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# *Kiting*

The Journal of the American Kitefliers Association

## “LUMINOUS AMARYLLIS”

*John Pollock's Fourth  
Grand Champion*

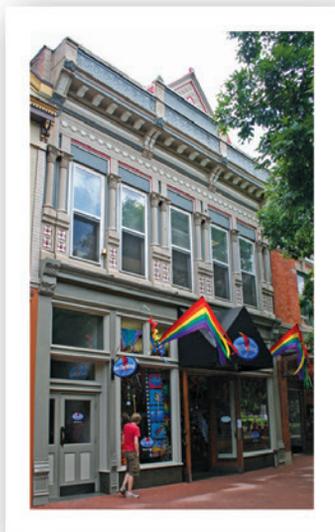


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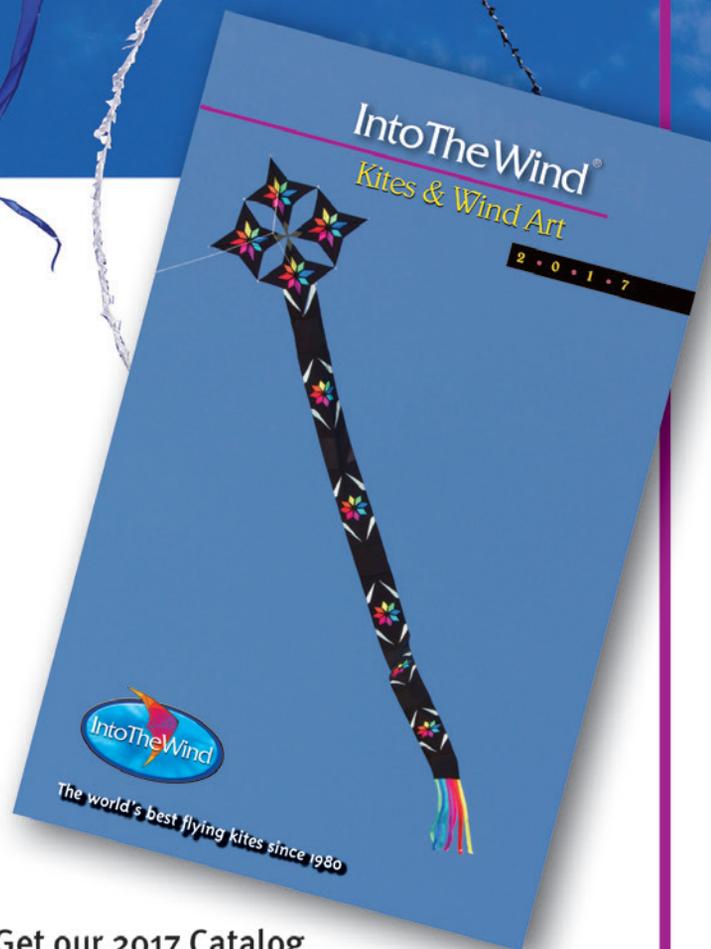


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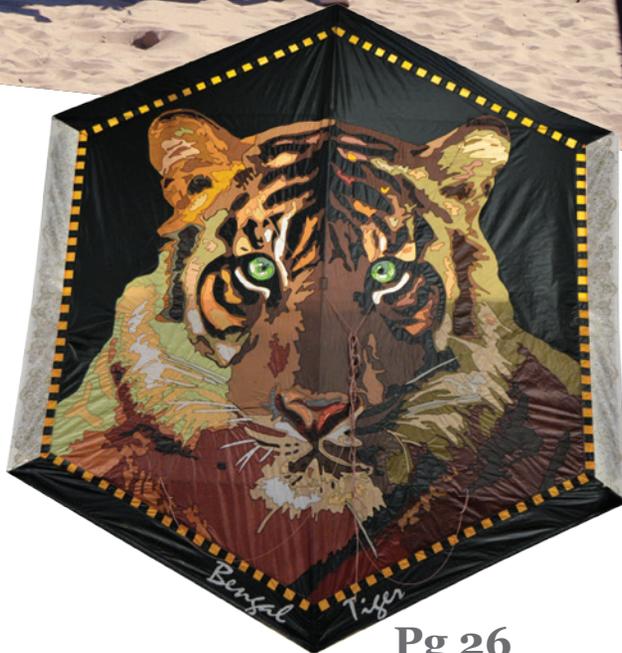
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**ON THE COVER:** "Luminous Amaryllis"  
Kite and photo by John Pollock.



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Founded in 1964 by Robert M. Ingraham, the American Kitefliers Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating the public in the art, history, technology and practice of building and flying kites.

# Letter from the President

**Hello members!** Let me take a moment to introduce myself. I am Nic O'Neill, and in October I was elected to stand watch as President of this amazing organization. Perhaps we have met on the field, or maybe we crossed a windswept playa together, or maybe you have never heard of me and wonder who I am. If we've never met, I invite you to take a second to read my candidate statement on the Members Section of kite.org. Now that I am standing at the helm, I want you to know that I am 100% committed to a vibrant and bright future for the AKA.

After the election results were announced, I spent all of my waking hours talking with members on the convention floor, and some of you who weren't able to attend. Something that stood out after looking back on my notebook crammed with ideas, concerns, and thoughts from those talks, was that the heart of our organization is still there. It is still alive, still amazing, and still exceptionally giving. Everyone was eager to see how we could give back MORE. Members want to see how we can give away more kites to kids, how we can give more free educational resources, how we can get more people flying. That is an exceptional thing, and to know that the capacity for love and caring is alive and well amongst our members—well gosh, it makes me cry with joy.

As 2016 wraps up, and we await the new year, we will be taking this time to thank the volunteers who have stepped up and helped the AKA. On our website we will be publishing interviews with the 2016 leaders, volunteers, and award recipients. They are the ones who have set the stage for the coming year, and while it may not have been showy, what they have done has absolutely helped create some positive momentum for the organization. If you have a chance, please take the time to personally thank them. Actually, the best way to thank them is to go fly a kite with them.

We will be jumping into 2017 with some ambitious goals; we will be heavily focused on increasing our education outreach, revitalizing the sport kite community, and growing overall membership. There is a lot of work to be done, and if you think you have a few hours to spare and want to help, let us know. Do you have a passion for STEM/STEAM events? Do you love building kites with kids? Are you absolutely passionate about fundraising? Do you have a great idea? Now is the time to get in touch with your Regional Director and let your voice be heard. Because, while we all can fly our kites, **WE FLY HIGHER TOGETHER.**



*Lindsey Johnson and President, Nic O'Neill, with their award-winning ground display at the AKA Convention in Seaside, Oregon.*

*Nic O'Neill*



# Kiting

people+places+things

## Record Smashed and Convention Set

OCEAN CITY, *Maryland*: On August 14, 2016, the record for most Trilobite kites in the air at one time was set in Portsmouth, England with 21 kites. Barely a month later on September 23, kiteflyers in Ocean City, Maryland, crushed the “old” record by flying 30 Trilobites (below), thereby tossing down the gauntlet by proclaiming: “Once again Ocean City regains its official title of Kite Capital of the World.”

Ocean City’s long history in kites included hosting the first AKA Convention and Grand National Competitions back in 1978. October 9-14, 2017, the AKA will celebrate its 40th Annual Convention by returning to Ocean City for what is sure to be one of the grandest kite parties in recent memories. This is your opportunity to fly on the same beach that other flyers such as Peter Powell, Bob Ingraham, Dom Jalbert and Steve Edeiken flew 40 years ago.

## Russian Experts Solve the Problem of Backaches When Flying in Strong Winds

MOSCOW, *Russia*: Old ideas have a way of becoming new ideas. United Instrument Manufacturing Corporation (UIMC), a Russian state corporation of some 43,000 employees, recently announced that they’re getting into kites. As stated in recent news releases, “The kites can reach an altitude of several kilometers relaying communications for warships and ground units. They can also be used to carry video and meteorological observation as well as transfer loads in rough terrain, through mountains, rivers and ravines. The idea to create a kite has interested the military customers for a long time. However, only now it has been realized technically. Our experts managed to create special heavy-duty materials to withstand strong winds, backache and cuts.”



*A new Guinness World Record!*

## Save the Dunes

CHAPEL HILL, *North Carolina*, from *Evan Goldstein*: Within the past several years, students and I have focused on photographing coastal dunes via KAP. We use new photo-processing techniques to make 3D models of these coastal dune sites using hundreds of KAP images. Repeating the process month after month, we are able to monitor and assess the development of coastal dunes. This work is motivated by the fact that dunes provide protection of human and natural habitat during storms—knowing more about how dunes grow will help to inform managers and policy makers.

JAY KNERR

## B4UFLY Smartphone App

B4UFLY is a new smartphone app from the FAA designed for drone operators but is pretty handy for kiteflyers as well. It helps you determine whether there are any restrictions or requirements in effect at the location where you are, or where you plan to be. Key features include: distance to nearest airports, informative interactive maps with filtering options, and links to other FAA UAS resources and regulatory information. Available for free download.





KEVIN SANDERS

leaf sail was made from the bark of the Hibiscus tree. Leaves from wild Cassava were stitched together with grass to form the sail. Even the flying line was hand-crafted by the team from wild pineapple fiber.

An official from Guinness World Records was present to inspect and measure the kite and flying line, then oversee the kite's launch and flight. To qualify for a new record, the kite had to remain aloft for a minimum of 20 minutes.

The wind at ground level was light and decreasing in strength—not ideal, but the team decided to go ahead. Launch was straight forward, but a lack of wind close to the ground had the crew struggling to get the kite very high, and 20 minutes suddenly seemed a difficult task. Using all their experience with leaf kites and local knowledge of flying conditions, the team slowly pumped the kite beyond the light wind close to the ground and higher up into a steady breeze. There was huge relief when the kite suddenly climbed by itself and flew steadily at around 400 feet. The rest of the required 20 minutes went by without incident, with a lot of happy faces turned skywards.

The crowd of a few thousand spectators enthusiastically joined in the final 10 second countdown before bursting into loud cheers. High fives, handshakes, and huge smiles followed. It turned out that

## Flying Leaves

MUNA ISLAND, *Sulawesi, Indonesia*, from Kevin Sanders: On October 8, 2016, a traditional Kaghati built and flown by the kitemakers of Muna Island, was recognized by Guinness World Records as the largest kite made from leaves to be flown in the world. The record attempt was held at the Jakarta International Kite Festival 2016, organized by Le Gong kite club as part of the 2016 TAFISA Games.

The kite measured five meters tall by five meters wide, and was constructed entirely from natural materials. The bamboo frame was held together with string made from wild pineapple fiber. The string net which was tied into a web and supported the



KEVIN SANDERS

*It was dicey getting the kite up into the wind.*

20 minutes was not a problem after all as it took longer than that to reel the kite back down to solid ground. The steady breeze above 300 feet held the kite aloft easily, and the 25 square meter flat lifting surface strongly resisted efforts to haul it down. It was as if the kite, knowing it had created a small bit of history, didn't want to relinquish its time in the spotlight so soon.

Congratulations must go to the leaf kitemakers and flyers of Muna Island. They continue to practice the craft of making and flying leaf kites, unchanged over hundreds, and quite possibly thousands of years, with no concession to modern materials, designs or practices. It is a tradition well worth keeping, and celebrating, as part of the rich kite flying heritage of Indonesia.

## A KITE IS A VICTIM

by Leonard Cohen (1934-2016)  
From: *The Spice-Box of Earth*, 1965

*A kite is a victim you are sure of.  
You love it because it pulls  
gentle enough to call you master,  
strong enough to call you fool;  
because it lives  
like a desperate trained falcon  
in the high sweet air,  
and you can always haul it down  
to tame it in your drawer.*

*A kite is a fish you have already caught  
in a pool where no fish come,  
so you play him carefully and long,  
and hope he won't give up,  
or the wind die down.*

*A kite is the last poem you've written,  
so you give it to the wind,  
but you don't let it go  
until someone finds you  
something else to do.*

*A kite is a contract of glory  
that must be made with the sun,  
so make friends with the field  
the river and the wind,  
then you pray the whole cold night before  
under the travelling cordless moon,  
to make you worthy and lyric and pure.*



# Empty Spaces *in the Sky*

Corey Jensen (1950 - 2016)



I remember when I met Corey Jensen. It was Friday, October 21, 1981, at the American Kitefliers Convention in Houston Texas. Actually, it was about 2 am on the 22nd. I was the auctioneer and we were finishing the last few items when Corey, with bloodshot eyes and wild hair, approached the stage pushing a woman by the hips in front of him. In a loud voice, he laughingly said, "Auction it! Auction it!"

The woman was Jane Ambrose, now better known for One Sky One World than her kite shop. She was wearing a t-shirt that Corey enthusiastically wanted me to auction. The crowd and I weren't really sure what to make of this, so I gave him the stage and he sold the shirt for \$200, the last item of the night.

When I called Jane and Larry Ambrose to tell them of Corey's passing, I learned that it was the two of them that got Corey into kites. Larry had a nightclub and hired Corey as a bouncer. When Jane opened a kite shop, Sky Works, Corey went to work for her.

Later, Corey went west with a VW busload of kites and windsocks and worked for Steve Lamb of Catch the Wind Kites in Lincoln City, Oregon. He worked for other kite companies notably, Windbourne Kites of Monterey, California. Finally, he ran WindPower Sports in Las Vegas.

There were always stories about Corey and his adventures. He took a small kite group to Baja Mexico. He started the Buggy Boogie Thang in the desert. Buggy Naked. Trips to Burning Man. From time-to-time, we went on road trips together.

In 1983, I went to Long Beach to be the announcer at the 3rd Washington State International Kite

Festival. We met at the Seattle airport and managed to take a number of "shortcuts" to get to Long Beach, thus making a three-and-a-half hour trip into a seven-hour marathon. Corey was intent on going to Brooklyn, Washington, to see if they had a bridge we could buy. It was also at this event that an attempt was to be made to fly the world's largest kite. Steve Edeiken and I were to be the flight captains. It rained. I went home. Steve returned in late September for a second attempt, dying in a tragic kite accident. Corey was there, heartbroken.

In 1995, Corey and I set out to visit Bob Ingraham at his home in Silver City, New Mexico. Bob was a very quiet, conservative kind of guy. He played the violin in the local orchestra. Over the years, Corey had gotten into the habit, whenever Bob attended a convention, of randomly taking the stage to initiate a call and response from the group. It went like this: Corey would holler into the microphone "Bob," then waving both arms

simultaneously in an upward motion, the crowd would respond “Our Founder,” and Corey would finish with “Ingraham.” It became a celebrated pattern, much to Bob’s chagrin.

We knew Bob wasn’t in good health and when we arrived at his house, his wife Hazel had him lying on a hospital bed in the living room. She warned us that he hadn’t been very lucid for the last few weeks, but said he had been looking forward to our visit. When we got into the room, he half raised himself out of the bed and said, “Is this what I have to do to get you guys to come visit?”

We were off to the races with abuse. We stayed for lunch, chatted with Bob, Hazel, and his daughter. We inducted him into The Rainbow Warriors. This consisted of taking the large ink-stamp Corey had made years earlier with the logo and name of our team and pressing it onto a handkerchief which we left with Bob. In our parting shot to Bob we told him to not die on us, to let us get out of town first—otherwise, we told him, we’d be blamed. We got out of town. Bob died three days later.

