

April 30, 2020

To Our Dear Ballooning Community,

It is with the heaviest of hearts that we announce the 2020 National Balloon Classic that was initially scheduled for July 24-August 1 has been postponed until July 30-August 7, 2021.

After endless evaluation, discussion, and careful consideration we have made the difficult decision not to move forward with plans for our 2020 event. We know that long-standing traditions are needed now more than ever, but given the reality of COVID-19, our highest priority is the health and the safety of our guests, participants, staff, volunteers, and community.

Our event planning began months ago and we waited as long as we possibly could to make this decision. While some restrictions are beginning to ease, there are still too many uncertainties to guarantee—without hesitation—the health and safety of our community and the 80,000+ visitors who come from all across the nation for the 9-day event. We also reached the point in our planning where the obligations to our sponsors, pilots, vendors, and other partners required the attention they deserve to make their own business decisions. We simply cannot promise to fulfill our commitments at the caliber in which we have always prided ourselves.

Furthermore, each year we rely heavily on the City of Indianola and Warren County for security, emergency management, and public safety. Each year they triumphantly rise to the occasion and support our needs. We are beyond grateful to have the services we have in our city/county; however, asking our front-line responders—our heroes—to take on the additional responsibility of ensuring the safety of thousands of visitors is a duty we could not, in good consciousness, request of them.

Since the earliest days of the National Balloon Classic we have always been first and foremost an advocate for community. Even though it cannot be done together, in the way we had hoped, this year we still proudly honor 50 years of hot air ballooning in Indianola.

Our determination, planning, and momentum will not end. We are more committed than ever to draw upon our strengths, support one another, and come back strong in 2021.

Thank you for allowing us the honor to do the work we love to do.

National Balloon Classic Board of Directors
Staci Scheurenbrand, Executive Director