

Flash!

Advice, perspectives & ideas to accelerate the leader in you



According to the I Ching... **before the beginning of great brilliance, there must be chaos.**

(The I Ching is an ancient Chinese divination text and the oldest of the Chinese classics.)

And that describes the International Balloon Fiesta in Albuquerque, NM, the largest celebration of hot air ballooning.

It was 5:00AM when we entered Balloon Fiesta Park with thousands of people from around the world. We immediately walked to the field to secure a spot on the sidelines, ready to witness the show.

Shortly thereafter, hundreds of balloon vehicles drove onto the field to set up in the dark.

And then a strange thing happened... the massive crowd started flooding the field, ignoring the sidelines and the lack of lights, paths, or markings.

We quickly ditched our seats to join them. As we walked through the field, crews were unpacking balloon baskets, unfolding balloon bags (*called "envelopes"*), checking wires, testing propane equipment, and inflating balloons (*first on their side before they are lifted to a standing position*).

It was mass chaos... 100,000 people, 500 horizontal hot air balloons inflating, flammable propane cylinders, and the darkness of dawn.

But out of that chaos came brilliance.

The crews worked around us without complaint. The crowd ebbed and flowed around the crews and the inflating balloons. And everyone cheered as each balloon ascended into the air.

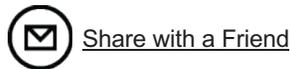
Arguably we should have been confined to the sidelines for safety and security reasons. And even observing from afar would have been beautiful. **But it**

would not have allowed for the amazing experience of standing amongst hot air balloons as they came to life and defied gravity.

Being on the field in the middle of the mass ascension seemingly without any order had me wondering if it was done by design...

...as if to remind us that in the moments of chaos in our lives, we must trust that brilliance will follow.

Ann Tardy



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