Corey was a lot of things, often in contradiction: sophisticated and crude, smart and tunnel-visioned, stubborn and

open-minded, kindly and hurtful. When I flew out to Las Vegas in May to help him after he got out of the hospital, it was one problem after another, many brought about by his inattention and failing health. He was on dialysis, three times a week, four hours at a time.

One day I asked to the receptionist about his condition, but before answering she checked his medical records to see if she could talk to me. “Do you know what he put down for you?” she asked, referring to the relationship-to-patient section.

I shook my head. “Best friend,” she said. I was stunned. “Not friend,” she said, “best friend.” She looked at me and I stood there swallowing hard. That was just like Corey—always getting the last word. Always, straight to the heart.

*Rick Kinnaird  
October 7, 2016  
Chesterfield, Virginia*



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## Empty Spaces *in the Sky*

### Michael William Anderson



One of my close friends and fellow flyer, Mike Anderson, passed away recently after a long battle with cancer. I first met him sometime around 2010, when he found out about our Mile Hi Club events, and brought his family up to the Denver area to fly with us. After that, Mike and his family were regulars at the Callaway Kite Flight every year until recently, when his health declined too much for him to travel.

It was Mike and Liz Anderson's 19-year-old daughter, Katie, who presided as our "ordained minister," when my wife, Liana and I got married on October 13, 2013. The wedding was held in Memorial Park, which was the old flying field for Colorado Springs. I didn't know that less than three years later, I would be one of the many kitefliers signing a memorial diamond kite for Mike which we released into the wind this September, at the Callaway Kite Flight.

Mike had been involved in kiting a long time and I used to enjoy listening to him tell me stories, from the 1990s, about the kite clubs around Colorado Springs and Denver. We'd remind each other of names of long-forgotten flyers, telling tales of old kite festivals as well as catching up on contemporary kiting. I miss those afternoons we spent together, digging through our kite bags and our memories.

*Robin McCracken*  
November 12, 2016  
Aurora, Colorado





Jon Trennepohl  
Walter Plummer  
Gary Maynard

Kids flying sport kites on their own! For years this was a dream of Walter Plummer, and in late July his dream became a reality. He began working in earnest last December, calling several sport kite pilots including Troy Gunn in Texas and me in Michigan. Then he found sponsors and a venue to hold the event.

Walter hoped this event would be the beginning of regular workshops, with the goal of having Jamaican children immersed in the world of sport kiting, and kites in general. Eventually he hoped the sport would grow to the point that they would have kite teams representing Jamaica in the World Championships. That seemed possible when kids at the local high school heard about the event and began to register in eager anticipation. Unfortunately, as the date drew near, Troy Gunn had some health issues and would not be able to attend. Fellow Michigan flyer, Jon Trennepohl went in his place.



## St. Ann, Jamaica 1st Annual SPORT KITE WORKSHOP 2016

By Gary Maynard

Photos by Gary Maynard and Cary Bulter



Starting a new tradition with the sponsors and their families.



Walter Plummer making his dream come true.

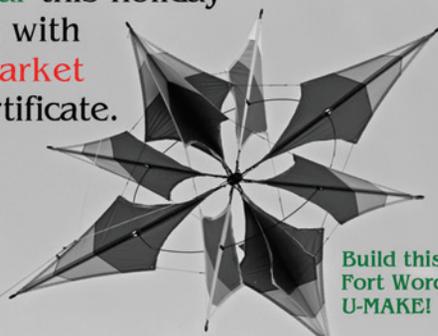
Wednesday, July 21, 2016, Jon and I headed down to Jamaica. It was during a Midwest heat wave and we expected hot weather. Departing the plane, we were not disappointed. We were greeted by our drivers, Vern and Vernon, who drove us to the venue where we met up with Walter. The field was on the picturesque north shore of Jamaica, with the trade winds coming off the blue waters that crashed against the coral coast.

We made our plans for the next few days, then left to try the islands' famous Jerk Chicken at "Scotchies," a shack restaurant just off the main road. It had an open courtyard with tables, wooden tree trunks for chairs, and a corrugated tin roof to block some of the intense sun rays. In the background we could hear the beat of reggae. We ate Jerk Chicken, Festival Bread and drank Red Stripe beer. It doesn't get any more Jamaican than that!

Thursday morning we headed to the field to set up. Jon put together Skyburner Profiles and I set up the Revolution Simulator, a Vented Rev and a six pack of Tri Master Dyna-Kites. The bus from Manchester High School arrived around 10 a.m. with nine kids and a couple of teachers. Gathering around the picnic tables, we explained the general principle of sport kiting, handed out the AKA publication on team flying, and told them about our own experiences with kites.



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We broke into two groups to get some hands-on flying. With the sun beaming down and a steady offshore wind, it was somewhat challenging for some of the smaller kids. I handed the handle to the first one and as I have done countless times in the past, I guided his arms, helping him get the feel of it. The smiles were instantaneous! Each student enjoyed the pull of the kites and the power of the wind. They picked up on the basics rather quickly and within a couple of hours, all were able to fly on their own and set up their kites after a crash. We stopped for a lunch break of traditional Jamaican Patties, which were very similar to Pasties from the Upper Peninsula in Michigan

It was now time to do the "Snack Attack," meaning the candy drop. With the steady winds we had all day, there wouldn't be any problem lifting the payload. As with any candy drop, Walter and I had to explain the rules. Even though these were high school kids, they eagerly ran to grab the candy as it fell to the ground.

We did a little more flying. This time the kids were able to do the flying themselves. Jon and I were basically there to help if things went wrong. Under the very hot afternoon sun, we continued until 4:30 p.m., when certificates were handed out to all the participants. With the generous donations from Steve Tapp in Indiana, kites were given to the school for kids to continue practicing the skills they had learned. The kites would be checked out similar to checking out a school book.

We took a few publicity photos before the bus was ready to depart. Then we noticed several of the girls back on the field trying to get in a few more minutes of flying. The bus driver blew the horn, and reluctantly they landed the kites and entered the bus. As we drove off, we determined that these first workshops were a huge success. All the kids were flying on their own by the end of the day, and maintained a somewhat stable flight.



*Presentation of the donated kites.*



Enthusiastic students of Manchester High School, Mandeville, Jamaica.

Friday began as previous days, hot and humid with a stiff offshore breeze. Today's students were a bit younger than the high school children, and that proved a little more challenging for several of the smaller flyers. But it did not keep them from trying, and the smiles were just as big. One student stood out, flying a stack



Gary Maynard teaches dual-line.

of Dyna Kites. He told me if he continued to fly from his present age of 11 until he reached 30, he was sure he would be an expert by then. Jon had a couple of boys who picked up the feel, and he helped a father and son fly together. Walter even spent some quality time on the Rev simulator and graduated from the simulator to the 130-foot lines. After a swim and another Jerk Chicken dinner, the day was deemed to be very successful.

Saturday was sponsors' day, and some brought their families to learn to fly. We also had several returning students from the previous day. One of the sponsor's sons said, "I thought this was going to be

boring! Boy, I was wrong. This is fun!" He then proceeded to master the Rev using the simulator. He would say, "I got this!" then realize he needed more practice. But he was able to fly by the end of the day.

Sunday was a day of rest. We traveled around to see a few sights and purchase souvenirs, but the highlight was a wonderful meal prepared by Walter's wife, Charlene, and his daughter, Jodene. As we dined, we reflected on the past three days



Maynard and Trewnepohl with new friends Xaundre, Sage and Rogdreike.

and how successful they were. We also discussed what we needed to do next, and how to keep the momentum going. In my kite travels, I have learned that kids are pretty much the same around the world. Having a good time will bring smiles to something they think is boring. With all the smiles we saw, I'm looking forward to returning and seeing how the seed of kiting grows. ▼

## From Hats to Banners



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# SMALL TOWN PROSPERS FROM KITES *(and the “Hokey Pokey”)*

*Photography by Steve Nicol*

*Kites Over Lake Michigan (KOLM) held on Neshotah Beach in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, has been steadily growing over the last 11 years and this September 3-4, the city’s police department estimated the crowd at 40,000! That makes it one of the biggest kite festivals in the country. We wanted to know how they did it, so we interviewed the principal organizer, Chow Chong, owner of the local kite store, Unique Flying Objects.*

## ***How did you get into the kite business?***

**CC:** I was living in Texas, and my wife Kim and I took a vacation down to Galveston. We saw this place with all this stuff moving around outside—it was the kite shop, “Kites Unlimited.” We walked out of there with about \$150 worth of stuff. At that time, the company I worked with was going through some changes and there was one day when I woke up, I felt a little bit of tightness in my chest area and I went to the doctor and he said, “Oh, this is just stress.” That’s when I talked with Kim and it sounded like...

“I think I need to do something else.”

“What are you going to do?”



*Organizer, Chow Chong, likes to keep it stress-free.*

"I don't know, how about a kite store?"

"Okay...where do you want to do it?"

I had a background in marketing so I knew I could promote and sell. We had both graduated from the University of Wisconsin in Green Bay. Kim always wanted to go back, but when we left, my famous parting words were, "I'm never moving back to a place this cold again." But we were tired of big cities and wanted to simplify our lifestyle so we took another vacation and flew up to Milwaukee. We drove along Lake Michigan looking at different towns trying to figure out what we wanted. We were staying at a hotel in Two Rivers and we saw a building, met the landlord, and walked out with a three-year lease. It was just one of those things you do without thinking. If you had put pencil to paper, financially, it would never work.

I was making a good living doing what I was doing but we flew back, gave notice,



LeAnn and Dennis Lauer launch their "Blue Meanie" from Gomberg Kites.

sold everything, packed up, and moved. We've been in business going on 17 years—we opened in May of 2000.

### **Were you both born and raised in Wisconsin?**

**CC:** Kim was, but I was originally from Malaysia. I moved over in 1980 to attend college which was where we met. After college we moved to the western states, always in big cities. I was the marketing services manager for Seagram's, the liquor company. I was in charge of 18 states so it could be stressful. Moving to Wisconsin

was a big leap of faith. My wife called it a mid-life crisis, but our goal was to simplify and to make do with less.

Now when I leave work I don't take it home with me. I don't stress about it, other than the festival part of it.

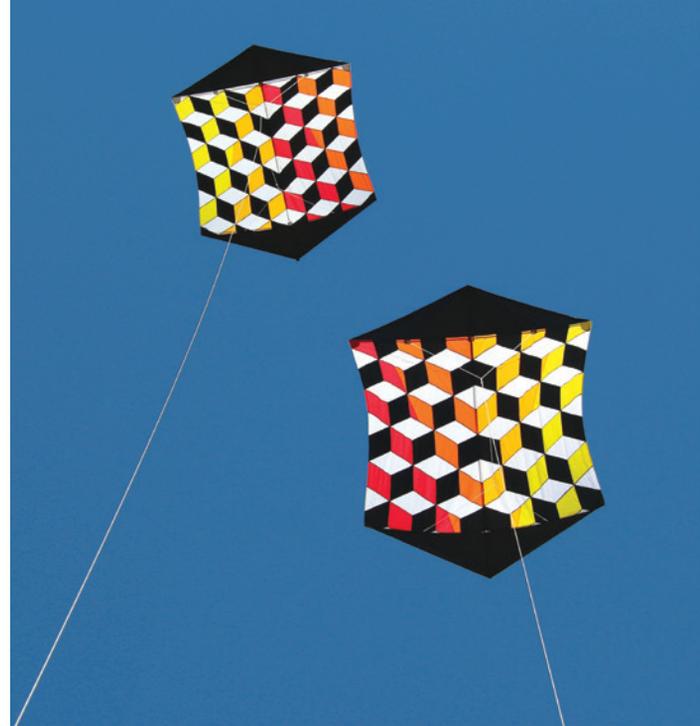
### **How did the idea of the kite festival begin?**

**CC:** It all started at a monthly meeting of the Two Rivers Business Association in 2005. At that time, the whole main street of Two Rivers was torn up for major infrastructure work, to replace sewer and water mains, for electrical work, and to pave a new street. This resulted in a detour around the business district of the city. As everyone knows,

when orange cones, barrels, and detour signs go up, a majority of the people will avoid the mess. This was tough on all the businesses, especially those in the retail and hospitality trade. I had projected a loss of 60% of sales and unfortunately, was proven correct. The road construction started in January and did not finish till mid-September of 2005. Practically a whole year was wasted as far as sales go.

At the meeting, the President of the association started asking for ideas on

how to get people back in town when the street was done. Many ideas were floated, and I suggested a kite festival. I had been to kite festivals and seen how much of an economic impact each had, and the idea was seriously considered. I told the group that to do a meaningful event, I would need the businesses to help with financial sponsorships. The next question was when to do it. I had said anytime in June or July would be ideal as school is out,



Two roks made by George Jacobsen and flown by owners, Jory Van Pietersom and Susan Towner (photo below).

weather would be great, and we'd have a lot of tourists around. A local hotelier piped up and said Labor Day weekend would be preferable because he could never fill his place up. Thus, KOLM was born, with the first event held the following year in 2006, and it has been held every Labor Day Weekend since.

### **So the event didn't start out with a kite club?**

**CC:** Well, I had good connections with a lot of kitefliers. We have our own club here with Wisconsin Kites Club. I knew I could count on them to come and help. The only thing I needed was financial help to get it going, which we managed to get the first year, and then it just kept getting bigger and bigger.





*Darryl Waters, Al Sparling and Mark Brandt brought their scuba divers for a joint swim. Running with the bols (below) is but one example of how KOLM involves the public.*

**Who is on the organizing committee now?**

**CC:** It's comprised of individuals who are part of the business association and our title sponsors. There are nine of us and I'm the only kiteflyer. We include the chief of police, the director of parks and recreation, the library director, credit union sponsors, and a couple of other business people.

**Clearly, this committee sees the event as financially beneficial to the community.**

**CC:** Correct. And they're very proud of things that happen in the community because their goal is to promote the city and make sure we have the best foot forward. The town has a population of a little over 12,000 and this is the biggest event of the year. The hotels are all full during that weekend.

Also, we made it a point to only have service clubs do the concessions. The Optimist Club did the food, the Lions did the corn roast, the United Way did water and soda, and Two Rivers Main Street did beer. What is a festival in Wisconsin without beer? This was a fundraiser for all the service clubs and all of the money raised went back into the community. We

learned a lot after the first year. The most shocking was beer sales. A grand total of 18 cans of beer were sold for two days. Only 18 cans in the beer-guzzling state, and half of them were consumed by the two gentlemen manning the stand! As a result of this, we stopped selling alcoholic beverages, and since then it became a family-friendly event. This is now one of the biggest fundraising events of the year for the service clubs, and that puts money back into the community.

**Other than the beer sales, how did the first year go?**

**CC:** It was truly a learning experience for us. We borrowed a couple of speakers from the Parks and Rec Department, plugged a mini stereo system to it, and that was our sound system. Fortunately, we had some renowned kiteflyers and kite designers who were eager to come and fly and help us get the event off the ground, figuratively and

literally. They've been coming back ever since. In addition to their giant show kites and spectacular ground displays, we had stunt teams who came and performed and they are now one of the crowd favorites. Teams like "Fire and Ice," "O2" and "Team 180 GO!" are synonymous with KOLM. In fact, "180 GO!" was formed at KOLM and became a very much sought-after team nationally. The whole weekend consisted of coloring the sky with kites of all shapes and sizes, aerial artistry by the stunt teams, and public participation in the running of the bols, glider, and candy drops.

