

AKA's 43rd Annual AKA Convention

Ocean City, Maryland, October 11-16, 2021

Princess Royale Hotel, 9100 Coastal Highway

Ocean City, MD

It's hard to believe how much has happened in the last year and yet, here we are again planning our 43rd Annual Convention in Ocean City. So much has changed; so much is the same. While the pandemic is still a concern, it seems less threatening this year and there is a groundswell of excitement to get together again and fly our kites.

Our planning for the cancelled 2020 Convention was driven to a large degree by members asking for changes to the Convention format. Some requested specific changes but many simply said, "Let's try something different." Some of the changes listed below were in the planning for last year, but others are new for 2021. One big change this year is that almost all our events will happen around the host hotel, The Princess Royale. Many fliers will park their cars on Monday and not need to drive it for the rest of the week! Walk from your room to the beach and fly.

As many of you know, the Kitemakers Committee and the Sport Kite Committee have new members and are offering lots of new ideas for us to try at this year's Convention. Both committees are focused on providing challenging competitions for those who like to compete but are also expanding the activities that are less about competition and more about the joy of sharing kitemaking with friends. The great thing about these changes is that they are just fun experiments. If we like them, we can continue to use them and if not, we can do something else in future years. Here are some of the things for you to look forward to:

- All Convention meetings, indoor flying, and other activities will happen in our host hotel, The Princess Royale.
- Most outdoor flying will happen on the beach directly in front of the hotel.
- Outdoor sport kite competitions will be held on a wider beach at 511 Boardwalk.
- Sport kite free flying will be on the Princess Royale beach with the other kites.
- Kitebuilding competitions have been changed to encourage more participation.
- There's more emphasis on free flying time, celebrating the art of kiting.
- We have planned new workshops, great food, and a shorter Awards Banquet.

Every morning, there will be an amazing choice of workshops held in four rooms for two sessions: 9:00-10:15 and 10:30-11:45. We will also offer optional afternoon workshops that will be held ONLY if the weather prevents us from flying outside. The times and locations of these workshops will be posted each morning in the lobby of the hotel. The sewing workshop room will be open all day, rain or shine.

We are lucky to have such a generous community of artists who are volunteering time to share their kite passion with Convention attendees. All workshops are free to registered attendees only. Most classes do not require any materials, while others offer the option to buy materials at the workshop. (If you want to take a sewing workshop, please note that on your registration.) The list below is subject to change, and an actual

schedule (plus materials list) will be published online no later than September 1, 2021. Go to www.kite.org for more details.

Last but not least, every afternoon we're planning to do lots of flying. In addition to the competitions and mass-ascensions, there will be space for show kites and demos. The public will be invited to enjoy the celebration. The Convention Committee has worked hard for the last year to make all this happen, and I am honored to have had the time to work with them. I invite you to come join us. Let's celebrate our 43rd Grand National Convention by simply having fun in the sand and sun.

Phillip E. R. Whitaker
Convention Committee Chairman

Register today at: <https://members.kite.org/event-4350932>

For Princess Royale Hotel reservations: 800-476-9253 (Discount code #6222)

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM

Is the Convention going to happen? The highest priority in making this decision will be the health and safety of all parties concerned. This notice is being written in mid-June and the trends are positive for moving forward. We will be monitoring the recommendations from the CDC and the Maryland health department and base our decisions on their guidelines. At present, it seems possible the Convention will be able to occur in October, but only if we continue to organize for it now. At the time of this writing the answer to this question is a resounding YES!

When is a final decision going to be made? The AKA contract with the hotel allows us to cancel the event prior to August 15 for a minimal fee. In addition to health and safety issues, the decision will also be made based on how many people register. This year the early-bird registration deadline has been changed to August 1, 2021. Based on the number of paid registrants at that time, the Convention Committee will prepare a report for the Board of Directors' meeting on August 3, 2021, and the Board will decide if the Convention will be held or cancelled. Email notice will then be sent to all registrants.

