



Media Guide

2014



Hot Air Balloon Festival & Warrior Weekend to Remember

Evenings – Friday July, 11 4-10:30PM Full Festival

Saturday July, 12 4-10:30PM Full Festival

Mornings – Saturday July, 11 7-11AM With 5k Race and Pancake Breakfast

Sunday July, 12 No Festival Activity, Event Ends after Morning Flight

Event – (513) 705-1770

Media Relations – (513) 320-4506

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www.ohiochallenge.com

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

It's more than hot air!

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On-Site Activity Policy – Booth/Literature/Campaigning



All booth activities are confined to within 5 feet of the booth. No hawking or accosting guests. Guests will approach a booth or ask for literature if they wish.

No sales or political activity may be conducted by walking around the event site. No soliciting permitted on the grounds.

Political Candidates who wish to attract voters may walk around the site wearing “tasteful” t-shirts or badges proclaiming their cause or candidate but may not accost people to elicit votes or support. Appropriateness of shirts and badges will be at the sole discretion of the event management. While The Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival certainly supports local non-profit agencies and many committee members personally support various local causes, the organization does not provide free booth space for promotional purposes. Booth space is made available to upper level

event sponsors and approved vendors.

Pet Policy

While service animals and well-controlled pets on leash are welcome in the park, owners should know that their pet's behavior and waste is their responsibility. Because large crowds, the sound of balloon burners and fireworks may be bothersome to many animals, we recommend that easily excited animals may be more comfortable at home in their familiar surroundings.

Admission Policy

The Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival charges a minimal \$4 adult admission fee to those who choose to walk into the event site (Children under 13 are admitted free). The \$4 is a very low admission fee for an event which provides fireworks, laser light shows, top entertainment, hot air balloon launches, skydiving demonstrations, classic car show, Indian Village and balloon glows without additional charge. For those who choose, parking is available (\$10 per vehicle) at the airport entrance off Germantown Road with free shuttle service to the event and free admission for all occupants of the vehicle. RV & Bus parking is available \$20. Two day RV parking \$40. The admission revenue is used to help defray the costs of presenting the event and eases the burden on sponsors who support one of the most spectacular events in SW Ohio. Each year, a portion of the proceeds from The Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival is directed to local non-profit organizations who help present the event – directing traffic, site cleanup, gate attendants, etc.

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

It's more than hot air!

Summary of Events

12th Annual Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

Officially Presented by Selection.com

July 11-12, 2014

It's more than hot air!

Hot Air Balloon Competition – Skydiving – Balloon Glows – Fireworks – Laser Light Show – Syrian Shrine Clowns – Car Show – Tethered & Full Balloon Rides – Arts & Crafts – Carnival – Music – Festival...and much more!

Full Festival:

Friday July 11 – 4:00PM-10:30PM

Saturday July 12 – 4:00PM-10:30PM

NOTE: Full festival ends Saturday July 12

Hot Air Balloon Competition Flights:

Friday July 11.....Launch approx.. 7:00 PM

Saturday July 12...Launch approx.. 7:00 AM

Launch approx. 7:00 PM

Sunday July 13.....Launch approx.. 7:00 AM

Balloon Flights: Competition Balloons, Balloon Rides, Fiesta Balloons and special Shapes. Weather permitting, early AM & PM flights. Balloon Glows Friday and Saturday night.

Skydiving : Team Fastrax Skydiving presents breathtaking skydiving demonstrations and VIP tandem jumps

Laser-Pyro Musical: Friday Evening

Fireworks: Saturday Evening

Classic Car Show: Saturday Afternoon

Arts & Crafts: The finest of Midwestern artisans

Air Rides: Helicopter rides, bi-plane rides, tether & full balloon rides and tandem skydives

Festival Foods: Festival food vendors bring a wide variety of choices to the midway. Soft drinks and beer available.

Breakfast: Saturday morning pancake breakfast

5k Walk/Run: Saturday morning

THE OHIO Challenge
July 11 & 12
2014

MIDDLETOWN CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
MIDDLETOWN COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Hot Air Balloon Festival & Warrior Weekend To Remember
Smith Park • Middletown Regional Airport

Officially Sponsored By
SELECTION.COM

www.ohiochallenge.com

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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Schedule of Events

July 11-13, 2014

Pre-event:

Balloon practice flights
Wounded Warrior Activities



Throughout the weekend

Tandem skydiving jumps
Balloon rides
Arts & Crafts
Trackless Train
Festival Foods
Indian Village
Carnival
Bi-plane and Helicopter Rides
Playground/Splash Pad
Rob Otto – Announcer

Rob Otto is a professional balloon event announcer who also writes a regular sports column at www.mlive.com. In his day job, Rob is Sports Director at ESPN Detroit 1090-AM

Friday Evening July 11

4:00PM..... Park Opens

\$4 Adult walk-in admission (12 and under free) OR \$10 per carload w/free shuttle. Premium on-site parking w/admission \$20

6-9..... Syrian Shrine Clowns
4-10..... Full festival including Murray Bros. Carnival Rides, Trackless Train, Indian Village
6..... Opening Ceremonies – National Anthem, Team Fastrax Skydivers and Native American Ceremony
6-10:30..... The Skallywags – classic rock and new country
7-9..... Tethered Balloon Rides by Gentle Breeze (weather permitting) \$10 Adults, \$5 Kids (under 12)
7-8..... Balloon rides from site (weather permitting)
7-8..... Balloon launch from site (weather permitting)
7-9..... Fluff & Puff – Walkthrough cold-air inflated balloon
8:15..... Team Fastrax – Skydivers
9:15..... Balloon glow
10..... Team Fastrax Pyrotechnic Skydiving Display
10:15..... Laser-Pyro Musical
10:30..... **Park Closes**



Saturday Morning July 12

6:45AM..... Park Opens

Free admission/parking inside park

7-9..... Tethered Balloon Rides by Gentle Breeze (weather permitting) \$10 Adults, \$5 Kids (under 12)
7..... Remote balloon launch – competitors fly into Smith Park
7..... Fiesta balloons launch out of Smith Park
7-8..... Balloon rides from site (weather permitting)
7:30-10:30..... 5k Wounded Warrior Walk/Run – race begins with US flag skydive
8-10:30..... Pancake Breakfast served by MCS Foundation
11AM..... **Park Closes**

Saturday Evening July 12

4:00PM..... Park Opens

\$4 Adult walk-in admission (12 and under free) OR \$10 per carload w/free shuttle. Premium on-site parking w/admission \$20

4-8..... Car Show (Registration 2-4PM)
6-9..... Syrian Shrine Clowns
4-10..... Full festival including Carnival Rides, Trackless Train, Indian Village
4, 5 & 6..... Team Fastrax Skydiving Performance
6-10:30..... Stagger Lee – Classic Rock, Blues and Country
7:30..... VIP Wounded Warrior Recognition
7-9..... Tethered Balloon Rides by Gentle Breeze (weather permitting) \$10 Adults, \$5 Kids (under 12)
7-8..... Balloon rides from site (weather permitting)
7-8..... Balloon launch from site (weather permitting)
7-9..... Fluff & Puff – Walkthrough cold-air inflated balloon
8:15..... Team Fastrax Skydiving American Flag Performance
9:15..... Balloon glow
10..... Team Fastrax Pyrotechnic Skydiving Display followed by Fireworks Presented by Start Skydiving
10:30PM..... **Park Closes**

Sunday Morning July 13

6:45AM..... Park Opens

Free admission/parking inside park

7-9..... Tethered Balloon Rides by Gentle Breeze (weather permitting) \$10 Adults, \$5 Kids (under 12)
7..... Remote balloon launch Competitors fly into festival site
7-8..... Pre-purchased balloon rides from site (weather permitting)

Park Closes following morning flight

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival Sponsors

Presenting Sponsor

Selection.com



Primary Sponsors

Middletown Community Foundation

Start Skydiving

The City of Middletown

Chamber of Commerce

Middletown Convention and Visitors

Bureau

Team Fastrax



Gold Level Sponsors

AAA Ohio Auto Club

Bob Sumerel Tire & Service

Digital Visuals

George E. Kuhn & Company

Journal-News

K99.1FM

Kroger

Land of Illusion

Blast Zone Paint Ball

Mejier



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Silver Level Sponsor

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 Butler County Visitors Bureau
 Cincinnati State
 Dayton VA Medical Center
 Garden Manor Retirement Village
 Great Miami Valley YMCA
 Improve-It Home Remodeling
 The Kleingers Group
 Leaf Filter Gutter Protection
 Miami University Regional Campuses
 Middletown Moose Family Center
 MidPointe Library System
 Otterbein Senior Lifestyle Choices
 Premier Health / Atrium Medical Center
 Sears Home Services



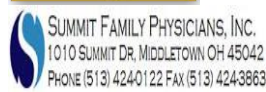
Bronze Level Sponsor

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 GFS Marketplace
 Huhtamaki
 Lee's Famous Recipe
 Miller Coors
 OmniCom Solutions Group
 Summit Family Physicians
 Wilson Schramm Spaulding Funeral Home



Corporate Balloons

BalloonPong • BalloonPong.com
 Bella Balloons • FlyBellaBalloons.com
 Gentle Breeze • Houser Asphalt • HotAirBalloonRides.com
 IMTS • International Manufacturing Technology



Special Thanks

Chick-Fil-A at Bridgewater Falls
 Jeff Couch's RV Nation
 Keep Middletown Beautiful
 Bob Leibold & Associates
 Rumpke
 TV Middletown

