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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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THE ST. LOUIS FAMILY TRADITION: GREAT FOREST PARK BALLOON RACE WEEKEND RETURNS FOR 53RD YEAR, SEPT. 19-20, 2025

ST. LOUIS, Mo. - The Great Forest Park Balloon Race, presented by PNC Bank, returns to Forest Park's Emerson Central Fields, Sept. 19-20, 2025. This free, two-day St. Louis family tradition, which includes the GLOW on Friday, Sept. 19, and the RACE on Saturday, Sept. 20, brings the community together for a weekend of connection, celebration and unforgettable moments.

The Great Forest Park Balloon Race is one of the longest-running hot air balloon races in the United States and one of the only races that takes place in a large metropolitan city. The tradition began in 1973 with a handful of hot air balloons and a few spectators. Today, the internationally renowned event welcomes more than 50 of the nation's best hot air balloon pilots and thousands of spectators annually.

Thanks to the generous support of event sponsors, including presenting sponsor PNC Bank, Main Stage sponsor NewGround International (new for 2025) and Blue Moon Brewing Co., this beloved St. Louis tradition is free for all to experience.

"For more than 50 years, the Great Forest Park Balloon Race has brought our community together and contributed to the vibrancy of our region," said Matt Corcoran, PNC regional president for St. Louis. "All of us at PNC look forward to welcoming attendees to Forest Park and connecting with neighbors and friends at the PNC Bank mobile branch onsite."

Throughout the weekend, the hot air balloons are surrounded by a festival environment with delicious food, live music and activities for people of all ages. Attendees can enjoy photo opportunities, inflatable games, giveaways, local vendors, Main Stage entertainment, fireworks and much more.

“There’s something special about how hot air balloons elicit joy and make you feel like a kid again, no matter your age. We are proud of the way this annual tradition brings the whole community together, as thousands of St. Louis families slow down, look to the sky, and create lasting memories,” said Jessica Stegen, director of Communications and Event Production for Great Forest Park Balloon Race.

Features for 2025 include:

- Access to a PNC Bank mobile branch
- Dancing with DJ Reggie and other performers on the NewGround International Main Stage
- Precision aerial skydiving demonstrations by The Chuters. Veteran owned and veteran operated, The Chuters ARE the U.S. A-Team!
- The Miller Lite Beer Garden and Blue Moon Light Sky Lounge offering tastings of their latest innovations, as well as buy 5 get 6 deals on ice cold beer, seltzers and more.
- Performances from the Purina Pro Plan Performance Team
- An hour-long live KMOV-TV broadcast from Friday evening’s Balloon Glow, with audience interaction and unique giveaways from CBS.
- The Nine PBS tent with games, activities and a chance to meet Zadie Wombat from the hit PBS KIDS show “Work it Out Wombats!”
- St. Louis Tornado Recovery village, featuring incredible #stlmade organizations leading tornado relief efforts throughout the community: Urban League, United Way, 4TheVille, American Red Cross, Forest Park Forever, Humane Society of Missouri and more.
- Activities, giveaways, demos, photo ops and more from Hyundai Hope on Wheels, BJC + St. Louis Children's Hospital, St. Louis CITY SC, GDIT, Underdog Fantasy, St. Charles Automotive and more.

In partnership with CBS, The Great Forest Park Balloon Race will also feature a special performance by country artist Forrest McCurren. Originally from Jefferson City, Missouri, McCurren is one of the featured musicians on CBS’s new “The Road” music competition series, premiering Oct. 19 (8:00-9:00PM CT). From Taylor Sheridan (“Yellowstone” and “Landman”), along with Blake Shelton and Keith Urban, “The Road” is a journey to discover the next big musician. The series provides a backstage pass into the life of a touring artist, with exclusive access to the inner workings of the music industry. McCurren will perform on the NewGround International Main Stage on Friday, Sept 19 as the Glow kicks off.

View the full event schedule for the Great Forest Park Balloon Race weekend below.

Announcements, answers to frequently asked questions, updated maps and 2025 parking information can be viewed on the event website, www.greatforestparkballoonrace.com.

Follow The Great Forest Park Balloon Race on social media for real-time updates:

[Facebook.com/greatforestparkballoonrace](https://www.facebook.com/greatforestparkballoonrace)

[Instagram.com/greatforestparkballoonrace](https://www.instagram.com/greatforestparkballoonrace)

[X.com/gfpballoonrace](https://www.x.com/gfpballoonrace)

About PNC Bank

PNC Bank, National Association, is a member of The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: PNC). PNC is one of the largest diversified financial services institutions in the United States, organized around its customers and communities for strong relationships and local delivery of retail and business banking including a full range of lending products; specialized services for corporations and government entities, including corporate banking, real estate finance and asset-based lending; wealth management and asset management. For information about PNC, visit www.pnc.com.

About The Great Forest Park Balloon Race

The Great Forest Park Balloon Race is a two-day event held in St. Louis, Missouri – annually celebrating soft landings and family traditions since 1973. It is the second oldest balloon race in the United States and remains a free event for everyone to enjoy. The Great Forest Park Balloon Race was inducted into the permanent collection of the Library of Congress on May 23, 2000.

The induction honors the race as a Local Legacy and documents the race as a “meaningful and significant American community tradition.”

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THE GLOW | FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

5:00 P.M. - Emerson Central Fields opens

- Midway concessions, food trucks, inflatables, games and sponsor activities begin
- St. Charles Nissan & Hyundai Family Picnic Areas open
- Activities from BJC + St. Louis Children's Hospital, NINE PBS, St. Louis CITY SC, GDIT, Underdog Fantasy, and more!

6:00 P.M. – Dance with DJ Reggie at the NewGround International Main Stage, followed by a performance from Forrest McCurren (CBS's "The Road")

6:45 P.M. TO 8:45 P.M.** – THE BALLOON GLOW

- The balloons "glow" like huge fireflies, a truly magical scene, and one not to be missed! The balloons do not launch during the balloon glow but for a portion of the evening (weather permitting), the rope line will be released, and spectators will be invited to walk around to enjoy the view and chat with pilots and crew.

9:00 P.M. - The Chuters Parachute Team

9:15 P.M. – PNC Bank Fireworks Finale

RACE DAY | SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

1:00 P.M. – Emerson Central Fields opens

- Celebrate 53 years of GFPBR at the NewGround International Main Stage
- Midway concessions, food trucks, inflatables, games and sponsor activities begin
- St. Charles Nissan & Hyundai Family Picnic Areas open
- Purina Children's Entertainment Area opens featuring the Purina Pro Plan Performance Team (performances at 1:15 p.m., 2:30 p.m.)
- Activities from BJC + St. Louis Children's Hospital, NINE PBS, St. Louis CITY SC, GDIT, Underdog Fantasy, and more!

3:00 P.M. - The Chuters Parachute Team

3:30 P.M. – OPENING CEREMONIES

4:30 P.M.** – PNC BANK "HARE" BALLOON LAUNCHES

4:45 P.M. (flight window 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.) ** – "HOUND" BALLOONS LAUNCH

*** events are weather-dependent and timing is approximate / subject to change*