors of the Wind, Penelope Mills with Ohana, Andrew Wellner with Ocean Sunset and myself with R3D2.

They had a great launch site (remote tether site) location that worked out perfectly. We were between launch sites for the regular balloons. The plan was when Dawn Patrol is over and the normal pilots went off to briefing and before mass accession, we would stand up and entertain the assembled masses. Let me tell you there was a massive amount of people on the field. The timing for the RCBs to inflate was a little off on media day and we (the RCB Pilots) adjusted to 30 minutes later on Friday thru Sunday. It worked out fantastic.

People were enthralled to see the RCBs inflate, tether, and get up close and personal to look (and touch) a miniature hot air balloon (aka as GRBR called us – baby balloons). Our flights drew hundreds (no exaggeration) of people from across the field. We were passing our several hundred trading cards each day. It gave each of the RCB pilots and their crew great opportunities to educate the attending public about hot air balloons. We talked about how hot air balloons worked, what they are made of, how they flew, etc. RCBs are a great educational tool and can be stood up and flown in very small spaces. Even when we were not flying we kept the envelopes cold inflated so people could still see them from across the field. As I said there were five RCBs in total, all different sizes, from the very small to just over 3,000 cf.



Pat Moore's R3D2



Andrew Wellner—Ocean Sunset



Moriah Sewell—Colors of the Wind

What a great experience working with my fellow RCB pilots each day. We shared crew, inflation systems, solved problems together, etc. A great group of pilots and now friends. We even had crew (Kris Moore, Jennifer Fugitt, and Linda Walton) from our larger counterparts that come to help with inflations, deflations, and handing out trading cards to the large curious crowds.

All in all, it was a fantastic weekend. Personally Fran (my Wife) and I got to prove could set up, assemble, inflate, fly, deflate, and pack up with just the two of us. She and I got to work together as we never had when we flew the big balloon. We had a blast working together.

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Oh yeah, who needs a crown line person when a five pound sandbag will do. Worked perfectly! In all it was a great weekend and great event. Thanks in part to our fellow RCB pilots, crews from Alan Sanderson and Brent Rolland, and the great support from the GRBR Organizers especially Katie Griggs and Melissa Ung.



Penelope Mills—Ohana



Michael Maung's Porthole.
A truly unique basket!

SONOMA COUNTY
HOT AIR BALLOON
CLASSIC
ARTICLE
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SONOMA COUNTY HOT AIR BALLOON CLASSIC

BY LINDA WALTON

SCHABC or Sonoma for short is currently being held at the Santa Rosa fairgrounds. I grew up in Sonoma County (Petaluma) and the habit of calling this event Sonoma, is tough on me, but that's not the point of this article.

I drove up to Santa Rosa, one of many crew members for Dana Thornton. The crew members set up the balloons on a nice grassy area, where the carnival rides sit for the fair. This year, the weather gods did not play fair for either Saturday or Sunday. The overcast was a mixture of fog and clouds, too low to consider flying, even if the wind direction would have been favorable.

With pilots driving from all over the western US, the field included the Yoda balloon and the Darth Vader balloon. Spectators sat in chairs along the field edge with storm troopers and Star Wars characters walking through the crowds. We entertained the crowds with a morning glow at 5am and to standup at 6:30 both Saturday and Sunday, allowing those interested to take pictures or a look inside the envelope. (Gotta check out the smiley face inside Dana's balloon)

Many people took the opportunity to walk inside Bob's Big Cat, the balloon that traveled the world many times over.

I hope the weather cooperates with us next year. Until then.



Photos by
Linda Walton



In my continued quest to prepare for fiesta. I traveled with Pilot, Karalyn Mumm once again this time to the tiny town of Alturasfuture. Friday we had a wonderful school program and Saturday a great flight complete with a hop and passenger change and a ceremony complete with a horse eagerly listening about the first passengers. Sunday's weather less favorable but not lost as we spent the time talking to event , CA to once again crew chief for her. The best way to describe this event is the little engine that could. A once thriving event is finding a hard time gaining momentum but event organizers are hopeful they can continue to grow in the organizers about weather, event organization and how to help them grow and thrive their event in the future.



