



MESQUITE GAMING



PRESS RELEASE

Volunteers needed for Jan. 28-29 Mesquite Hot Air Balloon Festival (1-16-2012)



The Mesquite Hot Air Balloon Festival slated Jan. 28-29 is offering unique opportunities for volunteers who work the event.

"We need as many as we can get," said balloonmeister Gayle McCoy, an Elko, Nev. resident who has been spearheading hot air balloon events for about 32 years."

McCoy went on to say that volunteers are needed to help set up the balloons before the event and also after the event has been concluded.

"You get to help put up and take down one of the most beautiful things in the world," said McCoy, 50, who has lived in Elko for 22 years. "This is a thrill beyond belief. In fact, some of the volunteers might be able to get the chance to fly – and I assure you that if that becomes the case, the thrill will be even bigger."

On Friday, hot air balloons will be taken to Virgin Valley Elementary and Charles Hughes Middle School in Mesquite.

At Virgin Valley Elementary, students will be allowed into an old balloon where they will learn about the educational aspects of hot air ballooning.

Students at Bunkerville Elementary School south of Mesquite will have an educational program discussing the important points of hot air ballooning.

Festivities kick off Saturday and Sunday beginning at 6 a.m. with the mass ascension balloon launch at the CasaBlanca Golf Club. Volunteers are especially going to be needed during the early morning hours.

Also on Saturday at 3 p.m., a tethering event will be

highlighted in which the balloon can go up as high as 125 feet. For an unspecified donation, the participant will receive a ride in the balloon; with the money donated to a charity.

In addition, a balloon glow will be conducted during the evening in one of the side parking lots of the CasaBlanca Resort beginning at about 6 p.m.

Mesquite residents are reminded that one of the colorful hot air balloons could actually end up in their back yard during the two days of festivities.

"Part of the color of the event is the possible landing of balloons in the yards of homes in Mesquite," said McCoy. "We just want to keep the local community aware of the possibility that balloons land wherever the wind takes us."

McCoy added that with the tradition of hot air ballooning, if a balloon lands in the yard of a residence, the pilot usually gives the property owner a bottle of champagne as a gesture of friendship.

Those interested in volunteering for both days should contact Mesquite Sporting Event Manager Christian Adderson at 888-711-4653, ext. 51.

Contestants include eight from Nevada; nine from Utah (Park City, Murray, Alpine, West Jordan, St. George, Salt Lake City and Salina); six from California (Simi Valley); and one from Arizona.

Further information regarding the event can be found by visiting www.casablancaresort.com; or by calling Mesquite Gaming Sporting Event Manager Christian Adderson at 888-711-4653, ext. 51.

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