Warrior Weekend To Remember

Purple Heart Sponsors

Selection.com
 Coalition to Salute America's Heroes • Fraternal Order of Eagles • Gartner
 Halo for Freedom • JBK Manufacturing • Miamisburg Sportsmen's Club
 Patriot Project • Quantrum Meridian Global Consulting • Segue Technologies • SimTrainer
 Summit Funding Group • WalMart

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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Making it Happen: The 2014 Ohio Challenge Committee

Executive Committee:

Event Manager..... Paula Hale
PR & Media Manager..... Patrick Venturella
Operational Logistics.....Rodney Hale, David Pearce
Maria Langendorf
Pilot Services..... Ginger Bruggeman
Pilot Liaison..... Dr. Mark Frazer
Site Management..... Brad Short
Treasurer..... Scott Richardson

Committee Chairs:

Airport Shuttles..... Joe Wittman
Arts & Crafts Vendors.....Lisa Pearce
Car Show..... Don DeBorde & Dave Dietz
Command Center..... Doug Hale
Data Collection.....Frances Sack
Food Vendors..... Matthew Dixon
Guest Services..... Ann Mort
Hospitality Carole & Dave Schul
Landowner Relations..... Walter Leap
On Site Business Office..... Ed & Evan Dobrozsi
Parking & Gate Support.....Jim Griffith
Public Works Liaison..... Donna Beauregard
Signage..... Debbie & Jim Edwards
Sponsors..... Kathie Wasseich & Sheree Garrett
Team Fastrax Liaison..... David Hart
Warrior Weekend Liaison..... Dan Sack
Transportation..... Joe Wittman

Non Profit Partners

Butler County Sheriff's Office Explorer Post
Falcon Lacrosse Parents
Grace Baptist Ministries
HALO for Freedom Foundation
Knights of Columbus
Middletown Christian School Foundation
Middletown High School Forensics Team
Middletown Magic Soccer Team
Middletown Youth Soccer Association
Shriner's Hospital (Syrian Shrine Clown Unit)

...And, a special thanks to The Ohio Challenge committee!

Balloon Competition Officials

Event Director.....Maury Sullivan
Competition/FAA Liaison..... Sean Askren
Air Boss..... Kyle Sward
Staff Coordinator..... Lynn Sullivan
Safety Officer..... Mark McSkimming
Asst. Safety Officer..... David Troutman
Weather Officer..... George Troutman
Theodolite Operator Dave "Bubbs" Endres & Paul Dale
Chief Scorer..... Lynn Sullivan

Remote Targets

Jessica Burgess	Dave Enders
Paul Dale	Tom Warner
Harlan Adrick	Debbie Ittel
Vickie Withrow	Brenda Withrow
Shannon Householder	Gloria Schreiber
Dottie Humbert	Mark McSkimming
Mike Tuten	Cyndney Sue Jones
Jim Diebal	Michelle Moody
Georgene Voutila	
Landowner Relations.....	Walter Leap
Field Announcer.....	Rob Otto
Tech Support Officers.....	Lynn Sullivan, Dave Endres Dottie Humbert and Jim Diebal

Team Fastrax Professional Skydiving Team

Start Skydiving is based at Hook Field/Middletown Regional Airport. Team Fastrax is the most professional skydiving team in the world. The team will demonstrate breath-taking moves in the sky and in the landing zone where guests on the Ohio Challenge grounds can meet and talk to the skydivers after every jump.

Many of the team members are world and national champions in their particular specialty, with thousands of jumps each. All are truly professional in their safety measures and all aspects of their operation. Visit with the team at their tent and watch as they prepare to do it all again.

You can experience the thrill of tandem skydiving before, during and after the Ohio Challenge. For more information, visit www.startskydiving.com



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2014 Food Vendors

Vendor	Partial Menu
A&S Concessions – French Fry Trailer*	French Fries, Ribbon Fries, Cheese Fries, Chili-Cheese Fries, Hot Dogs
A&S Concessions – Sandwich Café*	Philly Cheese Steaks, Sirloin Steak Sandwich, Fried Bologna, Turkey leg
Bite Me! Gourmet Corndogs	Chili Cheese Corndog, Sassy Sister Corndog, Reuben Corndog, BBQ Corndog, By the Sea Dog, Mini Corndogs
China Rainbow	Teriyaki Chicken, Teriyaki Beef, Orange Chicken, Sweet & Sour Chicken, Sesame Chicken, General Tso's Chicken, Bourbon Chicken
Coco Bongos*	Frozen Non-alcoholic Drinks, Lemonade, Water, Soda
Cold Stone Creamery	Ice Cream Creations in Waffle Bowls or Cups
D Fish D Chicken	Fried and Grilled Fish and Chicken, Fries, Slaw, Hot Dogs, Cheese & Chilli Fries
Depew Concessions*	Quesadilla, Funnel Cakes, Cheese Nachos, Cotton Candy, Hot Dogs, Grilled Cheese, PB&J, Iced Tea, Lemonade, Soda, Water
Fun'l Frenzy	Funnel Cakes with a variety of toppings, Deep Fried Oreos
G. Maguire's Grill	BBQ Ribs, BBQ Chicken, Jerk Chicken, BBQ on a Stick, Cheese Burger, Taco Salad, Grilled Steak Salad
Keller Catering	BBQ or Grilled Chicken Sandwich, Boneless Pork Chop Sandwich, Onion Petals
Kona Ice	Shaved Ice, Pre-Packaged Ice Cream
Maggie's Concession*	Fresh Squeezed Lemonade, Bottled Soda & Bottled Water
Middletown Youth Soccer*	Pepsi Products, Water, Gatorade, Energy Drinks
N&H Concessions Kettle Corn	Kettle Corn & Flavored Kettle Corn
Natalie's Concessions	Funnel Cakes, Sugar Waffles, Sno-Kones, Pretzels, Nachos, Cotton Candy
Petti's Italian Ice	Italian Ice, Popcorn, Soft Pretzels
Pizza Tower*	Pizza by the Slice, Toasted Raviloi, Soda, Fizz Cup, Breadsticks
Smokin' Buckeye BBQ*	Wood Smoked Pulled Pork, Beef Brisket, St. Louis Ribs, BBQ Pork or Beef Sandwiches, Pulled Pork Nachos
Sunshine Concessions	Soft Serve Ice Cream, Funnel Cakes, Funnel Cake Sundaes
Waffle World	Hot Waffle & Ice Cream Sandwiches, Chocolate Dipped Cheesecake on a Stick, Ice Cream Bar on a Stick, Frozen Banana on a Stick
Uncle Zorba's Greek Food	Greek Plate, Salads, Gyros, Pork Kabobs
Vera Cruz Mexican Restaurant	Fajitas, Chimichangas, Nachos

*Beverages (Non-Alcoholic Only)



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2014 Craft Vendors

Vendor	Wares
Discover Balloons	Hot Air Balloon gift items
Handmade Treasures	Hand sewn table runners, place mats, bibs, pillows, aprons
Ray Starr	Wooden toys
Clella Legett	Funky fedoras, Neck coolers, face painting
Stitched With Family Ties	Appliqued shirts, baby and children items
Sand Art	Sand art, tattoos
Henry Morales	Dresses, maracas, flutes
Dobbins Designs	Stuff your own Teddy Bear. Transfer T-shirts and other accessories.
Cincinnati Face Painters	Face Painting
Bowtiful Creations Boutique	Custom made hair bows, tutus, necklaces, crocheted hats
Can Man	Home canned products
Whirlygigs-N-Thing-A-Ma-Jigs	Garden spinners, garden flags & windsocks
Name That Ring	Hand stamped jewelry
Treats of Love	Homemade dog treats
Mommy & Me Plaster	Craft paint your own plaster pieces
Reann Designs	Jewelry
Inspiring Joy and Sparkly Star	Felt items, crocket items, children's purses
Wolf's Moon Apothecary	Candles, lotion, soaps
Avon	Avon products
Smokey's Handmade Leather Crafts	Leather Belts and purses



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2014 Ohio Challenge Balloon Pilots

Middletown hosted the U.S. National Hot Air Balloon Championships in 1992, 1993, 1994. For the next several years, residents kept asking when the balloons would return. In 2003, the Ohio Challenge began with 30 balloons and a small ground festival.

2014 marks the 12th anniversary of the event which now involves 40+ hot air balloons and a full ground festival. The Ohio Challenge presented by Selection.com has become a premier event in Butler County and is a part of family, group and reunion plans. The public/private partnership and many grants and sponsorships make the event friendly to family budgets.

Participating hot air balloons are all flown by licensed balloon pilots and will take to the skies in the Middletown area, weather permitting, per the schedule in this program. Balloons can fly only when the air currents are less than 10 mph aloft.

Conditions for hot air balloon flights generally are only in the time immediately after sunrise until about 9am and again in the evening from about 6pm to official sunset when all balloon craft must be on the ground. (Even when balloons cannot fly, there is still much to see and do at Smith Park in Middletown.)

Balloons flicker in the night like giant fireflies

After dark on Friday and Saturday nights, weather permitting, many of the balloons will "glow" on site for the guests in Smith Park topped off with a Laser-Pyro Musical on Friday and fireworks on Saturday!