**How did the event grow to attracting crowds of 40,000?**

**CC:** After the first year, we received a lot of suggestions on how to make the event better. Flying fields were added and enlarged to accommodate both the stunt teams and show kites. A professional DJ donated his equipment and services. A semi-trailer was also donated for secured storage of kite gear and banners. The city pitched in with picnic tables, garbage cans, bleachers, and anything that would help the kite festival better showcase the beach and city.

One of the best resources came from the kiteflyers themselves. They were the best ambassadors for the event and spread the word of what a great event this was. Each year we saw an increase in the number of flyers who wanted to come and be a part of it. This helped spread the joy of kiteflying to the general public, and the public flying field was filled with kids and adults enjoying kites, many for the first time. We saw an increase in the member-



ship of the Wisconsin Kites Club, and club members have been very active at the event, not just flying, but actively promoting all things kiting.

It is always a challenge to make the event better and we've added new elements to make it fresh. Some of the things we added were a night fly, bonfire on the beach, fireworks, off-site kite exhibit, free kitemaking for kids, mass ascension of Sky Lanterns, burger and brat drops, Tesla Coil demonstration, public participation in the chicken dance and Hokey Pokey, and a live band on Saturday night. Most worked very well and some were discontinued when they didn't meet expectations. The two most welcomed additions to the kite festival were the free bus shuttle service and an increase in the number of Porta Potties. You can judge the growth of our event by the fact that we went from four Porta Potties the first year, to 24 now.

**How do you raise funding for the kiteflying part of the festival?**

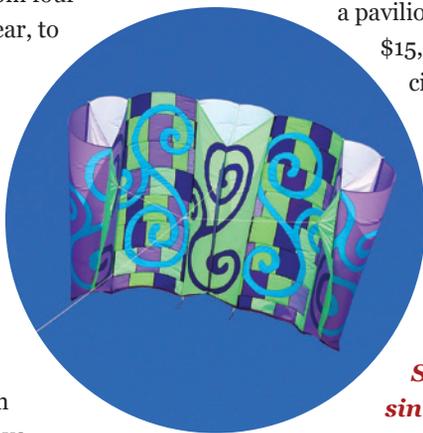
CC: Businesses in the community have seen what the event has done and we've been pretty successful in getting sponsors. We have 70-80 sponsors and we always have new ones each year. If there was one thing I learned at an AKA Convention, it was when a presenter in a workshop said that you want to get everybody on board with your festival and you want to make the others conspicuous by their absence. That's the formula I've been trying to follow ever since.

**How do you balance your roles as the organizer, sponsor, and local kite store owner?**

CC: I don't get paid for the festival. Ev-



Darryl Waters launches his large penguin (above), designed by Peter Lynn. Barbara Meyer's carefully crafted "Finnish Dream" (circle inset) took second place in AKA competitions shortly after flying at KOLM. The beach walkway (below) is a forest of handmade feathers.



everything that we get from the kite festival goes back into the kite festival or back into the community. For example, we were proud to spearhead the new addition of a pavilion at the beach with a \$15,000 donation to the city. The only benefit I get is through extra kite sales during that weekend. Our goal is to put kites in people's hands. We have a lot of people volunteering their time.

**Such as the Wisconsin Kite Club?**

CC: Yes. They are incredible. They are responsible for coming in and putting on all kinds of displays—the ground displays, flying the big stuff. Not only that, but some of them take a day off to come in on Friday and help set up the event. They mark the fields, set up canopies, and do whatever is needed. They do the take-down, too. Setting up is one thing; taking it down is also a big job. It's always amazing to see the festival with all the stuff on the fields, but then about an hour after the event ends, it looks like nothing happened over the weekend be-

cause they've taken everything down.

**Kite festivals couldn't happen without all the volunteers and we can't thank them enough.**

CC: Absolutely. No one gets paid. They do it because it's a fun thing. Besides flying, they have a good time explaining to the public about the kites, how to fly, and all that kind of stuff. They are actually our ambassadors, promoting kiting.

**Who else comes to the festival?**

CC: We have people coming in from Michigan, Illinois, Missouri, Minnesota, South Dakota, Iowa, and lots of regional flyers. There are a lot of kitemakers. Some of them have attended U-Make classes, making kites and banners. A lot of them are their own creations and they just put





*J.P. and Kathy Honeywell prepare to launch their rokkaku (above). Two kites almost appear as one, as Paul Fiebers' black and yellow spiral kite flies below Steve Nicol's eight-meter Pilot. George Jacobsen converted stained glass art into a stunning ripstop rok (at right).*



*Mark Ledvina, Police Chief Joe Collins and Chow Chong (above) take a break from organizing duties while "Team 180 Go!" (below) entertains the crowd, as they do every year. The hard work of setting up ground displays is done by volunteers including Randy Larkey (right) from Missouri.*

up everything that they have. Some of them are really incredible.

***Do you have any contests or competitions?***

**CC:** No. We talked about it, but it just seemed like there was another layer of logistics to do a competition and it didn't seem like it would make sense for us.

***Clearly, you're doing something right.***

**CC:** Like I said, we've been trying new things. The fireworks were a big hit. Last year we started having a live band in the pavilion. Also, when we had a foggy day with no wind, the deejay got everybody involved doing a "Hokey Pokey" dance, and despite the unforgiving weather, people stayed. It was amazing.

We are fortunate to have the

support of the kiting community who put on an incredible show each year. From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank everyone who has helped make this event what it is today. It has had a big impact. Remember the hotelier who had vacancies on Labor Day weekend before KOLM? His hotel has been full on this weekend since 2006.



*Chow Chong was interviewed by Daniel Prentice September 26, 2016.*



# Bringing *Joy* to People with Kites

*An interview with Don McCasland,  
The 2016 AKA Kiteflyer of the Year*

**How did you hear that you had won the Steve Edeiken Award?**

**DM:** It was kind of funny. The first thing I noticed was that Scott Skinner had sent me a message that said, “Congratulations, Edeiken winner.” And I was wondering if he meant to send that to somebody else, so messaged him back, “Who?” I didn’t hear back from him but then Ralph Reed from Kites Over New England posted on Facebook congratulating me and shared the video of the evening’s celebrations and I was like, “Oh, I guess I won!” (laughter) It was a total shock to me.

**Congratulations. What’s your earliest memory of kites?**

**DM:** The one I recall that was around 1968 or ‘69 when I was 9 or 10 years old. My brother, Ken, was a freshman at the University of Rochester in New York and he bought a plastic Gayla kite to blow off some steam. When he came home for Easter break, he and I flew it together. We had not really flown kites as a family prior to that. He had 10 rolls of standard Gayla twine: 200 feet of 18 pound test. So we had 2,000 feet of line and it was out there at an altitude of about 200 feet. We decided that we were too lazy to wind it back in so we tied it to a flagpole and left it overnight.

The next day we followed the string as far as we could but obviously it had snapped. The kite was long gone, but I liked it so much that I took the money I’d earned from my newspaper route and went out and bought another one. It got to the point that I was buying a new Gayla kite every week because I was flying them so high I couldn’t bring them back in without the line snapping. That went on for many, many years.

My most exciting experience after that was a winter vacation when I had scheduled a tobogganing party with all of my friends. On the day there was no snow, so I went to the store, bought a kite for every person, and we went up to the field near me. For many of them, it was their first time flying a kite and they loved it. That’s when I realized I could bring joy to people with kites. I was 16 years old.

**And you were flying a plastic Gayla delta kite?**

**DM:** Yep. It was the Sky Raider. That was my go-to kite. Most



*“Oh, I guess I won!” (laughter) It was a total shock to me.”*

people talk about the Gayla Bat kites, but I was into the Sky Raiders that were in plain colors—no stick-on eyes, no weird shapes—just a classic design, all plastic. In my lifetime, not counting what I’ve bought for my shop or given away, I’ve probably bought over 300 Gayla delta kites for my personal use.

**Can you tell us about your childhood years?**

**DM:** I was born in Foxborough, Massachusetts. I was the youngest of five kids. I lived there until I went to the University of Rhode Island. Later I transferred to Emerson College, where I graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Design which integrated all the theatrical design, sculpture, photography and graphic design courses I took.

**What a great background for kiting.**

**DM:** Yeah. One of my final thesis projects was an environmental sculpture project known as “Air Art,” where I used kites to lift different air-inflated sculptures that I made. More people were asking me about the kites than the sculptures and I realized that a lot of other people love kites besides me. That’s what got me into the business of selling kites. My first business was called Flight Delight in 1982.

**Were you flying kites between 1968 and 1982?**

**DM:** Prior to 1977, my only experience with kites was Gayla



## The Steve Edeiken Memorial Kiteflyer of the Year Award

The Kiteflyer of the Year will be a person who, during their lifetime, will have shown friendly, loving, fair, and even-handed concern for:

1. People in general, but kiteflyers in particular,
2. Kiteflying in general, but for craftsmanship and technical developments in particular, and
3. Communication in general, but for leading and participating in kite events in particular.

and the Rainbow Stunt Kites I saw in the Peter Pan peanut-butter commercial. I remember the first time I saw that commercial, I jumped up and pointed at the TV and told my sister, "I've got to get one of those!" I had never seen or heard of anything like that before and when I saw it, I said, "That's for me."

When I graduated from high school in 1977, a friend went down to Provincetown, Massachusetts, and stumbled into Outermost Kites. He was like, "Oh, my god, Don has to see this place!" I went down there and got myself an 8-foot delta by New England Kite Company. That was when I got hooked into serious kiteflying.

### *How was it being in the kite business?*

**DM:** I was primarily a street vendor when I started Flight Delight. I had a wagon with a couple of cans of kites in it. Whenever I had free time, I'd pull my wagon to different spots where I was allowed to sell on the streets of Boston.

Then I got a job at Whippoorwill Crafts, and they focused exclusively on handmade American kites. I was buying wholesale from Outermost Kites and the owner Tom Wineman asked me if I'd like to work for him as his wholesale representative, and I did that for a year. I was still selling kites for Whippoorwill Crafts, and after about a year she said, "There's a space available at Faneuil Hall Marketplace [in Boston]. Would you like to come and manage a kite store for me?"

I said, "Sure." Then she got a divorce and had other things going on, and she decided to give up the kite store. I'd put a couple of years into the business and had really started to see growth, so I bought the business from her in 1986. Kites of Boston had three different locations in Faneuil Hall. We went from 200 square feet to 600 square feet. For many reasons Faneuil Hall went downhill, and in the fall of 1998, I decided to close that location and I switched the kites to mail order out of my garage.

I've been doing kitemaking workshops all over the Northeast since 1982. When I started doing kite workshops at Blue Hill Observatory, they asked me if I'd do other programs. Once they trained me on those programs, they offered me a full-time job. I've been there since 2000, and basically moved Kites of Boston into the Blue Hill Observatory gift shop.

### *How did you get into kitemaking workshops in 1982?*

**DM:** I was at festival and a Girl Scout leader came to me and asked, "Do you do kitemaking workshops?" I had been to my first AKA Convention where I did a kitemaking workshop, so I said that I could. I looked in my Pelham Book and figured out how to make plastic-bag sled kits and did that for them. Then I heard about Frustrationless Flyers and started teaching people how to make those. Basically, the news spread by word of mouth. I was very fortunate to get to work with Margo and Bevan Brown at different conventions and festivals. Then, I worked on the "Kites in the Classroom" book [available for download at [www.kite.org](http://www.kite.org)] which expanded my repertoire for workshop lessons. It's continued to grow from there.



*McCasland in front of the Blue Hill kite shed with its historic display, created by the Drachen Foundation.*

***Do you have any idea how many students you've taught?***

**DM:** I've been thinking about that and I'm not sure. Last year I taught 1,780 students. So a couple of thousand a year times 30 years—maybe, around 60,000.



***Thank you for that work. How did the AKA fit into that?***

**DM:** I joined the AKA in 1981. My first convention was in Nashville in 1983 where I won novice individual stunt kite competitor, flying a 6-foot Flexifoil. As far as I know, I was the first person to make a kite do a 360 around the field. That was before we had field boundaries, so I could run anywhere I darn

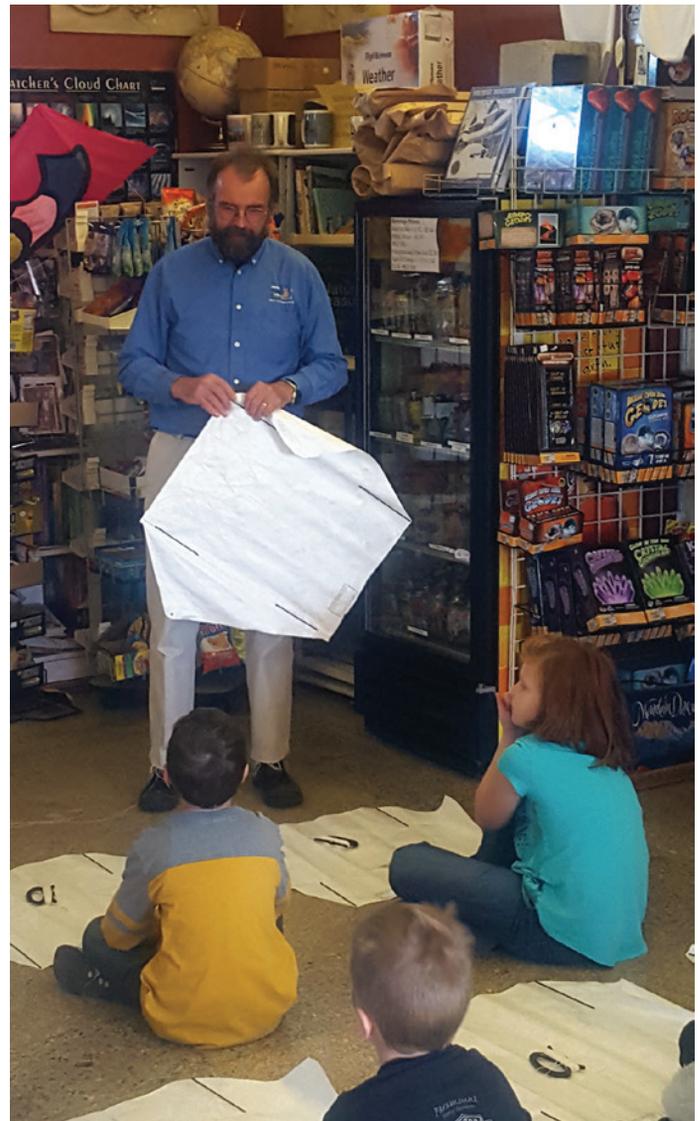
well pleased, and that 360 was one of the things that helped me win that year.

I went to every convention from 1983 through 1994. For many reasons I haven't been able to make it to a convention since then, but I hope to change that. One of the mixed blessings about being at Blue Hill Observatory is that we do a lot of workshops in October, so it's difficult for me to tell my boss I'm going to a kite festival and I can't do educational programs that week. I know that I need to start attending conferences again to keep my skills up. There's so much you can read and watch on YouTube, but there's nothing like being in a room with a bunch of other people, brainstorming to perpetuate the knowledge.

There's a lot of people that have been involved in kiting a lot longer than me and they still are. If you get serious about kites, it's a lifetime passion. That's one of the keys. The other is that people are constantly doing new things. For example, one of the things I've been able to do recently is collaborative kites with different artists in the area.

