

Spring 2012  
Volume 34 Issue 1



# *Kiting*

The Journal of the American Kitefliers Association

## India's satyagraha skies



gujarat  
belgaum  
mangalore  
nicholas chonor kaps india  
ahmedabad kite market  
the pensils of manjha  
indian ladies  
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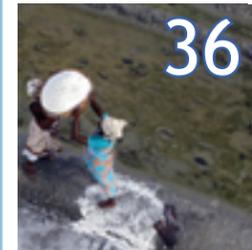
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- > World Sport Kite Championship

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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.

# THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Greetings from the Kite Trade Association International convention in sunny and warm Las Vegas, where retailers make the tough decisions about which products to stock for the upcoming year and manufacturers offer new kites and accessories along with great deals that tempt the stores to try new products and place large orders. The AKA always receives a great welcome as we provide the connection to end users, and an opportunity for Merchant Members to receive a listing in *Kiting* and on the website in exchange for a 10% discount to you, our members. This discount represents a huge benefit to members. Serious kites often report that savings easily exceed the \$40 spent on yearly dues. Are you taking advantage of these savings? If your local retailer is not a Member Merchant, and does not offer this discount, please take the time to point out the benefits both to them and to you.

Are you ready for National Kite Month? Advertise with the new poster, hang it in your workplace to interest your co-workers, and promote your local events. Prizes are back! Check page 26 for details. It's not just the USA, or North America, it is every nation. Let's celebrate internationally.

What are you doing the first week in October? Come have fun and fly kites in Enid! Registration fee will be \$125 or less; hotel rates very reasonable; great fields; wide open spaces; and a chance to visit a new section of the country. Convention is partly about competition, but mostly about connecting with other kites. Break out the cowboy hat, dust off your boots. Complete details will be available in June. Reserve that vacation time now!

One of the tasks of your Board of Directors in the upcoming year is to think about how to take the AKA from its current structure into the future with the upcoming emphasis on technology. Do we make *Kiting* available through e-book readers? How do we maintain and improve our Internet presence? Our current website has a wealth of information, but many members never even visit the website. Have you explored the

website? Do you know how to log in or upload pictures? Is the website of value to you? Volunteer hours are precious and limited. How do we channel that time into projects that give the most benefit to our members?

Our main source of income is membership dues, and then the annual auction. Our main expenses are the contracted cost of our executive director, the printing and production of *Kiting*, and the insurance policy that allows us to offer sanctioning. Which of those are critical to our existence? Is there a way to survive without an executive director? How could we generate funds without an auction? Could local events survive without sanctioning? Should the board be reorganized and downsized? What should the responsibilities of the regional directors be? Should competition be drastically revamped to consolidate and simplify categories both in sport kites and kitemakers?

Personally, I would love to hear your open, honest thoughts. No finger pointing, no whining, just an exchange of ideas. E-mail, call or post to the forum. Contact your regional director. Is this association worth enough to you to fight for its continued existence?

Time to fly!



Barbara Meyer

## EDITOR'S EXTRA

You probably haven't noticed it yet, only being on page 3, but this issue looks a little different. As we periodically do, we

recently reviewed our printing needs, and decided to switch to a new printer. That move is going to save us about \$2400 annually, and let us print every single page in full color. And a couple times a year, we'll be able to expand the magazine from 52 to 56 pages to bring you even more kiteflying from around the world.

This issue focuses on the world's second most populous nation, a place where every January 14 millions of people gather on terraces and rooftops to fly kites. Some folks will gripe that this is the American Kitefliers Association, and India isn't America. My response is that there are many AKA members in India, and that several American kites as well as Region 13 members attended recent festivals in India. Also, the mission of the AKA is to educate the public in the art, history, technology, and practice of building and flying kites, and we'd hardly be true to that mission if *Kiting* ignored everything that wasn't the USA. We all share the same sky.



Phil Broder

# GUATEMALA'S GIANTS

Travel Blogger *Kevin Revolinski*  
Spends All Saints' Day  
Flying Barriletes Gigantes

Crowds cheer as giant colorful homemade kites fill the skies competing to catch the sun. Bright orange and yellow flower petals cover the earth as if the previous night's rain had magically fallen as blossoms. It might be an unlikely sight in a cemetery, but this is el Día de Todos los Santos, All Saints' Day, a holiday that celebrates family and remembers departed loved ones. Every November 1 the tiny town of Santiago Sacatepequez, near Guatemala's capital city, follows a tradition over 100 years old while tourists come from far and near to sit atop the graves in the cemetery and watch. Some kites are over six meters in diameter, and teams of as many as a dozen men work to get them airborne. And when they are successful it is truly a sight to behold.

Taking a local bus from Guatemala City, I went a day early to watch preparations. In the open market, where days before there was only the healthy rainbow of fresh produce, now there were heaps of glowing marigold buds and other bright

flowers for sale for the festival. I followed the road up to the cemetery and found many people at work putting down fresh coats of pastel-colored paints on the tombs and headstones, using large hoes to shore up the tired mounds of the humbler graves, and spreading out bright, golden blankets of fresh flower blossoms.

I walked to the end of the center path and looked out over the valley beyond. The cemetery sat at the top of a great hill and all the squares of cornfields lay across the verdant slopes

like a patchwork quilt beneath the modest mountains. The sky was gray and cold, and the wind that swept among the headstones was ideal for kite flying, the kind of wind that one hears in old westerns with the low whistle as it slipped through the trees and corn tassels and over the colonial-style wall that enclosed the blessed earth. The wind was big, not just in terms of speed or force, but in the feeling of insignificance it created in the observer.

I asked around for someone who was flying one of the big kites the next day and a man in the cemetery gave me a name and address.

Marco Antonio was about fifty years old, five foot two, with black hair going gray and a moustache. He welcomed me into his dining room where he had cleared out all the furniture, and went to the corner to unroll the kite. Composed of circling patterns of colored triangles, the four-meter kite nearly filled the room. He got down on his knees to show me how it was made. The big ones, he told me, take about a month to construct. They were made from small pieces of tissue paper glued together with a special homemade flour-and-water glue, and reinforced from behind with larger sheets of white tissue or sometimes newspaper. Work begins with a small round piece of cardboard to which the first circle of papers is applied, and then the kite expands in concentric bands. It took Marco Antonio five full days to finish his. I asked him what the hardest part was. "It hurts the knees," he replied sheepishly.

He and his family have been making kites for 40 years, the tradition in the village is over 100 years old. Nowadays there are prizes for design and for length of flight. I admired his handiwork and he shrugged off the praise with a smile. He invited me back the next day to help attach the frame and put the final touches on the kite.

Early the next morning his house was a whirlwind of activity. While the men prepared the kite, the women were making *fiambre*, a traditional dish made every year for this holiday. *Fiambre* is a sort of cold meat salad, and though there are various recipes, the dish generally contains every kind of meat available at the local butcher: ham, bacon, the range of sausages from *longaniza* to hot dogs to chorizo, beef cubes, beef tongue, and any variations on pork products that haven't gotten in to begin with. Then a variety of vegetables, hard boiled eggs, and cubes of cheese. In the end a sort of vinaigrette is swirled into the mix and it is ready to serve. I had had it the night before at a local *comedor*.

All cousins, brothers, uncles, and fathers and sons had gathered for the last stage outside. Marco Antonio narrated for me as he went. The frame is made of eight long canes that must be cut in a full moon "so they will be strong," he told me, and then they are laid out for at least three months to dry so that they are lighter. They laid the four-meter canes in a compass pattern and Marco Antonio bound them together at the center with a rope made locally from maguey. He indicated two massive balls of it, like yarn for saber-toothed tiger kittens. One to two kilometers of it was required for the bigger kites. The rope was slightly thicker than my finger.

The frame was tied up with a line run around the points of the canes, and then the kite was attached by curling its round edges over the circling rope and then pasting the kite fabric to itself. They added two layers of colored fringes to the entire edge and then attached a long tail fashioned from old clothing scraps. Then smaller canes with small tissue flags were attached to four of the top canes, jutting out like the crown of the Statue of Liberty.

The kites are still thought by some to be a way of com-

municating with the dead, Marco Antonio told me. Messages written on papers are attached to the kite rope and then slid up to the skies, a sort of spiritual telegram. He just shrugged off the more mythical elements of the event. He laughed, "It is only for fun now." His own children were learning and no doubt already could direct the project on their own. But for now, he still played supervisor and all eyes turned to him when it came time to attach the rope to the giant frame. Marco Antonio carefully tied the loose end of one of the giant balls of rope to a rope triangle he had fastened to the frame through holes in the kite, and we were ready for flight.



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When all was finished, the men were called to the patio for lunch. We all sat around a row of mismatched tables and then the mothers brought out large bowls of fiambre. It is an intimidating dish for people who like to look at their food before putting it in their mouth, and definitely an acquired taste. I worked hard to acquire it without much success.

There are clubs and groups of friends that

participate in the kite flying every year. Marco Antonio's team was strictly family and so I felt extremely honored when they had handed me pieces to put in place, and later when we paraded through the cobblestone streets, the kite held above our heads, shouting directions and warnings as the road narrowed or light poles or awnings thrust out to tear the fabric.

We marched through the uneven streets, where crowds of locals and tourists lined the streets shopping for small kites or enjoying the sudden plethora of savory street food. Smoke drifted through the air replete with the smell of grilled meat and roasting corn.

At the top of the hill the cemetery had been transformed. People wandered the grounds and some even picnicked or looked on from atop tombs. Along one wall of the cemetery massive decorative kites over twelve meters tall were propped up, exhibiting complex designs, political messages, Maya figures in tissue paper.

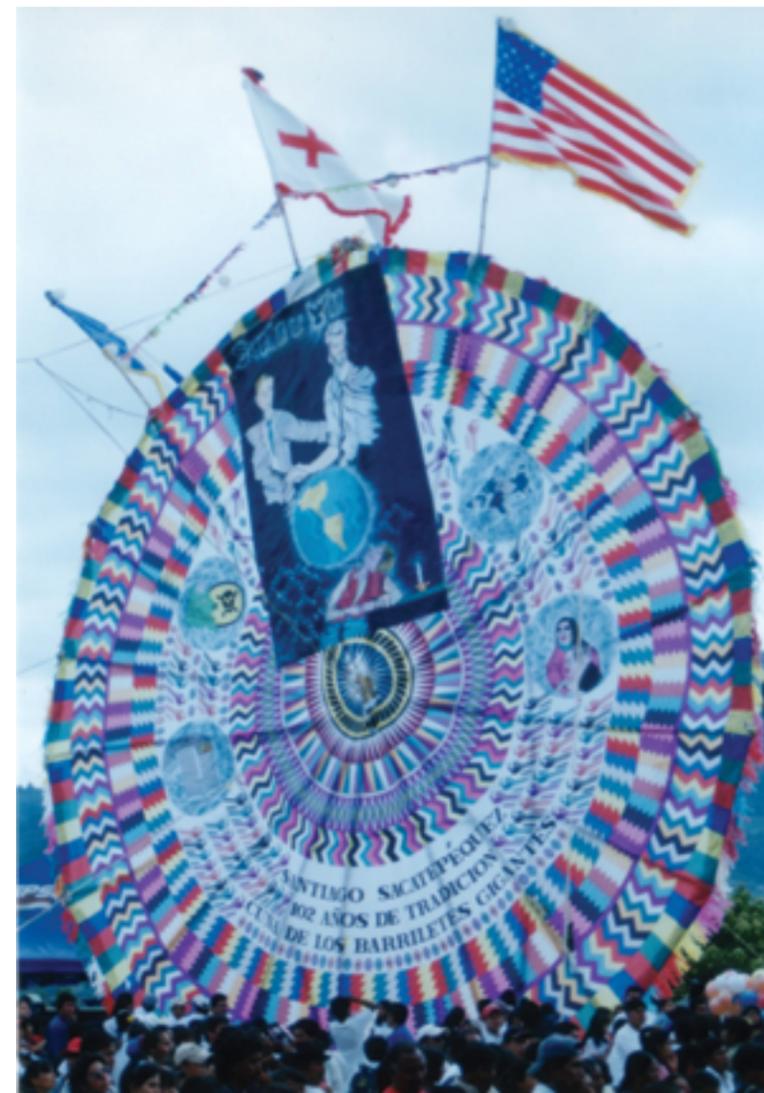
The winds were low, leaving us apprehensive, but the group was not to be discouraged. They tried repeatedly without success. It took nearly a dozen people to launch a kite of this size. They'd line up across the graves in three or four groups of two or three people. The first group held the kite erect until the signal. The second group would take hold of the rope and run while the first group kept the kite upright until it slipped up into the air. Once it was up, the second group released it to the third group who then also ran with it, attempting to raise it yet further into the sky. At this point if it hadn't plummeted out of the sky already, the fourth group took control and combined pulling and releasing techniques to work the monster kite toward the clouds. All this activity of course was done across the dearly departed.

When the winds failed to lift the kites, the beautiful creations and their jutting flags became whirling death stars falling from the heavens, and everyone ran laughing for cover. Occasionally, someone got nicked and blood was drawn but at least in the time that I was there no one lost an eye or anything.

A couple of kites had managed to reach the stronger winds up high, but our group was repeatedly retrieving crash landings. About three hours later, however, magic took hold. We all

stood mesmerized as Marco Antonio, now alone with the rope of the fourth group, worked the line back and forth as the circular rainbow rustled into a partly cloudy sky. Whenever the sun broke through, the kite colors took fire.

There were cheers all around and when it seemed certain the kite had the wind for good, Marco Antonio passed the line to others. Some time later he called my name. Others took it up in a chant. I stepped nervously to the plate. What if the kite took a nose dive when I was on the line? They cheered me on as I tried to imitate their method. Many shouted instructions, some unintelligible, others contradictory, so it was with some amount of relief that I relinquished the line to the next person. But that short moment at the end of that line, feeling the firm handshake of the wind, was magical. ☒



## FLORIDA'S TREASURE BY LAURA BERG

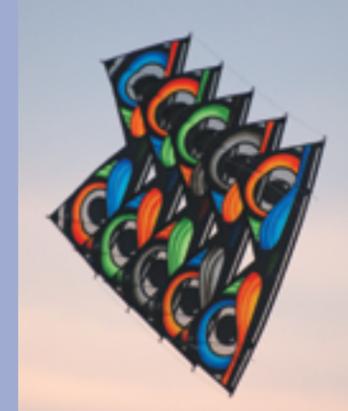
What do you get with a first time sponsor and a handful of volunteers with a limited budget in the middle of January? You get the Treasure Island Kite Festival and Competition. You also get hundreds of fliers filling the sky with spectacular kites and a wonderful and enthusiastic crowd of spectators enjoying a great weekend of kiting.

Joe Fala of Windworks stepped in as sponsor and made it possible for the T. I. Fest to enjoy its 15<sup>th</sup> year. With the help of Robbie Boerth from the Eastern League and the members of the Treasure Island Sport Kite Klub everything came together.

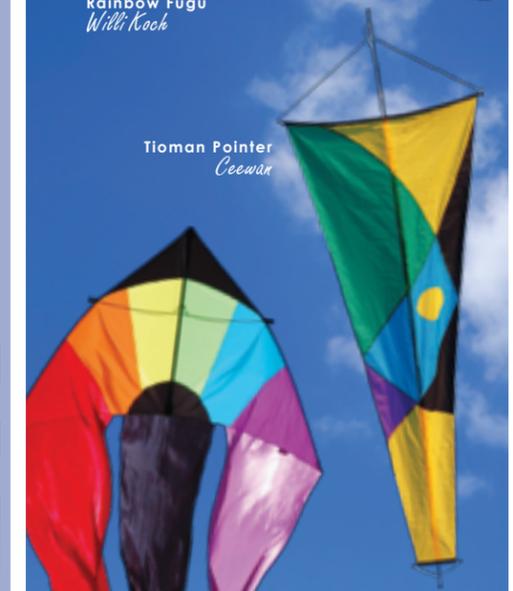


The Eastern League competition impressed the crowd with their skillful routines while the Rev folks wowed them with their amazing feats both rehearsed and improvised. Candy drops and a children's rok battle kept the kids smiling and the single lines small, large and really really large were a feast for the eyes.

A post on the festival's facebook page really summed it up for me. "First timer. Brought my girls and they loved it. Had a good time flying kite with them. I was amazed at the skill and talent that everyone has and everyone was very helpful and so nice to us. Thanks for a great weekend." ☒



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# GARDENING WITH WIND



Dutchman Robert Valkenburgh Cultivates The Breeze To Grow A Sonic Landscape

Aeolian, or windgardens, as they are more often called, are a relatively new phenomenon in the world of kites. The very first of these gardens was established at the 1996 International Kite Festival of Dieppe, France. After bringing a copy of a 17<sup>th</sup> century Aeolian harp to the '94 edition of this festival, I was contacted by more windmusic enthusiasts, and we agreed to combine our forces. Thus the Windgarden was born.