1st Place
2013 Ohio
Challenge

1-Bolt
Jim Cusick
Marysville, OH



2-A.B.O.
Nicholas Donner
Madison, WI



3rd Place
2013 Ohio
Challenge

3-Time Flies
Al Nels
Bevercreek, OH



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4-BOHICA
Sean Askren
Middletown, OH



5-Tumbleweed
Jeffrey Barlett
Mentor, OH



6-Sunshine
Meredith Bennet
Hilliard, OH



7-Arrhythmia
Rick Cusick
Lima, OH



8-TBD
Chase Donner
Atlanta, GA



9-Xtremely Contagious
Ken Draughn
Burlington, NC



10-Heartburn
Drew Egerton
Mooresville, NC



11-Second Wind
Michael Emich
Akron, OH



12-IMTS
Patrick Fogue
Columbia, MO



14-Release
Mark Frazer
Middletown, OH



15-Incognito
Phil Glebe
Brighton, MI



16-WindTrek
Rick Kohut
Louisville, OH



17-Rainbowmaze
Charlie Mays Jr.
Ryland Heights, KY



18-Tuscan Sunrise
William Meserth
Springboro, OH



19-Astro Racer
Andrew Nels
Atlanta, GA

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20-Tarheel Racer
Sam Parks
Statesville, NC



21-Hot Flash
Socrates Rettos
Liberty Twp, OH



22-H.E.R.B.
Shannon Rote
Doylestown, OH



23-Dream Racer
Chris Smart
Huntington, IN



24-Maybe
Dan Steeley
Beavercreek, OH



25-Lucky Strike
DJ Stukas
Central, SC



26-Celtic Cross
David Troutman
Louisville, KY



27-Free Spirit V
Eric Wasson
Hudson, OH



28-Legal Eagle
Ted Watts
Meadville, PA



29-Mariah
Mark Yeakle
Springboro, OH



30-Wings Over Wicker
Debby Young
Albuquerque, NM

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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Non-Competition Feista Ballons



31-Indian Summer
Robert Rhodenbaugh
Cincinnati, OH



32-The Ram
Mark Wiesmann
Middletown, OH



33-Angry Bird
Gary Moore
Lake Havasu City, AZ



34-Jewel the Hummingbird
Doug Grimes
Albuquerque, NM

Balloon Rides



35-Bella Americana
Mike Gliatti
Lebanon, OH



36-Bell' Aria
Rob Konkus
Lebanon, OH



37-Bella Vista
Ron Terranova
Fairfield, OH



38-Houser Asphalt
Tethered Ride
Gentle Breeze

Spirit of the Challenge Award

The award began in 2010 - the 8th Year of the Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival. The Spirit of the Challenge Award is given to an individual or group demonstrating enthusiasm, hard work, creativity and/or outstanding effort in support of the Ohio Challenge event chosen by the Executive Committee.

Winners

- 2010 - James Wannemacher, Balloon Pilot/Executive Committee
- 2011 - Brenda Withrow, Scoring Team Member/Local Liaison
- 2012 - Ginger Bruggeman, Pilot Services
- 2013 - Maury Sullivan, Competition Director and Ann Mort, Former PR & Media Director

Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival Past Champions

2003 - No Champion - Very few competitive tasks could be flown due to weather conditions.

2004 - Ron Terranova - Fairfield, OH

2005 - Rick Cusick - Lima, OH

2006 - James Wannemacher -
Middletown, OH

2007 - Scott McClinton - Middletown OH

2008 - Robert Mihaly - Lakewood, OH

2009 - Nicholas Donner - Indianapolis, IN

2010 - David Troutman - Louisville, KY

2011 - Nicholas Donner

2012 - No Champion - Very few competitive tasks could be flown due to weather conditions.

The top three competitors from the previous year are given the first three banners numbers.

2013 Winners

1st - Jim Cusick

2nd - Yudai Fujita (Sponsored by Nick Donner)

3rd - Al Nels



The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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Balloon Lingo - Talk the Talk

To enjoy any sport, it always helps to understand the terms used by those who are involved.

- Baggie—a 3 1/2 ounce bag of sand, rice, beans or corn meal dropped by the balloon pilots to hit a target on the ground. Closest to the center of the 30 foot "X" wins the most points for that task.
- Basket—the part that carries the pilot and passengers. Most are made of woven rattan with a plywood bottom.
- Balloon Glow—While balloons fly only during the daylight hours, they often gather after dark to use their propane burners

as huge night lights, causing their balloons to "glow." The balloons are tethered to the ground (or the bumper of their chase vehicle) and act like giant "fire flies" as their lights twinkle in the dark.

- Chase Vehicle—the van or truck following along on the ground as the balloon flies overhead. The crew helps the balloonist when launching or landing. No balloon goes out without a chase crew.
- Envelope—The large balloon part of the craft. Made of rip-stop nylon or polyester, it lasts about 500 flying hours. It is made of the same material as parachutes and can serve the same purpose, if needed.
- Helium—An inert gas used by balloon pilots for the small "pibal" balloons they release prior to a flight to judge the wind directions aloft. Sometimes pilots use a stream of shaving cream when in the air to judge the wind direction below them.
- Kissing—When two balloons bump in the air.
- Load Tapes—Straps of fabric running vertically and horizontally on the balloon envelope. They support the weight of the basket and passengers.
- Marker—A baggie after it is on the ground.
- Pibals—Two or three small helium-filled balloons released prior to flight to test the winds.
- Propane—Gas used to fuel the open flame burner which heats the air that keeps the balloon in the air.
- Splash and dash—A method used by balloonists to change direction. Touching down on a body of water and then immediately lifting off again will often change the direction of flight.
- Tether—A thick rope that keeps the balloon attached to its chase vehicle. Often pilots will give "Tether rides" taking passengers up just the length of the rope and then back to earth.



Ballooning is an Old Sport with a Modern Twist

Ballooning is an ancient sport. It's been going on for over 2,000 years, beginning in 300BC when the Greek mathematician Archimedes determined the principle of ballooning—the idea that less dense air will rise and heated air expands which makes it less dense. Humans first took flight in balloons about 800 AD. The early pilots were caught flying over Lyons, France and were called sorcerers and put to death. In 1783, brothers Joseph and Etienne Montgolfier tested a theory that smoky hot air would lift a payload by sending a sheep, a chicken and a duck on a short hot air balloon flight. The sheep kicked the chicken and broke its wing, hence the first hot air balloon accident. The first American balloon flight was January 9, 1793 over Philadelphia. Pilot Jean Pierre Blanchard carried a letter from George Washington, a permission slip of sorts, in case he landed in unfriendly territory. Balloons were used as observer aircraft during the Civil War and by Napoleon's Army, for the study of atmospheric conditions, and for the first aerial photographs of the US. In the 1950s, recreational balloon flights became popular. For three years, 1992-1993-1994, the US National Hot Air Balloon Championships were held in Middletown.

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Balloon Competition Tasks

- Competition tasks may be one or a combination of two or more challenges for balloon pilots during a single flight. Many target areas will be set at roadway intersections unobstructed by trees or power lines.
- PDG—Pilot Declared Goal—Each pilot selects a map coordinate as a personal goal. The pilot writes the map coordinates and a description of the goal and turns it in to the race officials before the flight begins. Pilots then launch all together from the same area and attempt to reach their personal goal to throw their markers as near that goal as possible.
- JDG—Judge Declared Goal—All pilots launch from the same general area with boundaries set by the officials. Each pilot will attempt to reach the same target and many will arrive at the same time to jockey for position.
- MJDG—Multiple Judge Declared Goal—Several targets will be set in the area. Each pilot will choose a goal to use as a personal target. Pilots choose a target while in flight and drop a marker as near as possible to the center of the "X".
- ELBO—Each pilot will fly from the same general launch area and attempt to achieve the greatest change of flight direction during the flight. Pilots will take off from spot A, drop a marker at point B and again at point C. By drawing an angle using the three points, the pilot with the smallest angle in flight will score highest.
- HNH—Hare and Hound. A single balloon will fly away to land and place a target on the ground. All other balloons will attempt to fly to the same spot to drop a marker on the hare's target.
- FIT—Fly In Task—Pilots find their own launch areas and attempt to reach a set point. Maximum and minimum launch limits are set. For instance, all competitors may be required to travel at least 5 miles from the goal to launch but no more than 10 miles.
- FOT—Fly On Task—Each pilot declares a goal to which he or she flies after dropping a marker in another task site.
- GBM—Gordon Bennett Memorial—Pilots attempt to drop markers within a designated area with definite boundaries. No points are scored for those who do not land a marker within the defined area.
- WSD—Water Ship Down—A two-part task, pilots will find their own launch sites and fly to a target. At a specified time, a hare balloon will take off adjacent to a target. Pilots must drop one marker at the target location and then fly on to the Hare's landing spot to drop a second marker.
- MAX—Maximum Distance—Pilots must drop a marker within a defined scoring area. They choose their own launch sites as far as possible away from the target. The pilot scoring highest on this task will be the one who travels the longest distance and is still able to drop a marker within the scoring area.
- MIN—Minimum Distance—Pilots will attempt to fly the shortest distance within a definite period of time. Many will stay near the ground for this task to avoid higher winds at higher altitudes. An additional penalty for touching the ground during the task is imposed.
- CRAT—Calculate Rate Approach Task. Pilots must drop markers at a target within a limited time period. Points are scored for only those pilots whose markers are dropped within the scoring area during the very short period of time.
- LRT—Land Run Tasks—Pilots will attempt to achieve the greatest area of a triangle from the launch point to two other points.
- STFT—Shortest Flight Task—Competitors fly from a designated launch area and drop a marker in a scoring area. Winner of this task will have the shortest distance from launch point to marker drop point.
- MDDD—Maximum Distance Double Drop—Pilots must fly from a designated launch area and drop their markers as far apart as possible within the scoring area.
- MNDD—Minimum Double Drop—Competitors fly from a designated launch area and drop their markers as close together as possible in different scoring areas.

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

It's more than hot air!

