

PUBLISHED SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2012 AT 1:00 AM / UPDATED AT 9:15 AM



CHRIS MACHIAN/THE WORLD-HERALD

John Huber of McMillan Magnet Center in Omaha holds a high-altitude balloon Saturday at Memorial Stadium in Lincoln. Astronaut Clayton Andersen, in red hat, joined science students and teachers for the release.

3 balloons score for science at Memorial Stadium

By Maricia Guzman
WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

News Alerts +1 Like 0 Share

LINCOLN — It takes a lot of work to gain the privilege of standing on the field at Memorial Stadium on game day in front of 85,000 fans.

It takes dedication, hours of practice, weeks of preparation.

But the cheers Saturday weren't just for touchdowns, and a football wasn't the only flying object.

ADVERTISEMENT

Christ Community Church

KIDS MATTER TO GOD

Come to church
this Sunday and
bring the kids.

cccomaha.org



Latest Popular Recommended

'Twas a beauty who vanquished the 'beast' - 12:10 pm

Interview: Dennis Quaid on his new TV show, his family, working with Lindsay Lohan - 11:05 am

TV What to Watch: eCreamery on 'Shark Tank' - 5:24 pm

Omaha time capsule: Schools won't get lower power rate - 5:20 pm

Annie's mailbox: Wife's inflight flirting in infuriating - 5:26 pm

New Benson venture Mantra a juggling act for Taxi's owner - 5:24 pm

Sitters feel pinch as parents cut out child care expense - 12:20 pm

Young painter finds way to help and heal - 4:42 pm

Annie's mailbox: Daughter-in-law to-be is rude - 4:43 pm

Time capsule: Nebraska inductees place second - 4:44 pm

ADVERTISEMENT

A group of students and teachers led one of the biggest science experiments Husker Nation has ever seen.

During halftime, the group released three high-altitude balloons, also known as weather balloons.

The balloons, 8 feet in diameter and typically filled with helium, floated to heights of up to 20 miles into “near space” to collect data. Astronaut Clayton Anderson of Ashland, Neb., assisted with the launch.

One balloon carried specimens of E. coli, red and white blood cells, oranges, motor oil and experimental planting seeds.

A second carried special devices to collect environmental data so students could measure such things as air pressure and cosmic rays. The third carried an identification banner of the different groups.

The data were expected to fall to Earth a couple hours after liftoff.

Michael Sibbernsen, science and technology coordinator at the Strategic Air & Space Museum, said near space is an area in the atmosphere where conditions are very cold and relatively similar to those of outer space.

Many of the experiments measured how near space and high altitudes affect the specimens. Thanks to a NASA grant, such research is now accessible to students and teachers in Nebraska.

Teams have been working together since school started. Many of the students were selected because of their interest in science.

Christina Argo, a teacher at Bryan Middle School in Omaha, said most of her students were selected because of their participation in the Science Olympiad competition. (The University of Nebraska-Lincoln will host the 2015 Science Olympiad National Tournament.)

Andrea Gonzalez, an eighth-grader, is a member of the Bryan team.

“Our project will test oranges and see if the acidity will decrease or increase,” Andrea said.

Argo said that while her students didn't have much time to prepare (they began when school started a couple of weeks ago), they did an amazing job and learned a lot about science. She hopes they can do more projects in the future.

“Science isn't always something you learn in a classroom — you learn out in the field during experiments like this,” she said.

Also represented in the balloon launch were UNL, UNL Extension 4-H, the Lincoln Public Schools and the NASA Space Grant Office.

Fans can see the course the balloons took and video and photos of the launch and landing at go.unl.edu/balloon.

Contact the writer: maricia.guzman@owh.com

Copyright ©2012 Omaha World-Herald. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, displayed or redistributed for any purpose without permission from the Omaha World-Herald. To purchase rights to republish this article, please contact [The World-Herald Store](#).

Christ Community Church

**KIDS
MATTER
TO
GOD**

Come to church
this Sunday and
bring the kids.

cccomaha.org



COLUMNISTS »



‘Across the pond?’ It isn’t nearly as far away as in pre-Internet days

“I don’t know if you’ll like it,” my friend said, recommending a book, “it might be too British for you.”



DailyDealOmaha.com
Mangelsen's
\$10 for \$20 Worth of Merchandise

BUY NOW!

FROM THE BLOGS »



Guest List: Rhett Miller from the Old 97â€²s

Kevin Coffey • Sep 19 at 4:10 pm



Dumpling making

Sarah Baker Hansen • Sep 18 at 12:53 pm



Live Review: Silversun Pickups at Sumtur Amphitheater

Kevin Coffey • Sep 18 at 1:32 am

Jump to a blog:

SPOTLIGHT »



We Love Weddings blog

W.E. Love Weddings is about everything Omaha and everything weddings by the editors of Wedding Essentials Magazine.

ADVERTISEMENT

PERFORMANCE
AUTO.COM

**LEXUS
OF OMAHA**

11910 W. Dodge Rd
1-877-266-0026
www.lexusofomaha.com

WORLD-HERALD ALERTS »