

BALLOONING IN CRESTON

The Hot Air Balloon Association was formed in Creston, Iowa, through the efforts and leadership of Lowell Sharp in 1978. The first rally saw 22 balloonists in the skies. Since then, the number has increased to over 50 annually, making it the second largest balloon event in the State of Iowa.

Over 10,000 enjoy this annual event always held the 3rd weekend in September. In addition to the ballooning, the city is the site of day-long activities for the spectators.

WHAT YOU WILL SEE

The average balloon has a diameter of 55 feet, a volume of 65,000 cubic feet and a height of 62 feet. This includes the envelope, gondola, propane tanks and instruments.

The balloon is filled first with outside cool air with the aid of a large fan and heated with a propane burner. Once the inside air is warmer than the outside, the balloon is ready to lift off.

Wind velocity at ground level must be less than 12 miles per hour for safe flying. Wind currents at different altitudes determine the flight path of the balloon.

The Hare and Hound Race is most common of the competitive events. The Hare Balloon takes off first, then the hounds try to follow the exact flight of the hare. The one landing closest to the hare's landing spot wins.

The balloon crew becomes the chase crew once the pilot is airborne. Ballooning is probably the only sport where the spectators do most of the running around.

THINGS TO SEE & DO

FRIDAY NIGHT FUN FLIGHT: Balloonists who come early fly over Creston and set the stage for an exciting weekend.

BALLOON RACE: Creston's rolling hills and blue skies provide a perfect setting for over 50 hot air balloons on Saturday at dawn & dusk and on Sunday at dawn.

FLEA MARKET: Over 20 exhibitors display their wares. You will find an array of the finest junk to the most prized antiques in Southwest Iowa. Located Uptown on Saturday.

MARCHING BAND PARADE: Saturday in Uptown Creston marching bands in the area compete for trophies. Each year the balloonist have been part of the parade. You have a chance to meet the pilots and view the gondolas first hand.

CRAFT FAIR: This yearly event gathers artists who display and sell their paintings, crafts, woodworking and pottery.

AIRPORT ACTIVITIES: Make a trip to the Creston Airport on Saturday. Enjoy or be part of the Pedal Pull. At dusk, enjoy the beautiful and ever popular Night Glow put on by the balloonists. It is a great way to wrap up a busy and exciting Saturday.

PET SHOW: Open to anyone through age 12 and includes any animal on a leash or in cages.

2014

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