



Michigan Challenge Pilot FAQ

June 26-28, 2026; Howell High School
1200 W Grand River Ave, Howell 48843

Crew:

The Michigan Challenge will not be providing local crew for the event, so please make sure to arrive with sufficient crew for the weekend. If you have local crew that you have used in the past, you are more than welcome to contact them individually.

Hotel Accommodations:

Each pilot will receive one (1) complimentary room for the dates of June 26, 2026 & June 27, 2026, provided by the Howell Area Chamber of Commerce. Crew rooms are the Pilot's responsibility. Accommodations have been secured at the **Hampton Inn & Suites, 3900 Grand Oaks Dr, Howell, MI 48843**. You should have received email confirmation of your reservation(s) sent by lcurnalia@howell.org. If you have questions regarding your reservation- please contact Lizz Curnalia at 517-715-9100.

Insurance:

Each pilot is responsible for having adequate insurance with a minimum of \$100,000 liability insurance per passenger and \$1,000,000 combined single limit coverage with a company that can function in the state of Michigan.

Maps & Competition App:

The Michigan Challenge Balloonfest will be utilizing the "Watch Me Fly" software for the competition, scoring and sharing event information such as weather and task sheets this year. All pilots will be required to have a functional mobile device running the Balloon Live app and by registering for this event, you agree to use the app regardless of your desire to compete. It is strongly recommended that you become familiar with the Balloon Live app and its functions before the event. It is also recommended to obtain a Balloon Live Sensor; however, it is not required to utilize the app, but does improve the accuracy of any logger scoring.

Parking:

Pilot parking will be at the Howell High School Freshman Campus at 411 N Highlander Way Dr, Howell, MI 48843 in the Yellow VIP Lot. There will be signage marking VIP and you will also receive a parking pass to place in the window of your vehicle.

Pictures:

The Michigan Challenge collects photos of you- the Pilot, and the hot air balloon that will be flown at the competition to be shown on our website, mobile app, and trading cards. We will utilize previous year's photos if not sent in with the Pilot Application.

Pilot & Crew Briefings:

All Pilot briefings will take place in the Howell High School Freshman Campus cafeteria located at 411 N Highlander Way Dr, Howell, MI 48843.

The Master Briefing will be held at 6:00pm on Friday, June 26, 2026, the remainder of briefings will begin at 6:15am and 6:30pm daily.

Events:

Media Fun Flight

Briefing @ 6:15am

Friday, June 26th @7am-8:30am

Pilot Welcome Party

Friday, June 26th @ 4:30pm

Pizza Party before Master Briefing

RC Balloon Rodeo

Saturday, June 27th @ 3:00pm

Pilot Meet & Greet

Saturday, June 27th @ 4:30pm

**Trading Cards will be provided to hand out*

Balloon Glow

Saturday, June 27th @ 9:30pm (approx.)

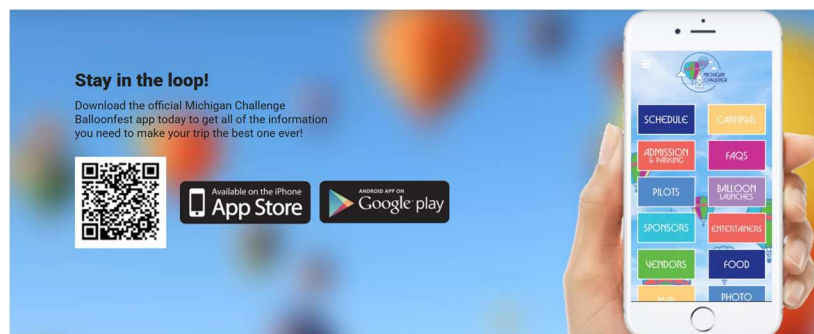
**Please confirm participation at Pilot Check In Friday*

Pilot Banquet

Sunday, June 28th @11:00am

Block Brewing, 1140 S Michigan Ave, Howell, MI 48843

***RSVP is required.**



Tentative Propane Refueling Schedule

**Subject to change*

Friday, June 26th

8:30am-10:30am

8:30pm-10:30pm

Saturday, June 27th

8:30am-10:30am

8:30pm-10:30pm (or when Glow is completed)

Sunday, June 28th

8:30am-10:30am

8:30pm-10:30pm



Tentative Balloonfest Schedule

**Subject to change*

Friday, June 26th

6:15am	Briefing
7:00am-8:30am	Media Flight/Fun Flight
8:30am-10:30am	Refueling @ Bus Garage
2:00pm-5:00pm	Pilot Registration @ Freshman Campus Cafeteria
4:30pm-6:00pm	Pilot Welcome Party @ Freshman Campus Cafeteria
6:00pm	Master Briefing @ Freshman Campus Cafeteria
6:30pm	Flight Briefing @ Briefing Room
7:00pm-8:30pm	Fun Flight- MASS LAUNCH (incl Shapes)
8:00pm-9:00pm	Special Shape Chris P Bacon Static Display
8:30pm-10:30pm	Refueling @ Bus Garage

Saturday, June 27th

6:15am	Briefing
6:45am	Shapes fly from CLP
7:00am-8:30am	Competitive Flight
8:30am-10:30am	Refueling @ Bus Garage
3:00pm-4:00pm	RC Balloon Rodeo
4:30pm-5:30pm	Pilot Meet & Greet on Launch Field
6:30pm	Briefing
7:00pm-8:30pm	Competitive Flight- MASS LAUNCH
8:00pm-9:00pm	Special Shape Chris P Bacon Static Display
9:15pm	Glow Briefing
9:30pm-10:00pm	Balloon Glow
8:30pm-10:30pm	Refueling @ Bus Garage

Sunday, June 28th

6:15am	Briefing
7:00am-8:30am	Competitive Flight
8:30am-10:30am	Refueling @ Bus Garage
11:00am-1:00pm	Awards Brunch at Block Brewing
6:30pm	Briefing
7:00pm-8:30pm	Competitive Flight- FLY IN (Incl Shapes)
8:30pm-10:30pm	Refueling @ Bus Garage