

Balloon Guys

2025 Annual Report

We prepare this report to identify things we did well, things we did poorly, things we should do less of and things we need to do more often. This year's progress was marred by health concerns for both Steve and Mick.

We completed 154 events in 2025, and we declined 33 due to scheduling conflicts. We also declined or cancelled 21 events due to health issues where neither of us could have made to the event. Our total count was a slight decline over 2025, so improving our health is important. There would have been a few more events we had to skip, but we were able to recruit our favorite balloon "gal", Linda Folster, to fill in for a few events.

There was a substantial change in solo events again this year, but it wasn't as positive. Mick only did 4 solo events while Steve moved his count from 82 to 132. Most of his increased count was not by choice but because Mick was unavailable for considerable periods of time. We were also down on our number of days with multiple events, from 32 last year to only 26 this year. Our peak day had 3 events and the other 25 were doubles. Overall, we did well on total events, averaging an event every 2.5 days.

We spent over six hundred hours twisting balloons, mostly for charitable and community events. We helped thirty-six distinct groups. We do not track how many balloons we used in total but based on some of our typical stats (and some purchase records), the number is over 27,000.

We served 66 distinct groups with our top 10 being Allen Park DDA, Allen Park Public Library, Chass Center, Mel-Nap Schools, Audial Entertainment, Downriver Foster Closet, Allen Park Parks & Recreation, Lindemann PTSA, Hope City Church, and Fish & Loaves Community Food Bank. We did a lot more work with the Chass Center than in the past and that in turn led us to several other community organizations. We extended our reach from previous years, and we had a lot of new opportunities to help this year. Our most common event is an outdoor market, with about 45 of our visits being to events like that. Our next most common were events in classrooms and libraries with about 25. We twisted at a half dozen block parties, a few dances (mostly parent-child), and some opening days for baseball seasons and local businesses.

One type of appearance that isn't included in this list is informal, unscheduled appearances where we show up at a location (typically a city park) and twist balloons for children who are visiting. These are impromptu and since there's not much planning, they don't usually end up on our calendar, but we still get smiles, laughter, and delighted faces. We view these unscheduled appearances as a "side hustle", just like folks do when they do a bit extra to make a little extra. We were somewhat down on these this year, but we're going to try harder next year.

We didn't do as well against our goals as we'd have liked. Most of this was health related and we're hoping to get off to a better start and stay there in 2026. We already have 40 events scheduled in 2026 and that doesn't include many perennial favorites like farmer's markets, outdoor festivals, and school visits. If we can stay healthy, we should be able to increase our event count this year.

Although we settled on new suppliers, there were sometimes issues with specific colors. Steve likes Kalisan and Mick prefers Sempertex. We've been using company called JK Balloons for most of our printed balloons (we mostly use them at Halloween) or for the occasional wand or scepter.

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Goals for 2026

We have made considerable progress in improving our website and it seems to be working for most people and for keeping us on track. We're still weak on end-of-line procedures, but we've made some improvements. With a growing number of events taking place where English is not universal, it seems like we need to create picture menus to use at our events.

Our biggest goal is to increase our appearances by 10% to 170. Assuming our health holds up, this should be doable.

Our other plans include further improvements to our website and furthering our reach to do events for more groups in 2026.