Best Balloon Watching Tricks

The best viewing spot is at The Ohio Challenge in Smith Park. Evening flights will launch from Smith Park/Middletown Regional Airport and fly elsewhere to accomplish their assigned competition tasks. Morning flights will launch at a location away from the field and attempt to fly to targets at Smith Park/Hook Field. The special shape and Fiesta balloons will fly out of the site in the mornings as other balloons attempt to fly in. Balloons not in competition and available for full balloon rides are called Fiesta.



To earn points, balloon pilots drop a 3 1/2 ounce bag of beans with their pilot number on the streamer as near as possible to the center of a ground target—a huge fabric "X" at the target site chosen for that flight. There are many variations on the task(s) assigned at the pre-flight briefing—shortest flight, longest flight, multiple drop zones, hare and hound . . . The site announcer will explain the tasks during each flight time.

Ballooning is a sport that does not adhere to the clock and launches happen when the wind speeds are best. Balloons fly in the early morning and early evening, just after sunrise and just before sunset, when the winds are lightest—5 to 10 miles per hour. A breeze may feel good on a warm day but it may mean that a balloon cannot fly. Sit back, relax and enjoy the day. Ballooning is a gentle sport that goes where the wind blows and only where the wind blows. If you find that balloons cannot fly, there is still much to do at the Challenge. Safety is the primary reason flights are cancelled.

Balloons are huge bags of hot air much like giant parachutes and even if ripped, will float gently back to earth using their parachute qualities. Only a very large hole in the top would cause trouble.

Balloon envelope designs are chosen by the pilot. Special shape balloons are generally the most expensive to make and sometimes the most difficult to fly. While balloon designs are generally not trademark designs, it would be considered a breach of etiquette for a pilot to copy another pilot's design—except for corporate balloon fleets which carry a sponsor trademark.

To fly, a balloon pilot spreads out the fabric envelope on the ground, partially inflates it with cold air using portable fans and then heats the air inside with an open flame propane burner. When the air heats, it rises and soon the balloon, with its wicker basket attached, will begin to stand upright. When the air inside the balloon is heated enough, the balloon rises from the ground carrying its pilot and passengers on a very gentle trip through the heavens.

Balloon flight is relatively quiet—punctuated only by the "whoosh" of the propane burners heating the air periodically to maintain a certain altitude. Balloons steer by going up and down to "catch" an air current traveling the direction the pilot wishes to go. Air at different levels will take different directions. The skill in ballooning is in being able to read the weather, the maps and wind currents to select a launch site that allows the pilot to maneuver his or her craft as close as possible to a target on the ground.

As the balloons float above, the support crews on the ground are following along in their chase vehicles. There are no round trips in ballooning (except at Albuquerque, NM where some pilots can "fly the box".) To return to base, the ground crew must meet the pilot at the end of the flight, help remove the heated air, pack up the balloon, load it on the truck or trailer and bring the pilot and passengers back to their base.

Do not "chase" balloons. Traffic accidents happen when drivers attempt to follow balloons in the sky without watching the traffic on the ground. A \$10 per car load fee admits your whole family to the festival. (Limited RV and motor coach parking is just \$20) There is a \$4 admission charge for adults who walk into the park. Children 12 and under who walk in with an adult are FREE. Smith Park will be open for morning balloon flight enjoyment—FREE.



If you have an open area on your property, away from trees or electric wires, and welcome a balloon crew to use that spot to launch or land, place a bed sheet on the ground at the location you are offering. That is the universal welcome sign for hot air balloon pilots.

If a balloon should land near you, please keep a safe distance from the craft until the crew has secured the balloon and basket. There are no brakes or steering wheels on balloons and sometimes they will bounce after they first touchdown. Do not follow a balloon onto private property. While balloon crews attempt to obtain permission to land and take off, that permission does not include the general public.

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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Take Home a Memory

2014 Ohio Challenge Event Pin - \$6

\$1 of every 2014 pin sold on 7/11 & 7/12 will be donated to the HALO for Freedom Foundation. Each year the Ohio Challenge event pin features a replica of the balloon flown by the preceding year's Hot Air Balloon Competition winner. Our 2014 pin features the "Bolt" racer balloon, piloted by Jim Cusick of Marysville, Ohio.



Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival Warrior Weekend to Remember T-Shirts - \$20

The design of the 2014 Event T-Shirt depicts not only the Ohio Challenge logo but reflects special events associated with the Warrior Weekend to Remember. Proceeds from the sale of the 2014 T-shirt will be donated to the HALO for Freedom Foundation.



Event Pins & T-shirts will be available on the midway.

A limited supply of pins from previous years is available.

StartSkydiving.com Tandem Skydiving Jumps

SAVE: On line prepay specials available – visit www.startskydiving.com
513-422-JUMP or Middletown Regional Airport



Hot Air Balloon Rides – Call (513) 932-3552 to Reserve Your Flight

Balloon rides are available to take paying passengers during morning and evening flight times. Visit www.FlyBellaBalloons.com for more info or call 513.932.3552 for advance reservations. Pilots reserve the right to cancel and/or reschedule flight if safety is ever in question and/or weather conditions are deemed unfavorable. In the event a flight is cancelled, ride will be rescheduled at the mutual convenience of the passenger and ride operator.

Higher Ground Helicopters - \$35

\$35 per person, minimum two people (max 3 per trip) 10 mile tour
Cash or Credit card

Contact: www.hghelicopters.com , 513-217-6700
or visit booth on-site to schedule rides



Bi-Plane Rides - \$80 per person

Grab a helmet & goggles and take a ride of a life time with Goodfolk & O'Tymes Biplane Rides.

Available all weekend. To make an early reservation call (937) 877-0837 or email: Info@gobiplanerides.com (include Ohio Challenge in the comments box to receive your special rate)



Tethered Balloon Rides—\$10/\$5

\$5 children, \$10 adults/ Weather permitting
7-9 p, Fri and Sat evenings and
7-9 a Sat and Sun mornings

Rides by Gentle Breeze Balloon Co - 513-476-0876
www.hotairballoonrides.com

And Come Back to Middletown for Other Great Events!

Visit www.calendarwiz.com/middletowncalendar for a Complete Middletown Community Calendar

Also Visit www.gettotheBC.com for area attractions



The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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2014 Car Show

The Ohio Challenge Open Charity Car Show



Winner of 2013 Selection.com Sponsor's Choice – '59 Chevy Impala (Nick Besch)

When	Saturday • July 12, 2014
Registration	2:00pm to 4:00pm
Show Time	4:00pm to 8:00pm
Where	Smith Park • Middletown, Ohio Follow signs to Show Car Entrance (VIP) GPS: 805 Columbia Ave., Middletown, Ohio 45042
Cost	\$15 Registration Fee
Awards	Dash Plaques – Guaranteed to first 100 Top 30 Awards PLUS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Warrior's Choice• Sponsor's Choice• Best of Show
Other	Split-the-Pot • Door Prizes • Family Fun Show followed by Balloon Glow & Fireworks

Email Info@OhioChallenge.com • Phone 513-705-1770

The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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2014 Pancake Breakfast

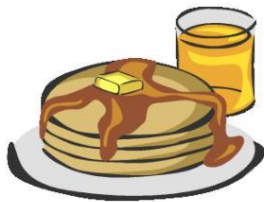


**HOT AIR BALLOON FESTIVAL &
WARRIOR WEEKEND TO REMEMBER
SMITH PARK • MIDDLETOWN, OHIO**

Officially Sponsored By
 **SELECTION.COM**

BALLOONS & BREAKFAST

By Donation



SATURDAY • JULY 12th

8:00am to 10:30am

Pancakes • Sausage • Bacon

Fruit • Coffee • Juice


Suggested Donation \$5 per person / \$10 for the family

*Watch hot air balloons before enjoying
a hearty breakfast served by*

Middletown Christian Schools' Foundation

BALLOON ACTIVITY IS WEATHER DEPENDENT – BREAKFAST SERVED RAIN OR SHINE
NO PARKING OR ADMISSION FEE REQUIRED FOR MORNING ACTIVITIES

FULL FESTIVAL FRIDAY & SATURDAY 4pm to 10:30pm
Complete Event Schedule Available at www.OhioChallenge.com

Like us on our Official Facebook page – The Ohio Challenge 

Call or Email for Group Reservations so we may better serve you.

513.420.1570 / mcsfoundation@mcseagles.net

The Middletown Christian Schools' Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization established for the express purpose of supporting the financial needs of the MCS System

The 12th Annual Ohio Challenge
Officially Sponsored By



The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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2014 Ohio Challenge Map



The 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival

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2014 Warrior Weekend Overview

Held in conjunction with The Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival, this event takes place July 10-13, 2014 at Smith Park/Hook Field-Middletown Regional Airport (Middletown, Ohio). Warrior Weekend to Remember is an exciting combination of activities meant to enrich the lives of our active duty and veteran men and women injured in combat deployments abroad, most are Purple Heart recipients. Up to thirty Wounded Warriors will participate throughout the weekend. The combination of activities is sure to put a smile on their face. Video of Warriors in Action: <http://vimeo.com/96442774>

To register a Wounded Warrior or become a sponsor contact: David Hart – dhart@teamfastrax.org

[\(Team Fastrax Event Website\)](#)



Ohio Challenge Warrior Weekend to Remember Golf Outing: 4-person Scramble, Shotgun Start: 1:00PM - Thursday, 10 July, 2014 at Weatherwax GC, Middletown, OH – Information Contact: Gary Holden, gholden@teamfastrax.org - [\(Register Here\)](#)

Ohio Challenge Warrior Weekend to Remember 5k Run/Walk: Saturday, 12 July, 2014 – Start 9:00am