From its first appearance, it proved to be a great success because of its novel and art-like concept. Response from the general public and festival organizers alike was overwhelming, and many invitations followed this first exhibit. It started snowballing from there, and today there is hardly a festival without some sort of Windgarden. More people joined in over the years, each bringing their own unique qualities and ideas to these exhibitions.

Personally, promoting windmusic and building these instruments has brought

me to over a dozen countries worldwide. In some of those, I could exhibit all of my smaller designs, but taking them abroad by plane proved too expensive, risky and cumbersome. One time proved to be enough, but that one time was



very special! The exhibition was set up at the 2003 Kites on Ice Festival in Madison, WI. This was the first time that a Windgarden was set up on a frozen lake!

In all other cases, in a few days time, I built an Aeolian structure on site, using locally available materials. Materials and shapes used vary widely, from recycled stuff like plastic bottles and such, to carved pieces of wood, metalwork, harp-like stringed objects and large temporary constructs made from bamboo, tree branches, driftwood and rope.

During the 15 years that these exhibitions are around, several people have developed their own specialty in constructing wind-driven and/or -played objects.

There are a few who have chosen to design, build and develop musical instruments, using strings, bells, flutes and the like to have the wind compose and play various melodies. Amongst them are France's Didier Ferment and Bruno



wonderful displays always attract a lot of attention. And, of course, there are all of those others, who give their own unique twist to the theme "Windgarden."

Besides being a wonderful addition to any kite festival, windmusic has been used in a lot of other applications too, like experimental music performances, background soundscapes for theatre and film, exhibits at garden shows and art fairs, and lectures on the theoretical aspects of music and sound. The simpler instruments and objects are very well suited for workshops also, for children and adults alike. Most of the children's workshops make use of recycled and simple



required to achieve a worthwhile result. The Instruments built in these workshops are either multiple pipe bamboo wind organs, musical weathervanes or multi-stringed wooden and metal windharps. All these instruments are weatherproof, and need minimal maintenance.



Tondellier, Germany's Uli Wahl and myself. We four are the hardcore Aeolians, with lots of others following in our footsteps.

There is also another Frenchman, Jean-Claude Anquier, who has lifted cutting up plastic bottles into a true artform.

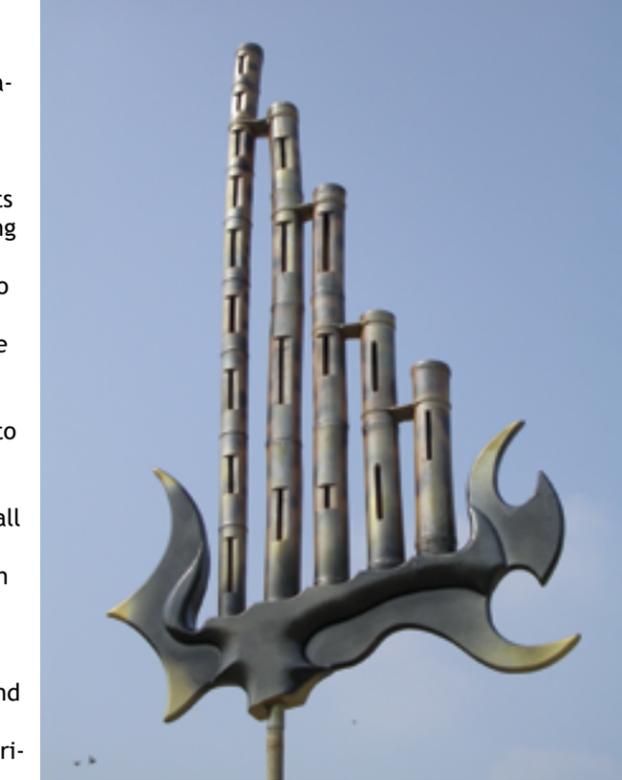
His colourful and

everyday materials and usually have the added aspect of teaching the kids about various environmental issues. It also brings out creativity in them, which is always a good thing, right?

Workshops for adults take on a totally different form. Most of the time they last two to five days, due to the amount of work involved. Basic wood-working skills are usually

required to achieve a worthwhile result. The Instruments built in these workshops are either multiple pipe bamboo wind organs, musical weathervanes or multi-stringed wooden and metal windharps. All these instruments are weatherproof, and need minimal maintenance.

All in all, Windgardens and Soundscapes have proven to be a worthwhile addition to almost any outdoor venue! ☒



For more information on Windmusic and all its aspects, see:  
[www.windgallery.nl](http://www.windgallery.nl)  
[www.windmusik.com](http://www.windmusik.com)  
[www.jardinduvent.com](http://www.jardinduvent.com)  
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# MANIPULATING OBJECTS

At a basic level, there isn't much difference between a kite and a puppet. Both are objects that are operated remotely. Imagine eyes and a mouth on a kite, morph the string into a sleeve, and there you are at the bottom, using your hands to make the puppet perform in the sky. It's all about manipulating objects.

Heather Henson knows this. Maybe she's always known it. Growing up with puppetry royalty, "Puppets were always there," she says. "I was more interested in the elements of nature than the characters of the puppets."

One of those elements — wind — brought characters to life in the hands of Heather and her cohorts at the AKA Convention in Wildwood last fall. Birds swirled across the indoor sky as a crane came to life, explored its surroundings, and set off into a world filled with kites. The show, performed by Henson, Curtiss Mitchell, Lisa and Ian Willoughby, Wen Jeng, Toby Arndt, and Scott Weider, was the culmination of more than a decade of combining indoor kiteflying with an artform most people know from *Sesame Street*.

You could say (with a bit of artistic license) that Heather Henson grew up on *Sesame Street*. She's the daughter of Jim Henson, the man known across the globe as the creator of the Muppets. Jim, along with puppeteers Frank Oz, Dave Goetz, Carroll Spinney, and others, brought the world Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy, Oscar the Grouch, Big Bird, Cookie Monster, Fozzie Bear, Bert and Ernie, Grover, and hundreds of other puppets, and expanded across film and TV with *Fraggle Rock*, *Labyrinth*, and *The Dark Crystal*. (Jim Henson himself voiced Kermit, Rowlf the Dog, Dr. Teeth, Waldorf, and the Swedish Chef.) And while puppets may have been his passion, Carroll Spinney, the man inside Big Bird, recalls that Jim always loved kites. Growing up in London (the Muppet Show was filmed in England) Jim would frequently take Heather to Kite Hill in Hampstead Heath. Along the way she appeared in *The Muppets Take Manhattan* and as Prince Kermit in *The Frog Prince*. With her siblings also involved in puppeteering — brothers Brian and John have both performed Muppets — it was perhaps inevitable that Heather too followed the puppet path.

That path led to Rhode Island in the late 1990s, where she created a show for Save the Bay. Her aim was to encourage participation with nature, and she was intrigued by watching the

Puppeteer Heather Henson Blends Kites  
With Marionettes To Create Wonder  
photos by Richard Termine



*The Wildwood cast: Toby Arndt, Heather Henson, Wen Jeng, Scott Weider, Curtiss Mitchell, Ian and Lisa Willoughby.*

Curtiss Mitchell, who she calls “a rock star.” Her IBEX Puppetry company was off and flying. With a goal of “using non-traditional storytelling tools to offer audiences transformative experiences,” kites fit right in.

Over the next few years Heather worked with Ricketts’ Guildworks group to build the UberBird, a giant ripstop nylon and carbon fiber avian that was the centerpiece of her “Celebration of Flight” show. With Craig Wilson and Pete MacMasters, she created “Panther and Crane,” performing it at the International Crane Foundation’s Crane Festival. There were outdoor performances on grassy lawns, and indoor shows on tiny stages that barely held three performers (each flying kites on 8’ lines).

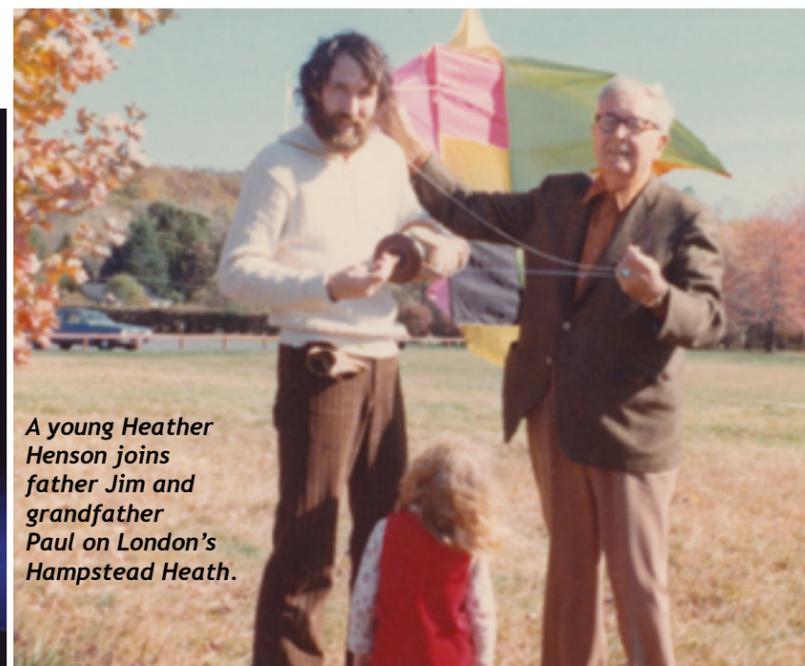
Finally came Wildwood, and the massive indoor space with an audience of a couple hundred rapt kitefliers. Heather performed the crane puppet, while the kilters who’d practiced with her all week flew Decas, Revs, single-line birds, and helix spinners on poles. In the six months since that performance she’s performed almost every weekend, using a rotating cast of kitefliers.

But she’s still taking time to set kite strings aside and return to her roots. Heather hosts the wildly popular *Muppet Movie Sing-A-Long* in Orlando, where crowds gather to watch the movie and belt out “Rainbow Connection” with Kermit. She also helps run the Orlando Puppet Festival, and sponsors Handmade Puppet Dreams, a touring film festival for independent puppeteers.



wind move things. Kites became “an interesting performance element,” she remembers, but they hadn’t attained star status yet.

Soon after, she saw Pauly Berard and Archie Stewart flying indoors in Newport. That led to meeting Marc Ricketts, designer of the Synergy Deca, and a leading Deca flyer,



*A young Heather Henson joins father Jim and grandfather Paul on London’s Hampstead Heath.*



Heather notes the similarity between kites and puppets. “Kites are very international, and really tap into indigenous communities. There’s a different style of puppetry in every community, and that’s true of kites too.” ☒

*Fatkin lends a hand to a kiteflier.*



## “OUR THEATER IS THE STREET...”

Henson’s puppets aren’t the only ones frolicking through kite festivals. Les Geants du Sud are coming from southern France to flying fields around the globe. Originally formed by puppeteer Stephan Meppiel, the 15-member troupe uses their creations to act out the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Their papier mache and wire frame puppets are built to fit onto a backpack frame, so the puppeteer can roam freely, manipulating the puppet’s arms with long control rods. Their creations have been to South America, Korea, and across Europe.

Five of the team came from the small village of Sauve to India in January: Jessica Cognac, Robin Fatkin, Romain Fougereolles, Jennifer Ryan, and Pierre Vacher. Of them, only Fatkin had previous kiteflying experience. Using a borrowed kite (their own lifter was damaged by the airline in transit), for the first time they lifted a 30-pound puppet on a line, creating a giant marionette. A pulley system allows the arms to be controlled by puppeteers on the ground.

The puppets are at their best interacting with spectators. Nearly everyone wanted their photograph taken with one. Occasionally a puppeteer would whirl around and chase a shrieking child across the field. Fatkin notes that sometimes babies laugh at the puppets, but older children run away screaming. “There’s always a reaction,” he says.



See the entire Wildwood indoor performance by Heather Henson and friends at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2LP0iq3z5w&feature=share](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2LP0iq3z5w&feature=share)



*Cognac helps Vacher suit up.*

*Ryan says hello.*





# CARIBBEAN CHRISTMAS

BY LAURA BERG

Kiting is a passion practiced all over the world, and it is extremely popular in the Caribbean. In Tobago, kite flying is a big part of the Christmas tradition. Tobagans use bamboo, paper and anything they can find to make beautiful kites of all sizes. Like the USA, the kite builders take great pride in their work and compete against each other. Their competitions are based on how well the kites fly and also on the most artistic kites. The competition is referred to as “the Mad Bull” as these kites race to the sky while zigging and zagging and “screaming” from the vibrations coming from a tensioner behind the leading edge.

My Rev Riders teammate Scott Weider and I, along with Wadson Michel, Janet Hall, and Ralph Gore met up in Tobago to share the American kiting style. We also had the privilege of



meeting with the Chief Secretary, the Honorable Mr. Orville London, at the Tobago House of Assembly to discuss what we could do to teach children about kiting and related topics such as weather and aerodynamics.

After the meeting, we had a fantastic time flying with a local club, the Bethel Kitters, on their home grounds in Montgomery. Leon Davis is responsible for founding the Bethel Kitters and his team Tobago Massive Kite Flyers. They created the beautiful and huge kite, with the star in the center, that won in the category of the largest Mad Bull Kite. In the spring, Leon and his team hope to travel to Bermuda to fly their first place kite. It was cool to see the “kite runners” (the kids) run after three large kites after the lines had been cut during a wind shift. While Patrick and Wadson were concerned about getting their kites back, the Bethel Kitters weren’t worried. The kites wound up in the next village and the kids were able to bring them all back, all in good shape too!

After some flying and many Rev lessons, Leon made fish broth for us. It was



a very special experience to share this tasty meal and to learn that the children patiently waited for their chance to have some of the broth after we were done with ours, because with a very tight budget the club only had enough money for ten styrofoam bowls, which the kids patiently waited to use.

The following day was the Tobago Flying Colours Kite Festival and it was a huge success. It has been growing every year since its inception in December 1999. The weather was awesome and so was the energy from all of the kite builders, competitors and the spectators, too.

The week went by way too quickly. Time does fly when you’re having fun and I had a blast! ☒

# BIRDS AND BUGGIES

BY CAT GABREL

Every year some forty to fifty people gather for Thanksgiving on Galveston’s East Beach for the Dead Bird Buggy Bash, DBBB. Kite bugging is the primary reason for this gathering, but we all come to enjoy playing with the wind, in whatever form that might be, seeing old friends and making new ones.

There are all kinds of ways to experience DBBB, from hotels at off-season prices to camping on the beach with camp fires and sunrises. Galveston is rich with history and culture, the locals are friendly and it’s difficult not to enjoy this small Gulf Coast community.



This is a tourist island that during peak season entertains a million people every weekend. Thanksgiving week the island is quiet, except for the locals and few tourists. Started in 1994 by Dick and Gail Bell, DBBB has intentionally remained unorganized, but there is a strong core group of people that makes sure that the basic stuff gets done and there are plenty of turkeys and food for the Thanksgiving feast.

The beach is long, skinny and hard packed, padded with 200 yards or more of soft beach.

There is a never-ending parade of giant freighters, cruise ships, and off-shore drilling rigs moving in and out of the shipping channel. Where else do you get a chance to ride in a buggy, play on a blokart and then blow your mind with a ride in a parasail above everything else?

The pre-event starts the Saturday before Thanksgiving, where the luckiest of the group gather for some beach and buggy fun at the far west end of Galveston. On Monday people start gathering on East Beach. Thanksgiving meal on the beach is a feast. Even though we are all traveling from somewhere else, the cooking is inspiring with solar ovens, Dutch ovens, deep fat fryers and grills. This is a gathering for all who come. Some are single line fliers, and each year we have a few super large kites, some line laundry, and banners come and go.

Like any event that one attends on a regular basis, you begin to make some really good friends. This year, we dedicated the event to our friend Charles “AJ” Jackson, who died in a kiting accident off Cape Hatteras in September 2011. AJ was a well-known and much loved former resident of Galveston. He was one of the most avid kite fliers most of us have ever known. Peter Lynn flew a banner all week for AJ, I know this meant a lot to each and every one of us at DBBB this year. ☒



Peter Lynn



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## VIRGINIA

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# REGIONAL REPORTS

## Region 1 ~ New England CT-NH-MA-ME-RI-VT-NY



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End of term: 2013

Greetings to Region One. The weather has changed as I'm writing this from the mild winter weather to snow and temperatures in the 20° to 30° range.

