



Don't let go: Inflate. Weight. Enjoy!

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Winners announced in the #LiftUpSomebody Photo Contest How Balloons Lifted Spirits During the Pandemic

Trenton, N.J. – The Balloon Council is proud to announce the winners of the annual **#LiftUpSomebody Photo Contest**, held during International Balloon Month in September, to showcase how balloons have been used to spread joy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Balloons have played an even more important role in our lives than usual this year, becoming a symbol of hope, survival, and community spirit throughout the pandemic,” said Lorna O’Hara, Executive Director of The Balloon Council which sponsors the contest. “We want to recognize these creative and impactful efforts and encourage others to continue to use balloons to spread goodwill and ‘lift up’ the spirits of their friends, neighbors and essential workers.”

Winning photos ranged from messages of hope and donations to local hospitals to amazing outdoor displays encouraging everyone to wash their hands. Winning photos are posted on balloonsliftup.com and winners received gift baskets filled with samples of the newest and most popular balloons, supplies, weights and creative materials from contest sponsors: *Anagram, Betallic, Qualatex, Premium Balloon Accessories* and the *HI-FLOAT Company*.

“TBC would like to congratulate all of the winners, and to thank everyone around the country who posted photos,” added O’Hara. “It is great to have a vehicle like International Balloon Month to give everyone a chance to help spread the word about Smart Balloon Practices and to share the joy and positive power of balloons.”

2020 #LiftUpSomebody Photo Contest Winners:

Heroes Award - Recognizing community and essential workers.

- **Balloonzilla (Irvine, California)** Thanking local responders by bringing them balloons. *“In this challenging time, we can all use a little lift in our day. At the Memorial Care Orange Coast Medical Center in Fountain Valley, the staff was trying to make their patients' day a little brighter with a beautiful balloon arch entry. They believe, like we do, that a smile can be powerful medicine! Balloons have always been a smile-maker, and at this time, we need more balloons because we need more smiles.” Marla Borokoff, Chief Creative Officer, Balloonzilla.*

Home Award - Decorations that inspire at home.

- **Infante Creations (Houston, Texas)** Creative displays outside to inspire friends and neighbors. *“When COVID hit I decided to create different designs every week for my neighbors to see. I figured balloons would cheer them up. Something colorful at such a dark time. I then decided to post to Nextdoor.com to invite neighbors to take photos with the designs to have a fun memory to look back at during a difficult time. I remember receiving balloons for the first time as a child, and how special they made me feel, I felt so much joy. So, I knew anyone who saw my balloon designs would smile and feel the joy I did; and they did. My neighbors thanked me on many occasions.” Charley Infante, Owner of Infante Creations.*

Community Award - Creations to “lift up” the community where we live and work.

- **Dream Factory Balloons (Kenilworth, New Jersey)** Multiple displays around the community.

“This decor in particular was made during a very difficult time, we had just shut down the entire state to deal with an unknown virus. People needed something to lift them up, they needed to feel joy and encouraged. Stay Strong was a reminder that we were all in this together and we would get through it with a smile in our faces. #StayStrong went viral after this installation.” Dante Longhi, Certified Balloon Artist/Owner of Dream Factory Balloons.

Family Award - Bringing smiles to children and families.

- **Aerial Bouquets (Chesterfield, Missouri)** Welcome Back display at a local school.

“Everyone has been affected by the pandemic, but children and teachers have had an especially tough time this year regarding education and going back to school. As we know, balloons have the ability to bring excitement and happiness to an event, and we wanted to bring that joy to a classroom, whether virtual or in-person!” Hilary Schobert, Social Media Manager, Aerial Bouquets.

Be Balloon Smart Award - Promoting the proper use and disposal of balloons.

- **Erikas Partycrafts (Galveston, Texas)** Posted displays with Smart Balloon tips.

“Some people have asked me if I really enjoy working with balloons, my immediate response is: I LOVE IT! Behind each balloon, there is a story, a reason, a happiness and a special moment. It fascinates me to see when people are happy with balloons and even more when they are surprised with them. We all enjoy balloons, but you have to know how to use balloons properly and be respectful to nature and the environment.” Erika De La Rosa, Erikas Partycrafts.

SPIRIT Award - Embracing the spirit of International Balloon Month.

- **Affairs Afloat Balloons (Fort Worth, Texas)**

“When the annual #LiftUpSomebody campaign was announced, I knew Affairs Afloat Balloons had to be involved. Especially with the craziness of 2020, we knew how important it is to lift people up. To lift our community up. Balloons bring joy, and happiness anywhere so setup our balloon display where people could see, take part in the campaign if they wanted, and mainly to promote love and joy to our community.” Tammera Hollerich, Founder/Certified Balloon Artist.

To learn more about Smart Balloon Practices and to take the [#BeBalloonSmart pledge](#) visit TBC’s website balloonsliftup.com.

The Balloon Council is a non-profit organization made up of responsible retailers, distributors, and manufacturers. For 30 years, TBC has been dedicated to educating others about the wonders of balloons and the proper handling of them.

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