Location: Smith Park, Middletown, Ohio - For Information Contact: Matt Harvey, mharvey@teamfastrax.org - [\(Register Here\)](#)

Sponsor a Warrior and participate in the activities with them over the Weekend: Sponsorship Contact: David Hart, dhart@teamfastrax.org - [\(Donate via Halo for Freedom Warrior Foundation Website\)](#) or Checks Payable to: HALO for Freedom Warrior Foundation - 100 Spanish Oak Rd, Weatherford, Texas 76087

Key Warrior Weekend to Remember Organizers

Since 2002, Team Fastrax has performed thousands of exhibition skydives at every national and international entertainment venue imaginable. Team Fastrax has performed as far away as Moscow, Russia and Normandy, France. The team is comprised of men and women and mostly military veterans, and is proud to jump our nation's flag and our wounded warrior heroes. America's skydiving team performing for you...On Time...On Target! www.teamfastrax.org

HALO for Freedom Warrior Foundation was started to show that physically challenged people can still work and excel in today's society and military. The organization provides support for wounded warriors as they face the many challenges they encounter during the rehabilitation, reintegration, and healing process. **HALO for Freedom Warrior Foundation** strives to make the public aware of the needs of our wounded veterans and the role played by the foundation. *Another Halo for Freedom in Texas: 2014 Weekend to Remember takes place March 7th & 8th.* www.haloforfreedom.org

The Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival - Officially Presented by Selection.com is a public/private partnership organized by The Middletown Area Chamber Foundation's Ohio Challenge Committee. Since 2003 it has grown to become one of southwestern Ohio's premier summer events and includes local non-profit organizations along with a core support of our nation's military, past and present. The event boasts a full-festival atmosphere with mass balloon launches, skydiving, fireworks, rides, and live entertainment as up to 40 hot air balloon pilots compete for The Ohio Challenge title and BFA's Great Lakes Regional Championship, while qualifying for the U.S. National Hot Air Balloon Championship. www.ohiochallenge.com

Ohio Challenge Balloon Festival: Paula Hale - info@ohiochallenge.com

Warrior Weekend to Remember: David Hart – dhart@teamfastrax.org

Media Contact: Patrick Venturella – media@ohiochallenge.com



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2014 Honored Warriors

Medal of Honor Recipient - Army SFC Leroy Petry



(Medal of Honor/Purple Heart Recipient) Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Arthur Petry is currently assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 75th Ranger Regiment at Fort Benning, Ga. with duties as a liaison officer for the United States Special Operations Command Care Coalition—Northwest Region, providing oversight to wounded warriors, ill and injured service members and their families. He was born in 1979 in New Mexico and in September 1999, Petry enlisted in the United States Army from his hometown in New Mexico, something he wanted to do since he was 7-years-old. Petry then volunteered for the 75th Ranger Regiment because of its reputable history. After completion of One Station Unit Training, the Basic Airborne Course and the Ranger Assessment and Selection Program – all at Fort Benning – Petry was assigned to 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. He served as a grenadier, squad automatic rifleman, fire team leader, squad leader, operations sergeant and a weapons squad leader. He has deployed eight times in support of overseas contingency operations with two tours to Iraq and six tours to Afghanistan. At the time of the May 26, 2008 combat engagement, Petry was a Staff Sergeant Squad Leader assigned to Co. D, 2nd Bn., 75th Ranger Regiment at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash. Petry plans to retire from the Army after many more years of service. Petry enjoys serving in the Army, and has a great opportunity to work with the care coalition; in his words, "If I can't go to the fight, I can help the men who are wounded, injured or ill." SFC Leroy Petry was awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty

Army PFC Bill Wilch (90) (WW-II D-Day Survivor)



(Two Purple Hearts) Bill Wilch, who had received a Knight of the Legion of Honor medal, the highest honor that France can bestow upon a person, and other WWII veterans were invited to have dinner at a French restaurant in Columbus. There was a TV crew there from France, and they were so intrigued by Wilch that they drove to Middletown and interviewed him in his home. The TV special is set to air on June 6, D-Day. There were about 100 letters that Wilch sent to his mother and 75 he mailed to his wife of 63 years ago who died four years ago. Steve Wilch became engrossed in the war and its impact on his father. He couldn't help but consider how the family's history would have been written differently without fellow soldier Burton Burfeind, a member of the 29th Infantry Division, 115 Regiment, who was credited with saving Wilch's life more than once and keeping him from being a POW. Burfeind was killed on Sept. 9, 1944 in France. It was Burfeind's advice to Wilch that became the title of Wilch's memoirs: "Don't Just Kill Them, Murder Em. Shoot Pee Wee, Just Shoot."

Some in the family didn't like the title because they thought it misled readers into thinking it was a violent book, instead of a collections of letters. Wilch told his son to keep the "gory" details out of the book.

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Marine – Gunney SGT Sam Deeds (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) During his Iraq deployment in 2005, Deeds came across an improvised explosive device (IED) while setting up a vehicle checkpoint near Abu Ghraib Prison. When he saw two of his fellow Marines approaching the area, Deeds turned back toward the IED to warn them of danger. Moments after successfully warding off his comrades, the device blew. "It basically leveled me," he said. His injuries set him on a path of nearly 40 operations and procedures to date. For his actions, Deeds received a Purple Heart, two Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medals, a Combat Action Ribbon and the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal. The moment he put his colleagues' lives ahead of his own may have cemented his legacy as a military hero, but he wasn't finished sacrificing his own welfare. In 2008, Deeds was recuperating from one of many surgeries--this one to repair a high-incision hernia. The surgical area was sutured and covered with a protective mesh. The doctors told him to avoid any strenuous activity for eight weeks. Six weeks into his recovery, Deeds was relaxing with his family on a beach when a woman was carried

away by a rip tide. The woman's husband and another man tried to save her, but all three were overcome by the current. "People were taking pictures and videos with their phones, and nobody was going to do anything," he said. "I couldn't let the guy drown in front of his family." Deeds plunged into the rip tide and helped all three return safely to shore. The protective mesh and two sutures tore away, leaving a hernia so close to his sternum he opted not to have any more surgery. He's been living with pain ever since. Deeds medically retired from the marines in 2011 with the rank of gunnery sergeant. Over the course of his injury-shortened career, he served Iraq, Japan, South Korea, and Haiti (twice). He also has worked in Greater Cincinnati as a recruiter.

Army SSG - Joel Tavera



(Purple Heart Recipient) Army Sgt. Joel Tavera is one of those truly remarkable people who, if you spend even a few minutes talking to him, any problems you think you have fade away. Tavera was horrifically injured in Iraq on March 12, 2008, in an attack that killed three others and wounded Tavera and another soldier. Tavera, who was volunteering for a mission shortly before he was supposed to head home, remembers a rocket exploding near his up-armored Chevy Suburban. Then came a panic attack. He opened the door. Then came the whistle – the sound of another rocket, heading straight for the Suburban. He was severely burned, had traumatic brain injury, lost part of his right leg, the sight in both his eyes, the fingers on his left hand and had to undergo many painful surgeries. Fast forward a few years. Hillsborough County Fire Rescue's Kelly Hallman heard that Tavera needed a home. When not fighting fires, is an architect and, among other things, designs houses. So, working with the Building Homes for Heroes, a non-profit that supports the needs of severely wounded or

disabled veterans and their families through building mortgage-free homes, Hallman designed a home for someone who couldn't walk and needed full-time nursing. Hallman tells a funny story about what happened when Tavera learned of the plans. His response as he walked up to Hallman with a prosthetic on his right leg speaks volumes for a recovery that can only be considered miraculous. "He said, 'Get that out of my house,'" Hallman says of Tavera's response to being told of plans for wheelchair access, a nursing station and a therapy room. "I don't need that.' I said, 'You are right, you don't need that,' and I took it out." Joel continues to be a strong role model in showing people that they can move forward and make a difference regardless of their setbacks.

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Army SSG - Shilo Harris (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) Shilo Harris understands the difficult challenges facing all soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as how to overcome adversity. During his second combat tour in Iraq, his armored vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device (IED). The explosion on February 19, 2007 killed three of his fellow soldiers and wounded the driver. Burned over one-third of his body, Shilo spent 48 days in a coma followed by nearly three years of recovery at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. Shilo credits his recovery to the courage and commitment of his wife and family, and the dedication and expertise of the military medical community. Shilo's mission today is to deliver a call to action on behalf of wounded warriors, their families, caregivers, and the surrounding communities. By offering hope, encouragement, and practical strategies for dealing with adversity, Shilo currently speaks to groups around the country about his experiences. Owner of WIN Home Inspection Services and national spokesperson for Helping A Hero, Shilo is a fierce advocate for today's veterans. Shilo and his family were awarded a new home during ABC's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition December 2012. His book, *Steel Will*, will be available in September 2014 through Baker Publishing Group.

Army SGT Matthew Pennington (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) Raised in both Maine and Texas Matthew Pennington entered into military service at the age of seventeen, He had a robust career full of responsibility and leadership roles. Then at the age of twenty three he was struck down by an ambush IED team in Iraq. Losing his left leg and receiving severe damage to his right he was honorably retired and received the Purple Heart and the state of Maine Silver Star among various others. Matthew has starred in a short film "A Marines Guide to Fishing". It is story that portrays an injured veteran's transition back into the work place as well as coping with his loss one year later on his alive day. Previously to acting Matthew has given a speech for veteran's day in the town of La Plata, Maryland as well as campaign videos for Senator Susan Collins. He has served on a panel for Secretary of Defense Gates at Walter Reed and received many of other types of recognition for his service to America. Matthew has worked alongside director Nick Brennan and Marjorie Pennington to perform screenings of "Marines Guide to Fishing" to raise donations for charitable organizations serving veteran's. It was creating these environments of entertainment and education that led him to further his speaking career as a Keynote Speaker for the Brain Injury Alliance, Joining Forces, various Military-Civilian conferences and Universities. Matthew has built a program that was endorsed by Congressman Mike Michaud and it has been replicated by the Vet Center's located within Maine and has been reported to have great success. Currently Matthew is a part-time National Spokesman/Field Associate for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes, it is a job he believes in and also one that allows him to witness and hear about the positive impact made in the lives of the combat wounded. Matthew has been married to his wife Marjorie Pennington for 11 years and looks forward to a life full of giving to and assisting those in need.