This from Bill Coons: "NYKE had its first winter workshop on January 14. We built the midi pointer by Ceewan. The workshop was led by Kevin Reynolds, a first time presenter. The workshop cost included a license fee paid to Ceewan. In what we believe to be a first, three participants did the workshop using a Skype Group call. We were able to add Ceewan, in Malaysia, to the discussion for a couple of hours. Five builders participated locally. Most of them had cut out the sail and done extensive appliqué work prior to arrival at the workshop. The only builder to do the appliqué in the workshop did not finish because we ran out of time."

More workshops are being planned by other clubs in the region.

NYKE kite club flew at the Lake George Winter Festival on February 18. Other winter events were planned

through the region.

March 31 to May 6 is National Kite Month. Please check the AKA Calendar for events in the area. Please help make us number one in the number of events for Kite Month. Are your events listed?

This from Fred Taylor: "The Niagara

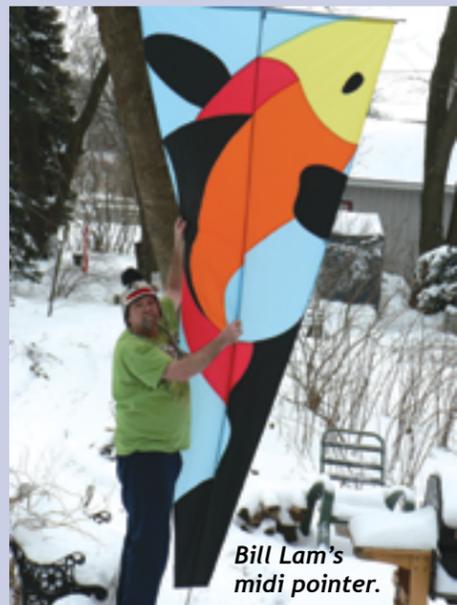


David Tuttle's  
midi pointer.

Windriders Kite Associations will be celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> year of hosting the Canal Days Kite Festival, August 6-8, in Port Colborne, Ontario. This is one of the festivals supported by our upstate New York kite clubs and fliers. Plan a trip to go to this festival and join the fun."

This from Jackie Maciel: "Over Martin Luther King weekend, kite flyers from the Northeast attended the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Treasure Island Kite Festival and Competition. Gary and Maggie Engvall and Dick and Jackie Maciel have been enjoying this annual kite festival for the past few years. Maggie is Chief Judge for the Treasure Island Stunt Kite Competition, Jackie competes, Gary flies his big kites and Dick colors the sky with his homemade kites. The crowds around the demo/competition field were the biggest in years. I think many who stopped to watch on Saturday came back with their lawn chairs on Sunday. A really great show was put on for these folks by all the fliers. Hopefully, some of them will get the kiting bug. Many people stayed on Monday, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and hung out on the beach flying kites. The festival next year will be January 19-20, 2013, Martin Luther King weekend. Save the date!"

Looking forward to seeing you at a workshop or on the flying field.



Kevin Reynolds

Bill Lam's  
midi pointer.

Mike Dallmer reports, "SJKF had a fabulous holiday party with 43 members and friends attending. We went to a new place in Philadelphia and had a Sunday buffet. We also had elections, everyone who voted re-elected Andy Selzer as President and Mike Dallmer as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. The club's March meeting is at a special location, Fran Gramkowski's house. After the meeting there will be a sale of High Fly Kite Company products."

You read that right. On March 18, get yourself to Haddonfield, NJ, to help the Gramkowski's clean out their closets. This includes kites by George Peters, Martin Lester, Nantucket Kiteman, Scott Spencer, Vertical Visual, and an original Gibson Girl. There'll even be a special bargain bin with kites for \$5. Half the proceeds from the sale go to SJKF.

From Todd Little: "On January 22, the Keystone Kites held a unique kite making event. General Abu Ismail, the president of the Malaysian Kite Society and a kitemaker of extraordinary talent,

## Region 2 ~ Northeast NJ-PA-(lower) NY



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End of term: 2013

presented a class where participants created their own wau bulan kites from traditional materials. General Ismail is attending the US Army War College in Carlisle, PA, for a year and we were extremely lucky to have him teach this class. The class was followed by a pot-luck dinner."

From the Poconos, Andy Gelinis reports: "By the time this is printed we will have had our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Appreciation Kick-Off Dinner. We decided to avoid the rush of getting Christmas preparations done and reward ourselves with a dinner in January. Our new website, [www.PocoNoKiteSymphony.com](http://www.PocoNoKiteSymphony.com), is up and running. Although not complete and all buttons are not operable we will be working on it in the coming months. We are planning for our 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual Kite Day in the Park the first Saturday of May at Louise Moore Park, Easton, PA. Even though the economy is down and all kiting events are hurting, we are still making a sincere effort to keep kiting alive in Eastern Pennsylvania."

## Region 3 ~ Mid-Atlantic DC-DE-MD-VA-WV



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End of term: 2013

Greetings Region Three. This winter was rather quiet. From the ITDKTFACKF (It's Too Darn Cold To Fly A Kite Kite Fly) on New Years Day, Stoney Stonestreet writes "We had a great turnout today. I was there early but there were about eight to ten ahead of me. Harold and Elizabeth Ames were there, and there were five or six buggy kites, Pete Omer showed up. Alan Ballou and Bryan Bevins were there and there were more but my memory fails me. Winds were cranking at about 15mph but the temperatures were tolerable."

Dave Ashworth reported that W.O.W. held elections and the officers for 2012 are President Dave Ashworth, Vice President Paul LaMasters, Treasurer Barbara Birnman and Secretary Evelyn Rossbach. Thanks to all of you for taking on those responsibilities.

Many events are already on the calendar by mid January, and I would

like to thank those organizers for being on the ball. Blossom Kite Festival, March 31; Windchester, April 7, Michael Rose; Bel Air Kite Festival, April 14, Al Ault; Rockfish Kite Festival, April 15, Peter Agelasto; Blue Ridge Kite Festival, April 21, Chuck Kroll and Debbie Kavitz; West Virginia Kite Festival, April 28, Max Barker. Max and the New Era Kite Club have lined up eight or nine events, and two month-long displays.

Don't forget to watch for details about the Mid Atlantic Sport Kite Competition and Maryland International Kite Expo around the end of April, and the Atlantic Coast Kite Festival in Virginia Beach the first weekend of May. Quetzal Kite Festival returns May 19, and ODSKC will be on June 16-17.

This year the convention will be in Enid, OK. The area is wide open with very little to disturb the wind, and AKA has received a super offer from the community to come to their town. I spent several years in Oklahoma and there is a great deal of history to explore, along with a variety of scenery. It is close enough to drive there from our region too. Please consider going to convention this year, and be ready to register when that starts in midsummer. There is a large picture book about Oklahoma getting passed around so let me know if you want to see it, and I will try to get your name on the list.

As always, I ask you to call, e-mail, write or visit with me to let me know how I can represent you on the AKA board. Get out there, put something up and challenge the wind.

## Region 4 ~ Southeast AL-FL-GA-KY-MS-PR-NC-SC-TN



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End of Term: 2013

Hello Region Four! Happy New Year, and happy new kite flying season! With the New Year all kitefliers look forward to warmer weather, here in the south-east (fingers crossed) we haven't had a very cold winter yet. Hopefully this year will be the best kite flying season yet. If you haven't already, make sure you start your plans for National Kite. Make sure all of your kite events are on the AKA Calendar and consider sanctioning.

From Karen Mault: "This past October was the 24<sup>th</sup> year of the Carolina Kite Festival. All plans were completed, reservations made, and invitations sent. But in August came Hurricane Irene. Everything changed. The beach at the festival location was eroded and the hotel was damaged to such a degree that it had to close for the rest of the year. The Town of Atlantic Beach approved the use of the public beach access site on the main strand. New to this year's festival was Purple, the pink playsail. Jeri and Brett Dixon spent many hours sewing the panels together to construct it. Purple was a huge hit and will be making ap-

Karen Mault



Purple plays in  
Atlantic Beach.



John Mault launches a sky lantern.

Hello again Region Five. You'll be reading this in the spring, but last night it was 2° in Ann Arbor.

Otto M Budig Festival (a.k.a. Air Waves) at the former Voice of America broadcast facilities outside Cincinnati is April 14-15. Pigs Aloft and OSEK have been running this great event for years.

April 28 is the second occurrence of Kite Komotion in Shipshewana, IN. Everyone had a great time last year.

Great Lakes Kite Festival returns to the beach in Grand Haven, MI, May 18-20. This is a great family event, on a huge sandy beach, huge kite store, great sound system, featuring performances by local and national champion kitefliers, pairs and teams. And beautiful sunsets.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Family Kite Festival in Milwaukee's Veteran's Park is the only event I know of with a bratwurst drop. You'll also see the Chicago Fire, Windjammers, O2, EOS, Fire & Ice, Blues Brothers, and many more local and national champi-

pearances at future festivals. "New Year's Eve brought an attempted night kite fly by club members. I say attempted because with the setting of the sun there was also a settling of the wind. What we did fly were sky lanterns provided by Kites Unlimited. We watched our lanterns fly over the beach and out to sea, welcoming the New Year."

The Cape Fear Kite Festival also occurred since the last *Kiting*. Cape Fear is one of the last festivals of the season. It started out with a nasty rain storm which seemed to be the pattern for 2011, but by the final day we had a show on the beach. With the Ogletree's risqué Mermaid and Neptune, to the high wind mesh Shook Revs and sport kites, a great time was had by all. Special thanks to Mike and Judy Agner for coordinating this event every year. And personal thanks to David Gomberg for loaning me a larger lifter before my Maxi-Ray took out some spectators who didn't understand why they shouldn't sit *there*.

Remember this update is for the region. And *Kiting* is our premier source of kite news, please share your stories even if it's just a quick paragraph or sentence or two, we all want to hear about the last time you flew a kite or participated in a kite-related event. As always, keep the wind at your back.

Hello from Region Six. This has been a quiet time of year for kite flying in the Midwest. There were some plans to fly on New Years Day in several places that had to be canceled due to the nasty weather. Some die-hards traveled to the events but no significant kite flying occurred. Events affected included the Minnesota Kite Society's Potluck, and

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End of term: 2014

ons. This is actually in Region Six, but we're all family.

Michigan has two events on June 2: Breeze on the Bay in East Tawas and the 3rd South Lyon Kite Festival. The following weekend is the Michigan KiteFest and Competition, hosted by Back 2 The Wind Kite Club. This is the oldest competition in Michigan, in the home park of Dave Bush and his Thor's Hammer kites.

the lakes. Some of the best kite flying occurs during the winter on our large open lakes. The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Lake Harriet Winter Festival had to be canceled.

The Frosty Fingers Kite Fly which the St. Paul Winter Carnival has sponsored and the Minnesota Kite Society has put on will not happen this year. The winter carnival committee wanted MKS to do the event at a park along the Mississippi River near downtown St. Paul instead of at Lake Phalen. But MKS rejected the committee's suggested field because it's too small and has wind obstructions. MKS looks forward to finding a more suit-

### Region 6 ~ Midwest IA-IL-IN-MN-WI



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End of term: 2014

the Cool Fool Kite Festival in Milwaukee. The other problem has been the warm temperatures and lack of safe ice on



William Haas KAPs Coxhall Gardens Park in Carmel, IN.

able location and resuming this event in 2013.

Many clubs did hold their annual holiday parties including the Wisconsin Kites. There was record attendance with 57 members enjoying the afternoon of reviewing the year in pictures, sitting down to a fine meal and participating in a fun raffle.

The second annual U-MAKE kite workshop took place over the January 15<sup>th</sup> weekend in Des Moines, IA. The featured workshop was led by Martin Blais with a 6' dolphin windsock project. This was Martin's first workshop and it was a great success with all who attended. He also described how to design and make three-dimensional wind-inflated figures. Other projects at U-MAKE included a roll-up kite bag by Ed Gryns, a notched sled by Linda Larkey and mini-classes by Linda and Ryan Larkey featuring mini-kites, knotless knots and binding a curved seam.

After a year off, Kites Over Grinnell returns to dazzle everyone on May 11-12 in Grinnell, IA. Kite fliers from Pennsylvania, Texas, Nebraska, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota as well as Iowa have already confirmed their attendance. Grinnell is a great place to be in the spring! If you are free, contact Dick and Sis Vogel or Rich May through [kitesovergrinnell@gmail.com](mailto:kitesovergrinnell@gmail.com) and plan to join the fun!

Spring is the time to dust off those kites and banners and have some fun. Just do it! Keep looking up and hold on tight!

### Region 7 ~ Great Plains CO-KS-MO-ND-NE-SD-UT-WY



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End of term: 2014

Hello friends! As you're reading this at the beginning of National Kite Month and early springtime (regarded in Western culture as kite season), kite activities will be happening everywhere. Please spread the joy of kites by participating in an event near you, or start a new one on your own. Please contact me and I will help you however I can. Don't forget to list any kite-related activity which occurs in April with National Kite Month even after it ends.



Howard Bashant

Saturday, April 14, is the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Arvada Kite Festival at Robbie Ferruffino Park. I hope to fly a chain of ten deltas on one line. In case we have no wind, which happens often in Colorado, we're planning an indoor-style kite and glider demo, outdoors, to show the public the latest trend in our kite world. There's also a Kids Fly, with fun competitions for Smallest, Largest, Highest, and Most Visually Appealing kites. The festival also includes dozens of vendors, community booths, art activities, jumping castles, kiddie train ride, and the Jefferson County Brass Band.

Saturday, April 21, Kansas City Kite Club and Metro Community College - Longview present Flights Of Fancy. The kites of the Kansas City Kite Club will take flight over the lawn of the picturesque campus during the heart of kite month, with awe-inspiring mega kites, power kites, stunt kites, and more including the world's largest windsock: three stories high and 200' long! For the kids, Flights of Fancy will feature kite making, an inflatable maze, face painting, a balloon artist and a candy drop.

Sunday, April 29, is the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Fort Collins Kites in the Park festival. Founded by John and Mary Farrell in conjunction with the City of Fort Collins, this is also a kids fly but with a strong emphasis on our kiting community with famous kites, stacks of stunt kites, power kite demos, fighter kites flown by the Pakistani community of Colorado State University, quad and dual-line sport kite ballet, and rokkaku battles. This year Carol and Cass Pittman will be doing demonstrations and showing off their coordinated team flying skills.

New Year's Day kiting has become a tradition in various locations around Boulder, Colorado. This year, a dozen Mile Hi Kites flew at Stapleton Central Park in Denver. I had a few of my single line deltas anchored in the steady breeze while it lasted.

One of the kiting developments along Colorado's Front Range over the past year has been the increased interest in glider kites. The chief proponent of the gliders is Howard Bashant, whose interest led to him forming a facebook group called Glider Geeks. The group is devoted to single line glider kites and anyone with an interest in flying them is welcome.

Although indoor and windless flying in Region Seven is in its infancy, there is no doubt that this year will see an increase as more kites begin to discover the special enjoyment and art form of windless flight. John Farrell has been consistently flying dual-lines and Revs indoors in Fort Collins for quite some

*The Gateway Kite Club's Steve Batliner flies at the first kite festival ever held in Washington, MO.*



time. Howard Bashant usually gets a couple indoor glider sessions a week, mainly in Denver. Paul Glasspoole and Joseph Becker also fly indoors when they get a chance. As for myself, I will be experimenting with glider kites and other ultralight SLKs to be able to fly more on the very light or zero wind days we often have.

**Region 8 ~ South Central**  
AR-LA-NM-OK-TX



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End of term: 2012

I'm back! I was the Region Eight Director in the 90s. I don't promise that I can attend each and every event in the Region, but I will go to as many as I can physically and financially make it to. I hope all of you also have plans to make it to as many kite festivals, club flies, and workshops as humanly possible! If you don't know where and when all of the Region Eight events are, visit the Region Eight Kite Events website that I've maintained since 1997, at <http://TKOGunn1.tripod.com/kitecalendar.htm>.

Great news! This year's AKA Convention and Grand Nationals Competitions will take place in Enid, OK, in our Region! Let's all make plans to attend this year, because it's not often that the AKA Convention is here! I've flown on the field in Enid and it's huge and

flat, with few obstructions to block the wind. The city is home to Vance Air Force Base and has plenty of conveniences, hotels, and things to see and do. The city hosted the Kites Over Enid Guinness Record Attempt in 2009 and 2010 for most kites flown at the same time, and had thousands of people attend and participate. By the time the AKA convention comes to Enid, there will be 100 new wind turbines spinning and creating electricity just north of the city. Enid also is home to a railroad museum. People may not have heard of Enid before, but for an inland kite flying location it doesn't get much better than this! For a good aerial view of the Enid kite flying field, search YouTube for "Hundreds Fly Kites in Enid to Break Record."

