

Rediscover Danville

Balloons Over Vermilion

By Carol Nichols Director, Illinois SBDC at DACC

Last weekend I had the chance to watch my oldest granddaughter enjoying fireworks for the very first time. She had seen them in previous years but this was the first year she ignored the loud booms and was able to be thrilled by the beauty of a sky filled with exploding color. I can't wait for her to see what this week has in store as the skies over Vermilion County explode with color once again, this time with just the soft whoosh of propane keeping aloft dozens of beautiful hot air balloons.

Balloons Over Vermilion, sponsored by the Julius W. Hegeler II Foundation and many, many local businesses, comes to the Vermilion County Airport Friday and Saturday with a schedule packed with food, fun and entertainment. The gates open Friday at 3 pm. Kids Zone activities are offered both days. Scheduled bands on Friday include: El Guapo, Boat Drink Caucus, Last Flight, Andy Mo & Jeremy and Sushi Roll wrapping things up at midnight. Saturday

the gates open at 1 pm and scheduled bands are: Alex Jenkins & the Bombers, New Souls with Mike Ingram and Brandon Washington, Candy Foster and Shades of Blue, The Tons 'o' Fun Band, Live Jukebox with David Howie & Lou Dibello and Feudin' Hillbillies playing until midnight.

In addition to the great music, enjoy the antique car show, the sand volleyball tournament, the Jesse White Tumbling Team and Hours of Fun with Ronald McDonald and D102 on Saturday

And, of course, the balloons.

In flying hot air balloons, the safety of pilots and passengers is paramount. Please understand that all activities are weather dependent. Balloon times may be delayed or canceled because of weather. Understanding how pilots make the decision whether or not to fly can help avoid potential disappointment. Balloons will not fly in winds higher than 10 mph. Winds aloft may differ from wind on the ground and

will also be taken into consideration. Balloon pilots operate under FAA VFR conditions, which means they must have good visibility for a least 3 miles. Balloons do not launch in the rain. Fronts usually bring a change in wind speed and direction, impacting launch and/or launch times. There must be no thunderstorms within 100 miles of the launch point for a launch to take place.

Maybe because of all these challenges, when they do happen, balloon events are extra special. A balloon launch is scheduled at 6:30 pm and a balloon glow at 8:30 pm on Friday. A community flight is scheduled for dawn at 5:45 am, a balloon fly-in at 6:30 pm and a balloon glow at 8:30 pm on Saturday. Tethered balloon rides are scheduled both days and a chance to have your photo taken at the balloon photo booth.

See www.balloonsoververmilion.com or the Balloons Over Vermilion Facebook page for details, prices and schedule information.

Plus, don't miss the kick-off party on Thursday night at the Danville Boat Club's Balloon Splash & Dash as ten hot air balloons fly over Lake Vermilion and compete to hit a target in the lake. For this event, gates at the Boat Club open at 5 pm with food and drinks available for purchase. See www.danvilleboatclub.com or their Facebook page for more information.

Rediscover the joy of Balloons Over Vermilion this weekend!

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