Will there be a refund if the event is cancelled due to the coronavirus? If the AKA cancels the Convention, all registration fees will be refunded 100%. Separately, if individuals cancel their own registrations for any reason prior to August 12, 2021, then their registration fees will be refunded 100%. From August 13-September 12, 2021, persons cancelling their registrations will receive a 50% refund. After September 12, 2021, there are no refunds for cancellations. (Please note that the AKA has no control over hotel reservations and/or refund policies.)

Can I register now and pay later? Yes. You can register for the Convention today and pay any time before August 1, 2021 to receive the early-bird discount. Unpaid

registrations will automatically be suspended after August 1 and will need to be renewed at the non-discounted registration rate.

BRIEF CONVENTION SCHEDULE (Subject to change)

Monday evening, October 11: Welcome Reception

Tuesday, October 12: Kite Art Exhibit opens, Annual Business Meeting at 7 pm

Wednesday, October 13: Bag raffle opens, evening: Indoor Kite Competition

Thursday, October 14: Activities continue

Friday, October 15: Evening Banquet, Great Kite Auction

Saturday, October 16: Evening Awards Banquet, activities conclude.

Mass Ascensions

Mass ascensions will be held every day on the beach from 1 to 2 pm at the Princess Royale Hotel featuring kites of similar types. The current schedule is

Tuesday	Rokakkus & Fighters
Wednesday	Cellular & Dimensional Kites
Thursday	Soft & Flexible Kites
Friday	Sport Kites
Saturday	Deltas and Delta Derivatives

Special Kite Exhibitions

Tuesday - 2:00-3:00 - Memorial Fly - All White Kites

Tuesday - 3:00-4:00 - Kite Making Challenge - Yoshizum Fish Kite

Tuesday - 4:00-5:00 - Red, White and Blue Display (kites, line laundry, banners, etc.)

Wednesday - 2:00-3:00 - Kites Through the Years - Kites of the 60's

Wednesday - 3:00-4:00 - Kite Making Challenge - Three-Stick Kites

Wednesday - 4:00-5:00 - Kites with Moving Parts

Thursday - 2:00-3:00 - Kites Through the Years-Kites of the 70's

Thursday - 3:00-4:00 - Kite Making Challenge - Patchwork Kites

Thursday - 4:00-5:00 - Arches and Trains

Friday - 2:00-3:00 - Kites Through the Years-Kites of the 80's

Friday - 3:00-4:00 - Kite Making Challenge - Ground Display and "Flock of Birds"

Friday - 4:00-5:00 - Workshop Kites - Any Kite made in a workshop setting

Saturday - 2:00-3:00 - Kites Through the Years-Kites of the 90's

Saturday - 3:00-4:00 - People's Choice Entry Open Fly

Saturday - 4:00-5:00 - Eddy - Trash Bag - Paper Bag Sled Kites

Competitions

Tuesday, October 12

- Sport Kite Competition begins
- Fighter Kite competition begins

Wednesday, October 13

- Kitemakers' Competition begins
- Sport Kite Competition begins
- Fighter Kite competition continues

Thursday, October 14

- All competitions continue

KITEMAKERS COMPETITION

As the Co-Chairs of this year's AKA Kitemaking Committee, Jose Sainz and I are proposing several radical ideas. Our goal, and that of the committee, is to encourage more member participation in kitemaking and flying activities at the AKA National Convention. We would like to make the Grand Nationals a celebration of kiteflying culture in America. Kitemakers of all levels and skills will have the opportunity to share and learn from others in the spirit of cooperation. This will be a complete departure from the past and, hopefully, a blueprint for future Conventions.

The biggest change: every field competition will be judged by the competitors themselves. Fliers will rank the kites being flown in their category and the highest ranked kite will win the category.

For example, if there are six fliers in the Delta category, they will gather on the competition field at the allotted time. Each will fly his/her delta and compare it to the others in the sky. If conditions allow, fliers will have a chance to fly another's kite, examine the construction, and discuss related issues. Then each of the six fliers will be given a scorecard and they will rank the deltas 1-5. The votes will be tallied on the field and winners declared. Ideally, this would take about 30 minutes and then a kitemaker could compete in the next category, where the process will be repeated.