In January, Barry and Karen Ogletree (Whatakite), from Lufkin, TX, traveled all the way to Treasure Island, FL, to attend the Treasure Island Kite Festival. Whatakite doesn't just fly kites, they fly huge kites! What does it take to set up about 100 wind feather banners, and prepare the flight of many huge kites each day during any kite event? Here's a link to a time lapse YouTube video showing just how difficult it can be, and the amount of people it takes: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjrrZncLtk&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xjrrZncLtk&feature=player_embedded). At this event, Whatakite was blessed with great wind, and a great location. Whatakite recruited and was honored to receive help from some of the best volunteers you could hope for: the US Army!

I'm always open to questions, ideas, and concerns from all of you, so please feel welcome to contact me

about any kite-related topics that involve AKA Region Eight! There's no such thing as a dumb or silly question, unless it comes from my wife or kids! Please, if you have any kite-related news, reports, or stories that you think I should add to *Kiting*, please forward them to me. If I don't know about your news, or if I wasn't able to attend your events, I can't write about it.

Fly high, fly safe, have fun!

**Region 9 ~ Intermountain**  
ID-MT-OR



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End of Term: 2012

With current winds right now at 45 mph, I'm looking forward to using a new vented kite I just got. With spring just around the corner, there is plenty going on to keep everyone busy all spring long.

This year has brought a few changes in the schedules and one of the ones I would like to make note of is the Indoor Kite Festival at Lincoln City. I have had many e-mails and calls about whether it will take place this year. Unfortunately Lincoln City will not be hosting the event this year. It is my hope that next year this event will return, but it will take the efforts of many. The Lincoln City Indoor Kite Festival is one that has been known to people around the world as one of the best. I would encourage you to e-mail the Lincoln City Visitors Bureau ([events@lincolncity.org](mailto:events@lincolncity.org)) if you would like to see it return.

The Oregon Kitemaker's Retreat was a huge success this year! There were classes from Ken Conrad, Nigel Spaxman, Mike Button, Deb Cooley, Barbara Meyer, Cari King, Gerry Pennell, Kathy Goodwind, Mark Engbaum, Rich Durant and David Ellis. The creativity was rockin' in Rockaway! Nigel Spaxman taught the Butterfly Kite, designed by Didier Ferment. It looked like everyone truly enjoyed this class and had a butterfly invasion in Rockaway. This was the 19th year of the retreat and the 20th looks to be even better. Mark your calendars now for next years OKR!

Kiting Just For Fun will be gracing the skies on April 26 in the Community

Park in Idaho Falls, ID. Kite demonstrations, kite lessons, children's kite making and more! On Saturday, April 28, join the fun at the Idaho Kite Festival. Demonstrations, bol racing, and open flying for everyone! A kite laundry record attempt will be made as well. Idaho is flying high! For more information contact Dean Turnblom at [sunrisekites@cablone.net](mailto:sunrisekites@cablone.net).

The Rockaway Kite Festival will

One of Lindsey Johnson's kites from Ken Conrad's OKR workshop.



Greetings Region Ten!

The 11th Annual Windless Indoor event at Long Beach, WA, in January had the best turnout that I can remember! Three days of indoor flying with demos, free fly time, competition with 22 competitors on Saturday and hot tricks on Sunday. If you missed it this year, be sure and mark your calendar for next year during MLK weekend. For some awesome videos, go to YouTube

Washington's Steven Tisch rings in the New Year at the San Diego Kite Club's fly.



Rebecca Tisch

bring in the spring on May 11-13. This event is really growing and the City of Rockaway really goes all out to put on a great show. We are looking forward to this event and hope to see you all there. Last year's event

even brought in a giant kite flying banana! For more information: [www.rockawaybeach.net/](http://www.rockawaybeach.net/).

The Lincoln City Summer Festival kicks off a great summer on June 23-24. This West Coast favorite will include Team iQuad, Team Suspended Animation, Connor Doran, Dale Ray, and many others. Ron Gibian will be the guest artist with a show and reception at the

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AK - WA



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End of Term: 2012

and just type in Windless 2012. Enjoy!

The hint of spring is just around the corner and there is lots of flying to be had in the Pacific Northwest! For a detailed listing remember to check out the AKA event calendar often.

Remember, March 16-18 is the 30th Anniversary for the Fort Worden Kite-makers retreat. Class sizes are limited, so I hope you had a chance to visit [www.kitemakers.org](http://www.kitemakers.org) and register.

April is National Kite Month! Anyone can add an event to the calendar! Let's fill it up and let others know what and where you are flying. It's a great tool to use, and spreads the word.

Even though August is still months ahead of us, I am getting calls and inquiries about WSIKF, held the third week of August in Long Beach. Local motels are already filling up. Some are sold out already! Make your plans sooner than later. There is something different to see and do every day. Hope to see you there!

Have fun flying!



Proving that anything can fly if it's bridled properly, Takako Barresi launches husband John at the Windless Kite Festival.

Willy Hendrickson

Cultural Center on June 22. Lincoln City will present the Great Kite Art Auction at the Cultural Center on June 23. The show and auction will be open to the public and all are invited to attend. For more information: [www.oregoncoast.org/festivals-events/#summer-kite-festival-3](http://www.oregoncoast.org/festivals-events/#summer-kite-festival-3).

Looking ahead to great events and gatherings with the kite flying family!

**Region 11 ~ N. California**  
Northern CA-NV



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End of Term: 2012

Welcome to spring in Region Eleven. This is typically one of the best seasons for getting outside and flying your favorite kite. It's also a time of newness, so consider bringing a friend out with you to enjoy the sunshine and feel the wind at your back.

This year, the Bay Area Sport Kite League is holding more clinics to help new fliers get started flying sport kites. Free instruction and coaching will be available from some of the best kitefliers in the country at each event. If you just got a new kite, or want to improve your skills, be sure to come by. The first clinic is scheduled for March 17 at Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley. You can check their web site for future clinics and competitions at [www.baskl.org](http://www.baskl.org).

Our local sport kite team, Team AirZone, will be going to France in April to represent the AKA at the World Sport Kite Championships ([www.worldsportkite.com](http://www.worldsportkite.com)). They will be practicing at Ocean Beach in San Francisco most

Barry Ogletree fills the sky at Treasure Island.



Sundays between now and the end of March. All are welcome to stop by as they perfect their ballet and precision flying. Check [www.teamairzone.com](http://www.teamairzone.com) for details.

Watch for some other events to be held this spring on the AKA event calendar: Doran Beach/Bodega Bay in March, Morro Bay at the end of April, Marina in mid-May, and San Ramon in late May. If you are holding a kite event, or need some help planning one, get in contact with me at [region11@aka.kite.org](mailto:region11@aka.kite.org). You can post your events on the AKA event calendar for free. Also, be sure to support your local Merchant Members, all of whom can be found on the Regional Resource page of the AKA website or page 16 of this magazine.

Deb Lenzen warms up in San Diego.



Region Thirteen keeps busy, as always. Please remember to e-mail me with news from your country, especially if you're in summer while others are enjoying winter.

Advance notice: my term as RD13 concludes later this year (six years so far) and calls will be out in July in case you'd like to nominate. Closing date will be August 4.

I'm curious to note the arrival date of this issue; new printer, new mailing

### Region 13 ~ International



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End of Term: 2012

I closed out 2011 on relax and mend mode so I could get a jump on 2012, so after a small vacation in Hawaii I pretty much stayed home. The year started off with the San Diego Kite Club's New Years Day fly where I saw some faces not normally seen in San Diego. This year Steve and Becky Tisch came down from Washington to play and Deb Lenzen and Mike Shaw brought their beautiful single line creations out also. Must be the weather or maybe it's that San Diego is just a kite town. This year fighter kite competition was pretty heated and the prizes were taken by Victor Heredia in first, his son in second, and Steve Tisch in third. As a side note, Victor was the manufacturer of the Vics fighter and is now the owner of Kite Country, a true brick and mortar kite store.

After Hawaii, San Diego, and then Treasure Island, I'm now at the KTAI event in Vegas.

I would like to close with one thought for all the members of the AKA: treat others as you wish to be treated, for only through strength and unity will we grow.

system, hopefully no more lost *Kitings*.

Curious about what festivals are where and when? Check AKA's website Calendar of Events for certainty, but here's a very rough guide: January - Ahmedabad; February - Pasir Gudang; March - Thailand, Vietnam; April - Weifang; May - Uchinada; June - Shirone; July - Jakarta; August - Bali; September - Bintulu, Bondi Beach, Dieppe; October - Taipei; November - Singapore; December - Cambodia. Aren't we a busy Region?!

A reminder that AKA Kite Event insurance policy does offer cover to Canadian festivals. Simply apply for sanctioning.

NEW ZEALAND / CANADA / THAILAND - Jim Nicholls, Sharon Musto and Ron Spaulding all declined the eBay "Eddy War Kite" auction in October 2011, where starting bid was \$2500. Air travel instead sounding better?

PAKISTAN - November reports said kite flyers who deliberately endanger lives of fellow citizens by using dangerous strings could possibly be arrested under the Terrorism Act. Beware!

CANADA - Gérard Piette, Ontario, loves winter flying where snow is dry and clean (mud isn't an issue), the ground is hard and crop-free to make KAP easier, trees are leafless so KAP photos are clearer and the white snow background offers fast exposures. But the negatives?

### Region 12 ~ Southwest Southern CA-AZ-HI



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End of Term: 2012

Mike Shaw enjoys the California sun.



Flyers need mittens to revive icy fingers and must keep watch for snowmobiles appearing suddenly and without warning! Gérard's next plan is to build a 525 ft<sup>2</sup> stepped-tail parafoil. Photos, please? Newest members from Saint-Honoré, Quebec, Brigitte and Lucien Bussièrès, offer this link, <http://danslvent.com/english.html>, as a holiday destination for June.

ISRAEL - Shula Shavit shared her colourful non-kite creations: knitted socks as absolute necessities for cold, Israeli winters.

UK - Bob Cruikshanks headed to India for January's Ahmedabad/Belgaum/Mangalore events. Pull one for me, too? Godfrey and Karen Gamble described their experience of the Fuerteventura Kite Festival as



"pretty amazing." It's held in the volcanic Canary Islands, with cafes, bars, restaurants, beaches and the perfect onshore breezes. "Kites essential, clothing optional!" Idyllic!



CHINA - Tan Xinbo from Weifang wrote saying he'd missed a *Kiting* magazine. Here's one special issue to keep - your name is in it!

AUSTRALIA - Kirra International Kite Festival 2011 featured Rob Brasington, Mike Richards, Ian Flewellyn, Grant Cowie, Kevin and Linda Sanders, plus members of Queensland Kiteflyers Society. Come back in November 2012 to Queensland for white sandy beaches and warm sunshine. Rod Steere, Geelong, has the kitemaking bug and is scouring the local sales for ripstop. Davide Colombi is proud of his AKA Pilot's card and regularly flies his kites at Moana Beach. Newsflash:

Grant Cowie and Kevin Sanders at the Kirra Kite Festival.



Kevin and I celebrated the New Year by welcoming our third grandchild, Jaxon. Baby is gorgeous, and both grandparents are exhausted, but happy.

CAMBODIA - December's kite festival in Phnom Penh attracted over 100 kite fliers from 19 cities. Traditionally, kites in rural Cambodia are used during the rice harvest season to preserve Khmer culture and attract tourists. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKS8Epic2A](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKS8Epic2A) shows kites in action.

INDIA - Belgaum Kite Festival had a date-change to 15-16 January to enable flyers to also attend Gujarat festival. Organisers apologised and agreed to pay any cancellation charges. Featuring 18 national and a dozen International kite teams, we trust everyone had fun!

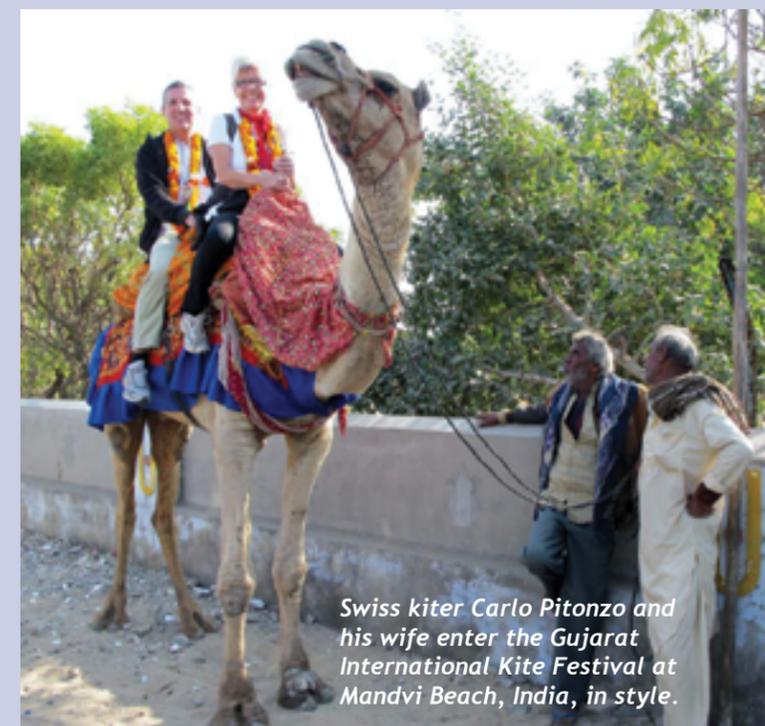
NEW ZEALAND - While more earthquakes rocked Christchurch (South Island), Anne and Peter Whitehead of Wellington (North Island) started 2012 at the Tongariro National Park Kite fly. Volker Hoberg, Germany, joined



the group sharing wet and thunderous weather conditions. Nelson Kite Festival, 21-23 January, hopes to report next issue. P.S. Anne's leg is still recovering.

Empty Space in the Sky - Noted Australian kiteflier Ted Mellor of Port Fairy made his last flight in January, after a long illness.

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



Swiss kiter Carlo Pitonzo and his wife enter the Gujarat International Kite Festival at Mandvi Beach, India, in style.

Full sky in Fuerteventura



## Sanctioning For Less

Sanctioning fees have been reduced for every event. No more extra paperwork to try and qualify, just a better rate for all. Protect yourself, your club, and the space where you fly. Sanctioning is now only \$100 for all events, not \$150. In addition, all clubs who purchase yearly coverage can add one festival for only \$50 more. But don't wait too long; you still need to file your sanctioning request 10 days before the event. See [www.aka.kite.org](http://www.aka.kite.org) for all the fine print.

## National Kite Month: Cash For Kites

It's been traditional to start National Kite Month with the Smithsonian Kite Festival (now the Cherry Blossom Festival) in the District of Columbia and extend for five full weeks, six full weekends, and that tradition will continue this year. That's March 31 through May 6. Certainly during that period there should be well over 500 events that could be registered at [www.NationalKiteMonth.org](http://www.NationalKiteMonth.org). Events need only involve kiting in some way to qualify, and can be a festival, competition, workshop, classroom event, or any activity that brings kites and people together.

Once again, prizes will be offered. There's a weekly cash prize of \$50 to the individual and \$50 to the club that registers the most events within each week of NKM. "Weeks" will go from Monday to Sunday, and March 31 - April 8 will constitute the first "week." There will also be a cash prize of \$100 to the organizer (individual or club) of the most registered events.

This year NKM will have a special emphasis on kids kite building workshops. KTAI's representative on the NKM Committee, Daren Henderson, has donated a Premier Luna Moth and a Prism 2.5m Snapshot power kite to whomever organizes the largest kids workshop. Send in photos of the workshop to [admin@NationalKiteMonth.org](mailto:admin@NationalKiteMonth.org) with a description of the attendance to be considered for the prize.

To further assist the kids kite workshop organizer, Scott Skinner and the Drachen Foundation have offered a 20% discount on their Trep-trap kite kits, developed by Robert Trep-panier and sold in ten-packs. They have established a special code to use to purchase their kit kites for \$1 apiece. The code will be given to all organizers who indicate a kids workshop in their registration. Also, if requested and while supplies last, organizers of events with kids workshops may receive a bag of kite line winders with Dacron line (courtesy of Val Deale at Premier Kites) sent to them if they register early. To request kits or winders first register your event, then send a note to [admin@NationalKiteMonth.org](mailto:admin@NationalKiteMonth.org) identifying your event and indicating your needs. Please allow time for delivery.