I have great appreciation for the huge realm of people in Kites Over New England, the AKA, and the whole kiteworld for how welcoming and supporting they are of each other, of me, and everyone else. I love being part of the community. ▼

*Interviewed by Daniel Prentice October 18, 2016  
Photos provided by Don McCasland*



*Teaching kids about parallel lines using a sled kite.*



*A group of Girl Scouts ready to fly their kites at Blue Hill Observatory.*

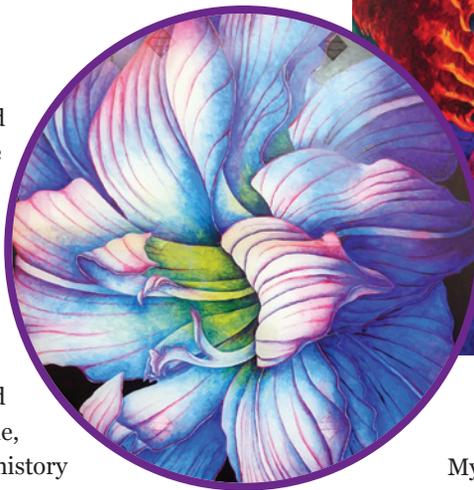
# Originality, Composition, Visual Impact, and Content

## John Pollock, in his own words...

*I was the little kid down the block who liked to fly kites. Over many years, my path took me other directions away from kiting, but fortunately, I have been able to use some of those experiences to return to making special kites.*

I am an artist and have taught art for forty years. Now retired from formal teaching and a Professor of Emeritus from Montana State University, Billings, I still create art and refer to my painted kites as flying paintings. Most of the kites I make are painted. After being challenged a few years ago by fellow kitemakers to make a real kite, I did make some that are not painted, or as my friend, Malcolm Goodman from England refers to them—proper kites. I remind people, however, that the majority of kites through history have been painted.

As long as I can remember, I have been drawing and making things. Becoming an artist was not a choice but a natural progression. Becoming a teacher of art was a way that I could continue as an artist and be able to share my adventures, talents, and knowledge with others. Coming back to kiting as an adult was a search that I needed at the time for the freedom and enjoyment that I had as a much younger person. Taking the creation of my kites to where they are today has involved an investigation into materials and methods that I could develop into making kites part of my art process.



My artwork is representational, but not always or necessarily about visual realism. I have an interest in things that are part of our lives but cannot always be seen—what is below the surface but part of an object, what do we feel, what has to be removed before something is visible, what causes the sound that we hear. An analogy might be a comparison to other artists who do representational art, and might paint what lightning looks like, while I want to paint what thunder sounds and feels like.

When I create visual artwork, no matter in what media, the approach is automatic. That which is important to me is originality, composition, visual impact, and content. Originality does

not mean that one cannot be influenced by other artists or images, but does mean that as an artist, one must have his or her own influence on or approach to the image. Composition is about the placement of the image, the balance, the movement, and creating dominance in the image. Visual impact has to do with value contrast, color intensity, and harmony.

The color relationships in my artworks are based on training and past experiences

to minimal basics and only use yellow, red, blue, violet, and black. By using only the most transparent colors available, I am able to achieve very intense color combinations and harmonies. Values are achieved by the concentration of the pigment and by layers of colors and not by adding black to a color. I only use black when I am depicting a black object.

The content of artwork can be said to be what the artist is trying to say. Most of

and the many surgeries that I have gone through over the years. I now need, not only my fingers, but also my toes, to count the episodes, some of which have been life-threatening. Creating the images has been my way of dealing with the mental and physical issues and being able to make a negative into a positive. Any object within one of my images may have a symbolic meaning. For example, when I paint a day lily, it is not just about the



as a printmaker and watercolor artist. In the process of printmaking, usually one color is printed at a time and by overlaying colors one creates additional colors. When working with watercolor, overlaying of transparent colors can also be used to create a similar affect. Both methods often rely on the white of the paper to create a value change in a color. I use this experience to transpose the use of acrylic paints on either canvas or kite material to create images. I have reduced my color selections

the time my artwork is about conflict and harmony. Sometimes that conflict and harmony is just about the relationship of color and contrast. Many times this content is based on a short story that I wrote several years ago that is titled "The Legend of the Raven and the Day Lily." This story is about inner conflicts that I and most likely others are faced with on a continual basis. Another story I wrote was "I Am My Own Demon." Many of my conflicts revolve around medical issues

beauty, grace, and color of the day lily. A day lily bloom lasts only a day and when dealing with many of my issues, I can only deal with a day at a time. A day lily has been this symbol to me for some time. In the newest paintings, the bear has been added to the story. The bear has become the philosopher and the psychologist to the legend. Maybe someday I will finish and publish the story with the images, but then again maybe the story will never be over.

One does not get to a high level in anything without having influences, guidance, and assistance. As an artist, there are many artists that have influenced me, but the person that was the greatest influence on my art and life was Ben Steele. Mr. Steele was my professor, mentor, and friend. Recently deceased, Ben was a great artist, an excellent teacher, and had a wonderful personality. Ben Steele was a survivor of the Baton Death March and a prisoner of war for three-and-a-half years. As an artist and teacher, he was able to turn that tragedy around and be a positive influence on hundreds of students.

Again, in the area of kiting, I have had many influences. When I first started making kites, a person that I greatly admired was Steve Brockett. Steve was already established at that time for his original and artistic kites. I was able to meet Steve recently, and I still admire his direction in kiting and his photography. Some others who have offered wonderful assistance and encouragement are Steve and Tony Ferrel, Jon Burkhardt, Ron Gibian, Drake Smith, Terry Z. Lee, and Bobby Stanfield. Of course my wife, Diana, has been a major help in my survival of the story. I greatly appreciate the many people who have enjoyed my story and my artwork, and I am glad to be able to share it with you.

*From the cover: John Pollock's "Luminous Amaryllis" was his fourth AKA Grand Champion Kite in 12 years. He has been featured in Kiting magazine on numerous occasions including his article, "Painting Acrylic on Nylon" (Spring issue, 2007). Photos provided by the author. ▼*





*The author flying his art.*

# It's Not About THE KITES...

By Daniel Prentice

Photography by Rick Agar  
and Daniel Prentice



*Rain. And more rain. It came in squalls lasting 30 minutes to six hours, followed by drizzle with the occasional dry spell when flyers dashed to the beach to launch. The wind followed a similar pattern shifting from 5 mph to 35 mph. And so it went for six straight days, October 3-8, at the 39th Annual AKA Convention in Seaside, Oregon.*

Of course, kiteflyers are used to dealing with nature. The general public sees us in terms of colorful kites and long lines but as a group, we are very attuned to our environment, studying not only the wind, but also the curve of the land, the tree line, the shifting sky, frontal weather patterns, and even the nature of the grass and ground cover. Just like hunters moving through the woods or sailors on the ocean, kiteflyers are immersed in nature. As Bob said, “[We] don’t need a weatherman to know which way the wind blows.”

When a person attends their first kite festival, it’s usually a dazzle of color and surprise. If they embrace kites, future events follow a progression of meeting other kitepeople—observing, learning, experimenting—and one day waking up to the fact that they are now addicted to



*Mike Macdonald's stack of Rainbows (top) and Chris Hanson's "Horse in Spring."*

kiting. Along the way, they also discover that they are part of a community that is open and supportive. Fellow flyers become friends and eventually feel like an extended family.

Nowhere is that more obvious than at the annual convention where flyers return for 10, 20, even 30+ years to see old friends and to trade kite knowledge in all forms. Everyone at this year’s convention would have welcomed blue skies, but in its own way, the weather was a blessing. The convention serves four major functions: flying time; workshops; casual visiting time; AKA administration. With flight time reduced to a few hours, the emphasis shifted to workshops and visiting. The consensus of most attendees was that it was the most harmonious and enjoyable convention they’d been to in years.



Ron Bohart's train of rokkakus, "Endangered Species" won People's Choice and Sky Display.

The workshops this year were organized by Cat Gabrel, and offered a broad spectrum of classes. For first-timers, the convention chairman, Phillip Whitaker, led a class explaining how to get the most from the week's events; down the hall, former head-judge, Mike Mosman was helping competitors understand the rules and sign-up procedures. Simultaneously, there was a class on Kite Aerial Photography alerting people to the growing issues of drones. If you wanted to actually make something, national champion kitemaker Susie Skinner led people in the construction of a miniature sled kite. All that happened on Tuesday before noon, and would have been followed by an afternoon of flying had weather allowed.

This was the sixth time the AKA has held its convention in Seaside, and to a flyer it's easy to understand why. There are predictably good winds and the wide beach has sand firm enough for cars. The hotels line the beach, allowing flyers to move easily from their rooms to their flying spots. Only two blocks inland, a

beautiful convention center is perfect for meetings. Seaside is also a bit of an anomaly for west coast towns. It feels more like a town on the Jersey Shore with a main street that runs four blocks perpendicular to the beach that is often



Cliff Pennell's "Kaleidoscope" (left) took first in Flat Kites while Sam King (above) displayed his kites without competing.



jammed with weekend tourists buying taffy, T-shirts, kites, sand-buckets, knick-knacks, bumper stickers, hot-dogs, alcohol, and "world-class clam chowder" (a claim made by all the cafes). There's even a boardwalk. Looking seaward, one can experience the same beauty that Lewis and Clark felt when they arrived here in 1805.

As with any national club, there are the "enablers" who spend less time flying kites than they do managing the club



activities. They organize raffles, rules, judging criteria, schedules, meals, awards, auctions, and endless logistics. In years past, the Annual Business Meeting has been a hotbed of disagreement over how the organization should run, but this year people listened, discussed, disagreed and ultimately worked together to find a common direction to move forward. Outgoing President John Lutter said, “ I am extremely excited by what the future holds for this association.”

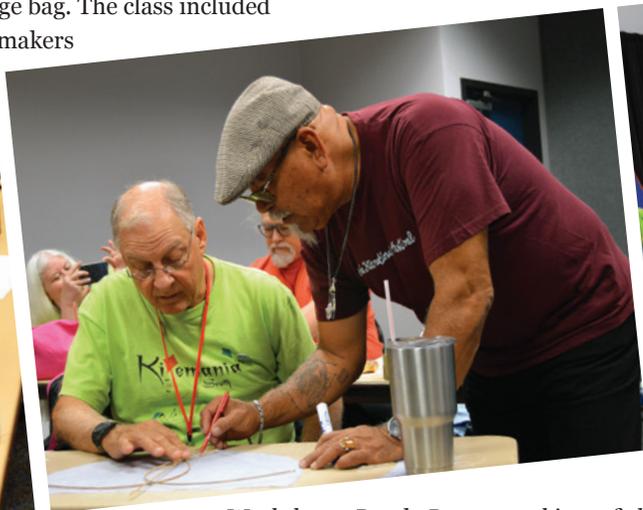
Along with the discussion of budgets and bylaws, the business meeting was also the introduction of the new president, Nic O’Neill [see page 5]. At 33, she is the youngest person to hold the post, and she quickly endeared herself to club members by sharing her enthusiasm about all things kiting. Her new board members included four new Regional Directors [see page 4]. Outgoing RDs—Greg Lamoureux, Thom McAdams, Jack Wilson, and Kelly Mayhew-Nunes—were applauded for their years of volunteering. And retiring after nearly 20 years as Executive Director, Mel Hickman received repeated standing ovations throughout the week.

The positive feeling coming out of the Tuesday night business meeting flowed directly into the Wednesday morning workshops. People laughed off the rain and faced the hard decision of which of four classes they wanted to take. A popular class given by Alexa King of Tacoma, Washington, involved making a simple delta kite from a white kitchen garbage bag. The class included seasoned kitemakers



*Darril dela Torre helps Mike Shaw launch his “Off-Kilter Chicken” (above). Ron Bohart’s “OR-7” (left) was first in Soft Kites.*

and beginners sharing colored markers and laughing like a classroom of junior-high kids. “It’s one of those designs that you can rely on,” said King. While these kites are great flyers outdoors, they also perform surprisingly well indoors.



*Workshops: Ronda Brewer making a fighter kite while Jose Sainz gives tips to David Piotrowski on his three-stick design. Elsewhere, kitemakers Dave Colbert and Chris Hanson displayed their kites to the judges.*

Indoor champion Donna Wendt gave the class “Learn to Fly Indoors” which prepared many beginners for flying in a demo later that night, where seasoned flyer Joanna Chen of Berkeley, California, took second place with her own trash bag delta.

For kitemakers into headier topics, Robert Brasington from Tasmania taught “Origin of the Specie,” in which he delved into the sources of his inspiration. Brasington travels the world promoting kites by teaching hands-on workshops and generously shared his tips on everything from construction, to materials, to the secrets of choosing a good design. Giving examples of inspiring Maori art and architectural design, Brasington asked the class, “How can you not be aware of the world around you?” For him, there’s inspiration everywhere, but he carried it a step further by making it clear that “to be good at anything, you have to have passion about it.” Clearly Brasington does.

Across the hall, Lindsey Johnson of Lincoln City, Oregon, demystified 3-D printing and gave practical information about how to buy printers and find free software. He then demonstrated the process by designing and making real parts. Johnson’s enthusiasm and candor were infectious and soon many people were thinking seriously of making their own kite fittings. In his second session, he was joined by Ronda Brewer in a class where



students made their own seagull kites using some of Johnson’s custom fittings.

Wednesday afternoon saw a break in the rain, and flyers not busy making



*For the second year, Donna Wendt swept the indoor competition to the smiles of the judges and the applause of the crowd.*



kites went out to fly. Since most of the actual competitions had been cancelled for the day, flyers were doing what they naturally do, but the caliber of kites was truly amazing. Mike Dertein of Grandville, Michigan, was flying a big sled he made from recycled church decorations. Mike Shaw of Prescott, Arizona, laughed about his red, white and blue kite. “Given its color and the fact that it’s an election year, I call it ‘Split Decision,’” he said. Shaw’s experimental designs often have a whimsical humor to them, such as his asymmetric chicken kite that he flew in competition later in the week.

Mike Macdonald of Brookings, Oregon, surprised many old-timers by flying a



10-stack of original Rainbow Stunters, complete with aluminum spars. Equally surprising for a different reason, Chris

Hanson of Bellingham,

Washington, flew four delta conynes on a single line uniquely configured with spars that made the kites dance around each other. He called it an “upside-down mobile.”

Not far away, Ken Conrad and Suzanne Sadow, this year’s recipients of the “Lee Toy Circle Award” (aka “The Kite Artist of the Year”) were complimenting Hanson’s designs. Sadow was flying a beautiful square fighter saying, “I made this little drawing and Ken printed it on fabric for me,” referring to Conrad’s dye-sublimation printing abilities. Meanwhile Conrad, an ambassador for KAP was busy explaining a rig he had been working on that would measure line tension and windspeed at the kite altitude.

Deb Lenzen of Prescott, Arizona, launched a 7-foot rokkaku she called “Journey.” She explained how her appliqué graphics were inspired by Hopi symbols and the rainbow colors were to help bring rain, a sentiment perhaps more appropriate for the Arizona desert than the current Oregon coast. As if on cue, it wasn’t long before the sprinkles returned and flyers who were scattered up and down the beach began pulling in their wares. As they did so, a five-year-old girl from Portland ran across the beach to launch her plastic Barbie kite, her father in hot pursuit. She was oblivious to all the other kites, enthralled by her own success. She had more in common with the adults around her than she could have possibly imagined.

