



January 5, 2018

**To:** FAI/CIA

**From:** Balloon Federation of America

**Nomination for CIA Montgolfier Diploma**

**Best Performance in Hot Air Ballooning 2017**

**Nomination for:**

Mr. Bill Smith  
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**Narrative:** The Balloon Federation of America annually hosts a Long Jump Challenge to encourage pilots to hone their skills by flying as far as they can on a maximum of 40 gallons of propane. Since the Long Jump Challenge was first held in 1990, over 350 flights have flown this Long Jump Challenge and only four have achieved a distance over 500 miles.

Bill Smith has been perfecting his Long Jump knowledge and skills with annual Challenge flights. This culminated with his Challenge record breaking flight on February 9, 2017. Conventional wisdom would be to fly the largest balloon envelope allowed in the Challenge, 105,400 cubic foot and fly no higher than 10,000 feet for best fuel efficiency. Bill developed a scientific formula to compute flight distance based on altitude, wind speed, temperature, weight, solar heating and other variables. With this information, Bill set out to break the Long Jump Challenge record in his smaller 90,000 cubic foot balloon. On February 9, Bill and his team traveled from Kentucky to South Dakota to launch his flight.

**Results:** Flying for eight-and-a half hours, up to an altitude of 16,753 feet and reaching a top speed of 109 miles per hour, Bill broke the all-time Long Jump Challenge record with an amazing great circle distance of 750.6 miles.

**Recommendation:** For this notable flight and his worthwhile contribution to the science of Long Jump flights, the BFA proudly nominates Bill Smith for the Montgolfier Diploma.

Orvin E. Olivier  
Awards Committee Chairperson  
Balloon Federation of America