To help foster the introduction of sport kiting to the public there are a few extra prizes especially for organizers of events that involve novice competitors. Those registering events that include stunt kite clinics or stunt kite competitions with novices will be put in a drawing for a pair of custom made cherry wood quad-line handles by Mike Van Meers. To sweeten the deal, the organizers of the first four of these events (those including novice competitors) in which proof can be provided that four or more novices were introduced to kite competition (photos with names will do) will receive a \$50 rebate on any AKA sanctioning fees that were paid for the event.

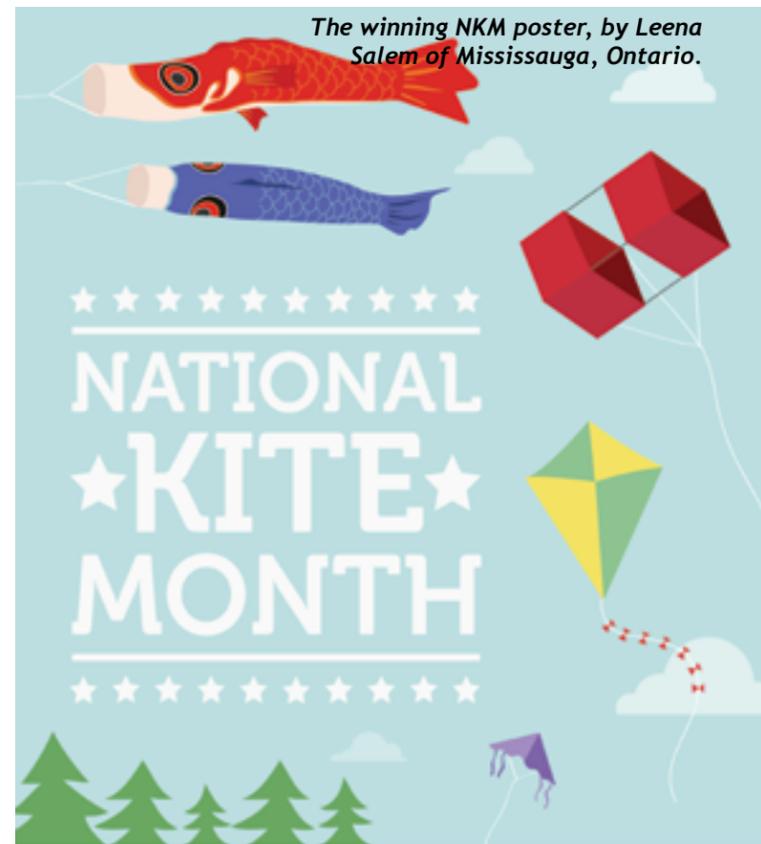
And finally, because we recognize that a lot of the success of National Kite Month springs from the efforts of our Regional

Directors, there will be a special kite, handmade by me, awarded to the RD with the most events registered in his or her region.

That's a lot of ways to grab a prize during National Kite Month. But there may be more. Check the KiteTalk Forum regularly for updates on NKM 2012. Also, look into the NKM website for all kinds of ideas and help about putting on a kite event. And remember that while you are on the kite field, or any time you have a kite in your hand, you represent the entire organization of kiting to the public. Use that opportunity to share what you love about kites, and don't forget to mention that the American Kitefliers Association is always there to help out.

## Oklahoma OK!

Of course you know that the 35<sup>th</sup> AKA Convention is in Enid, Oklahoma, from September 30 to October 7. We'll be based at the Enid Convention Center, less than three miles from the flying fields at the Autry Technology Center. The AKA has blocks of rooms at the Best Western Inn, Baymont Inn, Hampton Inn, and Holiday Inn Express, all less than five miles from the fields and with rates from \$78 to \$124 per night. There will be shuttle buses between the Convention Center and the fields. Enid is served by the Oklahoma City and Wichita airports, both about 125 miles away. Look for more details on the AKA website, and register online or look in the summer issue of *Kiting* for the registration form. And see [www.visitEnid.org](http://www.visitEnid.org) for everything you ever wanted to know about our host city.



Event: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Location: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date & Time: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_



# EMPTY SPACES IN THE SKY

## Gary Kelly

1946-2012

In January, Gary passed away in Mohnton, PA. He was a US Army veteran, having served with the Military Police in Germany. Although Gary had a large collection of single line kites, most times he flew only one kite at a time. He could be found roaming around the field with his kite, talking with other kitefliers. Gary loved conversation! He always had a story to tell to anyone who would listen. He was a very happy go lucky friend who enjoyed sharing conversation on and off the kite field. Our paths crossed about eight years ago on the kite field in Wildwood. Gary enjoyed attending the Wildwood International Kite Festival over Memorial Day Weekend because it gave him an opportunity to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. He could be counted on to answer those "inquisitive" kite questions from spectators with his unique sense of humor. Another event Gary enjoyed attending was Sunfest in Ocean City. He looked forward to the mass ascensions. There was a playful competitiveness between Gary's friends and himself to see who had the coolest kite in the air. He also couldn't wait to brag about his newest kite, toy or shirt he bought on the Boardwalk. Gary was part of a group that regularly flies at Louise Moore Park in Easton, PA. We enjoyed having Gary come out to fly and joke around with us. He will definitely be missed.

Paul Keeler



## Glenn Austin

1950-2011

Glenn was not only an AKA member but belonged to the Pierce County Kite Flyers Association, Washington Kite Association and Westport Windriders Kite Club for around ten years. Glenn was on the boards of WKA and the Windriders. If he volunteered to do something you never had to worry that he wouldn't follow through on his commitment. He and his wife, Marianne, flew red, white and blue colors and put on a wonderful display wherever they were. Glenn got into pin trading a few years back and built up a very large collection. He would always bring you a pin and trade with you at our club meetings. He also ran the pin challenge at the Windriders Club meetings. I will miss Glenn at our meetings and festivals, our great chats and sharing funny stories. He has left a very empty space.

Marla Miller

## Constance Pederson

In 1981, Connie Pederson rescued OSEK at a point when the club's original President stepped down. She brought us all together and simply walked around the field asking for our consensus about activities, until we held an election and put her officially in the Presidency. She created the Cleveland Kite Festival. She got us to events and places few kitefliers ever thought of going, often earning the club funds. Once, just because she thought it would be interesting to see if we could do it, a couple of our more fearless members climbed into the belfry of a big church to fly kites while others flew them in the church parking lot. Connie called us "the best kept secret in northern Ohio" because people constantly told us that they never knew we existed. Today just about every park system in a five county area knows we exist and vie for which weekend each spring and summer we can be at an event in their park. Connie served as OSEK's president for 15 years. Connie Pederson was something else! Always had a smile, sparkling eyes and a spirit of fun.

Nancy Lockwood



## JoAnn Weber

JoAnn Weber, of Minneapolis, died in late January at age 68 of natural causes. JoAnn had planned to go into nursing and began taking courses, but after a year realized that her real calling was in art. So she moved to Minneapolis and earned her degree at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design. She worked as an interior designer for several years at architectural and interior design firms in Minneapolis. By 1990, she had discovered kite flying and attended some kite events put on by the Minnesota Kite Society (MKS). She established her own business called "Arte del Cielo" where for twenty years she designed and sewed banners and unique fabric sculptures using banner cloth and other materials. Among her clients were restaurants, churches, libraries, and Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines; her fabric sculptures graced their ships and corporate offices. JoAnn was a gifted artist. She learned to make kites and practiced by making different designs, no two ever truly alike. She honed her craft at local and national kitemaking workshops. In the late 1990s, the Maryland Kite Society honored her as one of the "Women in Kiting" and invited her to Ocean City. She designed and had a pin made for that event, featuring "Venus", a bowed low aspect ratio kite which later won first place at the 2000 AKA convention. Joanne also trained Salukis. Her last three dogs were the most wonderful and loving creatures. I will miss being with them, but I will miss JoAnn the most.

Brad Klages



designs in ripstop, focusing on vibrant colors and designs, I was able to pass on inspiration and construction techniques to many other kitebuilders. I taught workshops around the country and participated in numerous festivals around the world. I've been the Event Coordinator and Head Judge at many kite festivals and competitions, including the National Kitemakers' Competitions at the AKA Conventions, the Newport Cup Festival, and the Smithsonian and Blossom Kite Festivals, and have been an active participant in the planning and operations of numerous major kite festivals, as well as kiteflying publicity events and kitemaking workshops for children. I was chief author of the materials still in use for AKA's Rules and Guidelines for Kitemakers' Competitions, and wrote articles on kite flying and kite festivals for numerous publications, including *KiteLines* and *Kiting*. Articles featuring me and my kites have appeared in *American Kite*, *KiteLines*, *Kiting*, *Martha Stewart Living*, the *Washington Post*, and numerous other publications. Teaching Martha how to make kites on her TV show was a great experience. Awards I've earned include AKA's "Kiteflier of the Year" award, presented in memory of Steve Edeiken, AKA's "Kite Artist of the Year" award, presented in memory of Lee Toy, and the Grand National Champion award for my Mama Sans rokkaku.



Thunderbird



South China Seas Northwoods Dream The Place Where the Lion Dwells

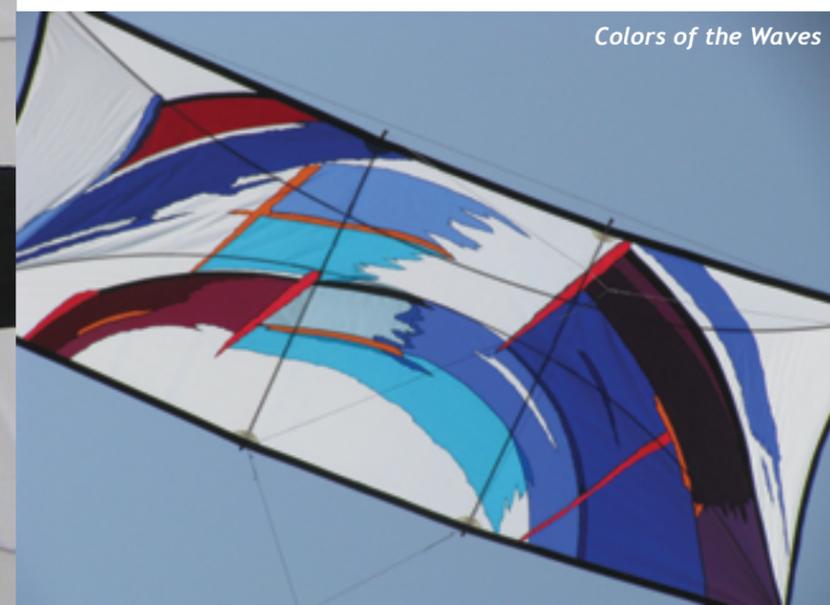
I'll tell you that kites offer great joys, and that one of the greatest joys is the friendships that develop across national and all other sorts of boundaries. Another is opportunity to experience the great creativity of kitefliers, whether it be in visual art (like kitemaking) or performance art (like sport kite performances). It's a wonderful world, and the sky is big enough for all of us. ☒



Soji Go Dark



Hadrian's Wall



Colors of the Waves

It does seem like a long time ago: it was 1980 when the kite bug really bit me. It had started a few years earlier, buying kites "for the kids," but guess which kid really liked it? After spending \$50 on a kite at the Fish Creek Kite Company, and being chastised by every female in my multi-generational family except my daughter, my parents suggested I go see Ansel Toney in Farmland, Indiana (who started seriously making kites at 89 years of age). In numerous pilgrimages to Farmland, it seemed that Ansel's love of kites looked a lot like the fountain of youth; his generosity in sharing kitebuilding techniques created another convert to playing with the winds.

I started sewing kites (the first one has never flown) and was captured by Margo and Bevan Brown and other members of the Maryland Kite Society after showing up at one of their events at Baltimore's Inner Harbor with a kite that was finished in the car while my wife drove to the event. The generosity, spirit, and creative talents of kitefliers proved to be irresistible. In an early meeting with Steve Edeiken (clearly a kite god), I asked him how he made that train of kites and Steve told me! This was so unlike the usual pattern of keeping all

your competitive secrets to yourself — and so much like what is the best of kiting.

Experimenting with graphic

South China Seas Rev



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## CALL FOR FREE CATALOG

# VOICES FROM THE VAULT

## PAUL FIEBER

BY PATTI GIBBONS

Although the kiting bug didn't nip Paul Fieber until adulthood, seeds took root during the playground days of his youth. Growing up a little south of Milwaukee on the shores of Lake Michigan, Paul and his brothers learned from their father how to make diamond kites from butcher paper and sticks. Kite in hand, the family headed to the park to fly, and in those days thrills for the Fieber boys were found up high. "We flew kites really high" but the upper atmosphere currents took their toll on their handmade kites. "We never got our kites back at the end of the day." Scratching his head, wondering why high flies tickled them as kids, Paul declares, "I have no compulsion to fly so high today."

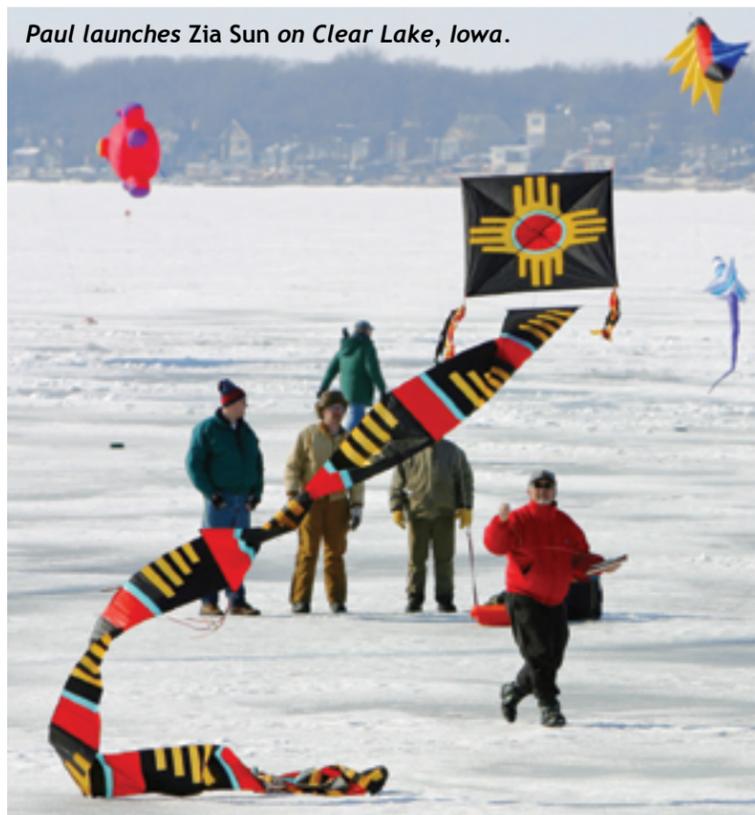
As an adult, kiting came out of nowhere and lured Paul at an art gallery. He and his wife were visiting a kite photography exhibit in Madison when wheels began to turn. As an amateur photographer who enjoyed dabbling with cameras, Paul decided to try his hand at kite aerial photography. He bought what he recalls was "a marginally acceptable kite for photography" and learned to fly and capture overhead shots. As his confidence grew, he let line out over water and went past the jetty to get otherwise impossible marine photographs.

Pretty soon, Paul's weekend kite photography sessions sparked a general interest in kiting and he reached out to other kitefliers and joined the Milwaukee-based Kite Society of Wisconsin. That group fractured and Paul joined the newly formed Wisconsin Kite Club and also added the AKA membership card to his wallet. Digging in and becoming an active member, over the years Paul held AKA offices including Regional Director and Chair of the Kite Art Committee. Drawn to service and helping to promote kiting, Paul keeps busy at the club's annual meetings, serving often on the Kite Art Education and Public Services Committees.

Back in the early salad days of his kiting involvement, Paul simply wanted to make his own kites yet quickly realized that he needed to learn to sew. While not quitting his day job to become a tailor, Paul readily mastered the fundamentals and sought out more advanced kitemaking classes. A familiar face at kitemaking retreats like Fort Worden, Paul learned to build

well-made steady fliers, including a number of prize-winning kites. Over the years Paul made his share of deltas and figure kites but admits, "I didn't have any one specific kite that I liked to make," other than a general preference for moderate-sized kites and a strong interest in single-line kites. Enjoying the art

Paul launches Zia Sun on Clear Lake, Iowa.