Our plan is to complete the individual category competitions in one day. For the Grand Champion competition, all kites winning first place in the various categories will have the opportunity to fly their kites during an allotted time on one afternoon. The Grand Champion will be chosen by the members of the Kitemakers Committee, who will vote using the ranking system previously described. The People's Choice awards will be held as in previous years and awarded at the Saturday night banquet.

The second significant change is that kite categories having less than three competitors will be eliminated as a unique category for this year. In these cases, "dissimilar" kites may be flown with others in order to have a competitive category.

Because of this, the number of competitive kite categories will be reduced to six this year. They will be:

- Flat kites
- Bowed kites
- Cellular and Dimensional kites
- Soft and Flexible kites
- Multiline Sport kites
- Traditional Material kites

Additionally, the committee may award the following categories from the week's activities:

- Novice kitemaker of the year
- Most Innovative kite
- Best flying kite
- Best visual appeal
- Best structural design
- Best overall craftsmanship

If you have been a judge at past competitions and were unable to compete with your kites, I encourage you to bring those kites to participate this year. If you were unable to travel to a particular Convention and have a kite that you built that year, bring it this year! Remember, this is a celebration of AKA kiteflying culture; let's make it a special one.

As we attempt to streamline the competitive aspect of the Convention, we also want to encourage more field participation by all Convention attendees. Certainly, there will be the scheduled mass ascensions that have been so popular, but I think it's also time to celebrate the AKA's history. After the mass ascension on Tuesday, let's add time for "kites of the 1980s" on Wednesday, "kites of the 1990s," and so forth. On Saturday, let's add a mass ascension for members to fly previous competition winners and Grand Champions. And don't forget: some members have offered "challenges" (see Schedule) to test your kitemaking skills. These are not competitions, but rather a chance to share ideas and inspire one another. This is going to be a fun week!

We are in a trying time as we work our way through the coronavirus outbreak, and I hope that by October, some normalcy will have returned and we will be ready to really celebrate our club and our passion. Jose and I, along with the Committee, will work until then to design a competition that allows maximum participation, recognition, and exposure. We will post specifics prior to the Convention using social media, the AKA website, and word-of-mouth. That said, the final schedule and details will be dependent on the number of competitors and the weather. We will have a workshop on Tuesday morning, October 12, to review these issues on-site, and to set the schedule for the week. Similarly, we'll have another workshop at the end of the week to decide what we want to do for 2022.

We will use the judgment gained from over 30 years of participation and observation to ensure every kite entered will be part of the competition. This is your chance to be both a competitor and a judge! I invite everyone to make a kite (more than one, really) and bring it to the Convention to participate in this year's very special competitions. It's time to have fun again!

Scott Skinner

AKA Kitemakers Committee: Jose Sainz, Scott Skinner, Pete Dolphin, Ron Gibian, Ali Fujino, Kathy Goodwind, Blake Pelton

SPORT KITE COMPETITIONS AND DEMONSTRATIONS

On behalf of your 2021 Sport Kite Committee, we are pleased to provide this update for the anticipated sport kiting activities to be hosted at the 2021 AKA Convention. As you may be aware, we conducted a sport kite survey of our AKA membership in April 2021. The purpose of this survey was to inquire about attendance with the desire to fly sport kites for recreation, as part of demonstrations, and/or in competition events at this year's Convention. We received sufficient responses to host outdoor sport kite demonstrations, several outdoor sport competition events, and the two indoor sport kite competition events. The following provides an overview of what we anticipate hosting at this year's convention, along with the associated assumptions. The seven sport kite competition events we anticipate hosting at this year's convention are:

Outdoor Sport Kite Competition Events:

- Individual Dual-line Precision (Run as an Open Class for all skill classes)
- Individual Dual-line Ballet (Run as an Open Class for all skill classes)
- Individual Multi-line Precision (Run as an Open Class for all skill classes)
- Individual Multi-line Ballet (Run as an Open Class for all skill classes)
- Open Individual Outdoor Unlimited

Indoor Sport Kite Competition Events

- Open Individual Indoor Single-line
- Open Individual Indoor Unlimited

As noted, we will be running the four outdoor individual sport kite competition events as Open class, where all skill classes for each event will compete together as one skill class. The other three sport kite events already exist as Open events.