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Army CPL, EOD Tech - Mathew Rodriquez (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) I enlisted in the military June 1, 2007 at the age 19 years old, I did my Basic training at fort Jackson South Carolina, upon completion of Basic I attend 88M course in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. My first duty station was at fort Polk, Louisiana were I was assigned to 5th aviation unit were I was assigned to the post command sergeant major aide, during my stay with 5th aviation I was sent and completed my Airborne school and my RIP school for pre-ranger course, I also got to level 3 of combative and being certified, after of doing a few years of 88M I crossed trained and went to combat engineering school were I learned about explosives and dealing and finding objects in the ground and above, i also was stationed in fort brag with 1st brigade and also with my last unit with 4th/brigade 10 mountain. I deployed twice in my military career, first was in December of 2007 for 6 months and the next was in September of 2010 for a year, my second deployment was when I gotten Hurt in a IED explosion in the southern Province of Afghanistan were I fractured 2 of my lumbar Vertebrae's, and nerve damage, I was later air medevac out of country and back to the states were I was sent to wounded warrior battalion and which I was later medically discharge of the United States Army in February 23,2012, I currently reside in Lubbock, TX and have 4 kids 1, girl and 3 boys. And Married to Ariel Adame who I've been with since 2008, one day I hopefully I can get on my feet more stable and take on future in law by any chance, cause I don't want a stop helping people out in the world and that can be satisfying for me. So whenever I pass a vet by walking and I see their wearing something relatable to the military I will drive on and say Airborne

Army SPC Chris Bowser (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) Medically Retired, US Army. Tour in Mosul, Iraq, with 1-502nd INF, Fort Campbell, KY. After 19 days in country, while riding as a gunner in a MK-19 Humvee, a grenade was thrown by an oncoming vehicle and landed in the back passenger seat. It damaged both his legs. Chris has over 30 some pieces of shrapnel in his legs and is 90% disabled. He is currently working on founding an organization to connect vets to celebrities who they admire, www.HeroesMeetingHeroes.com

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Army CW3 Thomas W. Russell



(Purple Heart Recipient) CW3 Russell was born in March 1974 in Ohio and entered the Army in January 1994 as an 11M Mechanized Infantryman. He completed the Special Forces Qualification Course in 1999 and was assigned to the 7th SFG(A) as an 18C SF engineer. He was assigned to the Special Warfare Center and School as an instructor from late 2003 to 2006. He graduated from the Special Forces Warrant Officer Basic Course in May 2007 and was assigned to the 3d SFG(A). CW3 Russell currently works in the Advanced Skills Company, 3d SFG(A) as the company operations warrant and executive officer. CW3 Russell has deployed in support of peacetime and contingency operations, including six rotations to Afghanistan.

Army SSG Jerald Robertson II



(Wounded in Combat) SSG Robertson joined the USAR in January of 2002 post 9-11 to serve his country in a time of need. He transitioned to the regular Army in July of 2005 and served as an 11B (Infantryman) for a heavy weapons Company in the 2/502/101st INF AASLT where he served one tour in Iraq. SSG Robertson completed the Special Forces Qualification Course in January, 2010 and was assigned to the 3d SFG(A) as a senior Special Forces Medical Sergeant. He served 1 year in Afghanistan and was awarded the Bronze Service Medal (BSM), Valorous Unit Award (VUA) and BSM(V) for gallantry in combat; treating two friendly personnel while under direct during an L shaped ambush, against overwhelming combatant numbers and firepower. Upon return from Afghanistan SSG Robertson was injured during a motor vehicle versus motorcycle accident. He was struck from behind while at a stop light and thrown 15 feet; receiving multiple physical and TBI related injuries. SSG Robertson has volunteered his time to serve as the unit Victim Advocate (VA) and SHARP counselor and has made great revisions to the medical training of personnel in processing to 3d SFG(A). He is a proponent to continuing medical education for the force and is

currently completing his Pre Med Requirements and plans to apply to USUHS to continue to provide medical care for the Soldiers, Family members and Veterans of the greatest institution, the United States Military.

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Army SGT Paul Schafer (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) Sgt Paul Schafer is from New Hampshire and served full time Active Guard Reserves with C co, 3rd/172nd Mountain Infantry Unit for 7 years. He has been deployed to Helmand and Paktia provinces in Afghanistan and was medically retired due to wounds and injuries received during combat operations.

Air Force Major Timothy O'Sullivan (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) Major Timothy O'Sullivan entered the Air Force in October of 1991 completing 21 years of military service after being medically retired in December of 2013 due to related combat injuries. Major O'Sullivan began his career in United States Air Force as an enlisted propulsion specialist. In early 2000, he was selected for Officer Training School at Maxwell AFB, Alabama where he earned a commission in May of 2000. Following his commission he was assigned to Air Force Special Operations as a contingency planner. Following the September 11th Terrorist attacks, Major O'Sullivan had then deployed to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen and Oman from Hurlburt Field as part of the initial Special Operations Task Force, Joint Special Operations South/Task Force K-Bar and Task Force 11. In 2007, he deployed in lieu of Army as an embedded combat advisor with British and Australian Forces assigned to the Iraqi Army 10th and 14th Division in Basra Iraq. During this deployment, he endured nearly 1000 rocket attacks, 2 direct fire incidents, convoyed 500+ combat

miles and was later injured on March 2nd 2008 during a convoy with British Forces by an 80lb explosively formed projectile. His injuries included a mild traumatic brain injury, internal bleeding and two surgeries removing several bones related to torn ligaments. By April of 2008, he was transferred to his home station MacDill AFB to receive ligament reconstruction, occupational Therapy and TBI treatments at the James A Haley Veterans Hospital in Tampa. Upon recovery from his injuries, Major O'Sullivan continued his career at USCENTCOM HQ where he served as a principle advisor to the Combatant Commander (General David Petraeus/General James Mattis) on Security Assistance and Security Cooperation activities regarding Oman and Qatar. His distinguished awards include the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Air Force Combat Action Medal, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal, Kosovo Campaign Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal and the Distinguished Presidential Unit Citation.

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Army & Air Force SGT Michael Mather USA (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) SGT Michael Mather served 15 years total to include the two years on Temporary Retirement prior to a full Retirement, 11 deployments around the world to include The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Iraq, Turkey, and a few other locations, served in the US Air Force for 9 years as an F-15 crew chief, then switching to the Army in 2007 as a Forward Observer, deployed to Iraq for my 11th and final time where he was shot by a Sniper who was 550 meters away, his 5.56mm round struck just below the left corner of his mouth and exited his neck on the left side, he is currently a senior at Xavier University where he is studying to be a Cyber Security Specialist. Mike is and active member in the local MOPH chapter that he started in Clermont County where he brought Chapter 156 from Mt. Healthy to Clermont. He participates in the JROTC graduations at Western Brown High School. He has two children and has been married for 9 years July 2. His duty stations include Texas, Florida, England, California, North Carolina, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Louisiana, and Kentucky/Tennessee, before moving back to Ohio where he grew up.

Air Force SSG Jeremy Gassert (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) SSG Gassert joined the Air Force immediately after graduating from high school, serving nearly 10 years on active duty. In 2007 he was deployed as a Paramedic as part of Task Force Med attached to the 396h CSH at FOB Salerno, Khost Province. During a mission to the Khost Provincial Hospital, Khost City, Gassert was assisting with security for a public event when a military aged male came running out of the hospital wearing a surgical mask. At this time a soldier engaged in a physical altercation with the individual, once he had created some space between himself and the assailant, Gassert and others opened fire with 5.56 mm and 9mm small arms. It was at this time that the subject was knocked to the ground, reached in his pocket, and detonated a suicide vest that he was wearing. Gassert was struck with multiple shards of shrapnel, unbeknownst to him. It became apparent at this time that there were multiple casualties. He began treating a badly wounded soldier with facial trauma. Once tactical field care was accomplished, the entire team remounted and moved to an OP nearby. Gassert further triaged, treated, and directed CASEVAC via the ground commander. Once all urgent patients were airborne and enroute to the CSH he was informed by the ground commander that he too had been hit by

shrapnel. At this time the remaining troops, including Gassert, remounted the convoy and returned to the CSH to treat the remaining casualties. Due to the training and quick reaction by the security team, and medics on scene, the only fatality during this event was the bomber himself. Awards received: Purple Heart, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Commendation Medal, and Air Force Combat Action Medal

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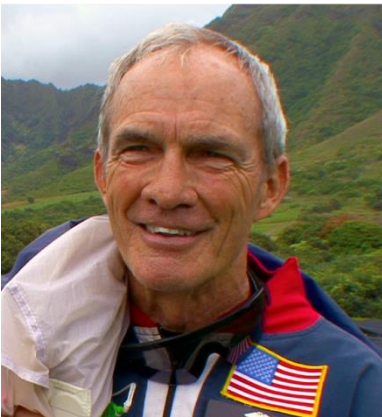
It's more than hot air!