Kay Day

of making kites, Paul's handiwork eventually led to deeper involvement, as Paul became a teacher. Realizing that "it's hard to fly a kite and be tense," Paul enjoys sharing the magic of kiting with others, and readily shares kitemaking skills with adults and children.

In addition to being a fun pastime, kiting became Paul's passport to travel the globe, and over the years he's flown in China and South Africa, and enjoyed North American festivals in Montreal and Long Beach. Treasuring the kite community's never-ending camaraderie, Paul's kite travels make him smile.

Active from the ground level, Paul helped put a little sunshine and fun in the cold winter days and co-organized Kites On Ice with five other fliers. The mega winter festival ran from 1999 through 2005 and got people out to fly in the frozen Midwestern winters. For the faint at heart and frostbitten, Kites on Ice included indoor kiting, kitemaking classes and kite exhibits that were equally popular to the blustery outdoor fun. The festival was very expensive with a six-figure budget that was overseen by a large non-profit manage-



ment company experienced in running crowd-filled citywide events such as the Taste of Madison and the Madison Marathon. Kicking off the first year, United Airlines generously supported the festival with travel vouchers and the organizers were able to bring in fliers from all over. As the years went on and sponsorship waned, the group solicited public donations at the gate before eventually requiring admission tickets. Paul's behind-the-scenes experience with Kites on Ice taught him how to organize large kite events, and years later he launched the Milwaukee chapter of Kite Fly for Peace — a worldwide kite fly that is simultaneously celebrated in over thirty countries. Paul's natural joining spirit helps bring fun to his local community.

Glancing ahead and speculating on the future of organized kiting, Paul likens the state of events in the kiting community to the sluggish world economy. "Seems like kiting is stuck, kind of like our economy is stuck right now," but Paul isn't downhearted because "kiting always has been an up and down kind of thing." Pointing out that kiting is a low impact recreation, Paul speculates that this feature will attract young people who are increasingly interested in activities not accompanied by a carbon footprint. ☒

Several chatty kitefliers let the tape spin and recorded their memories and thoughts about kites, kitefliers, and the great big sky for the World Kite Museum's oral history archive project. Interested in telling your stories? Would you like to hear what other fliers say? Got time to interview special people in your local clubs or friends in far away places? Feel free to contact the Museum if you'd like to learn more about the oral history tapes. Contact us at [info@worldkitemuseum.com](mailto:info@worldkitemuseum.com).



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# THE SPORTING LIFE

## 2X QUAD BY PAUL DUGARD

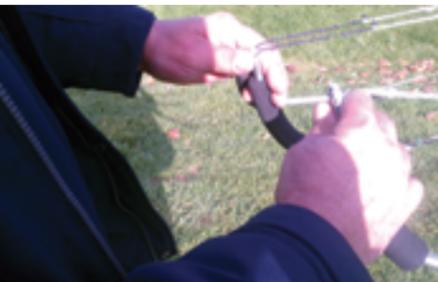
If you're not so lucky as to have a bunch of Rev flyers around to form a team, never fear. Learning to fly two Revs at once takes practice, but it's not difficult.

Your first objective is to even up the lines and launch the kite with one hand and it goes straight up. Even before you begin; check your equipment. Make sure that your lines are even, and that the bridle is not stretched or wrapped around a connection point. Set up your kite. Fly it for a couple of minutes to get out all of the wrinkles.

### Quick Tune

With the kite landed on its tips, leading edge up, put both handles together, holding both handle tops with one hand and the bottom handles with the other. Don't let the handles slide. Keep the handles even. Now launch the kite, pushing the bottoms toward the top lines, holding the handles one hand on the top and the other on the bottom. If the kite goes to the left, give a knot of down on the left. If it goes to the right, give a knot of down on the right.

Think of this as if both top lines are on one handle, and both bottom lines are on the same handle. Launch the kite. If your lines are even, then the kite goes straight up and down. If your lines are even then you won't be compensating for the kite going left or right.



### Holding the Handles

Both handles in one hand, next split them apart with your ring finger and pinky finger. If this is your right hand then your ring and pinky fingers are controlling the right side of the kite. The index and middle

finger will control the left side of the kite. The thumb will go across the top of both handles. It is important to get the bottoms apart and the tops of the handles close, this way when flying the bottom of each handle doesn't cross and they won't get locked up with each other causing loss of control.

What do you lose flying with one hand? You lose the ability of splitting apart the handles. You have to compensate for this. Inverse and vertical hovers are easy because the handles are right next to each other, all movements that require a difference between the handles (a separation of handles) become impossible or poorly compromised by technique adjustments



### The Pull Launch and the Pump

Rotate the bottom of the handles forward, now rotate even more trying to touch the bottom line to the top line. Extend your arm out, lean forward and with the lines taut, step back and pump the kite hard. If

necessary slowly walk backwards extending your arm forward toward the kite again and pump. The kite launches.

Leading edge up, launch to no more than 6' up. Learn to balance the kite keeping it level and slowly land and launch. As you continue to fly you will notice that the kite will slowly start to descend to the ground; extend your arm, rotate the bottom of the handles toward the top lines and pump. If the kite jumps up, then you have enough forward motion or "up" in the kite.

Practice straight up and down. Use the full window, not just the center but the side of the window also, with small taps on the bottom of the handles to correct the kite and keep it level. If the kite seems to be pulling very hard add a knot of down at the handles.

Both top lines should be barely touching your index finger. This is the normal hand position, up high on the handles.

### Kite Adjustment

In the beginning, add one knot more of up into the kites. Your bailout is up. If the leading edge is pointing up, the kite must go up when you pump. It might take two pumps but you must have that out.

### Two Finger Turns

Practice clockwise and counter-clockwise turns. Start with both hands holding the handles together, simulating holding in one hand. Think of the top of the handles are in one hand and only the bottoms move. Now make the kite turn clockwise and counterclockwise using only the bottom. Watch the handles. Now do this with both handles in one hand.

Using two fingers, index and middle, with the thumb on the top of the handle, push with the thumb and pull with the two fingers. Go for a full rotation. This is to make a small circle, not large. Switch thumb to the other top handle and spin in the opposite direction using the ring and pinky fingers. The faster the pull using the two fingers, the crisper the turn. Learn to do a square doing ¼ turns.



### Straight Across the Window

Next is to learn how to make the kite's leading edge go left and right across the window. When flying with two hands, the kite flying from right to left, the top of the kite is leaning toward the flyer

and the bottom is kicked out away from you just a little to keep the kite level as you fly straight across the window. To fly across from side to side one-handed, you must compensate. Pull your pinky and ring fingers in a little and cause the kite to angle up just a little.

Remember that your window is much smaller now that you don't have the ability of splitting your hands to allow for more of an edge. Turn early.



### 180 GO

Practice flying across the window, at the edge, use two fingers to turn the kite 180°, go to the other edge and use the other two fingers to unwrap and 180 Go. Practice up turn versus down turn on the 180 Gos. You will find that the kite will be more responsive on the down turn. On the up turns, extend your arm out and as you turn up put in a pump to get the kite going.

To fly a straight line side to side, the compensation is to slightly rotate the kite up. For example, if you want to fly 9 o'clock to 3 o'clock, aim at 10 and 2 o'clock.

### Inverted Flying and Hover

With the leading edge down, kite on the ground, reverse up to 6'. Keeping the kite level, no wobble. Continue till you're able to go to 50 percent of the window. Hold the hover.

Next, with the kite on the ground, leading edge up, fly up, quickly rotate the kite 180° and pull back with your hand to set the kite into an inverted hover. Do this turning clockwise and counter-clockwise.

### Twisted Lines

With the leading edge up, fly up. Turn the kite clockwise or counter-clockwise with two fingers to invert the kite. Quickly go into an inverted hover or snap hover, using the same two fingers again to invert the kite and pump to hold the kite. This is the bicycle turn with one hand.

### Practice Figures

#### The Big A

Start at the side of the window. Go up to 50 percent, ¼ turn fly across, turn up, turn at 75 percent fly across and turn down to 50 percent, fly across and turn down and 180 and

land. Launch and do the move to return to the starting point.

### Pez

Fly up to a corner with the tip up, add a little reverse and the kite will fall down on its own. Use the bottom of the kite as a rudder to keep it straight. ¼ turn and pump the kite when ready to fly towards the center of the window. Do this alternating hands at any point. Once proficient with either hand comes the Mutant.

### Mutant

Launch kite #1. Go to 50 percent and hover. Launch kite #2. You will have a tendency to keep the kites up high in the beginning because the Revs behave nicely when up high in a neutral place. Practice #1 hover, #2 up and down. Now reverse, #2 hover and #1 up and down.

Now a side by side up and down. #1 follow #2 up and down. #2 follow #1 up and down.

Hover #1, figure 8 with #2. Hover #2, figure 8 with #1. Fly up to 50 percent and turn both kites clockwise, next counterclockwise. Small circles to start with, then larger.

Once this is accomplished comes the fun part: crossing from left to right. Hover the left kite in the right window and the right kite in the left window.

Turn both kites in un-cross and turn up and hover. Now go back.

### The Big AA

Fly the big A as a mirror, then as a follow.

Don't concentrate on just one kite then the other. Use your peripheral vision and see both. Remember your out when you get in trouble is toward the center of the window and UP.

### What Kites? What Lines?

Do I need matched pairs? If you have deep pockets, yes. Fly the kite for the range of wind that is present. Do not try to fly a standard in 10mph where a Mid-Vent will fly. If the kite will go up with one hand off of the ground, and not pull too hard then it should be the right kite.

Do they need to be the same? No. Learn with what you have in your bag or can borrow from your friends.

Your hands will take a beating, getting cramped or just plain tired. The strength will come with time and flying.

Practice with different line lengths. I don't have two sets that are the same length. Fly what you have.

### Screw Ups

Make sure that the people around you know what you are working on. If you crash one kite blame it on your left hand if you're right handed.

Safety first. Keep away from others until you become comfortable with both kites. Even then you will crash. ☹



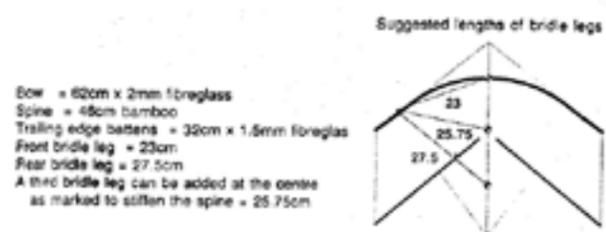
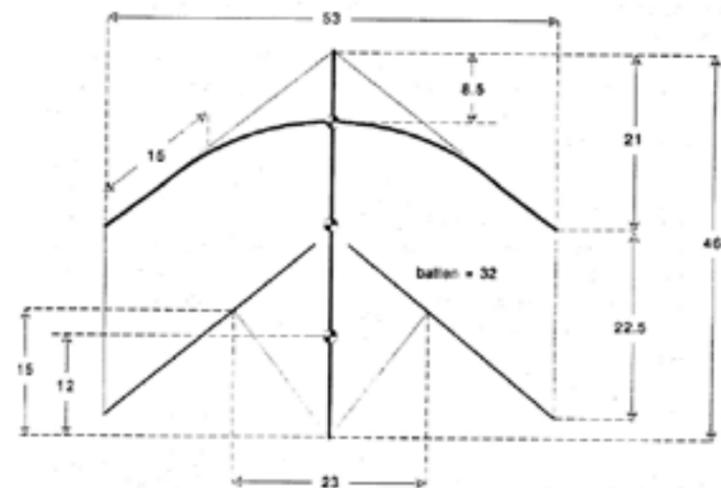
# KITE PLAN

## MANJHA CLUB INTERNATIONAL FIGHTERS

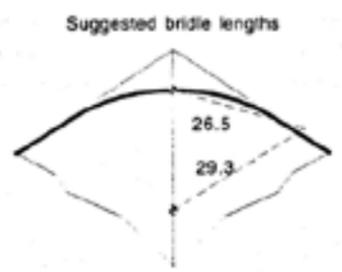
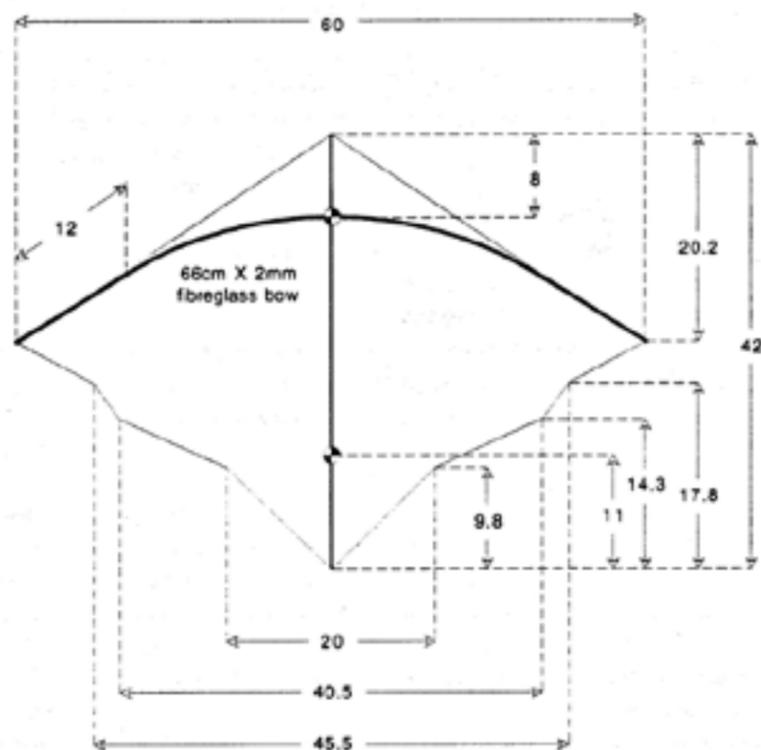
The Manjha Dart is a strong kite and needs a good line to play with. Ludo built his Manjha Dart with strong Mylar, extra strong tape on the front sides and to hold the bow at its tips. Same for the two bamboo sticks for the tail. The bow and the spine are made with 2.5mm bamboo. The bow is trimmed at the tips to allow more flexibility and to give more power. There are three bridles to hold the kite; the middle one will be adjusted once the front and the back are set.

You can find more of the Manjha Club International's fighter kite plans at [www.fighterkitecentral.com/plans](http://www.fighterkitecentral.com/plans).

Manjha Dart by Ludo Petit



Captain Tarbert by Philippe Gallot



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# KITE TRADE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION WRAP-UP

## FIRST KITE CONVENTION: FROM THE EYES OF A NEWBIE

BY SUEBIE MANNING

The 2012 KTAI Convention in Las Vegas brought a whole new meaning to me regarding kite manufacturers, their products, and what is involved in selling quality products. It was amazing to see the collegiality of everyone, and to see how long time friends in the industry were happy to share information with those of us who were new.

The first afternoon of the convention started with a Demonstration Day. Unfortunately, as unpredictable as life, the winds of Las Vegas were not very predictable either. Even though there was very little wind, many of the dealers were able to fly their low to zero wind products, which were still amazing to see. From stunt kites to zero wind kites, and from small single line kites to quad-line kites, the afternoon was still very colorful and fun!

The official opening day of meetings brought many retailers together to share ideas. After introductions of officers, past officers and attendees, the time was spent in discussing products.

We had the opportunity to see several manufacturers strut their stuff and show us what was new for the upcoming year. Besides showing many kite products, we were also able to see demonstrations of new non-kite products, flying toys, and other unique items that were available.

Friday and Saturday were mostly spent in browsing and taking in all the exhibits. What a wonderful display of color, excitement and energy, as we were able to see, hear and enjoy all the fun products. I have to say, this was one of my many favorite parts of the convention. One could not help but enjoy all the show of color, and be in a great mood after strolling down each aisle.

The manufacturers were very gracious in helping a new kid on the block better understand what was available, and share the workings of their own products. It was fun to test the products and have a hands on experience besides gathering information and having them explain what their company was offering and what products were best sellers.

During this convention, I really learned more about two great family-focused organizations: the AKA and the KTAI. Both of these organizations encourage the joy of kite flying, and their enthusiasm in getting families and more people involved in flying kites was very contagious. On the other hand, it was rather disturbing to hear of all the dishonest companies who are copying some of our certified manufacturers, and who are trying to sell knock-off imitations of original quality products from KTAI members.

