Spring 2010
Volume 32 Issue 1

# AKA Kiting

The Journal of the American Kitefliers Association

## Comprehensive Kitemaking

## Robert Brasington: Using Colour

## Deb Lenzen: Kites As Art

## Jon Trennepohl: Framing Basics

## Gary Engvall: Kite Sewing 101

## John Freeman: Log Cabin Technique

## Dick Maciel: No Sew Dunton-Taylor

## Dan Kurahashi: Washi Wasp

plus...

India's Kiteflying Holiday

Gujarat Int'l Kite Festival

Oregon Kitemakers Retreat

Windless in Washington

South Padre & Treasure Islands

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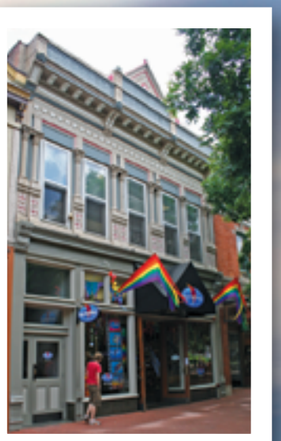

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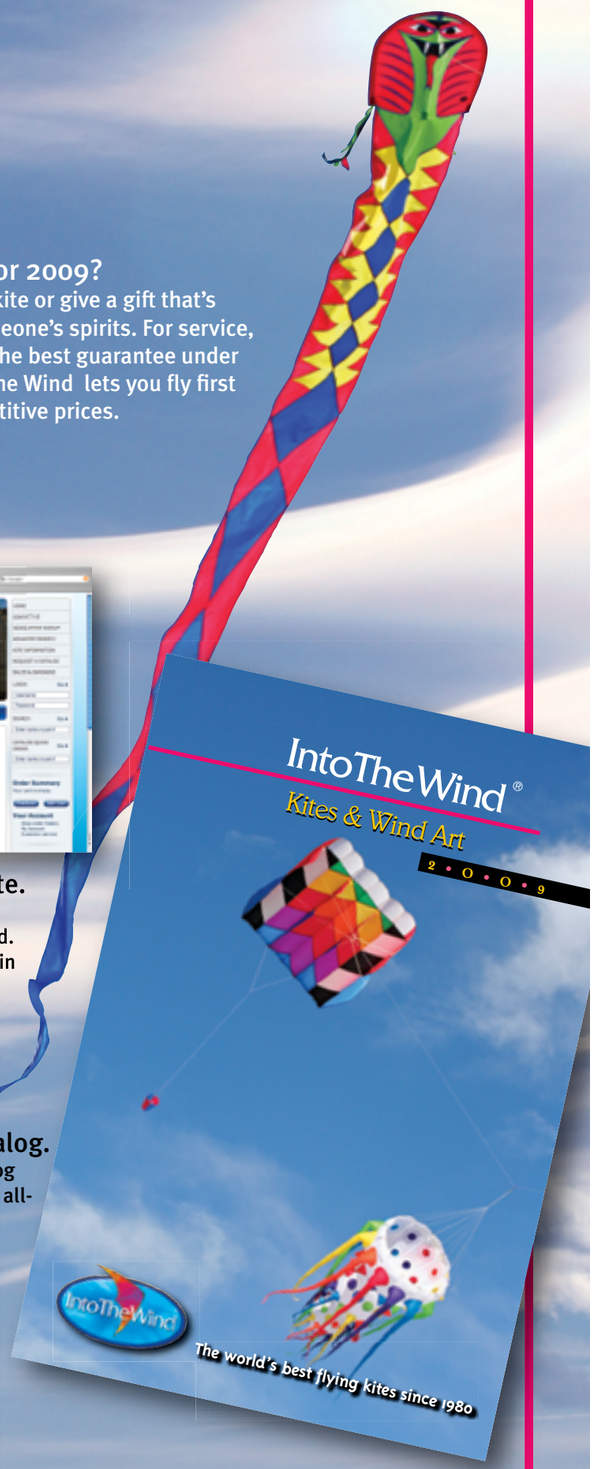


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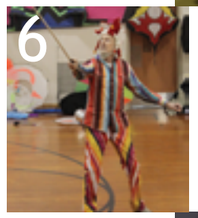

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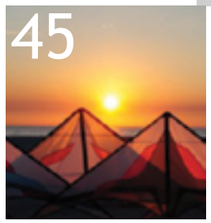

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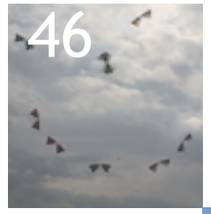

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**On the cover:** *A close look at Patrizio Mariani's snowflake*

***Coming in the Summer issue...***
> Fly Thai
> Kitesurf Barbados
> World Sport Kite Championship

This logo means you'll find additional content at *www.aka.kite.org/Kiting+*

# ~~Happy~~ Crazy Uttarayan!

## A Rooftop View Of India's Kiteflying Holiday Madness

*The sun sets on Ahmedabad, but the battle continues.*

BY PHIL BRODER

I never saw it coming. Only going. Time after time, just when I though I was doing well, the string connecting me to my fighter parted, and my kite fluttered away toward the river. No feeling of my line hitting someone else's, no vibration, no pop, just the certainty that I was holding a slack string attached to nothing. No idea who cut me down, or which of the thousands of kites they flew.

On January 14, Indians celebrate the beginning of the sun's northward movement with Uttarayan (also called Makar Sankranti). In Gujarat state, this means a day-long kite battle. For days beforehand, roadside stands sell patang fighters, the kite bazaars are filled with spools of glass-encrusted manjha line in every color of the rainbow, and men and boys stretch line between streetside posts, coating it with a sharp sticky mixture of rice glue and glass powder.

As the holiday dawns, Gujaratis take to their rooftops and terraces. Some haul massive speakers and PA systems up, filling the air with a gut-thumping mash-up of wailing sitars and gangster rap. The ceaseless honking of car horns drifts up from the street, creating a sonic boom that I've only ever experienced on the streets of cities that have just won the World Series or Super Bowl.

In Ahmedabad (and elsewhere in Gujarat, I assume), the sun is barely up before the kites take flight. A traditional patang fighter — made of brightly-colored tissue paper on a bamboo frame — costs pennies on the street, so everyone has a stack of them at their feet, ready to fly. Men tie a kite onto a spool, bend the kite over the crown of their head to give it some bow, and fling it into the air. The slightest breeze lifts the kite, and it's quickly spooled out.

Once in the sky, the insanity begins. Fighters drift left and right, some actively seeking combat, others just playing in the wind. Besides keeping track of your own kite, you need to watch the kites from the rooftops around you, plus the kites from houses upwind of you, and everyone downwind, and the crazed dashes to safety by pigeons. It's an air traffic control nightmare, with moving objects in every direction. Amidst all this, kites come crashing down around you, snagging on ladders and antennae and random bits of metal, and neighborly custom demands that you untangle the kite and help relaunch it.

Kite fighting adds another instrument to the cacophony. At the very least, cutting down another kite demands that everyone on your roof yell and shout. And odds are that someone has a whistle, so each cut sounds like a sporting event gone awry.

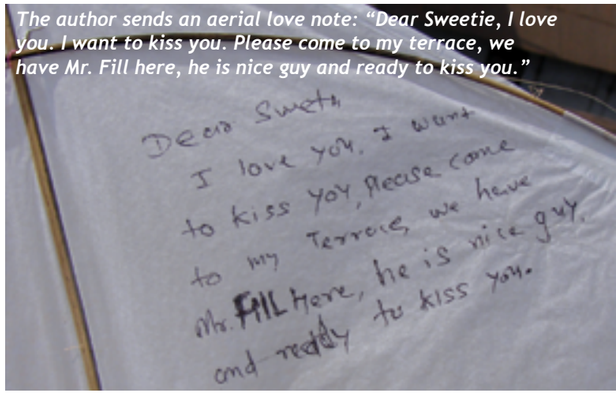


Occasionally a loose kite drifts by, trailing a length of manjha. If it's within reach, everyone scrambles to grab it (bear in mind that many rooftops have no railing, so one wrong step in pursuit of a kite could mean a swift plunge to the pavement far below). If money won is better than money earned, a kite snatched from the sky is better than a kite bought. Tie your string directly onto the string the kite already has, and let it fly.

*A bundle of fighters, ready for delivery to the kite bazaar.*

If your own kite is cut — and it happens to everyone, a lot — then reach down for the next one in your pile and start over. There's no rule that limits you to just one kite. Fly until you're out, then go buy more.

Throughout the day, friends and relatives come and go. We start on one rooftop, the home of a local politician. I go down to shop for manjha, and when I come back the roof is empty. I'm only separated from my group for a few minutes before a Dutch flier waves me up to the roof of the Bhatt family across the street. Entering a dark doorway, I climb three flights, passing through apartments, emerging to a crowded terrace. The Bhatts spend a lot of time in America (their son was injured snowboarding on Oregon's Mount Hood last winter, and endured a lengthy hospitalization. Rajan Bhatt also does business in New Jersey.) and speak perfect English, which becomes the common language between me, them, and the Dutch and Singaporean kiters also with us. Soon we scramble up a ladder to their roof, the highest in the neighborhood. It's a concrete square about 8' on a side, four stories up, no railing, no hint of safety. It's the best spot around.




*The author sends an aerial love note: "Dear Sweetie, I love you. I want to kiss you. Please come to my terrace, we have Mr. Fill here, he is nice guy and ready to kiss you."*

At lunchtime, Happy Bhatt and her niece bring up plates of chikkis (peanut brittle made with sugar cane) and jelabis (strings of fried dough covered in sweet jelly), as well as spicy vegetable dishes. Mr. Bhatt repairs damaged kites with packing tape. The noise level continues to swell. Every tree within sight looks like something Dr. Seuss would invent, a riot of colored paper stuck on each branch.

It's traditional to write messages on kites, sending them off to be found by someone downwind. Many of them are romantic, sort of the Indian version of online dating, as the kiter hopes that the woman of his dreams will find the loose kite and somehow figure out who was flying it. One of my hosts writes a message for me and sends it off. No luck. My dreamgirl never appears.

As the day goes on more kites are flown, more food is eaten, we change rooftops a few more times, and kites fill the sky like stars. There's no let-up, no feeling that the party is winding down.

There's a darker side to this fun. Every year, people die after falling from roofs. This year, it was a young boy in Surat, south of Ahmedabad, who fell six stories. Manjha draped across roads also takes its toll. With so many people riding motorcycles and scooters, it's inevitable that their are facial lacerations and even slit throats. In Surat, on the day before the holiday, three people are killed by manjha. This year, the police are cracking down on people flying kites on the sides of busy streets. Wildlife also suffers. Rehabilitation centers take care of pigeons, eagles, even flamingos that have been cut by manjha. A new polypropylene line, called Chinese manjha, is even more damaging and has been banned by the government, although it still seems readily available on the streets.

Uttarayan continues after dark. Fireworks explode randomly over Ahmedabad. Large tukkals (paper lanterns; a candle at the bottom heats the air inside, causing it to rise) take flight, soaring hundreds of feet upward before the paper catches fire, showering sparks. Well into the night, kite fighting continues.

It's difficult to truly describe Uttarayan, because to say that it's the day when everyone flies kites on their roofs doesn't convey the holiday's multisensory nature. Uttarayan has sounds, and smells. There's the feel of the wind, and the terror of teetering on the edge of the roof as you reach for a stray kite. There's friends and family, then more friends and more family. It's a delightful craziness that's only found in India. K

# Oregon Coastal Creativity

by Amy Doran
photos by Judy Brown

Marne Rizika

Three years ago I was lucky enough to get a scholarship to attend the Oregon Kitemakers Retreat. I remember being totally overwhelmed by how little I knew, and by the amount of information I learned. I humbly admit that three years later, I am just as overwhelmed by how little I know, and how much there is to learn.

Being that I have not been to OKR every year, there are some people that I just do not get to see often enough. One of those would be Karen Highfield. Karen took me under her wing three years ago without knowing a thing about me and made my first experience attending OKR something I would remember forever. Without her help and friendship, I would not have learned or experienced nearly half of what I did, and I am truly grateful for her. Needless to say, when I saw Karen walking toward me across the lawn I was delighted. Karen and I have this habit of sewing well into the night to finish a class project, which in the past has led to some pretty funny situations. I figured I was in for some more fun this weekend.

If you have never attended OKR, I can best describe it as an explosion of creativity. Some come to the retreat with ideas already formulated, but there are usually a lot of last minute changes as well as creative new ideas that come from a stitch gone astray, or a discussion amongst friends. Truly it is an enlightening experience to watch the process as it takes place. Even on the first night, some could not contain themselves and were already picking out fabrics and using templates to get a head start on the "King of the Road 20' Dragon" class that Arnold Stellema would teach. I set up my sewing machine to be ready for the Della Porta class that Bary Crites was teaching the next morning.

There was quite a buzz about Phil Scarfe's 55 ft² Flowform. With nine kites built in that class you can bet there were plenty of hours spent head down to the sewing machines and not many breaks to be had. There was a lot of back-patting on Sunday for those that were in the class, and I know many will look forward to Phil's return and hopefully more classes.

This year there was a great group of newbies attending for the first time. Gerry Pennell's basic sewing class was a great class for many, and the results were truly amazing. John Stefan was one of the newer kite makers, and after Gerry's class went on to make a beautiful 7' Ice Cream Cone line laundry piece in Ken Tuminia's class.

Friday's classes went deep into the night. True to form, Karen and I climbed wearily up the stairs to our dorm room about 2 AM, to find ourselves in a fit of giggles which woke up our roommate Barb. Somehow there is just nothing better then laughing till you cry, just because you can hear your friend guffawing into her pillow across the room.