Montague Hot Air Balloon Fair

If you missed the Montague Hot Air Balloon Fair Parade last Saturday we were honored to have as our Grand Marshals, Joann and Neil Rucker. Joann and Neil, as directors of the Siskiyou Visitors Bureau, created the Siskiyou Balloon Faire in 1992 bringing balloon pilots from all over the western states to fly in Siskiyou County. The Siskiyou Balloon Faire ran for 7 years from 1992 to 1998 before becoming the Montague Balloon Fair in 1999. We thank the Rucker's for their contribution to this beloved community tradition. Pictured with the Ruckers is Joan Smith Freeman who was the president of Montague Rotary when they took over the event in 1999.

I was the balloon meister for this rally during the early years assisting Joann and Neil with organization and selecting pilots. Great Fun! Photo and article gleaned from the Montague Hot Air Balloon Fair Facebook Page



PCA BOARD of DIRECTOR'S Minutes

for July 31, 2025 (Thursday 1900 hours PDST)

2025 Board Members: ☒ Pat Moore (PM) ☒ April Turner (AT) ☒ Tom Sharpee (TS)

☒ Linda Walton (LW) ☒ Jeanne Anson (JA)

Chair of Board: Pat Moore (PM) Club President: April Turner (AT)

Club Vice President: Dave Wakefield (DW) Club Treasurer: Linda Walton (LW)

BoD Mtg Secretary: April Turner (AT) General Membership Mtg Secretary: Jeanne Anson (JA)

VP Dave Wakefield

called to order: 7:02PM Pacific by Pat Moore

1. PCA Budget status/update – LW
Linda to email August 1-2, 2025
Payments to Zoom & Jr Balloonists
Some deposits to Cheddar
2. Treasurer Report – LW \$9866.78
Quarterly summary report— *Report due by email August 1-2, 2025*
Interest bearing account – status – LW due 4/28
Our account is free for the \$7500 balance
Linda will make appointment with Chase to see if there are options (savings/CD) with our account.
Credit union option: <https://www.monterra.org/business/checking/basic-business-checking>
3. New Business:
Email – Status of functionality – TS / LW / DW
Status unchanged, still needs to use 2 separate sends.
When Linda sends from the gmail account sends all are delivered, no bounces.
Linda to share credentials with Dave W for redundancy.
The email account from GoDaddy is part of our website/storage service so we can keep it.
Office 365 does not allow a user to be logged into two instances at the same time, making it difficult to move between personal accounts and the PCA accounts.
WHAMOBASS – Update - LW
Reminder email sent 7/25 advising that shirt orders need to be in by 8/15
Dave W & Peter Pierre applications are received
Alta's application is lost
Board to split roster and ask pilots if they are coming. Ask for new favorite picture. April to send list by August 1-2, 2025
All calls to be completed before August 15, 2025.
4. Continuing Business / Action Items:
Google Calendars, Best Practices – membership and BoD – Pat
Board usage is good.
Pat will ask Margot Tersey from Google if there is a way to track link clicks
PCA.balloons@gmail.com
Notifying membership how far in advance?
Pat has placed instructions in newsletter articles on how to set up notifications, and Jeanne will place in the next n newsletter as well.
Newsletter and website click rate – Dave
Monthly summary or quarterly summary? 22 downloads - Dave emailed full report 7/31/25
Procedural practices (proposals/storage) - Pat
Pat to draft procedure and submit to board by August 8, 2025
BoD Minutes approved / publishing process
Frequency/updating/make-up of the roster
Frequency of reporting budget status, quarterly reporting, yearly reporting
5. Committees:
Newsletter – Jeanne A. Uploaded on time, regardless of timeline challenges.
Dave Lester's balloon is for sale and Jeanne will add to next NL.
Paul Heiken's balloon is also for sale. Dave has reached out to Debbie Lebaneck regarding any services for Paul.
Monthly Board article:
September: Tom (Dave to write up Crescent City activities)
October: April (Pat will write up RC perspective from Reno) (write up Montague & Clovis)
November: Linda (WHAMOBASS)
December: Pat

Membership Development

Outreach – Vacant.