Army Lieutenant Daniel Sack (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) After being commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army, Dan served state-side as a television production officer with the US Army Mobile Television Detachment in Pennsylvania. After one year, he received orders to Vietnam in July 1967. He was assigned as a communications platoon leader in the field with the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry. He served seven months in the field with his last assignment at firebase Katum on the Cambodian border. At the end of that assignment he was transferred to the 125th Signal Battalion at Cu Chi. In February of 1968, during the Tet Offensive he was wounded by a 122mm Rocket that landed on his hooch in the early dawn. He woke up under his hooch mate's bunk with shrapnel in both legs and temporary deafness. His hooch mate was killed in the blast. Currently President, OmniCom Solutions Groups, Inc and a graduate of University of Cincinnati and Xavier University. Dan was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the US Army and served with the 25th Infantry Division in Vietnam from July 1967- 1968.

Marine COL John Bates (Ret)



(Three Time - Purple Heart Recipient) Marines Corps Colonel John Bates earned three Purple Hearts in Vietnam, the first after surviving machine-gun fire to the chest. Of the sensation, Colonel Bates says, "It's like standing over home plate having Mark McGwire wind up and try to hit you out of the ballpark." The second commendation came after a hand-grenade explosion blasted shrapnel into his leg. "If you've ever been hung up in barbed wire, that's what it's like," says Colonel Bates. "Except it's hot. Very, very hot. A searing heat and you can't get it out." Both experiences pale when compared to the time he fell into a pit and his left foot became impaled by a three-foot bamboo stake, the stake smeared with water-buffalo manure to maximize infection. Colonel Bates' military passion seeped into him through his bloodlines. His father, Leland, who died two months ago, flew 51 combat missions during World War II. When the Vietnam War heated up in the mid-1960s, Colonel John Bates enlisted. The machine-gun fire to his chest didn't deter him. After being hospitalized in

intensive care for 23 days, Colonel Bates had been relegated to mopping the hospital floor. "That wasn't my intention for being in Vietnam," he said. So he found a pair of boots, pants, a blue hospital gown, walked out of the hospital, hitched a ride to the airfield, caught a helicopter and despite still spitting up blood, rejoined his platoon. "Everyone was glad to see me," Colonel Bates says. "They needed more trigger-pullers." Less than two years into his scheduled three-year enlistment, he was discharged because of the injuries he received in combat. In the next seven years Colonel Bates earned a bachelor's degree and two masters. He worked as a substitute teacher, a railroad brakeman and a heavy-equipment operator. But his real goal was to rejoin the Marines. Knowing he'd have to prove his fitness, Colonel Bates began training intensely. Unbeknownst to his wife, Stephanie, over a 2½-year period he applied for readmission to the Corps at least five times. Finally, he was accepted. "Quite honestly," Colonel Bates said, "I think I wore them down." Colonel John Bates has served throughout the world since then, including tours in Kuwait during Desert Storm, and recently in Iraq.

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Army SGT Mary Herrera (Ret)



(Purple Heart Recipient) Army Sergeant Mary Herrera of the 855th Military Police Company of the Arizona National Guard, was wounded on November 8, 2003 while on a routine mission to Fallujah from Ramadi. Sgt. Herrera the gunner of the lead vehicle was manning an M249 and a MK-19 when her element was ambushed by rifle fire, R.P.G.s, and I.E.D.s. Sgt. Herrera was immediately hit with one AK-47 round on her right bicep but was able to continue suppressing fire until she was hit was a second AK-47 round on her right firearm. After returning to the United States, Sgt. Herrera was awarded the Purple Heart for wounds received as a result of enemy and hostile action. Mary did not lose her arm due to extraordinary surgical efforts, and she received numerous surgeries, skin grafts and physical therapy at Brooke Army Medical Center in Fort Sam Houston, Texas. According to Maj. Gen. David Rataczak, of the Arizona National Guard, Herrera is the bravest person he has ever met. He refers to Sgt. Herrera as a true example of a modern citizen-soldier who, despite being small in

stature, is motivated, loyal, physically and mentally capable, disciplined and proficient, courageous and always a professional. Due to her story and her example, the state of Arizona has passed a bill that will authorize tuition waiver scholarships to National Guardsmen and women who received a Purple Heart or were medically discharged due to injuries while serving in the military after Sept. 11, 2001. The bill is affectionately known as the Mary Herrera bill. Sgt. Herrera re-joined the Coalition team in April 2013 as a Field Representative of the West. She resides with her daughter in Arizona and is dedicated to serving her fellow wounded service members through the mission of the Coalition.

Navy Corpsman David Larson (Ret)



David was a Navy Corpsman who sustained several injuries while on active duty. Once he returned home, he eventually lost one of his legs due to complications from his injuries. He continues to suffer from health issues due to his injuries including severe phantom pains from his amputated leg. David spends his time working to honor our fallen heroes through My Memorial Tattoo. He has added 272 heroes to his tattoo to date. He is in contact with many of the families of the servicemen and women in his tattoo artwork. He does his best to help the families and the battle buddies through their grief, no matter what time or for how long. It has become his way to keep serving his country and the warriors that continue to keep us safe.

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2013 Economic Impact Report

Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival Presented by Selection.com

\$2 million to local economy

Volunteers gathered data throughout the weekend. License plate surveys, walking surveys on the grounds, and counts of individuals walking into the main gate on Tytus Avenue were combined with data from other sources to estimate the number of guests who were in and around the 100-acre Smith Park and Middletown Regional Airport.

Economic Impact estimates include not only the expense of producing the event, but also the sponsorship investments, vendor supplies, money spent by guests on site and in local retail establishments, gas stations, hotels, restaurants, etc. Considering the ripple effect of such spending, including taxes and resupply, a single dollar spent multiplies itself.

Throughout the eleven-year history of the Ohio Challenge, an estimated average of 50,000 people attend the event each year. The event experienced a 20% increase in attendance for 2013.

Based on license plate surveys and on-site personal surveys:

People came from:	2010	2011	2012	2013
Butler County	58%	41%	38%	34%
Warren County	8%	10%	16%	19%
Montgomery County	7%	10%	15%	16%
Hamilton County	7%	6%	6%	7%
Within 1 hour drive	83%	67%	75%	78%
Beyond 1 hour drive	17%	33%	25%	22%
Ohio	88%	95%	90%	94%
Other States	12%	5%	10%	6%

People heard about Ohio Challenge from:

	2010	2011	2012	2013
TV/Radio	7%	8%	14%	5%

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Newspapers	16%	29%	19%	18%
Website/Facebook/Internet	25%	21%	14%	13%
Other/Family Tradition	39%	18%	7%	48%
Word of Mouth	22%	23%	37%	12%
Signs/Cards/Magazines	1%	1%	9%	5%

Website statistics www.ohiochallenge.com

	2010	2011	2012
Visits January thru July	36,943	46,504	45,888

Cox Media On-line

100,000 impressions of an on-line ad were delivered via the Cox Media system. Listings in their Hot Topics sections were also considered very strong with 840 people clicking on any of the 7 different headlines. Ohio Challenge had a presence on several of the Cox Newspaper companion websites in the SW Ohio region.

Local non-profit treasuries also grew as a result of The Ohio Challenge Presented by Selection.com:

One of the results of the event is that several local non-profit organizations add much-needed dollars to their treasuries. The Ohio Challenge organizers are assisted by volunteers from local non-profits to fulfill specific duties on-site. In exchange, a donation is made to non-profits. Others choose to become food/drink vendors for the weekend. Some even just add their volunteer hours to the committee effort.

Summary:

2013 was a great year in terms of flights. We successfully launched 3 out of the 4-scheduled launch times. Saturday Night winds exceeded the speed that is deemed safe to fly. While pilots were unable to fly some inflated prior to the balloon glow and allowed visitors to come up close, meet the pilots and see the balloons. No weather-related medical emergencies were reported.

Team Fastrax performed several demonstration jumps into Smith Park. StartSkydiving remained a hub of activity, with hundreds of jumps scheduled to take place throughout the weekend and Higher Ground Helicopters saw a marked increase in helicopter tours.

Organizers of the event continue to tweak various elements each year. Not only are event organizers more efficient in the use of volunteers and available dollars, adding unusual and spectacular entertainment elements give guests something new to look forward to each year. This year live music by CMA Performing Artists The Stickers were added to the line up

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as well as local bands that attracted listeners from throughout the tri-state. For the children, an inflatable slide was added that was a big hit. Friday night featured a fireworks display for the second consecutive year and, a “people-mover” (trackless train) also helped shuttle walk-in pedestrians from the front gates to the mid-way.

The goal of The Ohio Challenge is to provide a quality event, which draws guests from outside the immediate Middletown area. We increased our range in terms of advertising in hopes to bring more people from outside the area that otherwise would not know about the event. The aim is to break even financially each year. It is always a challenge to make income equal expenses.

Admission rates remained the same for 2013 at \$10 per carload including parking, admission and free shuttle and \$4 per adult walk in. Children 12 and under were admitted free with a paid adult. Even with thousands of guests paying the parking/admission fees, there are many thousands who pay nothing to enter the grounds and/or enjoy the aerial show from afar. Nearly 2,000 free parking passes are issued to sponsors, vendors, performers, pilots/crew, volunteers, etc. A huge number of spectators watch from outside the park – Carmody Blvd, airport hangars, businesses on the opposite side of the airport grounds.

Data gathered on site and phone calls received on the event phone line before and during the event indicate the audience is attracted from a wide geographic area. Of the out-of-Ohio license plates, there were 22 states represented.

Of those polled, this year 78% of the surveyed guests came from within the 1-hour drive circle, with 22% driving more than an hour or staying in local hotels.

