



The first flights of the morning, the "Dawn Patrol," often provides some unusual photo opportunities as the rising balloons meet the rising sun.

ViewPoint Bank sponsors 27th Plano Balloon Festival

By Britney Porter

Bank on this: The 2006 ViewPoint Bank Plano Balloon Festival will soar into action September 22 - 24 drawing more than 100,000 spectators to Oak Point Park. All weekend long, 75 hot air balloons will spill into the sky like colorful gumballs, leaving children giddy.

The three-day spectacular begins at 4 p.m. Friday, September 22. Adults will enjoy the weekend's festivities, particularly the Friday and Saturday evening concerts at 7 p.m. featuring the seven-piece variety band, The Band Haywire, and the Dallas classic rock band Hoopdolphin. The Balloon Glow will light up at 8 p.m.

both nights, and Verizon FiOS will present a spectacular fireworks show on Saturday at 9 p.m.

Before each evening launch, The RE/MAX parachute team will coast down from their plane and land on the launch field signaling clear skies. On Saturday at 6:30 p.m. the Special Shapes balloons will be presented by your own *Plano Profile*. Airabelle the Cow, "the biggest flying cow anyone has ever seen," owned

by Schepps the Dairy Best, will grace the sky – all 110-feet of her. Joining her will be Cheshire Cat, Chimplly, High Jack, Miss Daisy, Total Panda-monium, Upside Down Humpty, and Woodrow C. Greenleaf.

Come hungry: funnel cakes, barbecue, and corn



Many Plano nonprofits join the fun on the midway and use the festival as a major fundraiser.



dogs are just some of the foods on hand to satisfy your cravings. More than 30 local nonprofit agencies and independent vendors will participate at the festival either as food concessionaires, service providers, or to create awareness for their agency. Adults can shop while kids race to the KinderCare "Kids Korner" to get their faces painted and participate in art activities, a rock climbing wall, and inflatable rides.

The annual hot air balloon festival is organized by The Plano Balloon Festival, Inc., its executive director Joe Via and its event director Jessica Jackson, as well as a board of directors consisting of 20-plus individuals. Each year the festival offers local nonprofits an opportunity to participate and create awareness for their agencies in the community. Nonprofit food vendors include AMBUCS, Knights of Columbus #7850, IceJets 93AA Hockey Team, Kiwanis Club of Greater Plano, and Plano West Rotary Club.

Service providers staff parking lots, gates, and Kids Fun Zone ticket sales. They include Collin County Community College, First United Methodist Church, Plano Children's Medical Clinic, Plano Eastern Star, Assistance Center of Collin County, Knights of Columbus, CITY House, Plano Shrine, Family Services of Plano,

Kiwanis Club, and Journey Home.

Agencies like Hope's Door, Girl Scout Troop #2814, Collin County Children's Advocacy Center, Plano Symphony Orchestra, SPCA of Texas, Keep Plano Beautiful, Collin County Republican Party, Collin County Democratic Party, Collin County Libertarian Party, Plano Amateur Radio Club, Collin County Sheriff Reserve, and Plano Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association are on-site to create awareness for their agencies and programs.

Oak Point Park is located at 2801 E. Spring Creek Pkwy. Prime parking, including Collin County Community College Spring Creek Campus (Jupiter and Spring Creek Parkway) and First United Methodist Church (Parker and Spring Creek Parkway), is \$10 per car. Off-site parking at the Plano Centre (2000 E. Spring Creek Pkwy.) is \$5 per car. Spring Creek Parkway between Jupiter and Parker roads will be closed to traffic. Towing will be enforced in No Parking areas. Many participants ride the DART to the Parker Road Station and hop on the free "Balloon flyer."

Admission is \$5 per person for an event ticket and \$8 per person for a day ticket (\$1 off for seniors 65 and over). Kids under 36 inches tall get in free. There is a \$4 discounted rate between 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Put all your eggs in one basket and take flight!