Due to the unfortunate impacts from COVID-19, most of our AKA Regions were restricted from hosting sport kite competitions for this AKA competition year. As a result of these restrictions, we suspended the sport kite pre-qualification requirements to compete at this year's Convention. If you register for the AKA 2021 Convention, you will be able to compete in the anticipated sport kite competition events listed above.

The above seven sport kite competition events are subject to change based on the actual registration numbers for this year's Convention. When you register, be sure to check the question saying you want to fly sport kites in competition and/or

demonstrations. If you check that question, you will be contacted later to provide a list of those events in which you wish to compete. Sport kite competition events with less than three registered sport kite flyers will not be held. As part of the registration process, we will also ask for volunteers to assist with running the sport kite activities for this year's Convention.

The outdoor sport kite competition events are anticipated to be hosted at the beach east of the Kite Loft, located at 511 Boardwalk. Based on our beach flying area evaluation, the sport kite competition flying area will satisfy the Sport Kite Rule Book size requirements for the individual dual-line and individual multi-line sport kite competition events. The outdoor sport kite competition flying area may be adjusted in size based on the actual beach conditions at the time of this year's Convention.

The indoor sport kite competition will be hosted in the evening within the Princess Royale Resort located at 9100 Coastal Highway. The outdoor sport kite demonstrations will be hosted at the beach to the east of the Resort.

The sport kite competition results and the associated awards will be presented to the successful sport kite flyers at the completion of the sport kite competition for that day. This is a positive and requested change from past AKA conventions. The anticipated dates for the outdoor and indoor sport kite competitions will be announced with the Convention schedule.

We will follow the current International Sport Kiting Rules. The adjustments listed above are related to COVID-19 and the sport kite competition locations, which are specific to this year's convention.

We look forward to your registration and attendance at our convention in October 2021.

Doug Stout

2021 Sport Kite Committee: Doug Stout, Chair, Paul Dugard, Will Smoot, and Mike Stuligross

CONVENTION WORKSHOPS

Jeff Bland, MAKE AN AEROPOD

The AKA Flight Technologies (FliTech) Committee, in partnership with NASA's AEROKATS and ROVER Education Network (AREN), will sponsor an Aeropod instrument platform workshop. Participants will assemble "MonoCams" and learn to prepare, fly, and retrieve images from these novel devices. Two sessions are planned: one early in the week for assembly, and one a few days later to share your collective aerial perspectives of a fun week of kite flying!

Ronda Brewer, DEMYSTIFYING KNOTS

Throughout the ages, people and animals have used knots and knotting techniques to give more form and function to their lives. Not only have they discovered the importance of the different applications of various knots, but what line or rope to use as

well. In this class, we will discuss the different aspects of knot assembly—parts, names, techniques, and usages. We will then have a hands-on session with multiple projects to practice.

Jon Burkhardt, WHY WON'T MY #@*%&! KITE FLY?

Most of us have built kites that struggle or utterly fail to stay aloft. What's wrong with these beasts? Some of them might deserve just one more chance before they meet the trashcan, while others, well...? Fixes could range from simple tweaks to total redesign and reconstruction. Share your stories and share your solutions. Come to participate. Bring a kite that's frustrating you; we'll have time to talk about some of them. Show me yours and I'll show you mine. Let's have some fun.

Paul Dugard, BUBBLES, BUBBLES

Learn how to make your own "Big and Large" Bubble Solution. Bubble machines, wands, and loops will be on display. All materials for this workshop will be provided including those needed to make a loop and wand to take with you. This will be a hands-on bubble workshop with minimum time spent on lecture. Safety and proper use of bubbles explained. There will be group testing after class. No prior experience required.

Lindsey Johnson: ADVANCEMENTS IN 3D PRINTING

At previous Conventions, Lindsey introduced the kiteworld to 3D printing and its many applications in kite building. This class will start with the basics of the technology then move into exploring the changes of the last few years. Printers are now cheaper to buy, and the materials and processes have advanced in exciting ways. There are more kite people than ever using 3D printers and the body of expanding knowledge will be explored. If you're into 3D printing or are curious, you won't want to miss this class.