Amy Doran

Though called the Oregon Kitemaker's Retreat kites were not the only things being created here. Lots of new hapi coats were appearing due to the class taught by Barb Wright.

John Freeman taught a fantastic class called DYOB (Design Your Own Box), a 6' winged box kite. A quick visit on Saturday to peek in and see what was emerging found everyone deep in concentration. Ronda Brewer was having a battle with her machine which she lost. But true to the ways of the kiting family, she was soon up and running on a machine graciously loaned to her by a fellow kitemaker.

First-timer John Stefan

Saturday I was truly excited to be in Sam King's Sode Pop class. I have been looking for more ways to use painting media on kites and this was the perfect palette for this. I spent the better part of the day sewing with the intention of painting later in the evening. Alas, I was too tired at 10 PM to start painting, but the kite was completed and I am happy to say I look forward to taking my time on the painting of the kite.

Dana Ann Suttell and instructor Deb Cooley

Saturday also found many in Deb Cooley's banner class. Deb is famous for her custom banners, and many have coveted her creations. Beautiful sets of banners began appearing at the Arts & Crafts Building.

I was looking forward to the paper piecing class with Deb on Sunday. I have always wanted to learn quilting techniques as my family back in Indiana is famous for its quiltmakers. However, never having sewn anything but ripstop, I have found sewing cotton to be a challenge. I am very happy to say that I had a successful morning in Deb's class. Not only did I learn to do paper piecing, but Deb was kind enough to design one with a quad line kite design. The finished projects were potholders, but I am so proud of this one single square, it may end up on my wall, framed. k

Rob Pratt and instructor Arnold Stellema

Instructor Bary Crites and first-timer Kelly Bruland

Sally Kinash

Anne Huston

Arnold Stellema

Judy Brown

# Windless Kite Festival

## Long Beach, Washington
## January 16-17, 2010
### Photos by Brad Bixby

Toby Arndt

Phil Burks

John Barresi

The Barresis do some pairs flying.

Scott Davis

Lee Sedgwick

Takako Barresi practices her balloon soccer headers.

Dick Curran

Amy Doran

Kristian Slater

Connor Doran

Lee Sedgwick



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# Regional Reports

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

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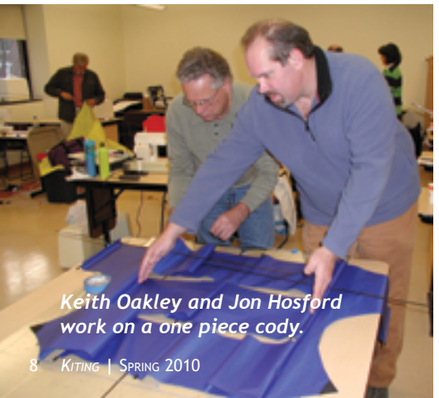
End of term: 2010

Hello Region One. The winter months have been very long here in the Northeast! Now that spring has arrived, we are all about getting our kites ready for some great local events. In Connecticut, there's Milford Living Magazine Fly, and Day before Flag Day – Red, White and Blue Fly, and the Hammonasset Kite Festival. In Rhode Island, there's Newport Festival, and in Massachusetts, the Boston Kite Show. In Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont several events have been scheduled. Upstate New York has the Great Lakes Kitefliers (GLKS) and the New York Kite Enthusiasts (NYKE) holding several workshops and kite flies. Kites Over New England (KONE) has scheduled their monthly spring and summer kite flys at Nahant Beach. Check the individual kite club schedules for details.

Kites Over New England hosted the holiday fly at Hampton Beach. Although we had light winds the kiting spirit was flying high as friends socialized and had a great time.

This past winter NYKE held two workshops. There was the One Piece Cody workshop, taught by Jon Hosford What was interesting was that the kite makers, mostly men, were sewing and the audience were there wives. In January NYKE held a Hapi Coat workshop. Great job!

In closing, it's never too late to have a happy childhood; but the second one is up to you and no one else.... Let's go fly a kite! Thanks to Bill Coons, Don Tuff, Jon Hosford and Ralph Reed for their contribution to this report.



*Keith Oakley and Jon Hosford work on a one piece cody.*

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

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End of term: 2010

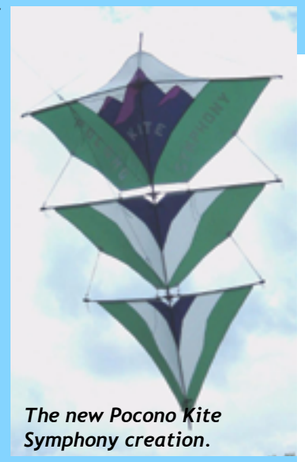
Greetings and salutations! Here's what's new in Region Two:

South Jersey Kite Flyers has elected new officers to replace the retiring Mike and Cel Dallmer. For 2010 the President will be Andy Selzer and Directors-at-large will be Don Pignolet and Thom McAdams. Late in 2009 SJKF hosted a workshop making bird kites given by Drake Smith. Everyone had a great time and all the kite were finished by the end of the day. A very big thank you goes out to Drake and all those who made it possible. SJKF held their 11th Annual Holiday party in December. A fantastic time was had by all 51 members who attended. 2010 is shaping up to be a year of excitement and a busy one. In February there was a kite repair day hosted by the Dallmers in their workshop. And check out their new website; Russ Mozier does a great job keeping it up to date: *http://sjkf.webs.com/*.

Hank Kleinot

*Drake Smith (at left) and the South Jersey Kite Flyers.*

Pocono Kite Symphony is thawing out by now and gearing up for a repeat performance for National Kite Month. Last year PKS had 30 of the 50 events listed in Region Two. By the end of 2009 they had built 980 kids kites, their second PKS logo kite (a 10' Brogden) and another twenty 5' feather flags. Don't miss their 20th Annual Kite Day in the Park, the first Saturday of May at Louise Moore Park in Easton, Pa. Help is always needed so please consider being there as a volunteer or as a flyer.



*The new Pocono Kite Symphony creation.*

Andy Gelinas

Douglas Stout writes that he has returned to kiting after a decade long sabbatical. A past Masters class sport kite competitor and kitemaker, he and an "old" (his word, not mine!) flying buddy, Jeff Wallace, have recently reignited their love of kites and have begun making sport kites — but for friends and family only at this point. They intend to attend a few fun flies in 2010 and see where that leads them.

The Fly Pittsburgh Kite Club is gearing up for another great year of fun on the snow, on the ice, in the fields and on the beaches! The club had their New Years kick off party in January to start 2010 off right. There were power fliers out on snow and ice gearing up for February's Erie Ice Fly. Then in March they will be holding the annual Indoor Fly at Slippery Rock University.

The Keystone Kiters hosted another Super Bowl Sunday kite retreat, making a bevy of bouncing beach balls for their ground displays. Stay tuned for word on their upcoming summer kite building retreat.

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

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End of term: 2010

Region Three was pretty quiet last fall. After the middle of October the calendar was almost completely empty. Several members of WOW were able to go south to the Cape Fear Kite Festival in November and fly large kites with our friends the WACKOS. Others made their way to the Outer Banks for Thanksgiving on the dune. This has become quite popular with a group of kitefliers, including folks that travel the full length of North Carolina to get there. WOWsters not making it to Jockey's Ridge did have the opportunity to gather at Sandy Point State Park near Annapolis.

Both WOW (Wings Over Washington) and RAF (Richmond Air Force) have traditional events on New Years day: WOW with their Foolish Hat fly, and RAF with the ITDCTFAKKF (It's Too Darn Cold To Fly A Kite Kite-Fly). They immediately followed up with a First Sunday fly in some of the most extreme conditions in many years. The wind gusted over 30 mph at the Washington Monument, and the wind chill at Richmond's Dorey Park was single digits. Both clubs continue to hold First Sunday events all year so check their respective websites for details.

By the time the magazine is printed you will have missed the Maryland Kite Society retreat, which is always President's day weekend. RAF has started their festival season with the Children's Festival on the first Saturday in March. WOW has held several indoor flying sessions in preparation for the Smithsonian Indoor fly held on March 20th this year. Also, Smithsonian holds their annual outdoor event on the last Saturday in March, and that is the kick-off for National Kite Month. I hope you have contacted your local library, scout troops, hospitals, schools, retirement centers and art galleries to help them with kite displays and presentations on kites.

I wish to point out the return of a sport kite event on the last weekend of April. Maryland International Kite Expo was held last year, but Jay Knerr of Kite Loft is bringing back the Mid-Atlantic Sport Kite Championships. There are plenty of activities no matter whether you are a sport kite competitor, builder, or just want to fly, so I hope to see you there.

Challenge the wind.

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

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End of Term: 2010

## Region 5 ~ Great Lakes
MI-OH

**Dave Bush**
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End of term: 2011

Hello everyone. Winter has lasted too long. The cold seems to go right through me. I have been spending some time planning my spring activities and wanted to let you know of a few of them. The Otto M Budig (Airwaves) Kite Festival will be held on April 10 and 11, in West Chester, Ohio at the V.O.A. Park. I can't wait to start out the kite season there. Next up is the Great Lakes Kite Festival in Grand Haven, MI, May 21-23. That one is always a weekend of fun and friends on Lake Michigan. Then in our region is the Michigan Kitefest in Richland, held on June 12 and 13. June is rounded out by the Warren Dunes Kitefest on the last weekend, the 26th and 27th.

I also wanted to take a moment to recognize two Region Five members, Clair and Jackie Howe of Mason, MI. These two folks aren't fierce competitors or world champions but they have a sincere love of kiting and kites and they also love the AKA. They sent me a photo of a kite they made some time ago and pulled "out of mothballs" to fly last fall.

*Clair Howe's rokkaku*

The kite is a 36" rokkaku made from newsprint and real wood spars. They put it up and it flew as Clair said, "Just as pretty as you please."

If you have any photos and a story of someone that you think I should write about then please send me the info and I will write about them too.

Please keep in touch and let me know about your upcoming events.

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

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End of term: 2010

Spring breezes are a blow'n and another warm weather kite season is about to begin. The year 2010 started snowy and blustery with several kite events in January and February. Reports from the "Cool Fool Festival" at Veterans Park in Milwaukee were summarized as "cold and snowy but fun."

The Minnesota Kite Society's New Year's Fly in North Park, Lakeville, MN, had 14 attend and netted two new members. According to Mr. Kite, Craig Christensen, they had a nice lunch and good fellowship for the 20th year for this event and he wishes to thank all who participated.

Other winter events included Frosty Fingers on January 30th, in St Paul; Kites

*Craig Christensen does some lonely winter KAPping in Minnesota.*

On the Bay on February 6th, in Fish Creek; the 10th annual Lake Harriet Winter Festival in Minneapolis; and Winterfest in Green Bay on January 30.

The Wisconsin Kiters held their annual holiday party with record attendance of over 40 people. It included a great meal, raffle and highflying fellowship.

Many events are coming up this spring and summer. Be sure to check the AKA website calendar. Highlighted here are several events by the Hoosier Kitefliers Society including the Lexington Library workshop and fun fly on April 16th, and the Mothers Day Fly on May 9th in Kendallville. Also noted is Iowa's Kites Over Grinnell, on June 4-6, a three-day event that is growing and has turned into a community affair.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention the Shawano, WI, Fun Fly on June 26th, another rapidly growing community event.

As you know by now MAKR did not happen in 2010. After 21 successful years the handful of original organizers retired and new volunteers were not ready to step in. The folks in Region Six and neighboring Regions can change that! You have enjoyed MAKR and the opportunity to attend this great event for years and now you have the opportunity to help it continue. Please consider giving a little of your time and talent and contact Karl or Kathy Horn at 815/393-4672; Tom McCune at 847/537-7066 or John Karel at 708/562-2367. The deadline for assembling a MAKR team for 2011 is July 1st, 2010. Let's make it happen!

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

**Donald Murphy**
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End of term: 2011

Welcome to another spring kiting season. Here in the upper Midwest we are still waiting for lots of snow to melt. We have finished up with the ice flies and it's time to enjoy some warm weather. I hope to run into a lot of you on the fields this year. Right now it already looks like a busy year flying. There are several new events this year along with the regular flies.

Greg Begey wants to inform you all of the 2nd Annual Kites Over Route 66, April 24-25, in Joplin, MO. The fest will he held on a 50+ acre flat field, located adjacent to the new Joplin Athletic Complex, about three blocks north of historic Route 66. Vince Lindstrom (Director of the Convention & Visitors Bureau) is still hard at work, getting the mass kite fly along the 2000+ mile length of Route 66 to come together. He is getting great feedback from cities along the "Mother Road." The mass kite fly will be held at 10:00 AM Central time. More details on this will be coming. This is starting to gain national attention, and Joplin will be the hub for this 2000 mile long event.

On April 10, the Arvada Festival Commission and the Foothills Kite Club will sponsor the 8th Annual Kite Festival in Arvada, CO. This event not only has kite competitions for all age groups, but also many free family activities. The kite competitions include smallest kite, largest kite, highest kite and most visually appealing kite. The age groups are 10 and under and 11 and over. The top four winners in each age group and in each category will win trophies. Judging is done by the Foothills Kite Club members. John Gabby, from Colorado Springs, will be doing the announcing. Besides that, there'll be two jumping castles, a face painter, a balloon twister, a caricaturist, free art activities and this year we also have the YMCA's kids zone, with fun fitness activities. The Jeffco Brass Band will play. The Vendor Village has seven food vendors with yummy food, and there are many community sponsored booths. The Foothills Kite Club also demonstrates kite flying with their beautiful kites. It's an all day fun event for everyone.