Communications – Dave W.

Website – Member balloons getting updated/FB updates

Education and Training – April T./Pat M.

Pat has been investigating BFA

Calendar based Events (not a committee)

BFA Youth Program

Melanee updated in the August newsletter.

Awards April looking for a new engraver for the WHAMO cup. (appreciation plaque as well) response due to board by August 8th, 2025.

WHAMOBASS see above

PCA Christmas Party Linda/April will reach out to Jana for a date and secure by August 8th, 2025

Larger question – ideas to get membership more involved and participating on Committees and calendared events – discussion ALL

For the good of the order:

Jeanne & Tom drove 3000 miles and got some flights in, but weather was challenging.

David has been getting some flights in, weather finally cooperating.

April has gotten a successful annual.

Linda next two events are Lincoln and Albany

Pat is looking for squeezer options for the RC

6. Motion to close:

Moved: Linda

Seconded: Jeanne

Closed at: 8:13PM

September 10th PCA Meeting,

Minutes by Jeanne Anson

Meeting called to order at 7:12pm

Attendees: Pat, April Tom, Jeanne, and Linda

- ♦ Reno discussion 63 balloons, 10 special shapes and 5 model balloons
 - ♦ 54 to 60F later in the day it was 80 and 90 during the day.
 - ♦ Challenging landing on Saturday
 - ♦ Light and variable winds as usual. Crowds larger than usual.
 - ♦ Monte is a sheep?
- ♦ Lincoln: light on crew.
- ♦ WHAMOBASS update.
- ♦ Meeting adjourned at 8:07pm
- ♦ To do list for Newsletter:
 - ♦ Pat to report on Reno and RCB participation at GRBR.
 - ♦ April to produce an article about Lincoln.
 - ♦ Linda to do article on Sonoma County HAB Classic

*Photos from
Auntie Joanna
Clovis Fest*





PACIFIC COAST AERONAUTS CLUB CONTACTS

2025 PCA BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND CLUB OFFICERS

Names & Email Addresses	Board Term Expires at	2025 Officers
Patrick Moore pcamoore587@gmail.com	2026	Chair of BOD
April Turner pca.april@gmail.com	2026	President & Co-Secretary
Dave Wakefield pca.dwake@gmail.com	Volunteer	Vice President
Linda Walton pca.lindaw@gmail.com	2026	Treasurer
Jeanne Anson ansonlta2@gmail.com	2025	Co-Secretary
Tom Sharpee tomsharpee@gmail.com	2025	



2025 PCA COMMITTEES

Committee	Chairperson	Members
Newsletter	Jeanne Anson	<i>And All Members!</i>
Membership Dev. Outreach	TBD	TBD
Membership Dev. Communications	Dave Wakefield	TBD
Education & Training	Pat Moore April Turner	Jeanne Anson Tom Sharpee
Calendar Based Events	Not Committees	Start Dates
BFA Youth Program	Melanee Scarborough	On Going
Awards	Linda W & April	Later in the year
WHAMOBASS	Board	Planning starts 3/25
Christmas Party	Jana Couch	Oct 2025 planning starts

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FOR SALE

Balloon and Equipment

Right-click on picture captions for more details



Raven S-55A



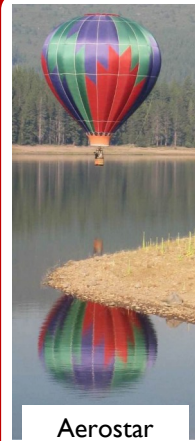
2001 Cameron 'Shoe 90



TBW AX-8B—Racer



**TBW FF7 & Trailer
New Price**



Aerostar S49A