Two hundred and fifty dollars can take you far ... and high in a hot air balloon. Flights will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis, weather permitting. Passengers must be over the age of 10, not pregnant, and in good health. Parental permission is required for teens and children under 18. The ride booth will be open one-and-a-half hours prior to each launch and will be located near the Main Entrance.

When & where ...

Friday, September 22

- 4 p.m. - Festival opens and busses begin service
- 4:30 p.m. - FM 544 in concert, Clear Channel Main Stage
- 5:30 p.m. - RE/MAX Parachute Team Exhibition
- 6 p.m. - Balloon Launch presented by RE/MAX
- 6:30 p.m. - Special Shapes presented by HD DVD Mobile Tour
- 7 p.m. - The Band Haywire in concert, Clear Channel Main Stage presented by Lincoln, Savor the Dream Tour
- 8 p.m. - Balloon Glow presented by The Villages of Lone Oak
- 8:45 p.m. - Lincoln, Savor the Dream Tour presents The Band Haywire for a street dance
- 10 p.m. Festival closes

Saturday, September 23

- 6 a.m. - Gates & parking lots open, busses begin service
- 6:30 a.m. - Dawn Patrol "Wake up Plano"
- 7 a.m. - Balloon Launch presented by the City of Plano
- 8:15 a.m. - Mad Science - Spin, Pop, Boom Show on the KDFW FOX4 Stage
- 9:15 a.m. - University of Gymnastics performs on the KDFW FOX4 Stage
- 10 a.m. - Plano Dance Force and Miss Billye's Dance & Cheer, the KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 11 a.m. - Falun Dafa Exercise Demonstration, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 11:15 a.m. - Chinese Traditional Dance, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 1:45 p.m. - inStep performs on the KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 2:30 p.m. - Revelation Studio - F- Troop, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 3:15 p.m. - Shaolin Wu-Yi Institute, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 4 p.m. - Cameron Coffey in concert, Clear Channel Main Stage
- 4 p.m. - Shufflin' Shoes Cloggers, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 5 p.m. - RE/MAX Parachute Team Exhibition
- 5 p.m. - Chamberlain Musical Theatre Co. performs on the KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 5:45 p.m. - Camille Broker, Clear Channel Main Stage
- 6 p.m. - Balloon Launch presented by ViewPoint Bank
- 6:30 p.m. - Special Shapes presented by *Plano Profile*
- 7 p.m. - Mad Science - Up, Up and Away Show, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 7 p.m. - Hoopdollar in concert presented by Aetna, Clear Channel Main Stage
- 8 p.m. - Balloon Glow presented by Medical Center of Plano
- 9 p.m. - Spectacular Fireworks Show sponsored by Verizon FiOS
- 10 p.m. - Festival closes

Sunday, September 24

- 6 a.m. - Gates & parking lots open, busses begin service
- 6:30 a.m. - Dawn Patrol "Wake up Plano"
- 7 a.m. - Balloon Launch presented by *The Dallas Morning News*
- 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. DRUM-A-THON benefiting the MAKE-A-WISH Foundation See more information on page 16.
- 8:15 a.m. - Mad Science Spin, Pop, Boom Show on the KDFW FOX4 Stage
- 9:15 a.m. - Dance Zone by Sarasue's Academy, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 10:15 a.m. - Studio For Kids, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 1:30 p.m. - Martial Arts Center of Plano, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 2 p.m. - Plano Dance Theater, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 3 p.m. - Dance Industry, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 3:30 p.m. - Plano Unlimited Sports Academy, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 3:30 p.m. - Signal 2 Noise in concert, Clear Channel Main Stage
- 4 p.m. - Kids Count Players, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 4:30 p.m. - Mad Science - Fire & Ice Show KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 5:30 p.m. - Impact Martial Arts, KDFW FOX4 Community Stage
- 6 p.m. - Balloon Launch presented by Allstate Insurance
- 7 p.m. Festival closes

