



# *Parish of Ascension*

OFFICE OF THE PARISH PRESIDENT

TOMMY MARTINEZ  
Parish President

## **Ascension Hot Air Balloon Festival Lifts Off Sept. 25-26**

**Contact: Lester Kenyon (225) 450-1138; E-mail: [lkenyon@apgov.us](mailto:lkenyon@apgov.us)  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 11, 2015**

GONZALES –Parish President Tommy Martinez, the Ascension Parish Council, along with the Ascension Festivals and Cultural Council, Inc. announced this week balloonists from around the country will again descend upon Ascension Parish for the 2015 Ascension Hot Air Balloon Festival on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 25-26 at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center.

#

Admission is \$5.00 for ages 13-plus, and free for children 12 and under on each day. Organizers encourage festival goers to bring their own lawn chairs. Ice chests, pets, bicycles and personal motorized vehicles are prohibited.

“The end of September now marks an important date for Ascension Parish’s premier balloon festival,” said Parish President Martinez. “Our committee has been meeting for months and the festival is shaping up to be another fine event for families in the parish and region.”

Gates will open on Friday, Sept. 25 at 4 p.m. and close at 10 p.m. Gates will reopen on Saturday at 10 a.m. and close at 10 p.m.

This year’s event will again have balloon glows and tethered rides pending safe weather conditions. Balloon officials are reminding all festival goers that windy conditions may warrant suspension of the tethered rides and glows.

More than 30 balloons from across the country have signed up for this year’s event, said Robert Ambeau, head of flight operations. Ambeau said special shape balloons will also grace the sky each evening during the balloon glows.

#

Hot Air Balloon Tethered Rides will be available for \$20 per adult (13 and over) and \$10 per child 12 and under.

“But we want everyone to know that safety is our number one goal and we will be monitoring wind conditions to make sure this is a safe event,” Ambeau said.

Barbecue pits will fire up on Saturday morning at 8 a.m. signaling the start of the “Battle of the Badges” Barbecue Competition. Teams made up of police and fire departments, along with emergency responders will compete for bragging rights and trophies with the final decisions concluding at 5 p.m.

Blues bands will take to the stage on both days starting at 5:30 p.m. on Friday and 4 p.m. on Saturday. Music acts include Elvin Killerbee and Chris LeBlanc on Friday. Saturday’s lineup includes Don Berry and Rock-N-Horse followed by blues ace Mike Zito and South Louisiana show band Nick-L-Beer.

More carnival rides and an expanded Children’s Village will be available this year for kids and their families. New features include a balloon photo booth. Face painting and DNA/finger printing will again be offered to children along with tours of the Fire Safety House.

The Steinhauer Arts and Crafts show will again take place next door in the Trade Mart Building on both days.

Fireworks will begin promptly at 8:30 p.m. each night followed by continued live blues music until closing at 10 p.m.

A Classic Car Show is in the works, organizers said. Information will be forthcoming.

For more information and event scheduling, visit <http://www.ascensionballooning.com>.

#



Members of the Ascension Festivals and Cultural Council, Inc. are shown at their weekly planning meeting on July 22 as they plan for this year's activities for the 2015 Ascension Hot Air Balloon Festival to be held at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center in Gonzales on Sept. 25-26. Show clockwise from left: Kemlyn Bailey-Lomas, Mark LaCour, Celeste Harris, Wanda Martin, Gwen LeBlanc, Tracy Browning, Martin McConnell, John Connelly, Flo Magee, Audrey Boudreaux, Kim Braud, Desiree Daigle, Ken Firmin (along wall), Cody Melancon, Lee Anderson and Bobby Soileau. Not shown: Sherry Denig, Robert Ambeau and Lester Kenyon.

#



More than 50,000 people attended the 2014 Ascension Hot Air Balloon Festival last September at Lamar-Dixon Expo Center. Organizers are planning for another successful festival on Sept. 25-26. (Photo courtesy of Mark LaCour)

#

P. O. Box 1659, 208 E. Railroad Ave., Gonzales, Louisiana 70707  
Telephone (225) 450-1130 Fax (225) 450-1145 – E-Mail [www.ascensionparish.net](http://www.ascensionparish.net)