

The Villages® BALLOON 2019 Festival NEWS



DAN STUKAS, BALLOON MEISTER

United States Air Force

Instructor Pilot 7 years

Delta Airlines

Pilot 25 years

Hot Air Balloon

Pilot 30 years

Dan has been involved in aviation all of his adult life, knowing from a very young age that he wanted to fly. Dan flew fighter trainers, the T-38 and the T-39, while in the Air Force.

After the Air Force, he immediately joined Delta and enjoyed 25 years as a pilot. He retired early from Delta in 2004.

Soon after meeting Susan, Dan surprised her with a hot air balloon flight, something she had always wanted to do. Very soon after that first flight, Dan got his commercial Lighter-Than-Air license. Susan quickly became an accomplished crew chief.

There are many aspects to ballooning and they have experienced it all. As a competitor, Dan has won several events. The most notable, Freedom Weekend Aloft in 1990 with 200 balloons. He also has won the Helen to the Atlantic balloon race five times. This is the only long distance race



for balloons. Dan and Susan owned a beautiful special shape balloon, “Miss Daisy”. They traveled the world sharing their beautiful balloon.

Dan has been Balloon Meister for more than 10 events as well as safety officer for many events.

A note from Dan and Susan

“We are very grateful for the opportunity to organize this

exciting hot air balloon event for The Villages®. After our first visit, we knew The Villages was the perfect venue for hot air balloons. It is a gorgeous flying area, beautiful weather and great enthusiasm from The Villages staff. We know this will be the first of many great years with The Villages and we are looking forward to meeting everyone. It’s always a joy to share our love of ballooning.”

LATEST NEWS & INFORMATION

Such excitement is going on around here getting ready for this magical event! Our whole staff is working overtime to put together an exceptional experience for you! From the balloons to the entertainment – exciting new vendors and ballooning competitions– we want to make your time here an amazing memory!

But we want to remind you, as with all outdoor events, please come prepared. Wear comfortable shoes and be prepared to walk distances. Please bring your own chairs or blankets for watching the balloons and the entertainment. We have a limited

number of rentals for tents and chairs that are available on-site. These rentals will be on a first come, first served basis.

We’ll be updating you with new vendors, ballooning and entertainment schedules, tickets, prices and maps! **If you are interested in becoming a vendor, or in volunteering, you may sign-up on our website links under “Get Involved”.** There are still volunteer opportunities available as well as vendor spots open. Once our Vendor Booths are full, this page will no longer link to the forms.

Looking forward to seeing you soon!

*The staff of
The Villages Balloon Festival*