On April 17, MCC-Longview Flights of Fancy Kite Festival will be held. Check *www.mccflightsoffancy.org*. The kites of the Kansas City Kite Club will take flight over the lawn of the picturesque MCC-Longview campus with awe-inspiring mega kites, power kites, stunt kites, and more, including the world's largest windsock: three stories high and 200' long!

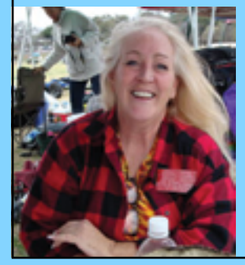
Bob Homan of the Topeka Kite Fliers wants you all to know about the Twisted Lines Kite Festival on June 11-13.

North Dakota is becoming a hot spot for kite flies. The first of the season was held at Devil's Lake on the large frozen lake. "Kite the Ice" at Shiverfest was held on February 20-21. Organizer Nels Nelson loves the cold up there. The Coal Country Kite Fly will be held on May 1-2 in Beulah. Prairie Winds Kites will be down and we will have food vendors. Darwin and Berna Smith will host the event. On May 29-31, Deb Lenzen will host the Skydance Kite Festival on Lake Sakakawea in Garrison. Two weeks later, plan to attend the Jamestown Kite Festival hosted by Mike Gee and Chris Dotson on June 12-13.

Enjoy the sky!

Hello Region Eighters! After the weirdest winter weather possible, we're kickin' back up into kite season. Troy Gunn has, once again, graciously created a region specific calendar online so folks can get to the information in one fell swoop. Many, many thanks, Troy! The link to that site is *http://tkogunn1.tripod.com/kitecalendar.html*. Be sure to always go back and look for corrections before packing the van and starting the ignition! Remember, this is kiting; stuff happens and plans can change!

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



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End of term: 2011

You know how we seldom learn about our kite friends' other lives? We often don't know what they do for a living, or what their other hobbies might be. Some of you might know that a huge event in my neighborhood is Drag Boat Racing. Well, that has nothing to do with kites, so I wouldn't dream of mentioning it here. Unless a kiter in Region Eight races drag boats! In the true fashion of a dedicated kiter, Roger Gaines emblazoned the name and logo of Family Fun Kites (the kite store owned by Stephanie Gaines) on the drag boat (smart man!)!

*Brent Sutherland, Stephanie Gaines, Roger Gaines, Melissa Sutherland, and Jody Williams do some drag boating.*

Here's a report from Donna McCown on the December Great Texas Kite Club Party in Rockport: "If you don't like the weather in Texas, just wait a day. That was true this weekend. A front blew through on Friday bringing snow to Houston and Austin, sleet to Rockport, and rain to the Valley; we were all questioning if the Great Texas Kite Club Party would even happen! But seeing the forecast of beautiful weather for Saturday, a few brave folks headed to Rockport. John and Laura Shamrock from Houston drove through the snow and were glad to see it clear when they got to Rockport. Dick and Sis Vogel left from the Valley early Friday morning with the threat of freezing temperatures during the night, arriving in Rockport in time to see it sleeting! The Grays, and others from the Austin area, felt it was safer not to try the trip. Jeff and I kept our fingers crossed, since we couldn't leave until later Friday, and we were lucky. It was clear with no icy roads at all. Yea!!! We all met for some chili and queso, warmed up and visited a while, then were off to our hotels to rest for the next day. On Saturday, we bundled up in layers for a cold start since the morning temp was in the high 30s to low 40s. As we began launching kites, we warmed up and started pulling layers off. The wind stayed pretty light all day, so we pulled out our light wind kites. This year, Dano Wright moved this event to occur along with the Rockport Tropical Christmas Festival. In addition to our kites, there were activities going on downtown throughout the day. People drove around our field checking out the display of beautiful kites. Some braved the chilly temperatures and got out to take pics and visit a bit, but then were soon off to the next activity. In mid-afternoon it started cooling back down again and the wind continued to die down. As the kites slowly drifted to the ground on their own, we began packing away our toys and headed to the buffet for a great dinner. We came back to the park just in time for the lighted holiday parade and an awesome fireworks display. What a great ending to the day!"

Mark your calendars now for the first Saturday in December and join us for the fun! Hopefully there won't be a cold front with snow and sleet coming to the Texas coast way two years in a row!

Keep looking up!

## Region 9 ~ Intermountain
ID-MT-OR

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End of Term: 2012

Here's to a brand new year, filled with good people and good kite. I hope you all had a wonderful transition into 2010. We've had some great times on the beach with some of you and I look forward to many more. It seems like nothing has slowed down much despite the winter setting in, so I would imagine we'll be hitting the ground running by the time this arrives in your mail. First off I would like to thank the committee members at the Oregon Kitemakers Retreat for putting on an excellent event. I hope you get some time to read about all the fun we had there.

In March we'll be heading down to the Lincoln City Indoor Festival for three days of indoor flying fun with Debbie and Lee Park of Aerial Productions. If you have the chance to come over to the festival, try your hand at some of the indoor kites, and have some fun with a great group of fliers. For more information go to *www.oregoncoast.org/kite-festival/indoor-kite-2007.php*.

April 22-24 is the 10th Annual Kiting Just for Fun Festival in Idaho Falls, ID. This event is Idaho's largest kiting event with attendance to exceed a thousand this year! It's a great event that includes a weekend long fun fly, children's kite making and a children's fly. Featured fliers will be doing sport kite demonstrations as well. The Snake River Birds of Prey from Boise will fill the air with peregrine falcons and other raptors. For more information contact Dean Turnblom at *sunrisekites@cableone.net* or call him at 208/524-5551.

Join us this year at the Lincoln City Summer Kite Festival, June 26 -27! This year's theme is "Quadzilla." At the festival we'll attempt to break the world record for most quad-line kites in the air at the same time on Lincoln City's beach (Oh yeah! Mega Fly, baby)! Persons that fly in our world record attempt will be entered in a drawing for a free AKA Convention registration, compliments of the Lincoln City Visitor & Convention Bureau. The winner will be announced on Sunday

*iQuad iDo: newlyweds Takako and John Barresi at their November wedding.*

at the end of the Mega Fly. Remember, the 2010 AKA Nationals are right here Seaside this year, and you could be going for free!

Brookings, OR, will be bustling with people and outstanding kites on July 17-18. This is a unique festival set right in the Port of Brookings. This is a chance for many to get to know fliers, and see some of the top fliers and teams from around the world. It truly is a must experience event. Looking forward to seeing many of you there! For more information go to *www.southernoregonkitefestival.com*.

I want to take a moment to thank all of you for your support and input. Travel safe, and have a great time flying. See you on the beach.

## Region 10 ~ Northwest
AK - WA

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End of Term: 2012

Neither rain, nor sleet, nor ice, nor snow, will keep us from kite flying! Just about all those conditions have fallen on most of us this winter.

November started with rain, so it was a good thing we were indoors for the 4th Annual Camas Indoor event, November 6-8. Three days of fun flying, demos and four separate competitions with flyers coming from Oregon, Washington and British Columbia. All proceeds from admissions and concessions went to the student volunteers at Camas High School, approximately $500 for their fundraiser!

December came so fast last year! December 5th found us daring the snow in the forecast to venture out to Edgewood for the Annual PCKA/WKA Banquet, Fun Fly, Bag Raffle and Auction. I saw Georgeann Curran doing a head count, but I forgot to ask her how many she counted. Lots of wonderful food, friends and kites! Traditionally everybody brings something to contribute to the bag raffle and this year, there was barely a bare spot on the tables! $947 was raised though ticket sales and after $100 was used for expenses, $847 was donated to the Mountain View Lutheran Church Food Bank. Thank you so much for offering the gym to us. But that's not all! More items were offered up in a live auction, with $475 going to the World Kite Museum!

Soon it was time to head for home and since Sunday was expecting flurries, Dave and I opted to head south to Vancouver that night. Clear and dry when we left, but 40 miles south we were in a white out! Thank you Dave for getting us home safe and in one piece.

New Year's Day Fun Flies were held at Delta Park in Portland and also at Chambers Bay in Lakewood, plus the annual WKA "Protest The Bowls" fly at Golden Gardens Park in Seattle. Then we were off to Long Beach on January 15-17 for the 9th Annual Windless Indoor Festival. Fantastic indoor festival! Lee Sedgwick was our guest this year.

Have fun flying!

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

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End of Term: 2012

Spring is almost upon us. Time to get outside and enjoy the breezes.

The Bay Area Sport Kite League is starting their season up with a couple events. An Indoor Fly was held February 27th in Walnut Creek, CA. On Saturday, March 6, the group will meet at Doran Regional Park/Beach near Bodega Bay for a fun fly. This is your chance to learn how to fly that new sport kite you got over the holidays, with some of the best kitefliers in the world on hand to show you how. The League begins its monthly competitions on March 20 at Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley. Be sure to check their web site at *www.baskl.org* for all details and last-minute changes.

Team AirZone (in its three-person configuration of Darrin Skinner, Aaron Champie and myself) has been invited to attend the World Sport Kite Team Championships (*www.worldsportkite.com*) in Berck sur Mer, France, this April. This competition is held every other year, with teams from countries around the world competing. This year Team Airzone will be the sole team from the AKA. Over the next several months, the team will be practicing weekends at one of three venues: Ocean Beach in San Francisco, Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley and Baylands Regional Park in Sunnyvale. Feel free to stop by and say "Bonjour!"

Join me in welcoming a new AKA member, Jaime Ray, from Martinez, CA. BASKL will be hosting an event in Jaime's hometown in June. New members are a good thing.

See you on the field.

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

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End of Term: 2012

The San Diego Kite Club's New Years Day fly included a fighter kite competition, which was a hoot for all involved. At Tecolote Shores (the field where the SDKC meets each second Saturday of the month) the fighter competition was very lively with a surprise guest, Steve De Rooy from iQuad. Even with missing three lines he had fun for sure, but alas the competition just did not give an inch. The big winner of both the trophies was Victory Herezia, the owner of Kite Country here in San Diego, but I have to say it was a hard fought battle to win this one.

Then the following day was spent at Mariners Point, where the wind was a bit light but steady enough to paint the sky in a big way by many different fliers from a bit of everywhere. This years line up included José Sainz and Ron Gibian — both world class kite builders — and Brian Champie with some of his big pieces. His gecko was the owner of the sky this year, flying very well considering the light wind. I also put up a full size octopus and he flew well for the better part of the day. Then as always the Revolution line was a who's who of Southern California with a few out-of-area special guests thrown in the mix. It included Ron Despojado, John Mitchell, the Fosters, John Mason, Alex Herzog, the Lummas Family of Team Too Much Fun, our Canadian friend Steve De Rooy, Mike Kory of Team 180 Go and his daughter Rose, and then the inventor of the Revolution kite, Joe Hadzicki. I'm here to tell you these folks cast a pretty big shadow to stand in, and to these tired old eyes I'd have to say we had fun with a capital F. It may not have been the biggest event I've ever had the chance to grace, but it sure was one of the best and most fun I've been at in awhile. So my hats off to the club for all their work, and to all of my friends worldwide who helped me start my New Year off in a great light.

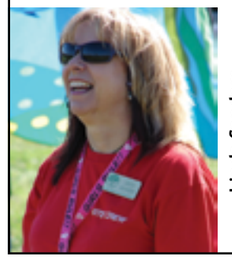
*San Diego's fighter champs*

Before I close I'd like to talk a bit about the man who started me on Revolution kites, Ron Despojado. Ron was hired as a kite consultant for the Neiman Marcus spring catalog photo shoot. The site was on a five acre private residence right on the cliffs of Malibu. The catalog had a theme of a young girl who longs for her traveling kite flying boyfriend (hmmm, sounds like some fellas I know).

*Ron Despojado*

"The kite they had fabricated weighed roughly 12 pounds," says Ron, "there was no way it was going to fly." So for the still shots the kite was secured to some rigging with the model standing in the background holding the string. For the motion capture the model carried and danced with the kite. "It was a lot of fun," said Ron, "but despite what most people perceive, fashion photo shoots are very unglamorous." Still sounds like good work if you can get it.

## Region 13 ~ International



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End of Term: 2012

I feel very fortunate to be able to learn more about kites from Region Thirteen members every day. And now, time to share some with you.

AUSTRALIA — Martin Smith wants his mail deliverer to stop bending his *Kiting* magazine, so now patiently waits by his mailbox. Will this plan succeed? Kevin Sanders offered his help at the Borneo International Kite Festival, the first of many we hope. Godfrey and Karen Gamble have transported themselves to the shores of the UK — de-Colonising the Antipodes, perhaps?

ENGLAND — Keith Griffiths apologised for the missing results of European Sports Kite championships held in September 2009 — he's only human! The White Horse Kite Flyers welcomed Cliff Quinn (Ralf Maserski and Holm Struck from Germany attended too) in October to teach his Modern Marconi. It was Cliff's first trip to England! WHKF held what they called a "Christmas Pudding Fly" at Barbury Castle on December 27th in bitterly cold, gusting winds. What dedication! Bob Cruikshanks will be at Thailand's International Kite Festival mid-March, probably as you read this! Sadly, England lost sport kite competitor and judge Steve Brill to cancer in January. Happily, he was able to marry Caron Wasserman just three days before he passed away.

SWITZERLAND — A selection of Olivier Reymond's kites is being displayed at the World Kite Museum in Weifang, China. Weifang is known as the birthplace of the kite, more than 2000 years ago. Well done Olivier!