Needless to say, my first experience at the KTAI Convention was amazing and a lot of fun! I really look forward to being a part of this activity next year, and encourage other kite lovers to get involved, too. The sky's the limit, and there is plenty of room for many more kites to fly. ☺

Nocturnal Sports, awarded Best New Product 2012 by KTAI, realized that outdoor kite flying fun didn't have to end when the sun goes down, so we invented NiteKite. NiteKite is the most advanced illuminated kite in the world providing you with hours of family fun. It's easy to operate and set up. Once it's flying, it looks like "lightning on a string". NiteKite uses Electroluminescent Wire Lighting technology and is powered by just 2 AA batteries. You can operate NiteKite with two different light flashing sequences or keep it steady on. The kite is a 6' delta, proudly made in the USA. NiteKite is weather resistant, comes in a variety of lighting colors, and it's ready to fly in a bag with line, handles and batteries. Stunt kites will be offered soon. Purchase NiteKite at all the large kite shops in the country or visit our website at [www.nocturnalsports.com](http://www.nocturnalsports.com).



Nary a breeze? It's time to Skate! Those light wind days that frustrate kitefliers are the Skate's cup of tea. A hybrid between a controllable single-line kite and a glider, it soars at the flick of a wrist. Designed for low wind conditions that leave most kites on the ground, it's a popular kite for indoor flying. Paul deBakker's Skate is flown by many top indoor competitors. Adding grace and elegance every place you fly, it turns kiteflying into performance art. Its nose pocket accepts one to three coins, allowing you to tune

it for indoor or outdoor conditions. Add weight to the nose to make it glide. Remove the coins to fly it as a kite in 0 to 6 mph winds. Made of lightweight micro-carbon rods and 0.6 oz. ripstop polyester. 5'-4" x 4", 2.8oz., 49" case. Ready to fly with 100' of 50# Spectra line on a handle. Available from Into The Wind, [www.intothewind.com](http://www.intothewind.com).

Gomberg Kite Productions introduced a variety of new products this year as part of our G-Kites brand. Our 2012 series included new cellula rkites, light wind gliders, and creative inflatables. Check out our entire interactive online catalog at [www.my-catalog.biz/GKites/](http://www.my-catalog.biz/GKites/). Gomberg Show Kites can still be found at [www.GombergKites.com](http://www.GombergKites.com).



# KAPTIONS

BY NICOLAS CHORIER



Fishermen dry sardines on the beach in Kozhikode.

Fifteen years ago, the kite line became my second optical nerve. Since then, each destination led me to devise tailor-made hardware and photographing techniques, which I am constantly improving. Each new venture brings me into contact with dedicated and highly knowledgeable specialists. And every instance turns out to be a rich and fulfilling experience.

Aerial photography is widely used around the world, and most of the territories have been seen from above. Nevertheless, some countries, like India, still banish it for security reasons, as it's usually done from helicopters or planes.

By combining a camera and a kite, I could record a spectacular kaleidoscope of aerial photography from across the country. These images are therefore really unique and exclusive, as they capture for the first time a wide range of the Indian beauty. Using a few square feet of fabric, a touch of technical know-how, and a whiff of breeze, these photographs challenge one's sense of orientation and perspective, play with textures and graphics, and provide a close view of the world from an unusual angle.

The kite allows the photographer to wait for just the right time to click, when a ray of sun finally comes to highlight the subject. The camera will fly the wind, a silent and unobtrusive spectator, alert and fully integrated in its natural surroundings. Eco-friendly, easy to set and non-intrusive, KAP has a lot to offer to the spectator. It allows low altitude shots, close-ups from above, preserves the human dimension in the compositions, and gives access to remote sites in intricate environments.

For the last 15 years, I've been shooting intensively in India, mostly for heritage (natural or human) conservation, tourism and wildlife, as well as for government, corporations and builders. I settled down in India three years ago, attracted by the tremendous potential for KAP here. My wife and I lived in southern France, but wanted to experience something else —

different colors, smells, traditions, language, etc. — especially for our two young kids, now four and six. Both of us had been traveling in the past. After publishing my coffee table book *Kite's Eye View: India*, there was some kind of logic to pursuing the Indian path. We settled down in Pondicherry, where I created my own company, doing KAP.

I've recently published an app for iPhones, iPods and iPads, displaying a selection of my work in India, mostly never published before. It can be found in the iTunes App Store, under the name of *India From A Kite*. This app depicts a selection of world heritage sites, spectacular landscapes, and most important: humans.

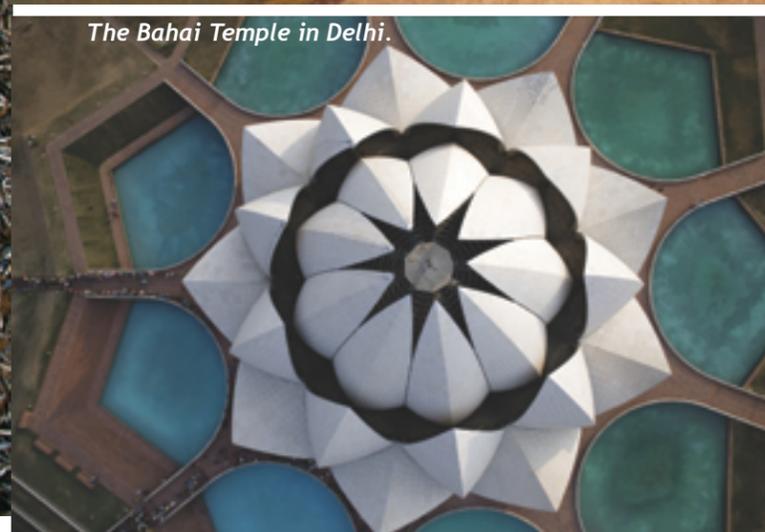
You'll fly above the Taj Mahal, close to its dome, and cruise on the small boat up the Ganga at Varanasi, the holiest city in the world. You'll share a meal with a group of camels in Rajasthan, and fly above legendary palaces. You'll imagine yourself at the Kumba Mela at Allahabad, the largest human gathering on earth. You will see the Kalari fighters on the beach, like only the birds have before. You'll visit Kerala and enchanting



Crowds at the Mangalore Kite Festival.



Elephants take a bath at a rehabilitation center in Kodanad.



The Bahai Temple in Delhi.

beaches, discover Hampi and its rocks.

But on the way to such topics, there are always people. Like in the fishermen image, there is something very special in their eyes. There is some kind of frankness, simplicity, with a glimpse of curiosity and amusement. They have this natural and relaxed attitude because there is nobody holding the camera.

And people seen from above are a very interesting subject. It's interesting to witness how people organise themselves in a crowd, how individuals become a crowd. It also gives a new vision on people in their environment, sometimes a new understanding.

Another interesting aspect of human shots is working with the shadows. If you shoot vertically when the Sun makes a 45° angle with the horizon, the shadows will have exactly the same size as the person, and your brain will project the character on the shadow only, forgetting the person standing there.

On the field, it's always amazing to see how much a kite



Old Gopuram in Vilianur Temple, near Pondicherry.

and a camera can create such a link between people, whether they're Hindus, Muslims, Christians, or Buddhists. Curious people from all origins and of all ages will have the same smile, the same shine in the eyes, when gathering around the kite line.

And in India, the country of faith in many forms, there is something strong in all souls, which inspires all aspects of a day spent in India. That spiritual dimension is intimately mixed with a fantastic sense of pragmatism, which is sometimes close to surrealism. That can be unbearable for some, but for me it's enchanting. ☒



Ladies visiting Hampi dry their saris on the Tungabhadra river banks, on upside-down bamboo boats.



Practicing the martial art of kalaripayattu in Kerala.

Fishermen return to shore in Tamil Nadu.





Suzanne Sadow pitches in with Ken Conrad's class, with Kara Zubal's and Alexa King's kites in the background.



Dave Ellis and his grandchildren



Linda Larkey



Instructor Martin Blais and Pam Hodges



Kelsy Knebel



Marlene Hubbard



# OREGON KITEMAKERS RETREAT ROCKAWAY, OR JANUARY 12-15, 2012

Kara Zubal and her painted diamond from Cari King's class.



PHOTOS BY SUZANNE SADOW, KARA ZUBAL AND SAM KING

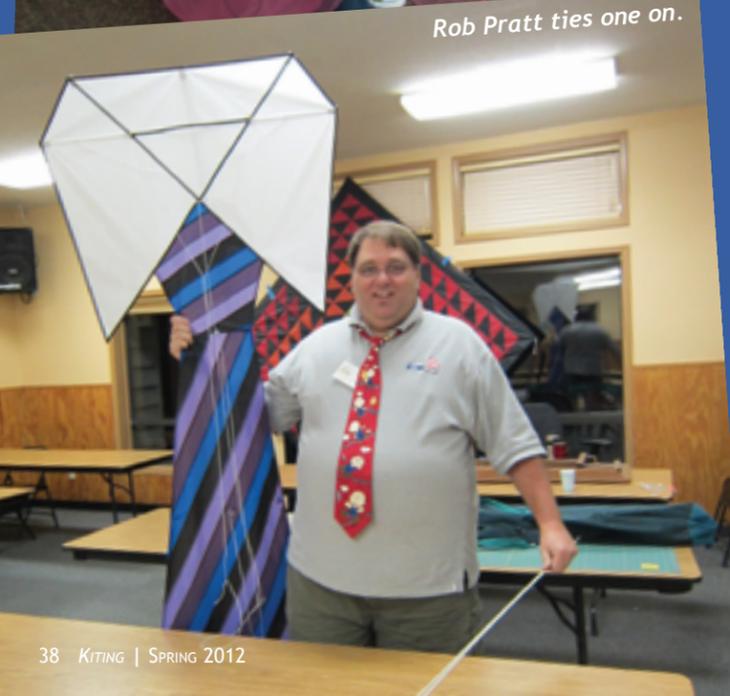


Alexa King



## UPPER MIDWEST AREA KITEMAKING EVENT DES MOINES, IA JANUARY 13-15, 2012

PHOTOS BY CONNIE LEDVINA, LINDA LARKEY AND RANDY LARKEY



Rob Pratt ties one on.



Dave Herzig

## MINNESOTA KITE SOCIETY FLED WORKSHOP CRYSTAL, MN DECEMBER 3, 2011

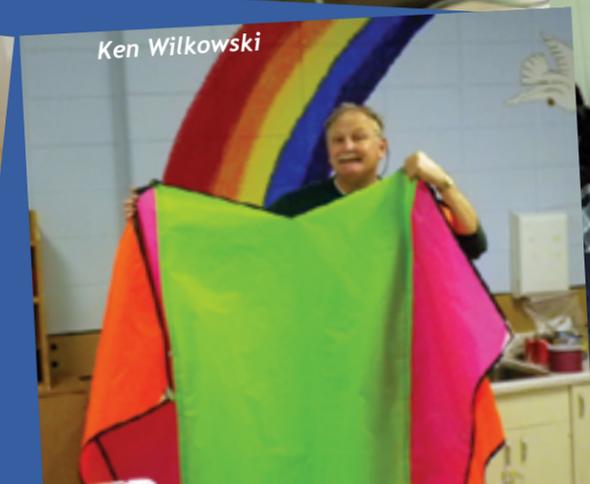
PHOTOS BY DEAN MURRAY



John Kaulbars and Dave Herzig cut fabric.



Kara Zubal



Ken Wilkowski



KEYSTONE KITERS  
WINTER RETREAT  
CAMP HILL, PA  
JANUARY 22, 2012

Faridah Ismail assembles a traditional wau bulan.

Adrienne Balmer

Faridah Ismail

Todd Little

Scott Davis

Amy Doran

Egan Davis

Lisa Willoughby

Richard Hurd

Dick Curran

Ian Willoughby

Bob Kelly glues bamboo to the sail.

PHOTOS BY KEVIN SUANNON AND BOB KELLY

General Abu Ismail gives a pointer to Ben Huggett.

Ben Huggett

Takako Barresi

Wayne Turner

WINDLESS  
KITE FESTIVAL  
LONG BEACH, WA  
JANUARY 14-15,  
2012

PHOTOS BY WILLY HENDRICKSON

# PATANG CULTURE

Phil Broder Journeys Through Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Karnataka In Search Of Good Kite Karma



India's skies often seem less than friendly. The airspace is crowded — Mumbai even has two airports — and if you walk away from your kite for a few moments, you'll no doubt find it tangled with someone else's. Long trains of hundreds of small kites snake cloudward. Large inflatables dangle from lifters. Rokkakus rise, deltas soar, teams of family members assist in launching circular kites, and in the midst of it all, boys who've snuck past the security guards tug-tug-tug on the glass-coated line of a traditional patang fighter. Overhead, kettles of India's ubiquitous raptor, the black-shouldered kite, circle on updrafts, eyeballing bird-shaped kites as possible competitors. It's unusual to stand in one spot for more than a few minutes before you find yourself side-stepping to a clearer patch of ground, angling your kite away from impending disaster.

In America, this scene would fray my nerves. But relatively speaking, our nation is new at this, and besides, isn't our goal to bring enough people to create this kind of crowd? India, the second most populous country on Earth, has a culture of kite flying that extends back long before the western world took string in hand.

The annual pinnacle of Indian kiting is Makar Sankranti, the January 14 holiday that celebrates the Sun's apparent movement back to the north, signifying the end of winter. In cities like Ahmedabad and Surat, city dwellers take to their rooftops and terraces with stacks of fighter kites, an unending supply of sweet chikis and jelabis, competing loud-speakers blaring an eardrum-bursting mixture of traditional Hindi music and American hip-hop, and extended families of relatives, neighbors, and strangers enjoying a day of sunwashed kite fighting.

For more than two decades, the Gujarat International Kite Festival has brought kites to Ahmedabad for the days leading up to Makar Sankranti. In recent years the festival has made it a goal to rise to the level of other international festivals like Dieppe, Pasir Gudang, and Cervia, moving to a breezy new parade ground on the banks of the Sabarmati River, bringing in kites from two dozen countries, and expanding the festival to include other cities throughout India's westernmost state.

This year, kites began in two groups, one in Delhi, the other in Mumbai, and converged on Ahmedabad, promoting tourism in Gujarat while they flew. The Delhi group was made up of kites from Japan, South Korea,



Indonesia, England, Belgium, Lithuania, Ukraina, Italy, Switzerland, Argentina, Turkey, and Lebanon. My Mumbai group consisted of Dutch, Austrian, German, French, South African, Thai, Malaysian, Singaporean, and New Zealand kitefliers. We covered a thousand kilometers of Arabian sea coastline, from Bollywood to the desert. And after we finished in Gujarat, many of us continued on to festivals in Belgium and then Mangalore, a three week Indian kiting adventure.

Most Americans knowledge of India is limited to *Slumdog Millionaire*, set amidst Mumbai's squalid shantytowns and fast-rising skyscrapers. Yes, India does have heartbreaking poverty side by side with booming hi-tech development. But the people I know who say they'd never visit India because of what they've seen in the movies are missing a cultural experience like few others. If you can weave through Mumbai's traffic (for my day of sightseeing, I hired a car and driver, for about \$75) you'll find a museum comparable to the Smithsonian, architectural eye-poppers, a train station that makes Grand Central look sedate, hilltop gardens, and tree-lined streets filled with shops selling handicrafts, Nikes, Levi's, and colorful fabrics. Buy fresh fruit from a cart on the street, sit down at a restaurant for traditional tandoori fare, or get a bucket of wings at KFC.

We flew in a seaside park in Mumbai, just south of the floating white Haji Ali Mosque. Sprinklers watered the cricket pitch while we were welcomed by folk dancers, and then kites rose up as the wind came in from the Arabian Sea. After a few hours, our bus headed northeast for the mountain resort of Supatara.

Tigers still roam India's Dang Forest, but more recently paragliders have discovered Supatara's mountains, and resort hotels are springing up. The flying field was dusty, and clearly had been home to cows at some point, and we struggled in the light winds. Austria's Eugen Palmers put his kites away and instead brought forth bundles of pre-cut sails, dowels, and tape. In an instant, and to the dismay of the vendor selling paper fighters, every child was lined up at a table, taping sticks to Tyvek and then running onto the field. Hours later, as we stopped for a drink at the end of the day, we could see some of Eugen's kites rising over the playground at a school a couple miles from where we'd flown.