Chuck Jones, MAKE AND TAKE FIGHTER KITE

Chuck is well known for building kites with traditional materials. This year he will lead workshop participants in making fighter kites using all biodegradable materials. They fly great indoors, or in light wind outdoors.

Paul LaMasters, TUNING YOUR QUAD BRIDLE

If you're curious about tuning and want to know more, this class is for you. Do you need help to correctly install a replacement bridle? Wonder what knots to use? Or how different tuning techniques affect flight? Here's your chance to learn by example working with a partner. Share my passion!

Mike Mosman, WHAT'S IN YOUR KITE BAG/TOOLBOX?

Mike will bring his kite bag and toolboxes to this workshop and show those the items he finds essential or handy, and then ask the participants to show or describe their favorite

kite bits and gadgets. It should be very interactive and, possibly, you'll get a peek at some "trade secrets."

Jose Sainz and Scott Skinner, KITEMAKERS' COMPETITION

There are lots of changes in this year's kitemakers' competition. One workshop early in the week will discuss those changes and answer questions. A second workshop at the end of the week will be an opportunity to discuss how the week went and what we might do in the future.

Phillip Whitaker, A FIRST TIMER'S GUIDE TO THE CONVENTION

Is this your first AKA Convention? This workshop is an opportunity to meet other kitefliers and hear ways to get the most from the convention experience.

Sewing Workshops: BRING YOUR OWN SEWING MACHINE

The last few years the AKA convention has held hands-on sewing workshops; they were a big success. This year we've expanded the offering of classes and the time to sew. A dedicated room for sewing machines will be available in the mornings for classes and in the afternoons for individuals to work on their own. When not in use, the room will be locked for security.

In addition to their machines, attendees should plan to bring accessory tools such as scissors, straightedge, thread, etc. Most sewing projects will require pre-purchase materials. To facilitate this, members must check the box on the Convention registration form indicating their desire to take one or more sewing classes. If you check this box, by mid-August you will receive an email with a list of materials and the costs (if any) related to each sewing class. Sewing classes are limited in size and registrants will have a reserved spot based on the order of the responses in August. If you have questions regarding sewing classes, you may email us at aka@aka.kite.org. All members are welcome to attend these classes if they wish to audit the class without a sewing machine.

Mike Dertien and Craig Rodgers, AKA CONVENTION ARCH KITE

Let's build the 2021 AKA Convention arch and fly it on Saturday! Not a kite builder? No problem. Mike and Craig are teaching classes in kitemaking using the arch panel format so you can join in the fun! Four sessions will cover all you need to know to make a kite arch panel. This is also the very basic knowledge needed to sew a kite and a great time for beginners to see if kitemaking is for them. All kitemakers will be welcome to drop in and make custom panels for this community project. The finished arch will be sold in the auction on Friday night with the high bidder taking it home after Saturday's flight!

Charlie Dunton, DUNTON-TAYLOR BOX DELTA

Do you have a kite in your bag that sets up in seconds, is fun to fly, can be flown by anyone, and flies in winds from 0 to 20+ mph? This workshop is your opportunity to

build the Dunton-Taylor Box Delta. If you can sew straight and zigzag stitches, this 31-inch-tall ripstop nylon kite can be built in less than six hours at a cost of about \$75. Bring your sewing machine and let's fill the sky at Ocean City with a mass ascension of handmade Dunton-Taylor kites.

(This is a partial list of the workshops being offered at this year's Convention. For a variety of reasons, workshops may change, be canceled, or replaced without notice. Schedule information will be available online at www.kite.org after September 1, 2021.)

Would you like to sponsor Convention activities or events? Please email the AKA office at aka@aka.kite.org. We would like to thank the following sponsors for their early donations to the 2021 Convention:

Pete Dolphin, Ron Gibian, Kathy Goodwind, Mike Klaiber, Shelby Klaiber, Jay Knerr, Ted Manekin, Maryland Kite Society, Ron Miller, Marla Miller, Mike Mosman, Sherman Myers, Theresa Norelius, Mark Quirmach, Jose Sainz, Lee Sedgwick, Scott Skinner, Will Smoot, South Jersey Kite Flyers, Washington Kite Association, Scott Weider, and Wisconsin Kites.

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