*Modern marconi master Cliff Quinn*

Arthur Dibble

FRANCE — The 30th anniversary of Dieppe International Kite Festival, 11-19 September, will be spectacular. AKA's Marla Miller is rounding up a group (keeping her brood close!), so send questions to *kytlady@aol.com*. This group includes Kevin Sanders, selected club members from WHKF, Olivier Reymond, and Carol Jansen.

CURACAO — Carol Jansen's kite festival is 9-11 April 2010. Head for Cancun then on to Isla Blanca. Curacao is blessed with ideal weather for kite flying. Airport pick-up for all attendees. Carol is at *info@curacaokites.com*.

DENMARK — Ralf Dietrich sends New Year wishes — possibly too cold to do much else?

CANADA — As I write, Adrian Conn was waiting to test his new 30' Geo Pointer kite, and hoping for some kinder breezes. Exciting news! 11-15 August 2010 will be the Dieppe CANADA Kite Festival! Yes, two Dieppes in one year!

NETHERLANDS — Frits Sauve's 2010 wish is for everyone's kites to be stable in flight.

MALTA — Ronnie Farrugia accidentally received two copies of *Kiting*, so kindly shared the spare copy with someone whose love for kites is being rekindled. That's value for money, and hopefully a new AKA member!

*Adrian Conn*

*A long way from home: American Jerry King is living and flying in China.*

Planning is underway for the AKA Convention, 11-16 October in Seaside, Oregon, west coast USA. "Convention" (it's a family get-together) means a time to love kites. I'm going… will you join me?

AKA's eBay Auction is seeking items to auction. Eli and Shula Shavit of Israel already donated a banner. How would you like one of YOUR creations to find a home in another country? When you have your kite / banner / windsock / pin / line laundry ready, let Gary Quinton know *gquinton@verizon.net* and he'll get it S-O-L-D for you. ALL proceeds go to AKA — a non-profit organisation, and totally reliant on dedicated supporters such as you.

Did you know? February had 20 AKA kite events recorded in total, with 9 of those in Region Thirteen! So, not all the world stops flying because of weather. Do check the AKA kite calendar for events near you, and don't forget to add your own festival.

A New Zealand film starring English actor Martin Clunes, called "The Man Who Lost His Head," features excellent footage of Maori-style kite fishing, where the action is real and not staged!

Remember, less talk, more fly!

*Stopping in Dubai on his way home from India's Gujarat International Kite Festival, Fevzi Kir of Turkey visits the world's tallest building.*

# Kite Happening

Nieuwpoort, Belgium

December 26 - 27, 2009

Photos by Bernhard Dingwerth

# Everybody Flies In Carolina by Karen Mault

Everybody Flies" was the theme of the 22nd Annual Carolina Kite Festival put on by Kites Unlimited of Atlantic Beach, NC. The festival opened on Saturday, October 24th to a beautiful sunny day with good winds coming off the ocean. It didn't take long for the sky to be filled with color. Dragons, deltas, rokkakus, and custom art kites flew over the dunes beside the Sheraton Hotel. Everyone brought out their finest custom kites and their best vintage kites to show off to other flyers and to the crowds who came to admire them. Al Sparling put up the large inflatable kites with help from members of the Carolina Kite Club. Throughout the day there were mass ascensions of specific types of kites. These included dragons, cellular kites, bowed kites and art kites. Ray Wong and Randy Tom attended and flew some of their special art kites. Lots of kids decorated their own sled kites and flew them in a mass ascension. There were also a couple of candy drops, which the kids enjoyed. Workshops were held for instruction in dual line stunt kites and quad-line Revolution kites. Chris Shultz of HQ Kites gave a demonstration of kite buggying and flew a power kite above the waves.

A night fly was held Saturday night. Many flyers attached lights of various kinds to their kites and flew them in the cloudless sky. Delta kites were the easiest to fly that night, although a couple of box kites, a dual line stunt kite and a parastunter gave everyone a show in the dark.

On Sunday, the winds were lighter and had come round to blow out over the water. It was harder to get kites up with the lighter winds but everyone had something in their bag that would fly. Once again there were large inflatable kites in the sky, but because of the light and erratic winds, they didn't stay up long. The day included more mass ascensions, the highlight of which was the gathering of Sky Skimmers. More than twenty Sky Skimmers were in the air at once, including the very first and the 200th Sky Skimmer on its maiden flight. There were more kids' kite building and candy drops. Jim Cosca of Sky Dog Kites gave a performance to music and showed us the capabilities of the latest Sky Dog kites. The latter part of the afternoon was given over to demonstrations of vintage and retro kites. Chris Shultz flew a stack of vintage Mirages. Several "old school" kites came out of the bags and were flown for the crowd. k

# Kites As Art

## by Deb Lenzen

*Octagon by Ecuador's Jorge Román.*

By one definition, art is the process or product of deliberately arranging elements in a way that appeals to the senses or emotions. The Drachen Foundation adds the word kite to the word art and quotes kite maker Marten Bondestam to say this about art kites: "Artistic kites are kites with some extra intellectual qualities. Beauty is not art. Art can be ugly, but must have an intellectual message." There are myriad opinions about when a kite is art, and it seemed a valuable discussion to enjoin at the national level through workshops offered at the AKA Conventions at Gettysburg and Rochester.

Workshop attendees at Gettysburg viewed a slide show of over 100 kites and discussed the aspects of art that were present in the kites that were shown. They were told to pay particular attention to how the kites made them feel, and asked to determine what in the kite evoked that emotion. For some it was a feeling of being uncomfortable when certain colors were chosen in the design. For others there was the feeling of melancholy when pictures were shown of kites done by kitemakers who have died. But for a kite to be memorable, have visual appeal, and be recognizable it must make a connection with the viewer. Color, shape, detail, contrast, size and creativity are categories that could help a traditional kite become a piece of art in the sky.

*A John Pollock edo.*

John Pollock, art professor at Montana State University — Billings and three time AKA Grand Champion, began the conversation at Rochester by discussing some basic principles and elements of art. It was a gift to hear him talk about balance, harmony, rhythm, color, movement and proportion when planning a kite sail. It was also very clear that as an accomplished artist he has an understanding of art that most kitemakers do not.

Without formal art training, I've needed to find other ways to try to master color and visual appeal when making a kite. My background in psychology views colors as a way to evoke, sooth, or heighten the emotions. I make a decision on what colors to use in a kite based on the emotion I hope viewers will get from that kite while it dances among the clouds or sails a deep blue sky. Purples, blues and grays are yin or feminine colors, calming the soul. Oranges and yellows are yang colors, exciting or causing a feeling of anxiety. For me, visual appeal happens in my kites when I do a good job of telling a story. As a storyteller I hope to pull the viewer into the sky to walk the wind word by word with me. Kitemaking for me is all about emotion. Kitemaking is art. k

*Aerial art by Deb Lenzen.*

*A creation by Eli and Shula Shavit of Israel.*



# The Sporting Life

## The Right Kite

### by Russ Faulk

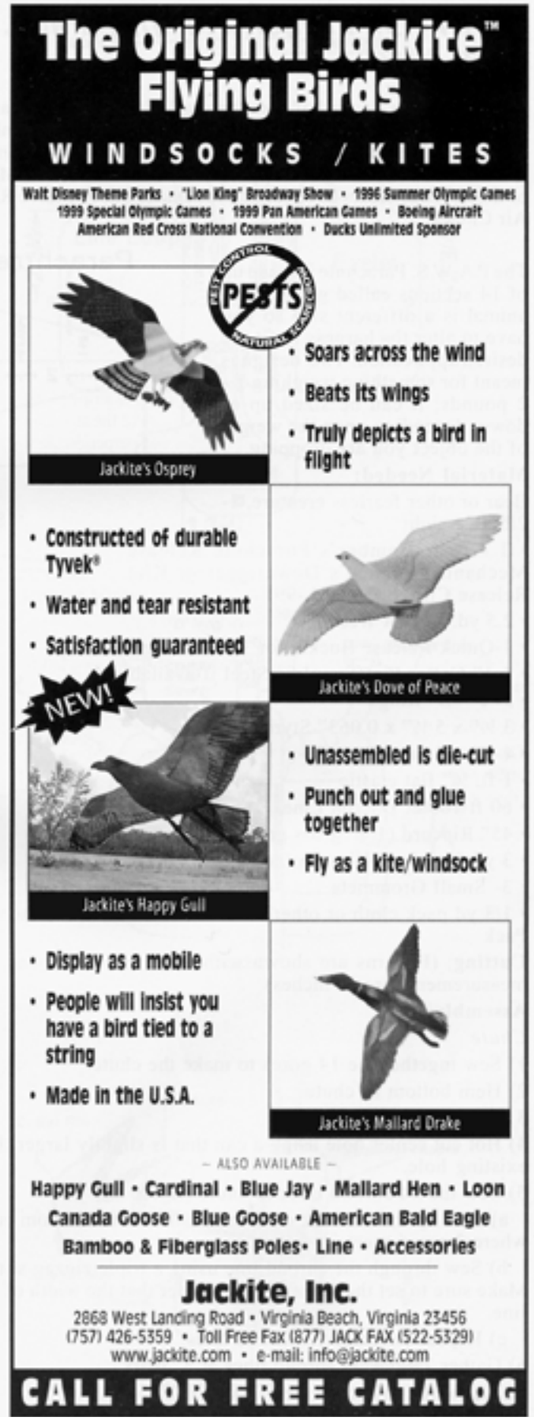
My first sport kite experience was flying a coworker's 8' Flexifoil in the spring of 1989. We were in Chicago's Grant Park. It was a windy day, and I had a blast. I was hooked immediately. Within a month I ordered my own Flexifoil. At the shop's recommendation, I ordered one of the ultraflex/ultralight rods for it as well.

Fast forward a couple of months to summer, and I had nothing but frustrating experiences with too little wind to fly the kite, even with the "ultralight" rods. Try as I might, I could not replicate the fun of that first flying experience. Eventually, I gave up.

Fast forward again, this time to 1994. I hadn't touched the kite for a few years, but I saw an article in the paper about a kite shop in the area. Maybe kites have progressed a bit, I thought. Indeed they had. I bought a new beginner's kite capable of flying in lower winds, and I've been flying ever since. I started competing the next year.

My point is, I tried the kite of an experienced pilot and then bought exactly what he had. Because I chose the wrong kite, I was nearly lost to kiting. I let people try my kite whenever I am able, but I also make sure to tell them it is probably not the right kite for them as a beginner. If they are from my neck of the woods, I recommend a particular kite (that I won't name here) that is inexpensive, durable, handles well and can be flown by a beginner in winds as low as four miles per hour. If they live somewhere with more wind, I recommend a kite that is better suited to the stronger stuff. I try to visit a festival's learn-to-fly field once in a while and make a point of trying the stuff for beginners. You never know when you'll have the opportunity to point another new flier to the right kite.

The best thing you can do to introduce someone to the joys of flying sport kites is to let them try your kite and provide a little instruction. You can also help them continue to enjoy flying when they're off on their own by recommending the right kite for their needs. Get both right, and hopefully you'll see them out on the field again someday. k



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| Nominations | Kathy Brinnehl 630/271-0765 |

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| Industry Liaison | Will Smoot 540/471-4949 |
| Club Liaison | Todd Little 717/975-2852 |
| Merchandising | Amy Doran 800/252-2550 |

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| Fly Market | Ron Lindner 636/677-3029 |
| Mass Ascensions | Al Sparling 630/369-9682 |
| Auction | Greg Lamoureux 781/925-3277 |

Summer issue deadline: April 15
Autumn issue deadline: July 15
Winter issue deadline: October 15
Spring issue deadline: January 15

Send address changes to
*UpdateAKA@aka.kite.org*

**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

Here at the Kite Trade Association annual show and convention, I am reminded that the while the AKA is the "fun" side of kiting, there is another serious side also. These are the manufacturers and retailers that make it possible for all of us to have new kites to fill the sky. They are also some of the best recruiters for the AKA, and where many new kiters learn about the sport.

Walking the rows of displays, you can't help being impressed by the wide variety and number of new fun items available. As you think about that next kite purchase — and there are some great new items you will need — I urge you to spend your money at an AKA Merchant Member. Manufacturers and designers are under seige by others that are unlawfully copying their products and designs. These knock-offs may cost less at first, but do not deliver the same quality and durability. Take the time to investigate what you are really buying.

Now, back to the fun! Are you ready for National Kite Month? Find education resources and references on the NKM website to help you plan a program for your local school or library. Add that event to others on the calendar. Let's make the best NKM ever!

More back issues of *Kiting* have been posted in the Members Only section of the Club House. In addition, the complete archive of the *Aerial Eye*, the one and only publication devoted to KAP is now available for your education and enjoyment. Coming soon are all the issues of the *Airborne Art News* for your free download. Volunteers are doing all this work, big thanks to Bernard, Rick and Sam for scanning. If you are willing to help, please e-mail me.

Plans are well underway for this year's convention in Seaside, OR, October 11-16. The Art Kite Fly will return, the best show ever! New vendors are reserving booths in the Fly Mart. The Associated Oregon Kiters led by Deb Cooley are rounding up some fabulous builders to make kites for the auction. Miniature builders are being contacted by Dave Butler for some truly unique works of art that you can take home.

Can't wait for the auction? Wonderful items are now available via eBay and the Great Kite Raffle. Watch for details in your e-mail, and also on the KiteTalk Forum.

See you on the field or in a workshop soon. Now, enough sitting at the computer, time to fly!

Barbara Meyer

# AKA News

### BIGGER, BETTER, FASTER, MORE

Have you flown a kite every day for as far back as you can remember? Did you build the biggest delta you've ever seen? Have you flown kites in more countries than anyone you know? Did your club fly more kites at your event than anyone has ever flown before?

