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Contact: Amanda Dolechek
316-688-8778

WORLD BALLOON CONVENTION LIVES UP TO ITS NAME
Inaugural event unites balloon professionals for education, networking, and more

Nearly 700 attendees experienced the first-ever World Balloon Convention (WBC), held April 15-18, 2010, in Dallas, TX, USA. Hosted by Pioneer[®] Balloon Company, the WBC 2010 showcased balloon artists and balloon creations from all over the world, with delegates representing 40 U.S. states and 46 countries.

“We were very pleased to welcome so many Qualatex[®] customers from both inside and outside the U.S.,” said Ted J. Vlamis, Pioneer vice president—international division. “It was exciting to hear the enthusiastic reaction to the classes, competitions, decorations, and social events. The interchange between delegates from so many different cultures was wonderful.”

One of the biggest draws of the WBC was the top-notch educational curriculum, which featured more than 50 classes taught by 32 of the industry’s most respected names. Delegates also had the unique opportunity to tour the Qualatex Plant in Dallas for an exclusive look at how Qualatex latex balloons are made. Other highlights from the event included a Vendor Showcase, Skills Booths, and a Deco-Twisting Jam.

Delegates were also treated to two fabulous parties during the WBC. The Opening Night Costume Party—entitled “Balloon-a-Mania: All You Need is Love...and Balloons”—featured ‘60s-themed decor designed by Alex Arroyo, CBA, and Pepe Posada, CBA, of Globimagen in Mexico City. Two nights later at the Grand Gala, guests were dazzled yet again with jaw-dropping decor and special effects by Rocky Toomey, CBA, of Future Affairs Productions in East Providence, RI, USA.

The WBC's seven competition categories also resulted in many awe-inspiring creations from artists representing 12 countries. Team Italia, led by Federico Onida, CBA, of Balloon Express Shop in Cagliari, Italy, won first place in the impressive Large Sculpture competition. The award for New Artist of the Year was presented to Takehiro Kai of Hiroshima, Japan, while the Master Designer award went to Masako Nomura, CBA, of FuwaFuwa Co., Ltd. in Okayama, Japan.

The WBC concluded on April 18 with the Festival of Balloons, which was attended by thousands of people from the Dallas area. The purpose of the Festival was to open the public's eyes to the possibilities of balloons and balloon decor. Adults and children alike were astounded by pieces created for the WBC's competitions and classes, as well as the lobby decor designed by Jodie Norris, CBA, of Balloon Art Studio in Essex, United Kingdom, and a signature sculpture from Jim Skistimas, CBA, of Balloon House Design Studio in Flower Mound, TX, USA.

"The World Balloon Convention was a huge success by any measurement," said Ted A. Vlamis, president of Pioneer Balloon Company. "The delegates reported that the content, breadth, and depth of the education was terrific and they're certain to put into use all this incremental knowledge to grow their businesses and profitabilities."

For more information on the WBC and the Festival of Balloons, visit WorldBalloonConvention.com.

Founded in 1917, Pioneer Balloon Company is the world's premier manufacturer of latex balloons, with a diversified range of balloon products and business solutions for the professional balloon industry. Headquartered in Wichita, Kansas, Pioneer has facilities in the United States, Canada, England, Australia, and Mexico.

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