Given the weather, it was not surprising that some of the hottest flying of the week happened during the Wednesday night Indoor Competition. Repeating her sweep from 2015, Donna Wendt of Puyallup,

Washington, took first place in both single line and “Unlimited,” flying her Pterodactyl kite made by Karl and Sara Longbottom. In addition to her flying skill, her performances illustrated the importance of musical choice and choreography. From the opening notes of her performance to “Phantom of the Opera,” one had a clear sense that something dramatic was forthcoming in her Unlimited routine. Other flyers delivered a range of routines with a surprising diversity of kite styles. Though not competing, John Barresi took time off from nurturing his three-month-old baby to treat the crowd to a dynamic demo fly that had people on the edge of their seats.

Attendees poured into the convention hall before 9:00 am Thursday morning, shaking off the rain and heading for the meeting rooms. Gary Goodenough of Vancouver, Washington, led a “Make and Take Fighter Kite” class in which he furnished pre-cut Icarex sails and preformed spines. Champion fighter kiteflyer Bob Hegman was on hand to help people learn how to actually fly their newly-made creations. French kitemaker Loik Lamalle taught about “Unexpected Flying Kites,” explaining how his innovative designs fly even though they don’t appear that they will. And for all those kite festival days with no wind, Archie and Jeanie Clay taught people how to make bubble makers for launching gigantic soap bubbles that float away for hundreds of feet before popping. They then took their class out on the street and amazed passers-by.

The new AKA President, Nic O’Neill taught two classes: one about how to use



kite competitors. The kitemaking competition was moved into the convention center to judge each contestant on three of the four criteria: Visual Appeal, Craftsmanship, and Structural Design, with hopes to review the Flight criteria on Friday or Saturday if the rain stopped. Meanwhile, people embraced the day’s workshops, filling each classroom.

While there were a number of activities scheduled for Thursday night, the focus was on

Social Media and the other about Crowd Funding on the Internet. O’Neill, a self-described computer junkie, has extensive experience promoting and funding non-profits using social media. While excitedly talking about some of her goals for the AKA, she patiently explained to her mostly grey-haired audience about the basics of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and all the other social media sites, and how they can be used to promote and/or fund a local kite festival, workshop, or even another trip to Dieppe.

It was cold and blustery all day, and just about the only flyers on the beach were the sport



*Deb Lenzen launches her winning rok, “Journey,” while Chuck Jones used a sand anchor to keep his kite down while he tuned it.*



*Mike Mosman’s “Schooner 4”*

a celebration of the life of Corey Jensen [see “Empty Spaces,” page 8]. His death on October 1 brought with it a wave of sadness that, over the week, morphed into a steady stream of stories about his time as the AKA President in 1988 and countless escapades since. A larger than life presence in the AKA for over 30 years, he rejoiced in keeping kiting fun and friendships meaningful. One of his famous pranks was encouraging people to exchange their convention nametags as a way of meeting new people and gently reminding the administrators to be a little less serious. This year, everybody’s nametag had a Corey Jensen nametag on the back. At his request, people met in the bar to trade stories and remembrances, but really it was happening all week.

By Friday, tension was building about flight time. You can’t judge a kite without seeing it fly and the decision was made to hit the beach in the afternoon. Until then, people eagerly filled the workshops that again were organized to perfection. Christian Baden Powell had a light table set up to carefully demonstrate his unique appliqué methods; in the next room, Jose Sainz and Scott Skinner taught a class on making paper kites with three sticks. All three of these teachers are past Grand Champion kitemakers, and yet their

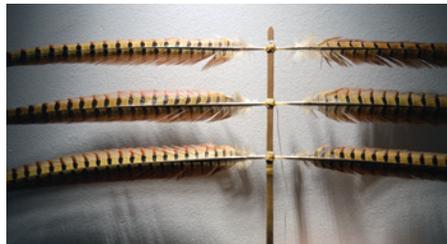
approaches were: “Anyone can do this.” While people left the three-stick class with beautifully-crafted handmade paper kites, others left the adjoining room talking about setting up their own light tables when they returned home.

Across the hall, this year’s Ingraham Award winner, Scott Davis, led the “Sport Kite Symposium,” where concerned flyers dug deeply into the conundrum of the declining interest in competitive sport kiting. Discussion ranged from the “good ole days,” to rules, to the need to qualify for Grand Nationals and beyond. While there were no easy answers, there was a sense that if changes were going to happen, the people in the room were probably going to be at the forefront of those changes.

Friday afternoon the rain gods relented, and flyers and judges filled the beach. The scene was classically unique to the AKA Grand Nationals and barely discernible to a casual spectator. When most people hear the words “kite festival” they now expect the sky to be filled with large show kites, mostly made in China. While the AKA has an area open



*Novice, Ron Ortega, impressed judges with his rok “Sandy” and his “Life Imitates Art” kite made of feathers.*



*Ex-president, John Barresi brings son, Luca, to his first Convention.*



*John Hurd’s “Monark”*



*Bob Matteo’s “Woven Claw”*



*Mitch Cordover’s “Ghost Fighter”*



Winners: Barb Meyers with "Love Ya," Chuck Jones with "Yellow Mylar," and Dave Colbert with part of his collection.



to such kites and socks, its competition fields are geared to the individual kitemaker's craft. Categories of kites are announced and competitors in that category launch their art to demonstrate its flight characteristics. A team of judges, clipboards in hand walk the field, making notes and asking the kitemakers questions. After the judges have scored the kites in the sky, the kitemakers are asked to bring down their kites and another group launches.

This process makes tremendous sense from the point of view of the judges and kitemakers, but oftentimes leaves the spectators wondering why there aren't more kites in the air. In recent years, the AKA has opened up to the idea of having more show kites on the field and to welcome the public to its activities, but at its core, the AKA convention is more like a kitemaker's retreat than it is a kite festival. The event is totally supported by the registration fees paid by the attendees, and it's reasonable for them to expect a return value for their investment. That value is created by the thousands of hours of volunteerism coming from dozens and dozens of people doing everything from teaching to scoring to passing out ballots. The workshops alone were worth the price of admission this year.

Leaving the beach Friday afternoon, flyers felt at ease that the competition was complete, and in typical convention group-mind, they moved to celebrate at the auction, bidding on the mundane and the collectible with equal gusto. The convention hall staff began turning out the lights at midnight as tabulations were made for one of the most successful fundraising events of many years.

Saturday morning workshops continued with Suzanne Sadow teaching a "Make and Take" class on exquisite butterfly kites, while Ron Bohart gave people tips on the safe handling of flying big, heavy-pulling kites. Head Judge

Jon Burkhardt of Potomac, Maryland, led a workshop with the Competition Committee and others reviewing the event and looking for ways to refine it for the next year. In the afternoon, most flyers retired to their rooms to disassemble kites and to try to reduce the amount of sand carried onto planes and into homes when they flew back across the world.

Awards banquets can sometimes be a stress on one's hands, clapping for one award after another. But again, members stepped forward to make the ritual more entertaining with Darrin Skinner spending weeks crafting a slide show presentation that consumed two big screens and filled the blank spots. Additionally, photographer John Gillespie had gathered touching portraits of attendees which spoke quiet celebration of the individuals that make up the whole.



Retiring after 20 years as the AKA Executive Director, Mel Hickman, gets a well-deserved hug from Gayle Woodul.

Bob Ingraham founded the AKA in 1964 because he wanted it to be acceptable to fly kites as an adult. On this cold, rainy week in October of 2016, the spirit of his wishes were once again fulfilled with the booming echo of Corey Jensen exclaiming, "Kiteflying is not about the kites, it's about the people!" ▣



# AKA 2016 Grand National Championships



<b>Steve Edeiken Kiteflyer of the Year:</b>	Don McCasland
<b>Robert Ingraham Award:</b>	Scott Davis
<b>Lee Toy Kite Artists:</b>	Ken Conrad & Suzanne Sadow
<b>Volunteer of the Year:</b>	Nic O'Neill
<b>Regional Director of the Year:</b>	Brett Morris
<b>Kite Club of the Year:</b>	Rogue Valley Windchasers

<b>Experienced Individual Dual-line Ballet</b>		
1	Brian Setterberg	69.667
2	Brett Morris	68.800
3	Joanna Chen	68.533
4	Nicholas Knight	62.667
<b>Experienced Individual Dual-line Precision</b>		
1	Brian Setterberg	62.133
2	Brett Morris	60.967
3	Nicholas Knight	59.167
4	Joanna Chen	56.500
<b>Experienced Individual Multi-line Ballet</b>		
1	Steve Kline	65.267
2	Brett Morris	65.200
<b>Experienced Individual Multi-line Precision</b>		
1	Steve Kline	67.933
2	Brett Morris	63.000
<b>Masters Individual Dual-line Ballet</b>		
1	Aaron Champie	81.600
2	Scott Davis	79.933
3	Darrin Skinner	77.000
4	William Hendrickson	75.000
5	John Gillespie	74.400
<b>Masters Individual Dual-line Precision</b>		
1	Aaron Champie	80.567
2	Scott Davis	72.067
3	John Gillespie	70.300
4	Darrin Skinner	67.067
5	William Hendrickson	58.900
<b>Masters Individual Multi-line Ballet</b>		
1	Mark Quirnbach	72.133
2	Aaron Champie	69.733
3	Mike Mosman	66.400
4	Joanna Chen	65.800
<b>Masters Individual Multi-line Precision</b>		
1	Mark Quirnbach	71.833
2	Joanna Chen	69.700
3	Aaron Champie	68.767
4	Mike Mosman	58.100
<b>Masters Pairs Dual-line Ballet</b>		
1	N-sync (Carol Pittman, Cass Pittman)	75.067
<b>Masters Pairs Dual-line Precision</b>		
1	N-sync (Carol Pittman, Cass Pittman)	68.833
<b>Masters Team Dual-line Ballet</b>		
1	AirZone Flight Team (Aaron Champie, Darrin Skinner, John Gillespie)	78.533

<b>Masters Team Dual-line Precision</b>		
1	AirZone Flight Team (Aaron Champie, Darrin Skinner, John Gillespie)	77.533
<b>Novice Individual Dual-line Ballet</b>		
1	Mike Allen	56.000
2	Mari Daniels	44.400
<b>Novice Individual Dual-line Precision</b>		
1	Mike Allen	49.633
<b>Open Individual Indoor Single Line</b>		
1	Donna Wendt	78.483
2	Joanna Chen	70.467
3	Richard Hurd	69.533
4	Mike Mosman	56.683
<b>Open Individual Indoor Unlimited Ballet</b>		
1	Donna Wendt	74.933
2	Scott Davis	74.233
3	Mike Mosman	68.333
4	Steve Kline	65.767
5	Joanna Chen	64.000
<b>Open Multi-line Pairs Ballet</b>		
1	N-sync (Carol Pittman, Cass Pittman)	72.333
<b>Open Multi-line Pairs Precision</b>		
1	N-sync (Carol Pittman, Cass Pittman)	78.067
<b>Miniature Kite Challenge</b>		
<b>Grand Champion: Barbara Freeberg Meyer "Spiral" Beauty</b>		
1	Barbara Freeberg Meyer "Spiral"	
2	Susie Jo Skinner "Russian Doll"	
3	Susie Jo Skinner "Rainbow"	
<b>Flight</b>		
1	Mitch Cordover "Concentric"	
2	Susie Jo Skinner "Rainbow Conyne"	
3	Jim Gates "Blueie"	
<b>Originality</b>		
1	Barbara Freeberg Meyer "Big Kite"	
2	Susie Jo Skinner "Russian Doll"	
3	Mitch Cordover "Concentric"	
<b>Smallest</b>		
1	Susie Jo Skinner "Red Dot" (17.5 mm)	
2	Barbara Freeberg Meyer "Lady Bug" (43.5 mm)	
3	Jim Gates "Blueie" (70 mm)	



<b>KITEMAKERS COMPETITION SPECIAL AWARDS</b>			
<b>Grand Champion</b>	JOHN POLLOCK	LUMINOUS AMARYLLIS	Bowed 1st
<b>Innovative Kite</b>	MIKE MOSMAN	SCHOONER 4	Cell 2nd
<b>Traditional Materials</b>	RON ORTEGA	LIFE IMITATES ART	Figure 5th
<b>Mixed Media</b>	CHUCK JONES	YELLOW MYLAR	Fighter 4th
<b>Special Recognition</b>	DAVID COLBERT	BODY OF WORK	8 KITES

