



HISTORY IN PERSPECTIVE

THE FIRST BALLOON RACE WAS HELD IN 1982

Twenty balloons participated. The idea was to create an event that would keep visitors in town the weekend between the State Fair and the Reno Air Races.

DAWN PATROL IS A PATENTED GREAT RENO BALLOON RACE EVENT

The pre-dawn flight known as Dawn Patrol is a new phenomenon in the world of hot-air ballooning. In 1978, Federal Aviation officials approved strict flying regulations and standards that all pilots must use in predawn flight. These regulations include flying within an hour of sunrise along with special navigation lights that are located under the basket. In the late 80's the Balloon Race Board of Trustees patented Dawn Patrol and began one of the community's most popular traditions in 1990. Balloon rallies around the country use The Great Reno Balloon Race as a model in orchestrating their pre-dawn events.

ATTRACTIONS ADDED OVER THE PAST 20 YEARS:

1991: The **Community Launch** was added. The goal is to direct the balloons to a point on the launch field. This offers the audience a new perspective of the skill needed to fly a balloon as spectators witness the pilots navigating through the wind currents to get to a spot directly in front of them.

1998: Addition of the **Glow Show**, which was added to offer spectators an attraction as they wait for Dawn Patrol on Saturday and Sunday. It also helps to showcase our major supporters (on Saturday) and Special Shape balloon visitors (on Sunday). The Glow Show begins at 5 a.m.

1999: Washoe County school children get involved with the event in the **Tissue Paper Balloon Launch**. This event gives school children a chance to positively interact with their community. One of the major goals of this project is to make sure that no funding comes out of the pocket of school teachers.

The thrill of winning big goes airborne as the Biggest Little City in the World hosts the biggest card game, **Balloon Blackjack**. The casino-style action gives pilots a chance to throw two extra markers at huge face cards placed on the launch field. Those pilots hitting the highest hand most accurately win prizes.

2000: Regional art gets representation at the event due to an affiliation with the Sierra Arts Foundation and the Reno Gazette-Journal. Over a dozen artists were on-site featuring works at the Sierra Artists' Tent, representing that the arts are alive in Reno.

The Tissue Paper Balloon Launch received the prestigious **Judges' Choice Award** given by the Sierra Nevada Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

Attendance soared to new record levels at the 19th annual race, as over **135,000 spectators** visited the event.

2001: The Great Reno Balloon Race celebrated its **20th Anniversary** with the Birthday Cake balloon.

2002: **ABC's Good Morning America** appeared at The Great Reno Balloon Race for live cut-ins of Dawn Patrol during their Friday morning show.

2003: The Great Reno Balloon Race hit record attendance with over **140,000 spectators** attending the three-day event. Also, Serena's Song, the only wheelchair accessible balloon in the United States, offered free tethered rides for wheelchair users and people with disabilities throughout the weekend.

2006: The **25th Anniversary** Great Reno Balloon Race was one for the record books! Saturday's Balloon Race crowd of 75,000 was the highest in history. Throughout the event an estimated **175,000 spectators** braved the early morning chill to celebrate 25 years of high-flying fun.

2007: **CNN** attended the event and The Great Reno Balloon Race also got coverage in worldwide media including *Prestige Hong Kong*, *Every Day with Rachel Ray* and *The History Channel Magazine*.