The Butler/Warren County area accounted for 53% of visitors. Having more people visit from outside the immediate area is one of the goals of the event – to bring new people to Middletown from outside the area.

Many guests learn of the event from friends and family, from vendors, sponsors and balloon pilots speaking well of the event, from the www.ohiochallenge.com website, Facebook, Twitter and numerous other websites, on-line calendars, media and camera club websites listing the event.

We appreciate the efforts of media partners in radio, TV, newspaper, the Middletown and Butler County Visitors Bureaus and others. The Ohio Challenge continues to have valued arrangement with Cox Media Group (Middletown Journal and K99.1FM), AT&T (YP/Yellow Pages), and Cincinnati and Dayton area TV as well as radio stations are using event releases.

More than forty sponsors and three corporate balloons supported The Ohio Challenge with their advertising dollars, donations or in-kind services and products.

Prepared by Sara Prueff based on data collected during the event by volunteers, 7/18/13.

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2014 Press Releases

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon and Skydiving Festival Presented by Selection.com

MIDDLETOWN, Ohio (March 14) –The Ohio Challenge committee is proud to announce the 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Competition and Festival, presented by Selection.com along with other sponsors. The event will take place at Smith Park/Middletown Regional Airport in Middletown, Ohio the weekend of July 11th.

This year the field of competition increased to include nearly 40 hot air balloons. The competition also expanded. Pilots this year will compete for both the Ohio Challenge and the BFA Great Lakes Regional Championship. The competition is also accompanied by a full festival. This year's festival will feature skydiving demos by Team Fastrax, fireworks courtesy of Start Skydiving, a laser light show, evening balloon glows, live entertainment, a carnival, car show, and food and craft vendors.

A new addition to the event this year is the Warrior Weekend to Remember. The Warrior Weekend will honor active duty and veteran men and women of the armed forces who have been injured in combat or training.

“Our committee has been hard at work to make this year's Ohio Challenge another fun weekend with activities for everyone in the family,” said Event Manager Paula Hale. “We appreciate the support of our sponsors and are very excited to partner with Team Fastrax and the Halo for Freedom Warrior Foundation to provide a great venue for the Warrior Weekend to Remember.”

The community is invited to take part in a golf outing July 10th and 5k run/walk July 12th, both of which help support the Warrior Weekend to Remember. Warriors and their sponsors will also enjoy a host of other activities including night bow fishing, tandem skydiving, balloon rides and a trip to Great American Ballpark. “It's an honor to work with The Ohio Challenge's dedicated volunteers” said David Hart, spokesman for Team Fastrax, “We are looking forward to working with them to make it a great weekend for our wounded service men and women.”

The festival runs Friday and Saturday from 4 to 10:30 pm. Walk-In Admission is \$4 per adult (12 and under are free) or \$10 per vehicle, which includes parking, admission for all occupants and free shuttle service. Special rates are available for buses and RVs. Saturday and Sunday morning balloon competition flights take place between approximately 7-9 am. Admission to the festival site is free during the morning hours. The festival will conclude Saturday night and the balloon competition will conclude on Sunday morning.

For more information about the 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival presented by Selection.com please visit www.ohiochallenge.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Warrior Weekend to Remember Honors Service Men and Women at the 2014 Ohio Challenge

MIDDLETOWN, Ohio (May 16) – The Ohio Challenge presented by Selection.com is proud to welcome The Warrior Weekend to Remember. Organized by Team Fastrax and the HALO for Freedom Warrior Foundation, the event will be held in conjunction with the 2014 Ohio Challenge. The weekend is a combination of activities meant to enrich the lives of active duty and veteran men and women injured in combat deployments abroad.

Some of the weekend's events include a USPSA Multi-Gun Competition held at The Miamisburg Sportsmen's Club and a 5k run/walk held at Smith Park on Saturday, July 12. In addition to these events, the warriors will also be treated to tandem skydives, hot air balloon rides and biplane rides.

"We are excited and honored that Team Fastrax and The HALO for Freedom Foundation chose to hold the Warrior Weekend to Remember during The Ohio Challenge this year", said Event Manager Paula Hale, "It's encouraging to see so many people working together to give such a special tribute to our service men and women."

The Warrior Weekend to Remember will also be host to a number of wounded warriors. The list of honored warriors includes Medal of Honor and Purple Heart recipient Sgt. 1st Class Leroy Petry. With Two tours in Iraq and six tours in Afghanistan, SFC Petry serves in the 75th Ranger Regiment.

Purple Heart recipient Sgt. Joel Tavera is also among the list of honored warriors. On March 12, 2008, while on mission in Iraq, Sgt. Tavera sustained severe injuries when his Humvee was struck by a rocket.

"We really worked hard to invite as many wounded warriors as possible", said Team Fastrax Spokesman David Hart, "All of these warriors have incredibly inspirational stories and just talking to them will change your life."

The Warrior Weekend to Remember starts on July 10 with a golf outing at Weatherwax Golf Course in Middletown, Ohio and concludes on July 13. For a complete list of events and to find out how to support the weekend please visit teamfastrax.com, ohiochallenge.com or email dhart@teamfastrax.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2014 Ohio Challenge Welcomes Two Special Shape Balloons to the Festival

MIDDLETOWN, Ohio (June 6) – This year at the Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival presented by Selection.com, two special shape balloons will fly. The Angry Bird balloon piloted by Gary Moore and Jewel the Hummingbird piloted by Doug Grimes.

Currently, the Angry Bird balloon is in Durban, South Africa. The balloon will be shipped from South Africa to Middletown, Ohio the second week of June. The Angry Bird Balloon will be on one pallet weighing 1108 lbs., 46 X 60 X 58 inches. Pilot Gary Moore has flown in 37 U.S. States and 17 countries. Moore has found memories of the Ohio Challenge; having previously flown Woodrow C. Greenleaf, the 120 foot tall Brazilian Rain Forest tree during the 2005 Ohio Challenge.

Jewel the Hummingbird comes to us from New Zealand. A relatively new balloon, Jewel was made and tested last year in Brazil. Jewel is rated at 111,000 cubic feet and stands roughly 100 feet tall. Pilot Doug Grimes began flying balloons in 1979. Over the course of his career he has flown in Colorado, Northern California and San Diego, California.

“We are always excited to bring special shape balloons to the event. People love to see these balloons at glows and in flight” said event manager Paula Hale, “so we are especially excited to have two unique and colorful special shape balloons for our crowd this year.”

The festival runs Friday and Saturday from 4 to 10:30 pm. Walk-In Admission is \$4 per adult (12 and under are free) or \$10 per vehicle, which includes parking, admission for all occupants and free shuttle service. Special rates are available for buses and RVs. Saturday and Sunday morning balloon competition flights take place between approximately 7-9 am. Admission to the park is free during the morning hours. The festival will conclude Saturday night with a fireworks display courtesy of Start Skydiving. The balloon competition will conclude on Sunday morning.

For more information about the 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival presented by Selection.com please visit www.ohiochallenge.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hot Air Balloons, Live Entertainment and Great Food. The 2014 Ohio Challenge Is Here!

MIDDLETOWN, Ohio (July 7) – This Friday, July 11 the Ohio Challenge presented by Selection.com will return to Middletown, Ohio with more hot air balloons, live entertainment and great food. The Festival will be held at Smith Park in downtown Middletown Friday and Saturday evenings, July 11 & 12 from 4:00 pm to 10:30 pm. The Warrior Weekend also kicks off this week. Starting Thursday, July 10 with 5:30 am balloon rides for the warriors, the event runs through Sunday, July 13.

On Friday evening hot air balloons will fill the skies over Middletown, Ohio. Pilots competing this year will begin the competition Friday evening with a 7:00 pm launch from Smith Park in Middletown, Ohio. The competition continues Saturday morning July 12 at 7:00 am with a remote launch and another launch from Smith Park Saturday evening at 7:00 pm. The competition ends Sunday morning with another remote launch at 7:00 am.

The balloons won't just be competing. Over the course of the weekend there will be balloon glows Friday and Saturday evenings at 9:15 pm. Tethered rides and full balloon rides are available to the public, as well as helicopter rides, bi-plane rides and tandem skydives. In addition to all that, Team Fastrax will, as usual, perform their breathtaking skydives, landing inside the festival.

There are plenty of things to do on the ground too. The Skallywags will provide live music Friday night and Stagger Lee will provide live music Saturday night. Along with music, the event will also have a Laser-Pyro Musical at 10:00 pm Friday, July 11 and a Fireworks display Saturday, July 12 at 10:00 pm. In between all of the excitement, the event will have unique arts and crafts to peruse and delicious food to eat.

The Warrior Weekend, new to the event this year, officially starts on Thursday morning, July 10 with a 6:00 am hot air balloon ride for the warriors. The event continues with a golf outing, a 5k run/walk and concludes Sunday, July 13 with a trip to Great American Ballpark to take in a Red's game.

The festival runs Friday and Saturday from 4 to 10:30 pm. Walk-In admission is \$4 per adult (12 and under are free) or \$10 per vehicle, which includes parking at Middletown Regional Airport, admission for all occupants and free shuttle service. Handicap parking is available inside Smith Park with a valid permit. All vehicles should enter via Middletown Regional Airport.

Saturday and Sunday morning balloon flights take place at approximately 7:00 am. Admission to the park is free during the morning hours. The festival will conclude Saturday night with a fireworks display courtesy of Start Skydiving. The balloon competition will conclude on Sunday morning.

For more information about the 2014 Ohio Challenge Hot Air Balloon Festival presented by Selection.com and a complete schedule please visit www.ohiochallenge.com