

Take to the Skies AirFest prepares for takeoff

[Janice Wood](#) | [Airshows & Fly-Ins](#) | May 21, 2012

A festival of aviation featuring two days of aerobatic airshows takes to the skies at Mesquite Metro Airport (HQZ) in Texas Memorial Day weekend, Saturday and Sunday, May 26 and 27.



The Take to the Skies AirFest was previously known as the Summer Balloon Classic & AirFest. Debby Standefer, president of the Take to the Skies AirFest, stated “we have updated our name to reflect our showcase of all types of aviation and are excited to be working with Mesquite Metro Airport.”

This will be the first airshow of the season in the metroplex and the only airshow in the Dallas area, she noted.

“We are proud to honor our military over this important weekend,” said said.

The festival will commemorate those who have served and are serving in our military services throughout the weekend. Special Opening Ceremonies at 1:30 pm both Saturday and Sunday are slated to include honor guards, flybys, skydivers and more, she said. In honor of the Centennial of Marine Aviation, the Trojan Phlyers T28 team will perform.



Saturday evening features the popular “Lite the Nite” balloon glow. The balloons will perform twinkle burns, waves, and other burns directed by the event announcer. Weather permitting, this is the one time when spectators may be able to come up close to the balloons, talk to the pilots and see just how everything looks and works.

The airshows begin at 2 pm each day with a variety of airplanes performing dramatic flights and

aerobatic performances. The stars of the show are the breathtaking Trojan Phlyers Demo Team with their astounding formation aerobatics that will keep you on the edge of your seat! Piloted by highly decorated combat veteran pilots performing exciting precision close formation aerobatic routines demonstrating the cutting edge performance of the Trojan T28 warbird and the flying expertise acquired in formal military training, the Trojan Phlyers demonstrate high speed action with the roar of the big engines as they fly their historic aircraft rich in military history. Randy Ball will perform in his Vietnam era MiG-17 jet, where he will pull 8gs and reach speeds up to 700 mph while sometimes flying less than 100 feet off the ground.



Trojan Phlyers

Jan Collmer, co founder of the Frontiers of Flight Museum and author of the new book *Go Start Something!*, will fly his Extra 300L in maneuvers. Mike "Spanky" Gallaway, announcer for the famous Red Bull Air Races and other prestigious events, will announce the show and fly as well.

The event opens at 10 am both days. Before and after the airshows you will be entertained with helicopters, airplanes, military aircraft, Commemorative Air Force, powered hang gliders and parachutes, skydivers, radio control aircraft and more, in static displays and demonstrations. Flights will be available throughout the day in helicopters, airplanes, biplanes, historic warbirds. Tethered balloon rides, weather permitting, will be available on Saturday evening before the balloon glow. The Kids Area has a variety of attractions for different ages.

The festival is \$5, with children under 6 free.

For more information: TakeToTheSkiesAirfest.com

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