## 2016 AKA KITEMAKERS' COMPETITION RESULTS

Category	Kite Number	Builder	Kite Name	Flight & Handling Score	Visual Appeal Score	Craftsmanship Score	Structural Design	Total Score
<b>BOWED KITES</b>								
1	BOW 02	JOHN POLLOCK	LUMINOUS AMARYLLIS	8.47	8.67	8.87	8.80	34.80
2	BOW 04	CHRIS HANSON	HORSE IN SPRING	8.77	8.10	8.47	9.10	34.43
3	BOW 11	DEB LENZEN	PAINTED DESERT	8.80	8.37	8.63	8.33	34.13
4	BOW 07	MIKE MOSMAN	DRONE	8.53	7.13	8.17	8.87	32.70
5	BOW 09	MIKE SHAW	OKC OFF KILTER CHICKEN	8.87	7.40	7.40	7.50	31.17
<b>CELLULAR &amp; DIMENSIONAL KITES</b>								
1	CEL 02	CHRIS HANSON	CAMO	8.13	7.93	8.43	8.70	33.20
2	CEL 04	MIKE MOSMAN	SCHOONER 4	8.10	6.90	8.40	8.77	32.17
3	CEL 05	LOIK LAMALLE	BEACON II	7.57	7.73	7.83	8.63	31.77
4	CEL 06	MIKE DERTIEN	BANG	7.47	7.70	7.73	8.30	31.20
5	CEL 07	RUSSELL SCHWARZ	JAGUAR	7.17	7.17	7.53	8.17	30.03
<b>COOPERATIVE KITES</b>								
1	ROK 03	BARBARA MEYER, TWALA MEYER, JONAS GRAMMER	LOVE YA	8.00	6.47	7.10	6.83	28.40
2	DEL 05	DEB LENZEN	LEE'S DESERT DELTA	8.23	6.63	6.63	6.50	28.00
<b>DELTA KITES &amp; DERIVATIVES</b>								
1	DEL 02	DAVID COLBERT	BAD MOON RISING	8.17	7.73	6.90	6.37	29.17
2	DEL 01	BOB MATTEO	GOTHIC DELTA	8.03	7.10	6.93	6.47	28.53
3	DEL 03	BARBARA MEYER	SCROLLWORK #3	8.03	6.73	6.77	6.87	28.40
4	DEL 04	LARRY CHRISTENSEN	BRASINGTON GOTHIC DELTA	7.70	7.27	6.67	6.47	28.10
<b>FIGHTER KITES</b>								
1	FTR 01	MITCH CORDOVER	GHOST FIGHTER	7.67	5.87	6.67	7.00	27.20
2	FTR 02	RICHARD HURD	RAM-BO	7.90	6.67	6.33	6.10	27.00
3	FTR 03	MIKE MOSMAN	TIE-DYE	7.00	6.33	6.37	6.00	25.70
4	FTR 04	CHUCK JONES	YELLOW MYLAR	7.67	5.50	5.97	5.57	24.70
<b>FIGURE KITES</b>								
1	FIG 01	DAVID COLBERT	SQUATTING BEAR TOTEM	8.40	8.50	7.37	7.77	32.03
2	FIG 02	CHRISTIAN BADEN POWELL	KETCHIKAN THE GUARDIAN	7.97	8.00	7.40	8.17	31.53
3	FIG 03	CHRIS HANSON	BLUEBIRD	8.47	7.03	7.10	7.03	29.63
4	FIG 05	MIKE SHAW	E-JAY	8.20	6.83	6.77	7.10	28.90
5	FIG 04	RON ORTEGA	LIFE IMITATES ART	7.80	6.67	6.60	7.17	28.23
<b>FLAT KITES</b>								
1	FLT 03	CLIFF PENNELL	KALEIDOSCOPE	8.33	7.80	8.70	7.77	32.60
2	FLT 02	JOHN POLLOCK	JON	7.00	8.47	8.30	7.93	31.70
3	FLT 01	DAVID COLBERT	STANDING BEAR	7.40	8.07	7.83	7.20	30.50
4	FLT 04	RON ORTEGA	JIM'S GAL	8.07	7.53	7.27	7.13	30.00
5	FLT 06	MIKE MOSMAN	MR LINCOLN	7.17	7.00	7.30	7.13	28.60
<b>INDOOR KITES</b>								
1	ARC 01	RICHARD HURD	MONARK	8.50	7.43	7.43	7.53	30.90
2	ARC 02	MIKE MOSMAN	TYRO	7.10	7.40	7.20	7.20	28.90
3	ARC 03	CHUCK JONES	I FLITETYPE	7.73	6.93	6.90	7.27	28.83
4	ARC 04	JIM GATES	JACK O LANTERN	7.37	6.77	6.70	7.00	27.83
<b>ROKKAKUS</b>								
1	ROK 10	DEB LENZEN	JOURNEY	7.93	8.70	8.37	8.07	33.07
2	ROK 06	RON ORTEGA	SANDY	8.37	8.00	7.30	7.20	30.87
3	ROK 04	CHRISTIAN BADEN POWELL	THE SHINER BOCK	8.43	6.93	7.30	8.10	30.77
4	ROK 07	MIKE MOSSMAN	NASHVILLE	8.00	6.67	7.50	7.43	29.60
5	ROK 02	DAVID COLBERT	NATIVE DRAGON	8.00	7.93	6.53	6.70	29.17
<b>SKY DISPLAY</b>								
1	SKY 04	RONALD BOHART	ENDANGERED SPECIES	8.30	7.70	8.47	7.77	32.23
2	SKY 05	LOIK LAMALLE	ED'S	7.40	8.30	7.67	8.40	31.77
3	SKY 06	RON ORTEGA	BOHAWKS #2 AND 3	8.67	7.37	7.53	7.90	31.47
4	SKY 07	CHRIS HANSON	CALDER	8.70	6.73	6.90	8.07	30.40
5	SKY 03	DAVID COLBERT	BIG DADDY'S DRAGON FAMILY	8.73	6.70	6.77	6.57	28.77
<b>SOFT AND FLEXIBLE KITES</b>								
1	SFT 03	RON BOHART	OR-7	8.63	8.10	7.97	8.43	33.13
2	SFT 02	BARBARA MEYER	FINNISH DREAM	8.00	7.53	7.67	7.50	30.70
3	SFT 05	LARRY CHRISTENSEN	OUR FLAG	7.83	7.53	7.33	7.47	30.17
4	SFT 04	CHUCK JONES	JORDAN AIR FOIL PAWS	8.10	6.73	6.83	7.17	28.83
5	SFT 01	MITCH CORDOVER	RAM AIR SLED	7.57	6.17	7.10	6.97	27.80
<b>STUNT/SPORT KITES</b>								
1	STU 01	BOB MATTEO	WOVEN CLAW	8.13	6.93	7.90	7.00	29.97
2	STU 02	DAVID COLBERT	HAPPY DRAGON QUAD	7.97	6.27	6.27	6.17	26.67
<b>NOVICE KITEMAKERS</b>								
1	BOW 04	CHRIS HANSON	HORSE IN SPRING	8.77	8.10	8.47	9.10	34.43
2	CEL 02	CHRIS HANSON	CAMO	8.13	7.93	8.43	8.70	33.20
3	SKY 06	RON ORTEGA	BOHAWKS #2 AND 3	8.67	7.37	7.53	7.90	31.47
4	ROK 06	RON ORTEGA	SANDY	8.37	8.00	7.30	7.20	30.87
5	SKY 07	CHRIS HANSON	CALDER	8.70	6.73	6.90	8.07	30.40
<b>CRITERIA TOP SCORES</b>								
<b>FLIGHT/HANDLING</b>		MIKE SHAW	OKC OFF KILTER CHICKEN	8.87	7.40	7.40	7.50	31.17
<b>VISUAL APPEAL</b>		DEB LENZEN	JOURNEY	7.93	8.70	8.37	8.07	33.07
<b>CRAFTSMANSHIP</b>		JOHN POLLOCK	LUMINOUS AMARYLLIS	8.47	8.67	8.87	8.80	34.80
<b>STRUCTURAL DESIGN</b>		CHRIS HANSON	HORSE IN SPRING	8.77	8.10	8.47	9.10	34.43

# Regional Reports

## Region 1: New England (CT-NH-MA-ME-RI-VT-NY)

Maggie Engvall, Cranston, RI  
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RD1@aka.kite.org  
End of term: 2019



This fall Region 1 has had a busy kiting season, and as we look forward to the winter weather, our activities will move inside with indoor flying, parties, and kitemaking. We are a friendly group of people and look for any excuse to get together. We have had the full course of weather for our activities.

The Great Lake Kitefliers Society (GLKS) ([www.fly-glks.com](http://www.fly-glks.com)) had a very active schedule with their first Sunday monthly flies and One Sky One World. Their Halloween Fly, Thanksgiving Fly and dinner, along with a Christmas gathering are on the list.

At the Kidz & Kites Fly, there was a good morning of flying until the rain came down in buckets. Most of the GLKS flies take place at Gratwick Park, Tonawanda, NY. For more information contact Ted by e-mail at [info@flyglks.com](mailto:info@flyglks.com).

The New York Kite Enthusiasts (NYKE) Club participated in The Cherry Valley Kite Festival in Cherry Valley, NY. The NYKE Annual Labor Day Go Fly A Kite Day was held at Dorset Park, Burlington, VT, and hosted by Jon and Jeanette Hosford. Information for NYKE can be found at <http://www.nyke.org> or e-mail them at [nykites@yahoo.com](mailto:nykites@yahoo.com).

Kites Over New England (KONE) held monthly events at Nahant Beach, MA. They also took part in the 18th Annual Capriccio Kite Festival put on at Old Orchard Beach by Tracy and Larry Smith of Crickets Corner Toys & Kites in Ogunquit, ME. KONE participated in the annual "East Meets West" Kite Festival at Pope John II Park,

Dorchester, MA, and took part in One Sky One World in October. In January, February, and March, KONE will be having kitemaking workshops. For more information visit the website at <http://www.kone.org/> or e-mail [info@kone.org](mailto:info@kone.org).

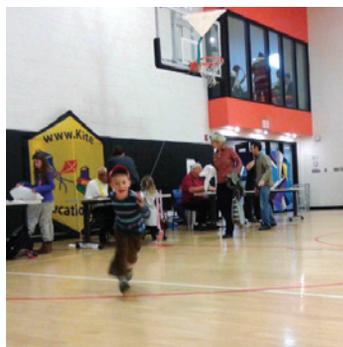
Nor'Easters had a nice day for the "Capriccio Kite Festival" in Ogunquit, ME. Most weekends you can find them flying at Bug Light in South Portland, ME. They will be hosting kitemaking workshops in January and February. New Year's Day will find them flying kites at Bug Light Park, South Portland, ME. For more information, e-mail the Nor'Easters Kite Club at [pandtkites@gmail.com](mailto:pandtkites@gmail.com) or go to the website at <http://www.noreasterkites.com>.

ConnectiKITERS continue to have their monthly flies on the second Sunday of the month. December will bring the Holiday party. January is their Annual Meeting, and in February and March they will have kitemaking workshops. Visit the web site at [www.connectikiters.org](http://www.connectikiters.org).

Another Regional event was the "Opening Our Doors 2016" at Bos-

ton YMCA where Archie Stewart, Pauly Berard, John DiMatteo, and Scott and Chris Weider entertained over 75 children and their families making and flying kites inside the gym. Lots of new flyers enjoyed learning how kites can fly indoors. Pauly even corralled an eight-month-old newbie! This was the 15th annual event that opens ALL museums, conservatories, theaters, and performance centers in Boston's Fenway District. It happens every Columbus Day and all venues are free to the public. All in all, over 10,000 visitors attend.

If you are reading this report, it is time to send along notes, thoughts, pics, and flying time experiences that you would like to see in the Spring AKA Region 1 report. They are needed here by January 10, 2017. Also, place them on the AKA Calendar. Thank you all for playing, and we will see you out there somewhere.



Indoor flying at "Opening Our Doors 2016."

## Region 2: Northeast

(NJ-PA & lower NY)

Daniel McGee Magnolia, NJ  
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or email [RD2@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD2@aka.kite.org)  
End of term: 2019



As your newly-elected Regional Director, I want to begin by thanking Thom McAdams for all the hard work, time, and information he has given us for the last three years as our RD. Thanks so much Thom, and enjoy what life has in store for you.

It certainly has been a nice summer with plenty of kiteflying activities. Our region is blessed with plenty of miles of coastline where you can usually pick a spot that has good winds. Who doesn't have memories of being at the seashore and flying kites with someone special? I certainly have my share of memories.

Let me tell you about some of the events in the region in the last few months. On July 16, Burlington, NJ, sponsored Kites for Peace at the waterfront. They treat kitefliers great, with shaded areas and seating for relaxing or taking a break. On July 17, it was happening at a National Historic site, Fort Mott, located on the Delaware River in Pennsville, NJ. With great views and good winds, this is always a favorite flying location.

On August 20-21, Keystone Kites sponsored their summer retreat. This year Mike Dallmer of South Jersey Kite Fliers taught the group how to make a wonderful Genki. Participants were generous and courteous and this helped everyone finish their kites. If you have not tried to build a kite before, I suggest you try to attend this event or a local workshop. More information can be found by going to Keystone Kites's Facebook page.

September 11 was the day of the Belmar, NJ, Kite Festival. Now there is a beach town that treats it kitefliers very well—including food, drinks, and a very welcoming atmosphere. It is also the place where a Batman-themed, swallow-tail kite with a cut flying line decided to play "Aquaman" and go for a swim in the Atlantic. A club member, young Mike Dallmer, sped past

me and got Aqua/Batman safely away from swimmers and out of the water.

On September 17, there were options to attend Kitefest at Traders Cove in Brick, NJ, or the Wind and Sea Festival at Bayshore Waterfront Park. On September 22-23, Ocean City, MD, hosted the annual Sunfest Kite Festival, which is an event everyone should attend sometime in their lives. Sunfest includes many activities to keep you busy, and it is usually attended by kite manufacturers and prominent kiteflyers.

October 7-10, Long Beach Island, NJ, hosted the annual Long Beach Island Kite Festival which is always a welcome weekend break that time of year. SJKF again did a wonderful job with all of the activities they arranged for everyone. And on October 16, SJKF hosted their 22nd Anniversary Bash, with great food and drinks. It was a wonderful way to bid on some stellar kites and accessories to fill up your flying bags.

October 22, Keystone Kiteers had a great fly day at Mt. Pisgah located in the Sam Lewis State Park in York, PA. This has to be one of the premier locations for inland mountaintop kiteflying.

### Region 3: Mid-Atlantic (DC-DE-MD-VA-WV)

Donald Jacobs, Copper Hill, VA  
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email RD3@aka.kite.org  
End of term: 2019



Region 3 kiteers were quite busy this past fall attending events up and down the East Coast. The fun began Labor Day weekend with 34 members of the RAF, WOW, and Got Wind kite clubs, along with the WACKOS attending the 14th Annual Mile High Kite Festival in Beech Mountain, NC. Saturday started with a kite building competition. Sunday brought a great show with lots of big kites and inflatables. Thanks to the WACKOS and Got Wind for wowing the crowd. Harold and Elizabeth Ames along with Stuart Crum kept the crowd entertained with several demos of sportkite ballet flying. The day had better wind than in recent years and the flyers put it to good use. Sunday evening ended with a fun picnic sponsored by Four Seasons at Beech.

The last week of September brought Sunfest in Ocean City, MD. Flyers from many regions gathered in front of the Kite Loft and put on quite a show, wowing the spectators on the boardwalk with everything from show kites to sport kites. There was an attempt at a world record for the most Trilobite kites in the air, and with a count of 30, the record was smashed!

That same weekend Coyner Springs, VA, held their annual kite festival. While not the largest event on the schedule, there were lots of folks who came out to see the show put on by Don Thomas, Will Smoot, Donald Jacobs, Steve Hughes, and Don Morris. The flag ceremony and bol races were popular events along with all the kiteflying.

The 2nd annual LBI event was held on Long Beach Island over the Columbus Day weekend organized by Lisa Willoughby. More than 40 kiteflyers came from up and down the East Coast including many from Region 3. Over the weekend, residents were treated to indoor kite competitions, demos, outdoor competitions, buggy kites, and a wind garden installation. As night fell on Sunday, the crowds gathered at the Barnegat lighthouse for a spectacular night fly. This is quickly becoming one of those "must go" events!

The New Era Kite Club of West Virginia has been quite busy attending events in Medina, OH, Barlow, OH, and the Mountain State Art & Craft Fair in Ripley, WV. They have a lot more events to come in 2017.

Sailwinds Kite Festival in Cambridge, MD, had plenty of wind as the Kings brought out the flying pigs and colorful banners.

And some parting words from prior RD Jack Wilson: Well folks, three years have passed and it's time for me to move on. The Eastern League Sport Kite Association was looking for a fresh face so I stepped up and took the job of Commissioner. I hope that I have served you well, brought a little inspiration, and represented our region

when given the opportunity. Whether we've crossed paths or not, we are kiteflyers and we are members of the American Kitefliers Association. I am happy to consider all of you as part of my extended family.

### Region 4: Southeast (AL-FL-GA-KY-MS-PR-NC-SC-TN)

John Layton, Ft. Walton Bch., FL  
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email RD4@aka.kite.org  
End of term: 2019



*From Anita Wheeler:* The Emerald Coast Kite Flyers Club spent a very hot summer flying kites and making people smile.

In August, ECKFC participated in the first annual Back to School Beach Bash in Navarre, FL, hosted by The Starfish Project. This organization's mission is to improve the lives of special-needs children and their families. September brought Kitty Hawk Kite 's Kite Fest in Destin, FL. The culmination of the weekend was the rescue of a fly-away kite from the roof of a seven-story condo! We also participated in the 3rd Annual Dragon Boat Races in Pensacola, Florida. Wind was scarce, but the bubbles were a hit as always.

*From Chris Barker:* Kiteflyers along the northern portion of the Gulf Coast have been actively flying their kites on the second Saturday of every month in Long Beach, MS. The Emerald Coast Kite Flyers Club and Kewl Kites, along with many



A month-long exhibit at Studio 620, St. Petersburg, FL.

JOHN LAYTON

regular attendees, are doing a great job in perpetuating this regularly-scheduled activity in which all are invited to participate.