Then you may have set a kite record. And you may want to get in touch with the new Kite Records Committee. We'll be looking at and certifying records involving kites of all types, both the traditional biggest/highest/smallest and more quirky, fun categories that you may come up with.

We encourage interested parties to contact us before making your record attempt, to be sure you will collect the documentation to make your claim "iron clad," but if you have already done something you think sets a record, you might as well submit it to us. It's free for AKA members, with only a small fee for non-members!

Records will be published here in *Kiting*, and we'll tell your local media of your accomplishment.

So start thinking: can you fly a kite to a great altitude ever, using under 5' of line? (Hint: stand on a nearby mountain!) How fast can you run a mile while "towing" a kite? (OK, we know you don't have to run with a kite, but for THIS record we guess you do!) How many sport kites can you fly in a stack? Whatever it is you can do with a kite, do it faster, higher, longer or better than anybody else, and we'll certify your bragging rights for all the world to see!

### OMG! C U @ CSIDE!

Make your plans today to attend the hottest kiting event of the year: AKA's 33rd Annual Grand National Competition and Convention, from October 11-16. The next issue of *Kiting* will have your convention registration form and complete details of the event. For those of you who love the ease and convenience of registering online, Internet registration will open the same time as the registration form in *Kiting* is delivered.

The Shilo Inn Suites Hotel is located right on the beach, and has a "bird's eye" view of the flying fields. Rates are $129 oceanfront, $99 partial ocean view and $79 city view. If you choose the Seaside Shilo East (about 10 blocks off the ocean), rates will be $74 per night. There are also several camping options nearby.

The nearest airport is Portland (PDX), but Seattle/Tacoma is also within driving distance.

### FLY LOCALLY, READ GLOBALLY

For all of you in Region Thirteen, the summer issue will mark the debut of our new international edition, *Kiting World*. You'll find eight extra pages of event coverage, features, and kiteflier profiles, all from the skies beyond America.

For everyone back in the States, don't worry, you'll be able to find *Kiting World* in the Members Only section of the Club House on the AKA website.

We need photos and articles for *Kiting World*. If you'd like to contribute, please contact *kiting.ed@aka.kite.org*.

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Seaside, Oregon
www.aka.kite.org

# Voices From The Vault

## Daniel Prentice

by Patti Gibbons

If a Hollywood storyteller wrote a screenplay about the kite community, chances are some colorful characters would emerge — the crafty kite maker, the easy breezy flier, the sharp-witted entrepreneur, the dry-humored jokester, and the pioneering club visionary — just to name a few. With coaching from Daniel Prentice, a character actor could easily land any number of kiting roles in a studio biopic. Former AKA and KTA officer, kite magazine publisher, kite businessman, and agile flier, Daniel's lifelong involvement with organized kiting taught him a thing or two about the different personalities of kiting.

Daniel was born in Louisiana in the cradle days of Elvis' rockabilly revolution to the son of a small town preacher, but spent the first four years of his life in Brazil with his family on a missionary trip. Fresh with memories of the Amazon, the Prentices returned to the States and took up residences in Texas and Arkansas before setting roots in southeast Missouri. Daniel grew up in the Show Me State with a generation of baby boomers in a changing America. After high school graduation, Daniel headed to Duke University where he studied for a year before taking time off to seek "fame and fortune" on the west coast. Daniel landed in San Francisco, working initially as a house painter. Not too long afterwards, in late 1973, his girlfriend landed a part-time job at Little People Kites and Daniel started hanging around the kite shop with her a couple days a week. Showing plenty of interest in kites, the owners offered Daniel a job making Mylar box kites.

Daniel brought experience and ample hand skills to his new position. As a child he shadowed his father's kite making efforts and was awed by their seven-foot bamboo and bed sheet diamond kite that shook their station wagon when tethered to the bumper. In junior high, a go-getting Daniel took up a quest to invent, and patent, a circular kite. His elder siblings ridiculed him mercilessly, but he wanted "to do something great and wonderful." Although Daniel missed the mark in his youth, as an adult he accomplished plenty of great and wonderful things for the kite community, including earning a patent for an adjustable kite line strap.

New to Little People Kites, Daniel learned the ropes and whet his entrepreneurial appetite. With aspirations of starting his own kite company, Daniel tested the waters and took a stab at distribution. He approached his bosses with a proposition and, with a handshake, became their exclusive Midwest kite distributor with a territory spanning between the Appalachians and the Rockies. By June of 1974, young Daniel started Shanti Kites. Shanti is the Sanskrit word for inner peace and, as a part-time yoga teacher, Daniel liked the idea of including the word shanti in his business' name. Reflecting back, Daniel is proud of his work and the "wisdom that teenagers sometime have" to select such an apt name for his company.

Bitten by a dream, Daniel quickly set out to pursue the stars. He bought a 1950 Metro van with a loft bedroom atop and a rising sun and "Shanti Kites" painted on the back. He, his girlfriend, three cats, a couple dogs, and fifty 45' Mylar dragon kites piled in the van and set off across the country to sell kites. Daniel targeted state fairs and department store chains. In the 1970's if you flew a dragon kite it drew a crowd instantly, but getting people to part with their money during the inflationary oil embargo days proved especially tough. Overall the trip was a sales flop. Daniel returned to San Francisco with more than half his inventory unsold, but this sandal-wearing twenty-year-old learned a lesson on how to evaluate a business plan realistically.

A shrewder Daniel returned to the Golden State and realized that the kiting world needed quality kite lines and spools. In this eureka moment he turned his focus from wholesaling to creating quality gear at a time when flimsy accessories blanketed the market. Daniel's carpentry skills and kite making roots mixed perfectly to nurture his aspirations into a sustainable business venture. For decades Daniel sold ergonomic spools and tough kite line that raised standards across the industry.

In the late 1970s Daniel paid his dues and joined "Bob Ingraham's kite club." Stepping up early as a club officer, he and fellow club pioneers fleshed out the AKA's organizational chart and somewhere around 1983 the Kite Trade Association became an official AKA committee. This dollars and cents committee gave folks in the kite biz a bona fide opportunity to get together. This excited Daniel. "All the people in the kite business at this time were a little bit crazy. You know you couldn't very well go into a bank and say 'I'm in the kite spool business' and have any credibility. There was no industry. There was no set formula for success. We were all on the edge of being real business people" and the KTA provided a much-needed forum for kite business people to talk shop and come together to learn how to make their way through the larger business landscape. In the mid-80s Daniel took up the KTA presidency and during his tenure he took a bold step and abandoned the jointly held AKA/KTA conventions. For some the separation stung, but in the end it allowed the KTA to spread its wings and focus on business issues while allowing the AKA to keep club issues at the forefront.

Forever interested in pushing the envelope and venturing into unexplored territory, in 1988 Daniel wanted to stretch professionally and mulled the idea of creating a new glossy magazine that documented the American kiting experience beyond the pages of *KiteLines*. Organized kiting was hitting critical mass and the sport kite movement punctuated the drive behind new membership swells. As a kite person Daniel thought the time had come for a second kiting magazine. As a businessperson, a new kiting magazine increased advertising opportunities and reached a larger customer base. But in the end, when Daniel analyzed his publishing idea, he was drawn to it largely because he "wanted to do something grand for kiting" and was convinced that creating a new stunning kiting publication was his next calling.

Setting out to fulfill his latest dream, Daniel cut to the chase and enrolled in a magazine writing class at San Francisco State University. Taught by a professional editor and former *Rolling Stone* and *Newsweek* writer John Burks, Daniel hoped the course would get him to his publishing goal. During a break on the first night of class, Daniel approached John and told him he wanted to start a magazine but needed advice and help. John asked him a series of simple questions:

"Do you know anything about publishing?'"

"No."

"Are you a journalism major?"

"No."

"Have you taken many writing classes?"

"This is my first."

John smiled and asked, "Do you have a lot of money?"

"No, I'm pretty broke."

"When do you want this publication out?"

"I want it to be on the stands by June." It was February.

John laughed and walked away. Daniel tried unsuccessfully to make appointments with him over the next month or so until John finally agree to hear him out over dinner. The two hit it off and before the check arrived, John signed on as the editor. *American Kite* magazine was born and on the stands by May. Over the years Daniel did some writing and photography but from the start he ran *American Kite* as a professional magazine, hiring professional writers, art directors, and editorial staff to oversee the production. He consulted on the kiting content and felt that *American Kite* coexisted with *KiteLines* nicely for over ten years.

Daniel and *American Kite* documented the salad days of the American kiting renaissance and since its subscription run lapsed he continued to busy himself patenting kite accessories, running his kite business, and promoting kiting. k

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*.

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| Overseas | $50 | $98 | $146 | |
| Sponsor (*KITING* via 1st class mail, Includes tax deductible contribution) | $100 | $200 | $300 | |
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# Sticks, Rods, Spars and Tubes

by Jon Trennepohl

Have you ever wondered what those sticks are made of that create structure for your kite? There are many options, such as wood, bamboo, fiberglass, pultruded carbon or wrapped carbon. Please continue reading to learn more about each of these options.

Wood is used in many parts of the world to frame kites. This is because of its ability to be transformed into many different shapes to fit the design of a kite, usually in the form of round or square spars of different diameters. The only downside to using wood is that it has the potential to warp due to moisture, or break under less stress than other materials.

Another option used widely around the world is bamboo. It is popular because of its wide availability, as well as its strength and weight. In addition, it can be split into different widths and lengths, and is fairly easy to bend so it is able to be used in many different types of kites.

Fiberglass is a man-made product that has over the years started to take the place of wood and other natural products because of its durability, stiffness, weight, and price point. If the spar has a hole in the center, it is called a tube, and referred to as a rod if it is solid. Fiberglass works very well in many kite designs. The only downside is weight versus deflection. Deflection is a gauge used to determine the stiffness of a rod or tube, in comparison to its length. In some designs, having a tube or rod that has a great deal of deflection may be good, but most of the time it is better to look for a higher deflection and lower weight, in order to have a wider wind range for the kite. In order to achieve this, pultruded or wrapped carbon spars are now being used to build our kites. To truly increase the wind range, on most kites at lower wind speeds it is necessary to make the kite lighter, but still maintain a rigid frame for higher winds. For example, build a kite with eight fiberglass tubes, each one of them weighing 30 grams and with a certain deflection allowing it to fly in 6 to 20 mph of wind. However, if a pultruded carbon tube is used, with the same deflection, and it only weights 21 grams, the kite would save nine grams per tube. If that is multiplied by eight that is a total weight savings of 72 grams or 2.53 oz over the fiberglass. In addition, using a wrapped carbon tube could increase the savings in weight even more.

What is the difference between a pultruded tube and a wrapped carbon tube? Pultruded tubes are made in much the same way as fiberglass tubes and rods; however, they use carbon fibers instead of fiberglass. Carbon rods and tubes are made up of carbon fibers (mostly carbon molecules bonded together and woven or twisted to form a long fiber or fabric) that are pultruded (or pulled) through a resin that binds the fibers together (referred to as a composite). The fibers are unidirectional, all oriented in the same direction, the entire length of the rod or tube. They are then drawn through a heated die that determines the inside and outside diameter of the tube. Pultruded tubes typically come in a variety of different diameters, ranging from .125" to .500" or more. As the outside diameter increases the stiffness or deflection goes up. In most cases you can order pultruded tubes in different lengths.

Fiberglass and carbon rods also come in many different diameters, usually beginning at .020" and continuing up in increments of .10 up to ½" ( .500) or greater. The stiffness and weight increase as the outside diameter increases because carbon is stiffer than fiberglass. A wrapped carbon tube is made one at a time by hand. Layers of carbon tape are wrapped around a mandrel, rolled under pressure, and spun to apply a clear cello tape that will compact the carbon around the mandrel. It is then placed in an oven and heated to a certain temperature for a specific length of time. Finally, the tube is pulled off the mandrel, stripped of the cellophane taping, and cut to length. The amount of layers and type of carbon, along with the inside and outside diameter determines the deflection. Wrapped tubes can either be straight or tapered.

There are many characteristics that need to be considered when choosing between pultruded or wrapped carbon. First, wrapped carbon is lighter and stronger in most cases. Pultruded tubes must be externally ferruled to join them together, while wrapped carbon tubes can be internally ferruled.

Kite manufacturers determine what type of framing material to employ based on factors such as design and cost versus performance. Often it is possible to change the flight characteristics and wind range by altering the framing materials. There are also other things to consider when choosing a framing material: wind range, cost, and the style of your kite. Wind range is broken down into three sub-categories commonly known as ultra-light (1-8 mph), standard (5-15 mph), and high-wind (15 mph and up.) A cost/benefit analysis should be done when choosing your material.

Finally, perhaps the most important aspect when framing your kite is to understand the design, regardless of whether it is a small or large kite. As a kite's size increases it needs to have a larger frame to support the structure. If the frame is too small for the kite, the kite will collapse in the air. In almost all designs there will be a part of the structure that will take more stress than the rest. For example, on a delta kite the outside leading edges and the spine are often the same deflection; however, the cross strut that holds the sail open must be stiffer and stronger in order to maintain the shape of the kite underload. Trial and error should be expected when developing the best framing for a kite based on the desired wind range.

When working with carbon and fiberglass there are tips and precautions to be aware of. Always wear eye protection and a mask when cutting fiberglass or carbon in order to prevent inhalation of the fibers. A fiber wheel will give you the cleanest cut, but if necessary you can use a small toothed saw. Always roll the tube when cutting and do not hold it rigid. When trying to determine which glue to use consider jet glue, which works quite well and sets up fast, but epoxy or super glue are also options.