Onward to Surat, a coastal city known for its diamond merchants and a



*Dilip Kapadia judges a train in the Ahmedabad competition.*

its tails have been torn off, probably tangled in the bumper of a passing auto-rickshaw. After lunch, the mayor walks across the field and is taken by my Gandhi rokkaku. "Gandhiji was the father of our nation!" he tells me proudly. "Really?" I answer, pretending that I haven't seen the Ben Kingsley film a half dozen times. "I didn't know that. How interesting."

kiteflying rivalry with its larger northern neighbor Ahmedabad that seems to be on par with the Yankees-Red Sox blood feud. Once again, an opening ceremony



*Austria's Eugen Palmers sets up a workshop in Supatara.*

filled with folk dancers, local politicians, pomp and circumstance. My delta does a death spiral, landing outside the field, over the trees, on the street. Quick helpers retrieve the kite, but not before



There's a kitemaking competition in Ahmedabad (with categories for rokkakus, serpents, and trains of 90+ kites, making the AKA standard of at least five kites in a train look pretty lazy), and although I registered my rok, I missed the judging. I was flying on the north end of the field, and

Ahmedabad, where we rendezvous with our Delhi counterparts. The festival grounds stretch for a kilometer, with something for everyone. A building near the entrance houses a huge museum exhibit, with patang-shaped signs explaining everything about kites, from how manjha is made to Ben Franklin to traction kiting to Peter Lynn's MegaFlags. Food vendors range from vegetarian Gujarati dishes to Domino's Pizza. The kids adventure zone has a rock climbing wall, trampolines, mechanical bull, and the chance to roll down a 20' tall ramp inside a zorb ball. Spectators are packed like sardines against the fence surrounding the flying area, held at bay by bamboo stick-wielding policemen. My official festival name badge parts the masses, although if I stop for an instant someone is sure to step forward with hand outstretched, asking what country I'm from, wanting to have their picture taken with me. For all it's traditional ways, India is also very modern, and I'm certain that my face is on the Facebook pages of dozens of bearded Sikhs, sariclad matrons, and clean-shaven college students.



for a time that seemed not long enough, my kite karma came together and I attained nirvana. The kite flew steadily, untouched by its neighbors, pulling with the exact amount of force needed to balance the weight of the winder. I let go of the winder, put one finger on the line, and sat back. I was able to blissfully ignore the crowds ten yards behind me, the children shouting, "Uncle! Uncle! One photo please!" and just enjoy the flow. Until I looked south and saw that everyone down there seemed to be flying rokkakus. The competition had started, unannounced, and I had missed it. But I can't say that I'm terribly upset about it.

The second day in Ahmedabad begins with the opening ceremony, a massive affair featuring chanting monks, thousands of students performing yoga, speeches by the Governor and Chief Minister, balloon releases, military bands, and a parade of nations. With practice, it's possible to hold an AKA banner in one



*Some of the Indian kites get ready for the parade of nations.*

hand and a camera in the other.

While the international guests occupy one end of the field, Indian kites mass on the other end. There are hundreds, with every style of kite: incredibly long trains, handpainted fighters, inflatables in the shape of the elephant god Ganesha, giant bols hauled up by entire clubs. They range in age from Dilip Kapadia, the elder dean of Indian kiteflying, to twenty-something Niyati Patel, the upstart designer building Buckminster Fuller-inspired tensigrity structures. Clubs proudly hang banners, although when I ask it seems that everyone in

*Germany's Rolf Sturm makes friends in Supatara.*



each club is a family member. Children help carry huge spools of line, and look for space on the field to fly their mid-size kites.

The next day we drive northwest, for Kutch. The government has set up a tent city there as a tourist destination, allowing urbanites to visit the vast salt desert, sleep in well-appointed luxury tents, and enjoy a different environment. The Delhi group peels off, bound for Mandvi Beach, while we drive into the White Rann. It's an endless plain of salt, stretching past the horizon to Pakistan, empty and dry. It calls out for kite buggies, but we have none.



We return to Ahmedabad on January 14, and spend part of the day in the old city, on the rooftops, leaving our modern kites on the bus and adding only tissue paper patangs to the aerial bedlam. Indian kiteflying is done at a decibel level that would be illegal in America. On the ground, car horns honk continuously. On the rooftops, music plays, kites shout and blow whistles. It's deafening, and nobody complains.

After Ahmedabad the groups merge and split. Some kites board planes for home. Some fly back to Mumbai, then board a puddle-jumper to Hubli, near the Belgaum International Kite Festival. Cards and Facebook addresses are exchanged. I run out of nylon feathers, and one Indian kiter is beside himself. He gives me his card, and begs, several times, for me to make him a feather and mail it when I get home. Kites from all nations ask how they can

get invited to America. Veterans of international festivals make plans to see each other soon in Thailand, France, or Japan.

There are those in America who have nothing good to say about India. They don't like the problems associated with manjha line, they look askance at India's pollution and suspect plumbing and questionable drinking water, or they believe that the food will keep them running for the

toilet for days on end. But India is the dream. India is what we can only hope kiteflying becomes in our own country. We'd love to have a kiting holiday, and have hundreds of thousands of spectators

*Dancers welcome the kitefliers to Surat.*



*Flight philosophy: the exhibit in Ahmedabad explains the Grand Unified Theory of Kiting.*

show up at a festival where they don't even get to fly kites of their own. We pray that a newspaper will print a photo or two of our festivals, and never even imagine the sort of full-page coverage devoted to kiting in a half dozen Indian dailies. The KTAI would give David Gomberg's right arm to have the kind of kite sales in a year that Indians generate in a single January week. We wish that our families were big enough, and interested enough, that we could form our own kite club without even having to leave home.

So say what you will about India. But you can't deny that India's kite culture is what the rest of the kiting world is hoping to attain. ☐

See more photos and videos from Phil Broder's India trip at <https://picasaweb.google.com/KitePhil/India2012#>



**GUJARAT INT'L KITE FESTIVAL**  
 MUMBAI, DELHI, SUPATARA, VADODARA, SURAT,  
 BHAVNAGAR, AHMEDABAD AND KUTCH, INDIA  
 JANUARY 7-13, 2012

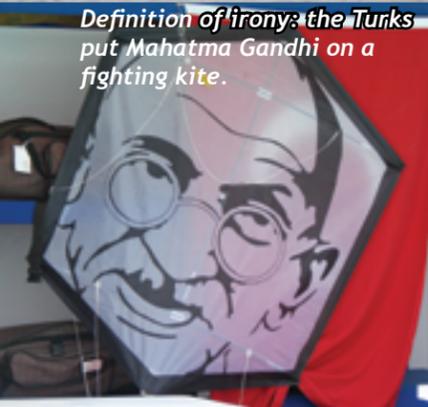


*A big kite in a bigger desert:  
 New Zealand's Simon Chisnall  
 in the White Rann of Kutch.*

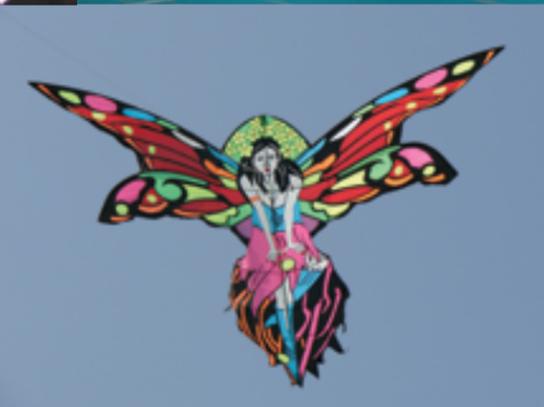
*Team New Zealand scores points with the organizers.*

*An Argentinean helps  
 launch the BaToCo kite.*

*Definition of irony: the Turks  
 put Mahatma Gandhi on a  
 fighting kite.*



*Phil Broder (center) joins Team Ukraine.*



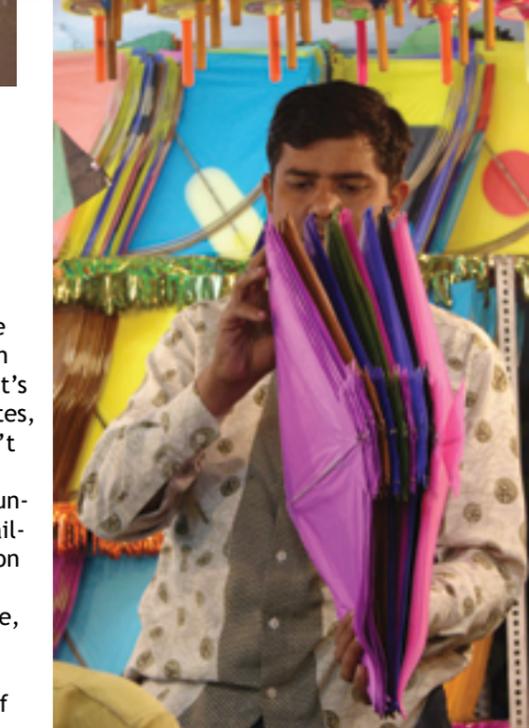
*Eugen Palmers examines the  
 evolution of the kiteflier.*

*The Japanese say thank you for India's support.*



**PATANG  
 BAZAAR**

While you can buy kites from numerous street vendors in India, the place that has everything is Ahmedabad's nighttime kite market. In this quarter mile of stalls, you can have any kind of kite you want... so long as it's a fighter. Each vendor stocks thousands of kites, in every color of the rainbow, and if you don't see what you're looking for they can always break open another brown paper-wrapped bundle to show you a thousand more. Line is available in every form, from huge spools of cotton line to brightly colored manjha wound onto firkins. A man carries a tray of antiseptic tape, which you'll need for your fingers if you're flying with manjha. There are no price tags; everything can be haggled over. At the end of the row of stalls, men wipe balls of powdered glass across line stretched between posts, while boys wash line through bowls of dye and wind it at incredible speeds onto drums made of bicycle wheels. Customers pull away on motor scooters, teetering under the weight of bundles of kites, ready for Makar Sankranti. ☒





A Cambodian kite by Sim Sarak



Lebanon's Rami Al Khal



Bhavna Mehta

# INDIA'S WOMEN TAKE FLIGHT

Indian society tends to be male-dominated, but in recent years women have made huge strides in kiteflying. The Mysore Ladies Kite Club is the nation's first club specifically for women, and this year's Gujarat International Kite Festival in Ahmedabad featured a competition category exclusively for women.

One woman taking full advantage of these advances is Ahmedabad's Bhavna Mehta. She's won various categories of the Gujarat competition in each of the last four years: for collage work in 2009, painting in 2010, for Indian-style painted kites in 2011, and for rokkakus this year.



"Women fly kites as children," Bhavna notes, but as they grow up they often get out of kiting. As adults, when Makar Sankranti rolls around, women may get a chance to fly kites on the terraces, but they're also responsible for cooking for guests.

Bhavna started to see a change after she began winning. "Once I won a competition, more women got involved. Before that it was mostly men."

As for this year's winning kite, she notes, "The rokkaku... I love to make this kite." She points out that its dimensions are easily scalable, and that "once you know the measurements it's always the same."

Another woman making a name for herself is Niyati Patel, also from Ahmedabad. Her background is in interior design, and she helps produce tensioned fabric sunshades and other installations. If that sounds familiar, she counts Synergy Deca creator Marc Ricketts as an inspiration. Both Patel and Ricketts based their kites and fabric art on the work of Buckminster Fuller, using tensigrity principles to suspend fabric in never-before-seen ways. Taking inspiration from nature, Patel is moving from her earlier bird-based kites to new designs fashioned after the bones of fish. She's currently building paper mock-ups, and will soon begin turning out finished kites. ☒



Niyati Patel



## BELGAUM INT'L KITE FESTIVAL BELGAUM, KARNATAKA, INDIA JANUARY 15-16, 2012



Luke and Colin Marshall and Bob Cruikshanks



Otto Vossen's Kissing The Skies



The Netherlands' Otto Vossen



Bhavna Mehta and one of her painted rokkakus.



A genki by Austria's Eugen Palme



A Niyati Patel bird



The entire student body of the Mangala Jyothi Integrated School could fit into these boxers.



A Malaysian kiter readies Che Guevara for launch.



**MANGALORE INTL KITE FESTIVAL**  
**MANGALORE, KARNATAKA, INDIA**  
**JANUARY 21 - 22, 2012**  
**PHOTOS BY BOB CRUIKSHANKS**



Andrew Beattie bought this stylish outfit after ruining his only clothing rescuing kites from the incoming tide.



# MANJHA: A DEADLY TRADITION

The kite flying culture in India (as well as neighboring Pakistan and Bangladesh) demands the use of manjha string. The cotton string is dipped in rice glue, then coated with powdered glass, giving it the requisite cutting power for rooftop battles. But the manjha tradition is beginning to change.

Animal rights and nature organizations are asking the public to save wildlife by foregoing manjha. Their education campaigns use gruesome images of eagles, ibis, and pigeons with lacerations and nearly-severed wings. "We have rescued more than 90 birds in the past one year with the help of the fire brigade. Among these, 25 have died due to their injuries. We take the birds to the veterinarian for treatment and then release them in their habitats," informed Shekhar Gaikwad of the Nature Club of Nashik. He added that most die due to shock. "We are appealing to people to resist using nylon manjha," he said.

It's important to differentiate between traditional cotton manjha and the new Chinese manjha, made from nylon or polypropylene. Chinese manjha has a much higher breaking strength and doesn't break down in the rain, so it's more damaging to wildlife and is persistent in the environment. It's also a better electrical conductor, causing more power outages as loose kites trailing string land on electrical lines and transformers. The Indian government has banned the sale of it. That hasn't stopped most people. Kite sellers say that

the demand for cotton manjha in spools has gone down drastically, with people preferring to buy Chinese manjha. Kite seller Rahul Rande said, "No one makes thread manjhas in the city. There is a big demand for nylon spools and they are selling like hot cakes."

In January, in the western Gujarat city of Rajkot, a public funeral procession was held for 20 threatened Painted Storks, killed by Chinese manjha. Two boys were electrocuted using a metal pipe to free a manjha-entangled bird caught on a power line. Meanwhile, PETA India gave an award to Pakistan's Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammed Chaudhry for banning the use of all manjha in his country's Punjab province.

Manjha takes its toll on people as well. With millions of kites cut loose, inevitably the string is draped across roads. India is a nation of motorcycle and scooter riders, and there are dozens of serious facial lacerations and even slit throats caused by manjha. In Mumbai a new bridge was designed with overhead cables that keep manjha

from falling across lanes of traffic. Last year in Ahmedabad, manjha caused four deaths and over 200 injuries. This year, traffic policemen were trained in the use of hemostatic sponges, which can be applied to wounds to stop bleeding and speed up clotting.



Are manjha's days numbered? There seems to be a growing cry to cease using it, but even laws banning it haven't worked. Educational efforts are increasing, and several Bollywood stars have lent their images to anti-manjha efforts. Still, it could be generations before India's skies are free of glass. ☒





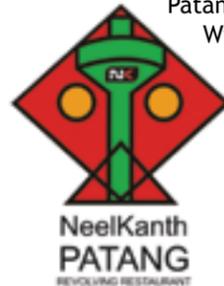
## MANJHA ON THE MENU?

After a long Makar Sankranti holiday of flying fighters from rooftop terraces, what's a hungry Ahmed-abadian to do for dinner?

Why not dine at

Patang, the revolving restaurant that towers over the Sabarmati River?

With a vegetarian menu, and dinner for ten costing just \$150, it's a healthy spot for the entire kite club!



## SHAMELESS SELF-PROMOTION

Revolution and iQuad are on a promotional roll. For the third time in the past five years, the KTAI honored their efforts in promoting kiteflying and their brand. In 2007, they won Best Retail Promotion. Two years later, it was Best Wholesale Promotion. For 2011, they got the trophy for Best Kite Company Promotional Effort. Congratulations!

## MERIWEATHER, WILLIAM, AND 28 KITES

Twenty seven kites made by American kite builders in 2003, interpreting the journey of Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery's historic expedition, are flying toward Lewis and Clark's finishing point. The entire collection spent most of January in Louisville, at the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft, the Henry Clay Building and the historic LVAA Waterworks.

Another kite honoring York, Captain Clark's loyal manservant, was added to the collection when Kentucky commissioned internationally renowned sculptor Ed Hamilton to paint a cotton canvas that Drake Smith made into a large Edo kite. York lived in Louisville for many years.

Next in the collection's travels is a three month display in Portland, at the Oregon Historical Society's History Museum. The downtown Portland museum will feature the entire collection in its large, high ceilinged entrance area starting on March 5, and the kites stay on display through May 24.



Ed Hamilton and Drake Smith



Kentucky schoolchildren learn about Lewis and Clark.

Friday, March 30th - 9a.m. - 2p.m. (Student Day)  
 Saturday & Sunday, March 31st & April 1st - 11a.m. - 6p.m.

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# Kite Fest Louisiana 2012

America's Got Talent  
 2010 Semi-finalist, Connor Doran  
 & Lisa Willoughby  
 Indoor kite flying presented by

