



BALLOONS
Over Vermilion



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It has been many years since a large gathering of hot air balloons flew over Vermilion County, Illinois. Since then, thousands of children have missed out on the colors and the beauty of dozens of balloons ascending to the clouds to slowly drift across the evening sky. A generation of kids has missed out on experiencing that magic and wonder....**until NOW.**

Balloons Over Vermilion will return hot air balloons to the skies over Vermilion County this summer, culminating with ***a new balloon festival at the Vermilion Regional Airport in Danville, Illinois on Friday July 15, 2016 and Saturday July 16, 2016.***

When asked why they would get involved in another balloon festival and risk the financial burdens, recruitment of hundreds of volunteers, and worry about the weather, event co-chairs Jim Anderson and Pat O’Shaughnessy had an easy answer, ***“It’s for the kids”***.

With ***“the kids”*** as the inspiration, it gives us great joy to introduce Mrs. Tia Petersen’s 4rd grade class from Bismarck Henning Elementary School, who will be ***Balloons Over Vermilion’s*** “host” kids for 2016.

As they help organizers announce the new event to the public on January 26th at Vermilion Regional Airport, Mrs. Petersen’s class will launch the first “balloons” of ***Balloons Over Vermilion 2016.***

During this semester, the host students will design a poster to be used in marketing ***Balloons Over Vermilion*** throughout the summer, leading up to the event in July.

Students will also be involved over the coming months with planning and designing the event’s ***“Kids Area”***, providing organizers and volunteers with ideas about activities that will be provided on the airport grounds to youngsters attending the balloon event.

Students in Mrs. Petersen’s class, along with their immediate families will receive free admission to the event throughout the weekend, and will be introduced on the main stage by State Representative Chad Hays on Friday night, July 15th and join his band to sing a song for the crowd.

As with all children attending the event, our Bismarck-Henning students will be able to learn about hot air ballooning during Saturday afternoon’s **Balloon School For Kids**. And for the very first time, there will be a ***“balloon for everyone”*** tethered(weather permitting) on the grounds Friday and Saturday, so that anyone with mobility issues can move into a hot air balloon and experience the thrill of being lifted into the air as pilot **Tony Sandlin** (at **midwestballoonrides.com**) brings his special wheelchair-accessible balloon to the event.

Mrs. Petersen’s 4th graders will join thousands of other children across the area as “the kids” experience the sheer joy and colorful magic of hot air balloons in the skies over Vermilion County once again. After all, ***“It’s for the kids”***.

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