I hope I have helped in the understanding of what goes into the framing of a kite. As I have shown, there are many things to consider when framing or re-framing your kite. Experimenting with different framing materials may seem daunting, but chances are you will improve the way your kite flies. k



# New Frontiers in Fabric: The Plastic Tablecloth

by Al Matheny

There are over twenty colors of plastic tablecloth (54" x 108") available, and you can use them to color kites made from plastic dropcloth (2 mil) or Tyvek. A simple technique to "iron on" colors to these materials requires the following: (a) clean concrete floor, (b) electric iron, (c) roll of good wrapping paper, (d) scissors/razor blade, (e) metal straight edge, (f) roll of indoor carpet tape and electrical tape, (g) old piece of carpet used as a cutting board, and (h) staple gun.

*Everything you need for coloring kites with tablecloths.*

Simple and complex designs can be "ironed on" and many color variations can be made by overlapping colors. The following steps can be used as a guide to color any plastic/Tyvek kite using colored plastic tablecloth:

1. Select the colors and pattern design to fit kite.
2. The pattern shapes can be cut all at one time by layering the selected colored sheets. A paper template outlining one side of the kite with all its pattern shapes is placed on top of the colored sheets then stapled to the carpet to hold in place. Cut through all the colored pattern sheets. It is sometimes helpful to leave a small section uncut at the end of each pattern.
3. Draw outline of kite on the floor with erasable marker and lightly tape down a clear plastic sheet that is 3" larger than kite outline, as plastic will shrink when heat is applied.
4. Set iron heat control on 4½ (on iron with seven heat settings).
5. Position colored patterns on sail and lightly hold in position with small pieces of electrical tape. Larger patterns can be applied one color at a time.
6. Place sheet of wrapping paper colored side down facing colored plastic, ironing on white side of paper. Iron small area of each pattern to hold in place and remove tape. Iron remaining areas of the pattern(s) and as the plastic cools, lift off wrapping paper. Repeat the sequence to completely color kite. For kites that require stiffening, color touch-up or repair, use indoor carpet tape to make "stick on" strips of whatever colored plastic is required. To flatten edges that roll up, a 2" strip of clear plastic can be ironed on the back side of the edges.

CAUTION: Do not let hot iron touch any unprotected plastic as it will instantly melt.

*Patterns ready to be laid onto plastic.*

This guide can be revised and improved. For example, I use a concrete floor because it's easy to mark the outline and size for different kites and it provides a uniform heat sink when coloring all plastic kites. k

# K-Files

## Niyati Patel & Vishal Wadhwani

by Phil Broder

You remember that moment, the instant when you think, Whoa! I've never seen anything like this before.

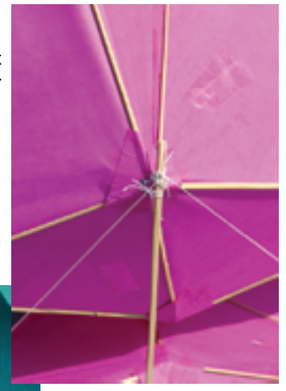
I had that moment judging the kitemakers competition at India's Gujarat International Kite Festival in January. Amidst all the painted kites and the sewn kites, there were these incredible things that looked like Buckminster Fuller's idea of origami. My problem was that they didn't fit into any category that we were judging. The other judges all felt as I did, and we awarded a special trophy to a girl who might be the next great kitemaker.

Only 26 years old, Niyati Patel of Ahmedabad has only been building kites for two years. The young design student wanted a way to take her study of fluid mechanics and make it into something that flies.

She studied the flight dynamics of the black eagles that circle over the Sabarmati River, taking careful note of their wing shape and center of gravity. The results were a series of paper bird kites, which even now she's still perfecting.

Vishal Wadhwani is an expert in fabric structures. A look at his website, *www.ideafactor.net*, quickly shows his influences. He's built metal "tensegrity trees" and cantilevered canopies for trade expos. Teaming up with Patel, it's easy to see the direction they're going.

Their kites are folded paper, with thin bamboo supports, all held in place by neatly-tied string and tension. I mention that their latest kite resembles something from the mind of an American kitemaker. They don't know the name Marc Ricketts or the Synergy Deca, but when I say that he used Fuller's principles of tensigrity, they light up. Half a world away, using tissue paper and plastic straws instead of nylon and carbon, great minds think alike. k



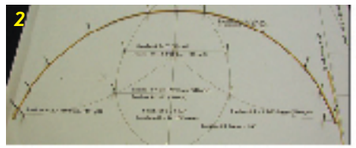
# Kite Plan

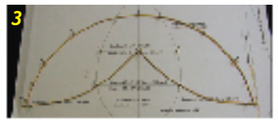
## Dan Kurahashi's Wasp

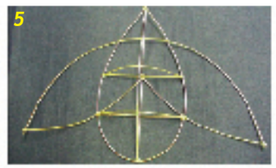
**Tools**
Bamboo knife
Straight edge
Needle (for bridling)
Tweezers
Small wire cutter
X-acto knife
Magnifying glass

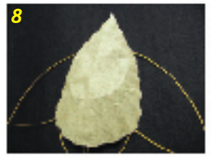
**Materials**
Fine washi or coffee filters
Bamboo
Hot glue
Line (for tying together)

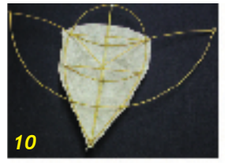
**Assembly**
- Cut washi as in diagrams at right.
- Cut bamboo to size as in diagram below (all pieces are slightly long, and will be trimmed later.)
- On a board, make a jig as shown in the diagram, using small nails. Assemble piece #3, #4, and #5 in the jig. Tie with line at points indicated in diagram, and apply a small amount of glue. (Note: you are working from the back side of the kite.)
- Assemble pieces #1 and #2 in jig. Tie with line and apply glue.
- After it is dry, take pieces out of the jig and turn over. Attach #6 and #7 on the front side, tie and glue. Repeat with cross-body bowed pieces.
- Glue body face to front side.
- Repeat with wings. There is no excess material; glue to edge of bamboo.
- Color if you like.
- Attach bridle, about 12" for each leg.
- Make loop at tow point, and attach lightweight flying line.

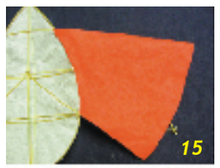


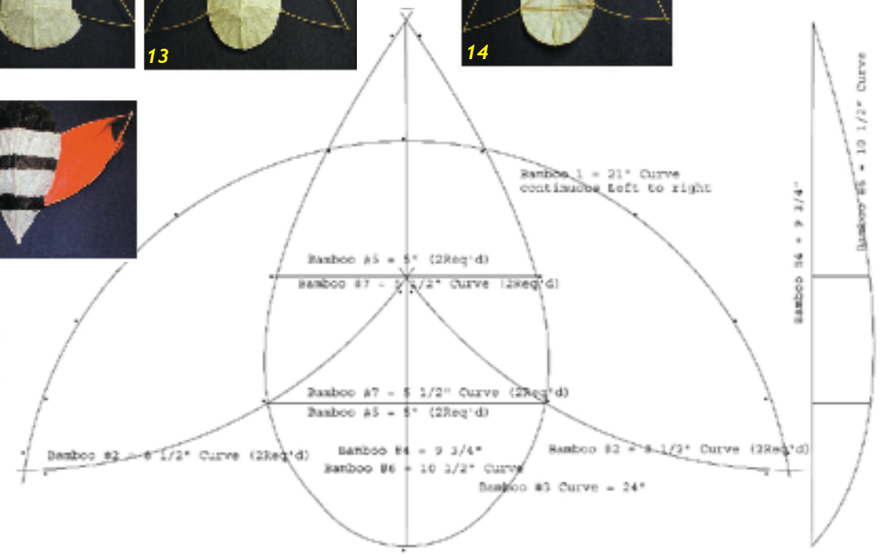





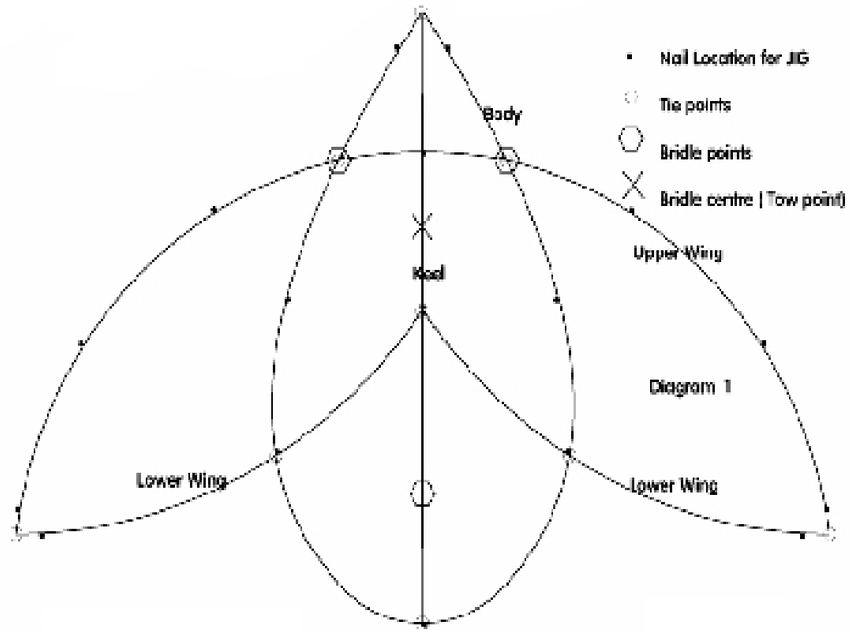








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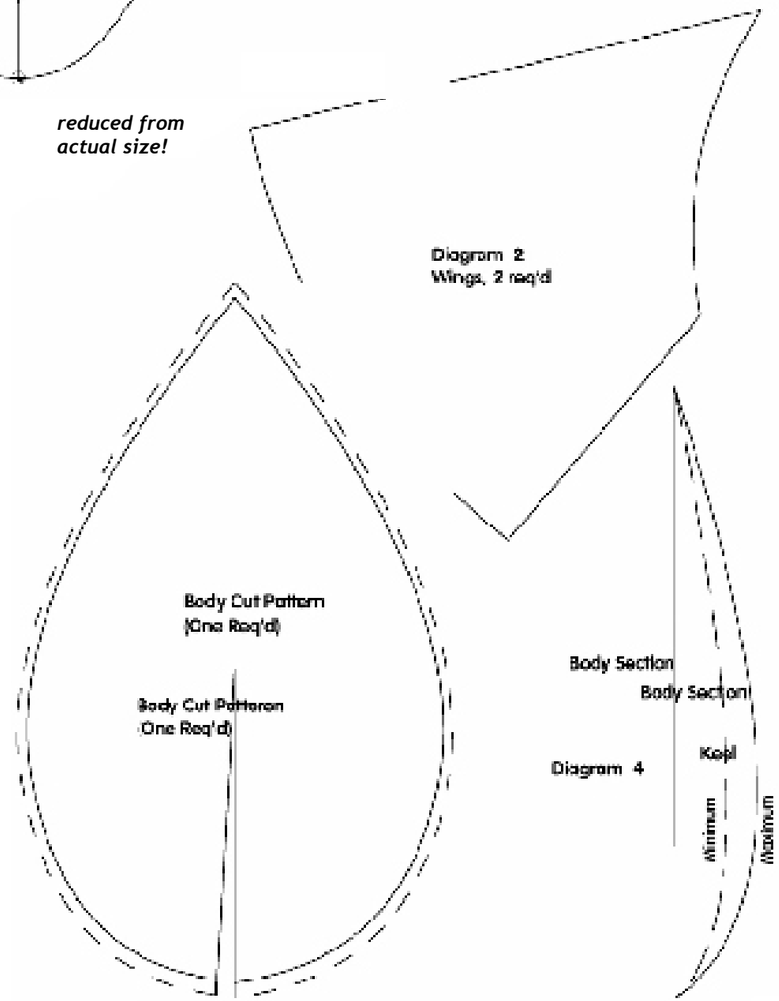


# KAPtions

## Making Your Camera Fly

by David Wheeler

The Spring 2009 issue of *Kiting* introduced the basic gear needed for kite aerial photography: cameras, rigs, kites, gloves and an anchor. This column discusses how to use that equipment to send your camera into the air and return it safely back to earth.

**Preparations**

A successful KAP mission begins before you leave the house. All batteries need to be charged and memory cards made ready. Also, all the necessary gear needs to be together. In addition to the camera, rig and kite, there are a few other items that are indispensable like an anchor strap and gloves. Having a checklist of all your equipment is a good idea.

Once all the gear is ready, you're ready to head to the flying site. What makes a good location for KAP? First and foremost, you need a safe place to launch and operate the kite. This means an open area with room to walk upwind in case the wind gets too light. And you'll need some open space in the downwind direction as well since this is the space the kite will launch into. Finally, you'll need some kind of fixed object that can serve as an anchor point. Power lines and roads are hazards to stay well clear of. It's also best to avoid large groups of people when getting started. Ideally, a KAP launch site would have some interesting scenery, architecture or event to photograph. But if this is your first KAP outing, don't worry about the subject matter. Beaches, parks and farm fields are usually good locations for learning KAP.

Finding a good time to KAP is just as important as finding a good place. If you're just getting started in KAP, you may only have one kite. In this case you'll need to wait until the wind conditions match the kite's range. Check the weather forecasts and watch how wind conditions change during the day. You'll find the window for KAP opens frequently if you're paying attention. Many KAPers will have a variety of kites matched to different wind conditions. This allows them to do KAP in a wider range of winds. Lighting is also a concern. Mornings and late afternoons offer the best quality of light.