*From Will Smoot:* Over the Labor Day weekend the highest town east of the Mississippi hosted the 14th Annual Mile High Kite Festival on top of Beech Mountain. There were 34 kiteflyers from the WACKOS and the RAF who made the trip up the mountain and they all put on a great show. Saturday's highlight was the kite builder's competition run by Charlie Dunton, with scoring by Joan Dunton. Charlie Dunton, Harold Ames and Will Smoot were the judges. Sunday

was the really big show with giant inflatables by several of the WACKOS members including Jim and Laura Podlasek, "Grumpy" Gwynn, and Donald Jacobs from the Got Wind club near Salem, VA. There was a large ground display with homemade banners and wind art put up by Russell Dresch, the Heatleys, and the Maults. For kiteflying I need to thank Harold and Elizabeth Ames, and Stu Crum for the frequent demonstrations of sportkite flying to music. The day had better wind than in recent years and the flyers put it to good use. The evening was a lot of fun with a picnic sponsored by Four Seasons at Beech which was also the headquarters hotel for the weekend.

*From Kelly Mayhew-Nunes:* From Kiting Tampa Bay, St. Petersburg, FL, was the place to be in September, thanks to Drayton Callison and Studio@620. The studio was filled with a month-long exhibit of kites, including a mix of rare, historical, and local kitemakers. Wayne Hosking held three kitemaking workshops. There was night street flying and kite poetry, and special guest Enrique Cay from Guatemala spoke about the making kites for the Day of the Dead. A big thank you goes out to everyone who helped with this amazing event. Keep your eye out for more fun things to come from Drayton. With the weather cooling off, come fly with us on the third Saturday of each month and/or at KiteMania/Feather Mania, February 3-5.



To learn more about kiting in the Tampa area, check out [www.Kitingtampabay.com](http://www.Kitingtampabay.com).

*From Dan Ward:* The sky over Miami Beach displayed a marvelous array of colors and figures from the hundreds of kites in the air during the 24th Annual Kiteober Fest at Haulover Park, Miami Beach, FL. It was the biggest kiting event to happen in South Florida this year. Hosted by Miami-Dade Parks and Skyward

Kites, this free event featured demonstrations from longtime kite enthusiasts. We especially enjoyed the folks who made their own kites in their traditional styles from countries like the Bahamas, China, Colombia, Jamaica, Trinidad, Peru, Puerto

Rico, Venezuela, and many more. It was a fantastic way to celebrate unique diversity of cultures that make up South Florida. An estimated crowd of around 5,000 people showed up to fly and enjoy the live music and fun family activities. February 18-19, 2017 will be our grand 25th year Kite Day at Haulover Park. For more information, call Dan Ward at Skyward Kites, 305-893-0906, [www.skywardkites.com](http://www.skywardkites.com), or Haulover Park, 305-947-3525.

In the Atlanta area, Dodd Gross was the special guest at the Atlanta World Kite Festival and Expo in Piedmont Park on October 22.

### Region 5: Great Lakes (MI-OH)

John Graves, West Chester, OH  
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End of term: 2017

Here we are at another kite-repair season, and I have a few repairs to make—both to my kites and my hands. In September, I journeyed to Lincoln City, OR, for their fall kite festival where my inflatable pig escaped. I must admit that since we don't have a lot of sandy



beaches here in southwestern Ohio, the proper use of sand anchors is somewhat of a lost art—in other words, I did it wrong. Lincoln City provided me with several lessons in flying larger kites on sand. I dug my hole for the anchor a bit too shallow and without the squared-off side at the front. A good gust of wind took my pig and kite for a very fast stroll down the beach. I must offer a very large thank you to those who helped capture her before she ran into the mighty D River. The D River, for those who haven't been there, is listed as the world's shortest river at 130 feet at high tide. Thus, lesson number one: how to dig holes for sand anchors.

Lesson number two came during the confusion with the "flying" pig. I, of course, ran after her and tried to slow her down or stop her by diving and grabbing onto the line. If your pig is running down the beach, you won't be able to catch her from the rear, which is where I was.

While grabbing the kite line, lesson number three became all too painfully clear—one should be wearing gloves while flying kites. We all tend to forget one or two things that seem not to matter during our time out on the fields, but I forgot a major one in my haste to get on the beach. My gloves were in the car. Bad thing. At the time of writing this, my hand wounds are still healing and will continue to do so for a while longer. Thanks to Mitch Cordover for his medical assessment and expertise rendered a few days after the incident.

One of the things I really like about kites and kiteflying is the community we have. Even though this incident was entirely my fault and I felt really stupid for it happening, the concern, offers of help, education, empathy, and stories of how it has happened to others were comforting.

From Lincoln City, I travelled North along the Pacific Coast Highway for the 39th Annual AKA Convention, held in Seaside, OR. So much fun, education, conversation, was had by all. Even though there was a lot of rain (and who hasn't had to put up with that when flying a kite?), it was a great event. There were elections, educational workshops, competitions, and attempts at kiteflying on the beach when it wasn't raining. If you didn't make it, you missed a good one.

Next year's convention is to be held in Ocean City, MD, which is closer for us in

Region 5. Start working now for time off for the convention. It will be worth it.

Please keep me informed as to upcoming festivals so they may be posted on the AKA event calendar. Please don't assume I know about them. Stay safe and remember to wear gloves!

### Region 6: Midwest

(IA-IL-IN-MN-WI)

Ed Grys, Shawano, WI

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or email RD6@aka.kite.org

End of term: 2017

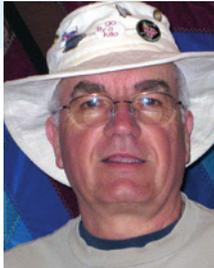
Once again, Neshotah Beach in Two Rivers, WI, was the place to be for the 11th Annual Kites Over Lake Michigan (KOLM) over the Labor Day Weekend, September 3-4, 2016. It was the best year by far, with both days having near ideal flying conditions and attracting crowds in excess of 40,000 people. On Saturday, evening the winds did not quit, causing the cancelation of 1,500 Sky Lanterns that were to be released. The beach has shrunk due to the increasing water level in Lake Michigan, but that did not dampen the enthusiasm of the flyers and the spectacle in the sky.

The Prairie Winds kite festival was held on September 10 in Jackson, MN, hosted by Chrystal Dunker. The winds were ideal. There was good turnout, plenty of room, and a lot of kites in the air. This was Crystal's last year to host the fly as she is moving on and will be concentrating on getting her doctorate degree. We wish her all the best and look forward to next year with a new host.

On October 2, Paul Fieber and Ray Blum hosted a One Sky One World fly at McKee Farms in Fitchburg, WI. There was a nice turnout, but they could have used a bit more wind.

The Wisconsin Kites Spin Sock Fly was held on October 8. Spin socks were flying and so were lawn chairs—or as some might call it, a chair lift for dummies.

From Steve Anderson from Illinois Kite Enthusiasts (IKE): The fall was once again a busy season for IKE. It started out in



STEVE NICOL



*Kiteflying in Pontiac, Illinois.*

September with Kites Over Lake Michigan, in Two Rivers, WI, and was followed with festivals in Macomb and DeKalb, IL, where the weather was fine, but the winds less cooperative. The weekend of September 24 saw some great weather and wind on Saturday for the annual IKE Retreat, held at the Indiana Dunes State Park. The most recent event for IKE was a brand new festival sponsored by Route 66 Kites, in Pontiac, IL, on October 15. The day featured plenty of wind. It started out cool and cloudy, but by the sunny afternoon turned into a really beautiful fall day for kiteflying. We had a good turnout of IKE members, and the Wisconsin Kites made the trek down to Pontiac and filled the sky with their show kites. The sportkite field featured demos by 180Go! and Fire and Ice. We had a pretty good turnout for a first year festival, including the Mayor, who was really impressed by the event. We're looking forward to this one becoming an annual event and growing in the future.

A final note: Once again, the premier winter event in the region will be "Color the Wind" in Clear Lake, IA, on February 18, 2017. Keep Looking up and Hold on Tight!

### Region 7: Great Plains

(CO-KS-MO-ND-NE-SD-UT-WY)

Roger Kenkel, Gibbon, NE

308-240-9266

or email RD7@aka.kite.org

End of term: 2017

Everyone is saying that the AKA Annual Convention in Seaside, OR, was a tremendous success. Although I didn't



attend, word spread quickly that the enthusiasm was strong and participation excellent. I so often wish life would cooperate so I could participate and attend in more events nationwide. This got me thinking about travel, promoting, and sharing kites with the masses.

In recent years, I increased my travel schedule, which gave me the opportunity to discuss the joy of kites with parents and kids alike. It still amazes me how many children have never flown a kite. In my childhood, it was virtually a rite of passage. I suppose with the advent of modern technology such as cell phones, laptops, and video games, outdoor fun has gone somewhat by the wayside. But I have found that grabbing a few kids' kites and heading to the local park can gather quite a bit of interest. I launch a few unique pieces or break out a quad kite, and a crowd usually starts to gather. The opportunity is there to get the kids involved by putting a few kites in their hands. During this time, I remind parents that they can build lasting family memories by doing something fun together on a nice day. Watching the kids flying, laughing, and genuinely having fun with their kite really opens the eyes of Mom and Dad. I remind them as well that the wind is free and one simple kite can bring a lifetime of fun to anyone.

All this may sound like I am trying to sell people kites, and in some cases I am—as a kite retailer, that's what I do. But the larger picture is creating awareness that kiteflying doesn't involve a rate plan or batteries. For a lot of parents, this is an attractive option. I've been talking about this a lot in my last few reports because the continued operation and success of the AKA hinges on bringing new and younger members into the association. It is an important thing we all must do for the AKA to grow and succeed. Without the help of all of our members talking up the joys of kiteflying, I fear we will lose the AKA to continued declines in membership. Whenever possible let's all take a moment and be an ambassador of kiting if, for no other reason, than to share in a child's joy you have brought them.

As for news in Region 7, the Callaway Kite Flight on Labor Day weekend was a tremendous success. A memorial kite



*Whales over hay bales in the Midwest.*

launch was done for Michael Anderson of Colorado. All festival flyers were invited to sign the memorial kite, and at the end of the second day, it was launched and the line cut. The kite may have drifted away into the wind but Michael's memory will forever be carried by it. Michael was a genuinely great man and it was my sincere pleasure to be able to fly with him in the years he attended the Callaway Kite Flight.

If you have any news to share from your club or local festival, please email it to [RD7@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD7@aka.kite.org) for inclusion into the quarterly regional report. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. I am here to help.

**Region 8: South Central**

(AR-LA-NM-OK-TX)  
 Jason McCaleb, Tulsa, OK  
 785-383-5157  
 or email [RD8@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD8@aka.kite.org)  
 End of term: 2016



Did I ever tell you about that time we went to do some sledding with power kites? I had better save that story for the kite field. I do have

some things I would like to share with you but I also want to be sure you are submitting your stories to be told! Please be sure to send us what your group is doing to promote kiting in your area.

The South Houston Recreation Kite Flyers hosted a fun fly on East Beach in Galveston, TX, for One Sky, One World, with several families gathered on the beach to fly. The Tulsa Wind Riders also hosted a fun fly at their home kite field in Tulsa. Some of our Region 8 members were still on their journeys home from the convention. Thanks to all of you who flew a kite for One Sky, One World. Please learn more about the event at [www.oneskyoneworld.org](http://www.oneskyoneworld.org).

I would like to recognize the Region 8 members who attended the AKA National Convention: Phillip Whitaker, Catherine Gabrel, Kathy Nixie, John West, Tom Wallbank, Lorraine Achey, and Deb and Gary Morey. Thank all of you for your participation in the convention. I know some of you got some great kites in the auction, and we appreciate those contributions to the AKA, but locally we look forward to seeing those kites very soon!

I'd like to share a few words about one of my favorite kite-flyers, Kathy Nixie. Kathy was

recently an AKA representative in Dieppe, France, and also the 25th Annual Portsmouth International Kite Festival in Portsmouth, UK. Thank you so much for being an international ambassador for kiting. Kathy is constantly organizing kitemaking classes at various functions all over the world. You have truly been an inspiration to me with your selfless acts. Thank you so much Kathy!

Lastly, I just want to take a moment to share a word with you all about the power of communicating on social media. Many of us see many posts about kites. What's important, though, is that we are sharing those posts. It only takes a second more to click "share." Oftentimes when you read a post about kites, the audience is people who already know about kites, or perhaps



*Kathy Nixie checking the line laundry in Dieppe.*



Mike Tracy's new quadline "Sky Dancers" made by Kisa of Germany.

are in the AKA already. Many of the posts we see are circulating through several groups of people who are already members. Share these posts on your personal pages. Be the person who inspired your friend to pick up a kite again after 20 years. If you have any questions about how to increase the reach of your kite club on social media I would be glad to help you out. Until next time, thank you to everyone in Region 8.

### Region 9: Intermountain (ID-MT-OR)

Brett Morris, Medford, OR  
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or email RD9@aka.kite.org  
End of term: 2018

I'm hopeful everyone had a chance to fly kites and attend a kite festival in 2016. Diane and I kept busy traveling to over 25 kite events, promoting kiting and the AKA. We sure had a great year and met so many wonderful people. Our 2017 kiting schedule is filling up, and we hope to see you at an event or two this year.

Thank you to Mel Hickman, John Lutter, and the outgoing BOD members; they have worked extremely hard this year. Many changes have taken place over the last several years, and those changes are now



leading AKA in a positive direction. Congratulations to our new AKA President, Nic O'Neill. She has hit the ground running. Stay tuned to see what fun she has in store for AKA. There is excitement in the air this year. The convention was a fun, positive place to be. Help us share the love of kiting. Let's make this the year of flying kites and having fun. If you were able to join the Facebook live feeds during the AKA convention auction and awards banquet, you could see what fun we were having. It was an awesome use of social media. If you missed it, you can look on Facebook #AKAGN.

This year, I was honored to receive the 2016 AKA Regional Director of the Year Award. I couldn't do what I do without all the behind-the-scenes people helping me. Thank you. The Rogue Valley Windchasers were named AKA Kite Club of the Year. It was nice for the club to be recognized for all the years they have been providing kids' kites, helping at festivals and promoting the joy of flying kites. Check the AKA event calendar for their monthly Fun Flies in Crescent City, CA. They fly there year-round, weather permitting: <http://kite.org/activities/events/event-calendar/>.

This was the first year I competed in the Northwest Sport Kite League and qualified to compete in the AKA Grand Nationals. I earned four silver medals. The experience of competing was really what I was after, and I learned a great deal—not only how to be a better flyer both in dual and quad

line, but how the process works. There are many devoted people like Scott Davis, Bob Wendt, and others who take the time to organize the field and judges. They make sure the documentation is correct and compile and tally the scores. This is not done the morning of the event, but many hours prior to and after each competition. They do this for the love of kiting and competition. For those of you who have never competed, for whatever reason, come try it out; it's a lot of fun. They will teach you the ropes and you'll meet some really nice people.

Washington State International Kite Festival (WSIKF) in Long Beach had another successful event. It is such a great place to fly with friends. Make your reservations for August 21-27, 2017. The motels and RV parks fill up quickly, so don't be left out: <http://www.worldkitemuseum.com/>.

The Lincoln City Fall Festival is always challenging, not knowing which way D River will flow. This year it went right through the flying field. The kites flyers did a wonderful job of flying in the ever-changing weather and field.

