



Sam Parks, Biography

Former Owner-President, Parks Quality Air, Inc. (27 years), sold company in 2018

Former Owner-President, Parks Balloon Aviation, Inc. (29 years)

Director of Operations, Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (2018-2022)

Executive Director, Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta (2023-)

Obtained LTA private pilots license 1988

Advanced to commercial rating 1989

Advanced to gas balloon rating 2000

1,650 total hours of flight time in all balloons

180 hours in Gas Balloons

Founding member and past President, Iredell Aeronauts Society

Past President, Carolinas Balloon Association

Member, Balloon Federation of America

Member, Hot Air Competition Division

Member, Gas Balloon Division

Member, National Aeronautic Association

Member AAAA Balloon Club

Member, Top Gun

Past Board Member, National Balloon Rally Charities, Inc.

Past Chairman, Balloon Federation of America Hot Air Competition Division

Past Balloon Federation of America Southeast Region Board Member (elected 2012)

Past President, Balloon Federation of America

Alternate Delegate CIA (appointed in 2016)

President and Founding Member Aero Club of America, North Carolina Chapter LLC
(Gas Balloon Club with the goal of training pilots and promoting safe Hydrogen gas ballooning in America)

Board Member THE BALLOON MUSEUM (Statesville, NC)

Board Member gas Balloon Division of the Balloon Federation of America (2021)

Co-Chair NFPA-58 Committee (2017) To create new rules that would allow the continuation of LP refueling in Hot Air Balloon fuel cylinders

Chair NFPA-2 Committee (2021) To create new rules that would allow hydrogen to be used to fill gas balloons.

Member: Call to Action Committee. Formed after Lockhart balloon accident to communicate directly with FAA on regulation issues.

Director, 1989 Low hour pilots rally, Statesville, NC

Director, 1990 National Balloon Rally, Statesville, NC

Director, 1991-1996 Lowe's Balloons over the Blue Ridge, N. Wilkesboro, NC

Director, 1993-1998 Alamance Balloon Fest, Burlington, NC

Director, 2006 Carolina Balloonfest, BFA Southeast Regional Championship Statesville, NC

Director, 2011-2017 Carolina Balloonfest Statesville, NC

Director, 2010-2014 Freedom Weekend Aloft, Simpsonville, SC

Director, 2015-2017 Freedom Balloonfest, Raleigh, NC

Assistant Balloonmeister, 2011 & 2012 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Balloonmeister, 2013-2018 Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta

Deputy Director, 2011-2017 America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race

Director, 2019, 2021 America's Challenge Gas Balloon Race

Competition Director, 2012-2014 Southeast Regional Championship, Simpsonville, SC

Competition Director, 2007 Southeast Regional Championship, Baton Rouge LA

Competition Director, 2007 Louisiana State Championship, Baton Rouge LA

Championship Director, 2021 Jr. US Nationals Hot Air Balloon Championship

Championship Director, 2021-2022 Great Texas Balloon Race

Championship Director, Junior US National Championship, 2021-2023 Longview Texas

Championship Director, US Nationals Championship, 2022 Longview Texas

Deputy Director, 2016-17 US National Hot Air Balloon Championship, Shreveport LA

Safety Officer, 1998-2005 & 2008 National Balloon Rally, Statesville, NC

Steward, 2010 19th World Hot Air Balloon Championships, Debrecen Hungary

Steward, 2012 20th World Hot Air Balloon Championship, Battle Creek MI USA

Committee Member, 2011 Balloon Federation of America Event Guidelines Manual

Co-Chair, BFA/FAA Call to Action Committee to develop action plan to improve safety in Ballooning.

Chair, BFA Safety and Education Committee

Member, CIA Competitors Sub-Committee

North Carolina State Champion, 1994,1995,1996,1997,2003,2004,2005, 2007, 2009, 2010,2013

Champion, 1994 Fools and Ghouls Balloon Race, Wilson, NC

Champion, 2000 National Balloon Rally, Statesville, NC

Champion, 2005 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Anderson, SC

Champion, 2006 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Anderson, SC

Champion, 2007 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Simpsonville, SC

3rd Place 2008 Pontiac Freedom Weekend Aloft, Simpsonville, SC

3rd Place 2011 Great Texas Balloon Race, Longview TX

Runner-up, (Silver Medal) 2003 Balloon Federation of America Hot Air Balloon

National Championship, Anderson, SC

Runner-up, 2007 Kentucky Derby Balloon Race, Louisville, KY

Member, 2004 United States team competing in the World Championships in Australia

Balloon Federation of America Award of excellence, 1995

Balloon Federation of America, Distinguished Aeronaut award 2003 (highest award in the Pilot achievement Award Program)

Balloon Federation of America Director's Award 2007

Balloon Federation of America President's Award 2017

Balloon Federation of America Shields-Trauger Award 2022
The Sid Cutter Award (AAAA 2019)
Lindstrand Hot Air Balloons, US dealer of the year 1997
Ballooning Safety Seminar Organizer and Presenter
Balloon Event consultant
Member Savannah Six world record balloon flight team 2005

Managed corporate balloon programs for such companies as: CargoLifter, Husqvarna outdoor equipment, Sagebrush Steakhouse and Saloon, First Union Bank, Lake Norman Magazine, City of Statesville, Stiles and Company/SEP Construction Company, Parks Quality Air

In addition, flown corporate balloon for the following: Pontiac, Burger King, Cadillac, Oldsmobile, Ball Park Franks, Archway Cookies, BFI Industries, Jeep Eagle, WJZY TV, WFMX Radio, Foxcroft Temporaries, Lowe's Hardware, US Postal Service, GMC Curves, Tran Orthodontics, Accent Marketing

Flown balloons in Canada, France, Japan, Australia, Austria and Mexico

Personal:

Born in 1960

Native of Statesville, NC

Residency: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Married 41 years Winna C. Parks

Member: Monticello Methodist Church, Past Chairman of the Church Administration Board.

Past Chairman, Dale Beatty home project; a project to build a Handicap home for a local National Guardsman who lost both legs in Iraq

Past Board Chairman, Monticello Volunteer Fire Department