**Setting Up For Launch**

Once on location, the first thing you need to do is establish an anchor point. This will be some object where you can tie off the kite while you attach the rig to the line. Fixed benches or sturdy railings make good anchor objects. Trees can work if they won't interfere with the kite or line while the kite is anchored. You don't want to tie the kite line directly to any of these objects, though. That might damage either the object or the kite line. So wrap a rope or strap around the anchor object and attach a carabiner to it. The carabiner is what will eventually hold the kite line.

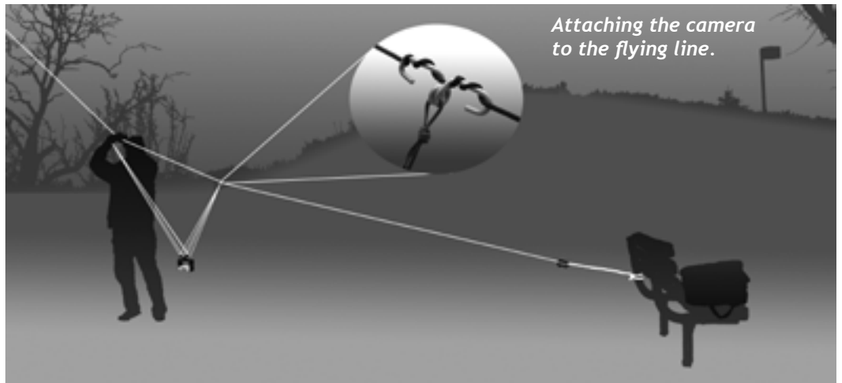
Next, put together the KAP rig and camera so it's ready to attach to the line. The camera needs to go in the cradle and the Picavet lines need to be untangled. It's a good idea to switch on the controls to make sure they're working. Now that everything checks out, set the rig aside making sure those lines remain untangled. It's time to set up the kite.

*The minimum that you'll need for a KAP session.*

If you're just starting out and you have never lifted a camera with your kite, a good idea is to use a dummy weight as a stand-in for the KAP rig. Just fill a bottle with water and attach it to the kite line by a string. This will let you practice your KAP flying skills without risking a camera. Be aware, however, that your kite, line and water bottle can still be hazardous, so take care.

There's no special technique for launching a kite for KAP. The launch is done without the KAP rig attached. Once the kite is flying, watch it for a few minutes to see how it's behaving. If there are wind gusts that turn the kite sideways, or lulls when the kite loses altitude, maybe this isn't the right time to put the camera up. If all goes well, though, it's time to anchor the kite and attach the rig.

Since you're going to need your hands free to attach the rig, you first need to tie off the kite line to the anchor. I like to use a clove hitch knot to tie the line to a caribiner on the anchor strap. Instructions for making this knot can be found on the Internet. Now, pick up the rig with one hand and walk down about 15' of line with the other hand. At this point connect the rig to the kite lines. The Picavet lines should form a nice open triangle. Now, keeping a hand on the kite line, turn on the rig and check that the controls are working properly. Finally, keeping a hand on the kite line, walk back to the anchor point. The rig should gently rise up as the kite line straightens. All that's left now is to untie the line from the anchor, let out some line and watch the camera head skyward.



*Attaching the camera to the flying line.*

**Composing Shots**

Once the camera is a safe distance from the ground, it's time to think about what it's shooting. Walk around with the kite to move the camera into various positions. With KAP it's possible to take photos from both high and low altitudes. Generally, the lower the altitude, the more detail is revealed which makes for more appealing results. So try to resist the temptation to send the camera as high as possible. And when shooting a particular subject on the ground, it can be very difficult to judge where the camera is aiming. People usually assume the kite is higher and farther away than it really is. So try to get closer to the subject than you think you need to be or shoot beyond it. This takes a lot of practice and patience.

As with other types of photography, lighting can make or break the shot. During early morning and late afternoon, the sun creates very interesting shadows and warm, soft light on the landscape.

Another tip: when setting the tilt of the camera, try angles that get a bit of sky in the top of the frame or tilt it to shoot straight downward. These two angles frequently produce good attractive results. Intermediate angles tend to produce more awkward compositions. But by all means, experiment with all sorts of subjects and compositions. The view from the kite is constantly wonderful and surprising.

**Difficult Situations**

Everyone hopes each KAP flight goes smoothly. But you need to be prepared to act quickly if things start to go wrong. If the wind starts to lull, the kite may no longer pull hard enough to lift the camera. With a slight lull, the camera may settle down at a lower altitude then rise back up when the wind returns. If it somehow drops all the way to the ground, though, it will usually land fairly gently. I've never had a camera or rig suffer any damage when this has happened. Of course, if the landing is on water, trees or other hazards, this will bring the KAP mission to a bad end. When the camera rig is seriously losing altitude, the thing to do is walk upwind or pull in the line quickly. The fastest way I've found to bring in the line is to put the reel down and pull in the line hand over hand. With a kite of typical size for KAP, this will keep tension in the line and the camera off the ground until it returns to where you're standing.

What's worse than having too little wind is getting too much. Most kites will become unstable above a certain wind speed. And if the kite turns over and flies into the ground under power, this isn't so gentle on the camera suspended below it. When the warning signs of increasing winds appear, try to retrieve the kite before it gets out of control. These warning signs include the kite turning sideways or oscillating back and forth. If the kite does start to turn sideways or downward in a gust, one remedy is to let out some line. This will de-power the kite a bit and allow it to recover. Once it resumes a better attitude, though, it's time to bring it down.

**Retrieving the Camera**

Eventually you'll need to bring the camera back down to earth. To do this, walk back to the anchor point then reel in the line. If pulling the line is difficult, an easier way to do it is to tie off to the anchor then walk down the line. Don't bring the KAP rig all the way down to the ground, though. Stop reeling in when it's about 10' or 15' up, tie off to the anchor, then walk down the line to the KAP rig. This can prevent some accidental bumps between the rig and the ground. Finally, detach the rig, turn it off and set it somewhere safe before retrieving the kite itself.

Once all the gear has safely returned from the sky, be sure to pack it up carefully. If you chain stitch the Picavet lines, they resist tangling during storage. This can save loads of time and frustration next time you unpack it. And always double-check to make sure you picked up the anchor strap and other equipment.

**Sorting Photos**

So how did the photos turn out? Typically, most of the shots from a KAP outing look pretty bad. Let's face it, it's hard to aim the camera when everything is swinging and swaying up there. But there are almost always one or two shots that really stand out. The best strategy during a KAP session is to take as many pictures as possible from many different vantage points. This will increase the yield of keepers. k

# Kite Sewing 101

by Gary Engvall

It's not Kite Making 101, because kites can be made without sewing. It's not Sewing 101, because there are many techniques we will talk about that are unique to sewing kites.

**Sewing Machines**

- If you are new to sewing, don't buy one, find one for free. Pick one out of the trash. Tell everyone you know that you want to learn to sew kites and someone will feel so sorry for you that they will give you a machine.
- Older is generally better. Metal body and gears, stronger motor and belts.
- Easy to clean and maintain.
- Simple, all gear and cam driven. No step motors.
- You don't need 1,000 different stitches. You'll only ever use four.

If you are sure you absolutely have to have a new machine, here is what to look for:

- Vertical bobbin, not a flat drop-in bobbin. (see adjusting bobbin tension)
- Ability to stop (needle up / needle down)
- Very wide zig-zag. Most will do 5 mm. Look for 5.5 to 6 mm.
- Variable width zig-zag.
- A 3-step or triple zig-zag.
- A bobbin out warning.
- Dual feed.
- Automatic needle threader.

Learn the machine! Read the manual. Don't have a manual? Get one! Most stores will copy one.

Threading the machine properly from the spool of thread to the needle is critical. Learn the proper thread path for your machine.

Minimum things to know about the machine:

- How to thread the machine. (Thread path)
- How to wind and thread and insert the bobbin.
- How to set bobbin tension.
- How to set top tension.
- How to adjust stitch length and width.
- How to use reverse, if it has it, to back tack (bar tack).
- Replace a needle.

Other things to know about the machine:

- How to clean
- Where, when and how to oil.
- Older machines have more places, use grease-like lubricant in some spots.
- Newest machines generally only need a drop of oil on the bobbin race.

Flat bobbin and slant needle machines: all slant needle machines have flat drop-in bobbins. The following bobbin tension technique won't work for flat bobbin machines. Flat bobbin tension can still be adjusted, but it is more tedious. The bobbin still needs to be adjusted first, but it needs to be done using a screwdriver (the one that came with the machine) with the case in the machine.

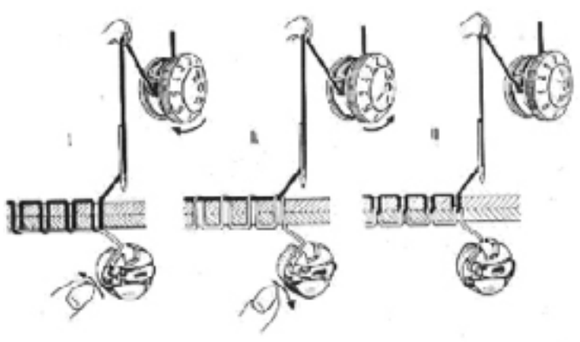
**Tension**

Sewing kites involves working with thin and slippery material. "Normal" thread tensions will tend to pucker up the fabric. Kite sewing usually involves much lower tension, both top and bottom. To set bobbin tension:

- remove bobbin case from machine.
- holding latch open holds bobbin in case.
- hold bobbin and case by thread.
- bobbin and bobbin case should just fall under its own weight
- this is just a place to start from, a guideline
- Left loose, right tight. Turning screw counter-clockwise lowers bobbin tension.
- Screw should turn easily without a screwdriver.
- Replace bobbin and case into the machine.
- Holding latch open holds bobbin in case.
- Make sure bobbin case is fully inserted in bobbin race.

To set top tension:

- With bobbin in machine, sew a row of stitches on a piece of scrap.
- Set/check tension on same type material you intend to sew.
- If bottom stitches are being pulled up, lower top tension.
- If top stitches are being pulled down, increase top tension.
- If stitches are even, no bumps top or bottom, no puckers in cloth, good to go.
- If fabric is puckering, remove bobbin, lower bottom tension, and start over.
- Very big loops of very loose thread on bottom means no top tension.
- In the illustration below, (I) the bottom tension is tighter than the top. (II) shows top tension tighter than bottom, (III) shows ideal tension with both threads meeting in the middle. Using two different colored threads of equal thickness makes it easier to see the differences for adjustment.



**Needle**

Think of the needle as a delivery system to get the top thread to the bobbin race so the rest of the sewing machine can complete the stitch.

Size matters. Too small a needle invites tension problems. Some people say that too big can excessively damage the fabric. Best to use is a #14, 90 European, Regular Point. We can make a good case for using #16's and #18's too.

Position matters. Make note of where the "flat" is before you take it out. Put it back in the same way it came out. Make sure it is all the way in. If you didn't look at the way it came out, there is a one-in-four chance of putting it in right. "Flat" goes away from the last thread guide.

Brand matters. Use the brand that came with the machine, the brand the manual recommends. There is a relief, a scarf, a "gouge" on one side of the needle that makes it possible for the bobbin race hook to grab the thread. The shape of this scarf is different on different brands of needles. Different brands of machines require different brands of needles.

Don't sew with a bent or dull needle. Dull needles make a "snap" noise in the coated ripstop fabric. Bent needles will drop stitches, especially in zig-zag.

**Thread**

This is one of the most critical components of sewing and most often overlooked....

- friends don't let friends sew with anything from Coats & Clark.
- using a thread stand properly is strongly recommended.
- overlock and serger cone thread is cheap and breaks very easily. It is okay for satin stitching appliqué on flag cloth (not ripstop) but nothing else.
- Mettlers Metrosene, Güterman, or Mölnlycke polyester threads are acceptable but are made from many short yarns and fuzz up the inside of the machine.
- color matching: not always a good road to start down.
- with Mettlers Metrosene, Güterman, or Mölnlycke polyester threads, different colors often have different diameters, different tension settings. Re-tension every time colors change.
- make sure thread is color fast. Some bleed when wet.
- best threads to use are HB (or HSB) 33 nylon or V 30 polyester. These are commercial grade threads. They have very consistent diameters and run very clean. They are very strong for their diameter.
- Polyester is a little softer than nylon. Nylon is a little stiffer than polyester.
- The numbers are "denier" a French term denoting the weight in grams of 9,000 meters of the thread. In other words, the bigger the number, the thicker (and stronger) the thread. Kite makers use 30 or 33 in most applications, 46 denier in some places. Hot air balloons and parachutes are sewn with threads in the 150 denier range. (Hint: They are sewing ripstop nylon using thread more than four times the size of ours. What size needle do you think they use? What does that do to the "big needles damage the ripstop" argument?)

**Fabric**

- Ripstop: to keep it light, woven from many small threads.
- Every ⅛" (usually) a thicker stronger thread is woven in.
- Any rip should stop at the thicker thread. (Actually, rips usually follow the seam.)
- ¾ ounce means one yard weighs ¾ ounce.
- Kite fabric is very stable, may be cold cut or hot cut.
- Uncoated untreated fabric is called greige (gray) goods.
- Only a few mills weave, many places dye and coat, some places only convert.
- Rolled flat and coated for porosity, called "calendaring"
- Because of the coating, ripping out stitches leaves a line of needle holes.
- Fabric is woven. Long straight threads are "warp". Short crooked ones are "weft."
- When strength is needed, cut along warp threads.
- Nylon degrades in ultraviolet light. Its dyes degrade too. Fluorescents degrade the fastest, white is almost as bad.
- The darker the color, the greater the resistance to UV.
- Stretches considerably when wet.