Northwest Art and Air Festival in Albany, OR, invited five couples to come fly kites after the hot air balloons lifted off. We put up ground displays, taught kids' kitemaking, and showcased many different types of kites in the air for the 50,000+ spectators who attended. Hugh and Lyn Hall, Rod and Cindy Thrall, Lindsey Johnson and Ronda Brewer, Phil and Barbara Burks, along with me and Diane made up the kites flying crew. It was a perfect mix of art, kites, hot-air balloons, and wonderful people.

As the weather turns stormy, it is time to head indoors. Make plans for these great events: OKR (Oregon Kitemaker's Retreat) in Rockaway Beach, OR, January 12-15 ([www.kitemakersretreat.com/](http://www.kitemakersretreat.com/)). Windless 2017 in Long Beach, WA, is January 21-22. Scott Weider will be the invited guest flyer, so you know it will be awesome ([www.worldkitemuseum.com/](http://www.worldkitemuseum.com/)).

If you are reading this and you are not an AKA member, why aren't you? AKA is a great way to connect with people who love to fly kites. If you are an AKA member could you help us out by getting a new member, or even paying for a membership for a friend or family member? Diane and I do this every year because we know AKA is being prudent with their budget, and could

use more members ([www.kite.org](http://www.kite.org)).

Now, go out and have some fun flying kites.

### Region 10: Northwest (AK-WA)

Pete Zweifel, Federal Way, WA  
206-718-3301  
or email [RD10@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD10@aka.kite.org)  
End of term: 2018



It is not an exaggeration to state that many families plan their annual vacation time to be able to attend Washington State International Kite Festival in Long Beach, WA. Once again, kiteflyers were not disappointed this year as the weeklong festival continues to be the marquee event of the year. If ever there was an event that you should make special allowances for, this is the one. Each day is planned with a certain theme, guaranteeing something for everyone.

Oregon's first beach resort community officially became the city of Seaside in 1899. The first ordinance passed by the Seaside city council was one regulating saloons. That first year, \$620 was collected in taxes and the city spent \$627. Population numbers neared 500, but summer brought an additional 5,000 to 10,000 visitors. A lumber mill, cannery, and the steady stream of visitors during the summer were the backbone of the city's early economy.

And so it should be that Oregon's vacation destination also serve as the backdrop for the AKA National Convention this last October. This once-a-year convention serves as a melting pot of some of the finest kite builders and flyers in the United States. A full list of all the award winners is available on the AKA website ([www.kite.org](http://www.kite.org)), and I'm proud to say a lot of them were from region 10. A job well done to all those individuals who participated in the many different categories; you are true artisans. I'm not sure who the author was, but someone once said that the only art we can create is that which authentically reflects who we are. Our soul is the material for all we create and artisan soul essence is far more important than talent.

The change of the seasons gives us time to reflect on the coming and going circumstances of our lives. That's why you can't be a true kiteflyer without winter, which is the season most conducive to the art of dormancy. This art requires an appreciation of semi-consciousness—that beautiful and necessary prelude to sleep and wellspring of ideas. May the fabric that you're flying be of sound quality and workmanship, and may the person holding that piece of fabric be of the same quality.

### Region 11: N. California (Northern CA-NV)

Tom McAlister, Richmond View, CA  
510-235-5483  
or email [RD11@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD11@aka.kite.org)  
End of term: 2018



The end of summer brings the Bay Area Sport Kite League's annual awards presentations, as well as their Multi-line Skills Clinic. Congratulations to this year's BASKL Champions:



*Berkeley Kite Wranglers flying in the ghost town of Bodie, California.*

Joanna Chen, Brian Setterberg, Aaron Champie, Steve Lewis, Ben Lummas, David Bernstein and Team AirZone.

In September, the Berkeley Kite Wrangler team traveled to the inaugural Eastern Sierra Kite Festival in Walker, CA. I joined Mike North, John Khan, Mark Quirmbach, and Kerry Kasagar for the trip and was glad I did. Walker is located just south of Coleville in the beautiful Antelope Valley on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. Though the weather was clear and beautiful for the entire weekend, the winds were on the light side. Saturday was filled with teaser winds that kept the team and their giant kites up and down most of the day. Sunday's winds were steady enough for the team to get several giant kites airborne. The sight drew ranchers and residents out of their homes to see our crazy kites.

On the Monday after the event, we traveled south to the Bodie Historic State Park. Bodie is a genuine California gold-mining ghost town that is preserved in an arrested state of decay. Our Walker host arranged with a park ranger to let us tour the stamp mill, the heart of this once-thriving mining town. We were also excited to be granted special permission to fly kites at the site. The tour was a highlight of the trip, and I encourage everyone to visit Bodie. If you do go, make sure to book a tour. You can find more into at: ([www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=509](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=509)).

In October, I made the trip to Seaside for our convention and was excited to join Jon Burkhardt's team of judges for the kitemaking competitions. Being part of Jon's team is always rewarding, and I enjoy the camaraderie and rigor of the judging process. It is a great way to meet fellow kitemakers and learn what inspires them. They, in turn, inspire me in my own creative endeavors.

Another highlight from Seaside was getting to meet Luca, John, and TK Barresi's newborn child. John grew up flying with us Berkeley, and it was meaningful for me to meet Luca and see John at the beginning of an exciting new chapter in their lives.

On the final night of convention, it was especially rewarding to see my friends Ken Conrad and Suzanne Sadow become recipients of our Lee Toy Award. Lee Toy's sister, Sunny Toy, had asked me to help shepherd Ken and Suzanne's nomination through the

nomination process, and I was thrilled to be part of it.

Ken and Suzanne perfectly represent a spirit of sharing and generosity toward others that was such a hallmark of Lee's life. They are always ready to lend a helping hand or words of encouragement to anyone who enters their circle. They represent the best of us as kiteflyers, and the best of us as human beings. To Ken and Suzanne I say, "Thank you for inspiring me to try to be a better person."

**Region 12: Southwest**  
(Southern CA-AZ-HI)  
Glen Rothstein, San Pedro, CA  
213-407-3515  
or email [RD12@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD12@aka.kite.org)  
End of term: 2018



The third Sunday of October brought close to 40 heavily-armed kiteflyers to Seal Beach, CA, to continue the tradition of an event that started 20 years ago. Besides all the color in the sky, we had enough children present to unload 12 pounds of candy during the three individual candy drops. Thanks to all who made the trek. I know what it's like to clean sand out of your gear and pump gas back into your vehicle.

December's indoor fly with the San Diego Kite Club will be Friday, December 9, so you will have plenty of time to practice for the New Year's Eve Fighter Kite Challenge at Tecolote Shores, CA. The next morning, grab your kites and head to Mariner's Point for a pot luck that will surely be another splendid tradition of the club. Speaking of the club, their new website can be accessed via [www.sandiegokiteclub.com](http://www.sandiegokiteclub.com).

And speaking of links, as our website continues to grow and refine, here's a nice little place to grab some insight on where kites fit into history – <http://kite.org/education/history-of-kites/>.

As we approach the New Year, you may, as I do, ponder where, when, and how many times you will have the opportunity to fly. I'm curious as to what else brings you the joy that we share. Do you have plans to connect with a school or youth organi-

zation and introduce them to kiting? How about displaying some of your favorites in a library, public mall or corporate lobby? Maybe you're helping a family with a kite birthday party? Have you ever asked an organization with an auditorium or gymnasium to barter your talents for some heavily sought after indoor practice time? If you have plans for these types of adventures and celebrations, I would love to hear from you. If any of these ideas are of interest and you would like assistance in piecing one (or seven) together, contact me. It would be my pleasure to help. The AKA has a great well of information to draw from, and I'm here to help you bring up the buckets.

I truly hope the New Year brings you much happiness and flying time.

**Region 13: International**  
(The rest of the world)  
Linda Sanders,  
Willunga, SA Australia  
+618-8556-2681  
or email [RD13@aka.kite.org](mailto:RD13@aka.kite.org)  
End of term: 2018



"Lucky" Region 13 kite festivals happen in exotic destinations.

**FRANCE** – The 10-day Dieppe International Kite Festival (September) marks end of European kite season. Sandrine Frébourg and organisers prepared full, daily programs of non-stop art, music, food, refreshments, and friendship. Kite artists



Decked-out in purple: Marla Miller, Linda and Kevin Sanders represent the AKA in Dieppe.

from 38 countries shared their styles. Saturday markets with freshly-baked macarons tempted us briefly, but kites ruled. Dieppe loves kites!

Locals eagerly await Sunday's kitefliers' parade of nations through their streets, cheering and laughing, wondering who will wear what. New Zealand dressed for the Maori Haka, Canada wore red and white, and one jolly group of purple people attracted masses of camera action, i.e. Marla Miller, Kevin Sanders, and yours truly, and why not!

French drivers accept September as "kite time," and local police on traffic duty have easy days. A flurry of excitement over an abandoned backpack on Wednesday prompted immediate army response, and when the oblivious owner returned, she was "escorted" away... Photo #10 but beyond that, only one day was rained out. The "naughty elves" amended the "aerobatiques" sign to produce "aquabatiques," since much of the sportkite field was awash for 24 hours.

The 2016 contest theme—Les Arts Premiers—covered indigenous, native, traditional, aboriginal, and folk arts. Trevor Reeves and Michael Alvarez (Australia), Olivier Reymond (Switzerland), Christian Kolz (Germany), Eli & Shula Shavit (Israel) and Karl & Sara Longbottom (UK) competed.

Jean Lamoureux (Canada) translated daily French-to-English briefings, adding commentary on the aerobatiques field. Bernard and Marie Fournière provided AKA tent translations for the curious public wondering "What is AKA?" Aim for this event if you enjoy everything French—wine, cheese, crusty bread, crepes, and the accent! The next one is in 2018.

**SCOTLAND** – Meet Kate Beattie, the Border Collie kite expert. She won't rest until



*The Mona Lisa by French kitemaker, Jean Paul Richon.*

those fallen kites are re-launched. I saw her in action in Dieppe, amazingly gentle, but persistent. She's an ideal kite companion for Andrew Beattie.

**CANADA** – It was August 19, 1942, during WWII, when the Allied Forces' "Operation Jubilee" occurred on France's Dieppe seafront. A New Brunswick city was later named "Dieppe." This year, Brigitte Bussièeres and Gary Mark (possibly firming up the Acadian / French friendship charter) remembered Canadian soldiers who died during that raid. With support from "Dieppe Capitale du Cerf-Volant," the Acadian city launched its first kite festival in 2001. Strong links were evident.

**AUSTRALIA** – Redcliffe KiteFest 2016 (Queensland) featured Robert Brasington (Tasmania), Michael Richards (Sydney), Kevin Sanders (South Australia), Jessica Kaixuan (China), Lyndall and Simon Chisnall (New Zealand), plus Malaysian guests. Phoenix Kite Collective showcased quadline kite routines. Riding jet skis on the water, a stunt-kite team from H2O Events wowed the crowds. Redcliffe KiteFest in 2017 will be MAMMOTH.

Sarina Beach (Queensland) held their inaugural Coconut Festival, featuring Robert Brasington, Kevin and Linda Sanders, and local families enjoying Blo-Kart rides, sand art featuring a fire-breathing dragon, and the ever-popular camel rides. Plans are under way for 2017, with more kites needed!

**INDIA** – Mehul Pathak's first trip to Europe "opened his skies." First, the Amy Johnson Kite weekend in Hull, UK, followed by Scheveningen in Netherlands gave many opportunities for new friends. "In India we fly single line kites. We don't have so much wind to learn quadline," Mehul said. But following a quick lesson from a European Rev champion, Mehul proudly achieved "how to take off, landing, break, turn," and hopes that quadline kiteflying could soon be popular in India.



*Harko Brown in full Maori costume.*

Until next time, less talk... more fly! ▼

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## Voices from the Vault

# Tom McAlister

By Patti Gibbons

Halfway through college at UC Berkeley in the early 1980s it dawned on Tom McAlister that maybe he should have majored in business rather than psychology. Although business sensibilities come naturally to him, in the end, his studies likely helped him understand his future customers better than a dollars-and-cents training path. The longtime kitemaker and itinerant kite merchant has made a living trusting his entrepreneurial instincts, and the skies of Berkeley are forever tattooed with colorful kites due, largely, to his vision.

McAlister traces his interest in kitemaking back to childhood where his curiosity was influenced by his stepfather's love of flight. Naturally skilled with his hands, Tom took to kitemaking quickly and developed a life-long interest. Later, as an adult, he landed a job apprenticing with an antique carousel restorer and continued making kites on the side. Watching his boss transform his hobby into a livelihood, McAlister remembers seeing an ordinary man with average skills succeed at business and thinking, "I should do that." With that realization, he began carving out more time for his own kite building and started Highline Kites.

In the 1980s, the City of Berkeley began cleaning up a derelict section of the waterfront and transformed its municipal trash dump into a park. In its early days, the Marina, later home to Cesar Chavez Park and the Berkeley Kite Festival, was just a five-mile-stretch of reclaimed green space. With steady Bay winds and a lovely view, McAlister saw a future for a park full of kites and approached the city to open a kite shop. On public land, a brick-and-mortar retail shop was not possible, and when he asked permission to set up a concession stand he was put off with a lukewarm "Maybe." Somewhat of a bootlegger, McAlister sold kites out of his Honda Civic hatchback for three years before he re-approached the city with his business plan. The second time around, the city council asked him to submit a formal proposal and granted him a concession license. Light years ahead of today's food truck movement, for three decades he has operated on wheels, and Highline Kites is now an eighteen-foot-long mobile kite store—impressively, one that happens to be solar powered. Focusing on service and quality, McAlister drives to the Berkeley Marina and greets his loyal customers, and increasingly their grown children and sometimes even grandchildren. Creating traditions and building a scene, McAlister helped kiteflying become ubiquitous at the park.



Always eager to share kites with others, when McAlister isn't helping customers find the perfect kite, he might be teaching kitemaking classes at Fort Worden, lecturing about kite history at the Washington State International Kite Festival, or organizing the very popular Berkeley Kite Festival. Founding the festival in 1986, the annual two-day event is a high point in his year where he shares the magic of kiting with thousands of die-hard flyers and enamored newcomers. Strongly believing the event belongs to the community, McAlister works tirelessly to organize and promote the festival and keep it admission-free. For him, the real magic happens when people crossover from volunteering and develop a personal stake in the festival's success. Creating an army of kiting devotees supports the sport and grows the community of flyers.

Making connections outside of kiting circles, Hollywood filmmakers have approached McAlister for his kiting expertise. He was a prop consultant on Kevin Costner's *Waterworld*, where he built a model of a self-assembling Cody kite that Costner's character shot from a cannon to make a split-second getaway. While the movie was pelted by rotten tomatoes, the scene endures as a kiteflyer's favorite. A few years later, in the mid-2000s, when filmmakers began adapting the acclaimed book *The Kite Runner* into a movie, they hired McAlister to teach a legion of extras how to fly fighter kites for flight scenes filmed stateside. Whether on the big screen or out in the big open sky, McAlister's kite knowledge brings the joys of kiteflying to many. ▼

*Voices from the Vault* articles are based on interviews recorded for the World Kite Museum's Oral History Project. Want to share your story? Please contact the World Kite Museum at [info@worldkitemuseum.com](mailto:info@worldkitemuseum.com).

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