Polyester: really slippery to sew! Lasts much longer in UV. Bright colors fade less. Stable when wet. Colors tend to "offset", or bleed when in storage.

**Sewing**

- Hold both threads to start first stitch, at very least hold the top thread
- Hand wheel always turns top towards you. Never away.
- Don't sew with nothing in the machine. Don't sew air. It's begging for a tangle, and it wears out feed dogs and presser foot.
- Only lift presser foot when needle is all the way up or down, never mid-stroke.
- Sewing slow and steady and accurately is better than fast and messy.
- Shift fabric with needle down. Especially for appliqué.
- Always cut thread with scissors, close to the work, leave at least 4". Doesn't wear out cutter on machine, don't have to trim a second time.
- Always cut the little thread tails off the bobbins right after they are wound.
- These are lockstitch machines. Backstitch only a stitch or two.
- Industry standard is eight stitches to the inch.
- Let the machine do the work. Don't pull or push.
- Trim threads as you go.
- Zig-zag is weaker than straight stitch, but covers a multitude of sins.
- Machine should be stored covered, presser foot down, with fabric under foot.

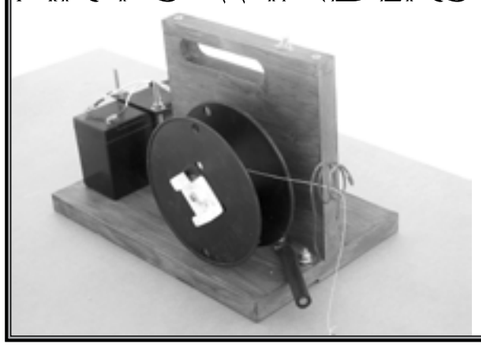
**Feed Problems**

If fabric doesn't want to feed straight, or reliably, it is a problem between the presser foot and the feed dogs. Things to check:

- Pressure of presser foot (not all machines have this)
- Presser foot is straight and installed properly. Straight means left to right and also level, or parallel to feed dogs.
- Presser foot meets feed dogs evenly.

*continued on next page*

ART'S WINDERS



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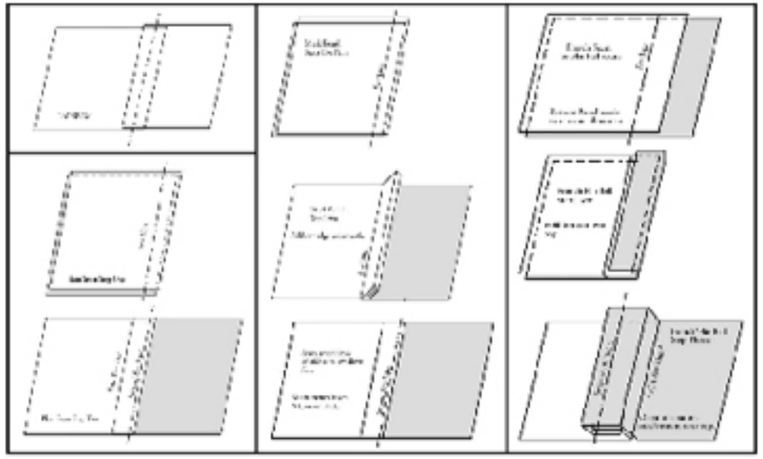
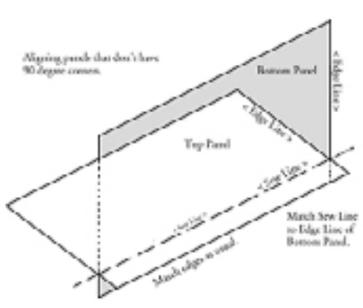
• On older machines, dogs could be worn. Seek professional help.
• Original presser foot may be replaced with a Teflon coated foot, a roller foot or a walking foot. (Note: A walking foot doesn't pull the fabric, its feet grab better and slide with the feed dogs).

**Seams**

Seams join two or more layers of fabric. There are many different kinds of seams. Most often used are Plain and Lap, also Flat Fell or Double French, and Mock French. Terms differ among different schools of sewing.



When planning for seam allowances, choose a seam allowance that works for you. Draw a template for the panel, add seam and hem allowances. On angled panels, sew line needs to match edge line.




**Holding Panels Together**
• Use a hot tacker to spot weld panels.
• Hot cut panels together.
• Seamstick or tape can work. Duct tape sometimes.
• Other adhesives, sprays or Smurf Snot (poster tack, keen tak, fun tak)
• Water can work.
• Straight pins are last resort and generally not a good idea.

**Sewing A Straight Seam**
• Can use edge of presser foot as guide.
• Can use marks on throat plate as a guide.
• Can use layers of masking tape placed on machine as guide.
• You will develop your own taste for seam allowances.

**Hems**
• You will develop your own tastes for size of hem.
• Double fold hems last longer than single fold hems.
• For accuracy, mark a line on good side, crease on line.
• For double fold hem, fold again to the fold.
• One row of stitches.
• Bias tape is a good way to finish a curved edge.
• To hem a curved edge, mark, fold, use a hemming foot.

**Glossary**

*Appliqué*: applying pieces of cloth to add graphics to a surface.
*Back tack / back stitch / lock stitch*: backing up two or three stitches to lock the beginning or end of a row of sewing.
*Basting stitch*: very long stitch used to hold something in place temporarily because it is easily ripped out later. Not a good idea when making kites.
*Bias tape/Edge Binding*: tape for finishing a fabric edge, especially when the edge is curved. Tape may be made from scraps or purchased at a sewing store/supply house. Bias tape is cut on the bias and stretches to follow a curve very easily. Grosgrain tape is cut on the grain and doesn't follow a curve as well.
*Bobbin*: very small spool that holds thread inside the sewing machine and provides the bottom thread on a lockstitch sewing machine.
*Bobbin Case*: case that holds the bobbin and controls the tension of the bobbin thread as it enters the machine.
*Bobbin Race*: part of the sewing machine that holds the bobbin and bobbin case and contains the bobbin hook which picks up the top thread out of the needle and pulls it around the bobbin.
*Controller pedal*: The gas pedal. The foot pedal that controls the speed of the machine.
*Denier*: term that denotes the thickness of the thread. It stands for the weight in grams of 9,000 meters of the thread. Basically, the bigger the number, the thicker the thread. Common kite sewing deniers are 30 and 33, 46 denier for high stress areas like noses and arch strings.
*Dual feed*: an integrated feed foot that moves with the feed dogs to move fabric more easily. See also Walking Foot.
*Feed dogs/feed feet*: the jagged teeth in grooves in the throat plate that push the fabric against the presser foot and move the fabric through the machine.
*Grain*: the threads of the fabric. Cutting along the threads in either direction is cutting on the grain. Cutting in any direction not along the threads is cutting on the bias.
*Greige Goods*: (pronounced Gray goods) fabric straight from the weaving loom with no finishing treatments.
*Hand wheel*: wheel on right side of sewing machine for advancing needle or stitches manually.
*Notions*: all the "other stuff" needed to sew. Thread, needles, scissors, seamstick, etc.
*Presser Foot*: feed foot that presses the fabric against the feed dogs. Many machines have a means of adjusting the pressure with which the foot presses on the fabric.
*Ripper/Seam Ripper*: handheld tool for ripping out stitches.
*Ripstop*: fabric woven with thin threads with thicker threads added at regular intervals. Any rip will stop at the thicker thread.
*Satin Stitching*: Many stitches close together to bind layers of fabric to prevent fraying. Useful for flagcloth appliqué.
*Seamstick*: double sided sticky tape used to hold layers of fabric together.
*Tension*: the part of the machine the controls the amount of "pull" there is when the stitch is pulled tight.
*Balance tension*: making sure that the top and bottom tensions pull the same amount so the knot or loop where they meet is right between the layers of fabric being sewn.
*Thread Path*: path of thread through the sewing machine from the spool to the needle.
*Timing*: the top of the machine runs everything on top including the needle up and down and zig-zag. The bottom of the machine runs everything on the bottom including the bobbin race and the feed dogs. Since the needle and the bobbin hook need to be in the same place at the same time, the top and bottom need to be "timed" to run together smoothly. Sometimes a machine can jump time and the bobbin hook won't pick up the thread no matter what. This is when it is time to call the pros.
*Throat Plate*: also called the aperture plate. The plate under the needle and presser foot where the feed dogs protrude. Usually it is easily removable to clean underneath.
*Walking Foot*: an after market (sold separately by manufacturers often other than that which made the sewing machine) presser foot that has rubber dogs on the bottom that move with the feed dogs. Often gives a more reliable feed in slippery fabric than factory presser feet.
*Warp*: when fabric is woven on a loom, these are the long continuous threads that go the entire length of the roll of fabric. These are generally much straighter than the weft, or fill, threads. This means they will stretch less over time.
*Weft*: in woven fabric, these are the threads carried back and forth by the shuttle and combed into place. They can be very crooked and so tend to stretch more than the warp grain of the fabric.
k

# Empty Spaces In The Sky

## Frederick Kerry Glass
### 1948-2009

Kerry Glass was a kite flying friend of mine. Our friendship originally centered on kite flying, but it quickly grew into something much more meaningful to me. Yes, he was certainly always a kite flier, but limiting Kerry to only a "kite flier" meant you lost the other 95% of the man — and that would be a sad loss indeed. Kite flying was a hobby to Kerry, nothing more. He took it seriously, because it was his joy, his delight, his "Bliss!" But it wasn't his be-all and end-all, because being Kerry meant just living a full, happy life in all aspects. We started flying our single line kites together, and over time we learned a bit more about each other too. The more I heard from Kerry, the more I liked and respected the big guy. We'd discuss the way our kites flew, and listen to each other about some changes to help them fly better next time. Or we'd talk about the people we knew together (mostly kiters), and try to find some ways to help others in the sport grow, and get to be better fliers.

I'll miss you pal. But wherever you are, I hope there's plenty of sunshine, about 10 mph of steady breeze, a big yellow sweatshirt for you to wear, and a yellow dual-line kite that axels perfectly every single time. Hasta luego.

*Dave Shattuck*

## Mike Moeslein
### 1925-2010

Mike Moeslein of Harrisburg, PA, died the day after celebrating his 85th birthday in February. Mike was a member of the Keystone Kiters for over 10 years and a member of the AKA since 1989. His primary love was for fighters, but would fly anything with a string on it. As a WWII veteran, he served in the Army Air Corps from 1942 until 1945.

*Todd Little*

## Richard Solier

In 1976, Richard and his partner Jeri started Pic-a-Patch Kites in Westport, WA. He was instrumental in establishing the Westport Windrider Kite Club in the 1980s, along with some avid kiters at the time, some of whom are still members. We have fond memories of Richard and the first kite festivals he put together. You could not go to the beach without going into town and hanging out at the kite store. I can still picture Richard across from the kite store flying a kite over the boats in the harbor or his van parked on the beach and teaching people how to fly kites. He supplied a lot of us with our first kite and a few after that.

*Rob Pratt*

# Knot In This Issue

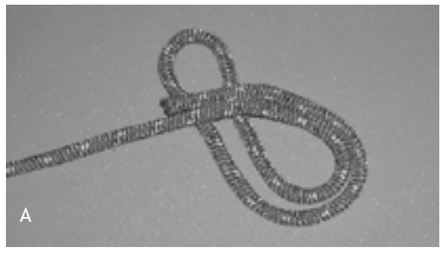
by Rod Beamguard with Ronda Brewer

Knots have always fascinated me. Whenever I went backpacking, I would take several 50' lengths of parachute cord with me for use around camp. As I became more proficient at tying knots, I realized that a good knot definitely made rock climbing outings much more enjoyable, not to mention safer. Thirty-some years ago thanks to the late Margaret Greger, I became a kitemaker. Through trial and error, I discovered using the correct knot for the situation made kite construction easier and flying a lot more fun.

There are thousands of choices when considering what knot, loop, bend or hitch to employ. But who needs so many ways to do the job when a few simple but effective knots can be learned and easily remembered? Issue by issue, we'll look at some of them, starting with the easiest.

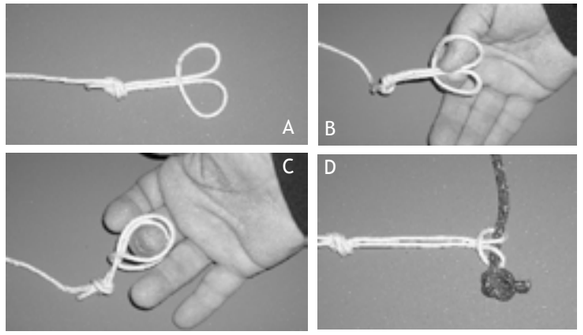
**THE OVERHAND LOOP**

Easy to tie. It is not the strongest knot to use but has the virtue of not coming undone by itself. I tie an Overhand Loop at each end of the 10' long tubular nylon cord I use for tethering my kites to a convenient anchor. It is also the starting point for the Lark's Head Hitch and Prusik Knot. To tie: A) fold the end of the line back to double the line. Pass the doubled end under the end of the rope. B) Pick up the doubled end and pass it down through the middle of the loop. C) Pull the knot tight.




**THE LARK'S HEAD HITCH (Ring Hitch)**

Also easy to tie and to untie. This hitch is used to attach a line to an anchor point, flying line to bridle, tails to kite, etc. To tie: A) Turn the loop end back under the doubled line. B) From beneath the loop, place your index finger through one part of the loop and your thumb through the other part. Bring your thumb and index finger together and take hold of the doubled line. C) Fold the two halves of the loop around the doubled line and transfer to one finger. D) Transfer the knot to the desired line and pull it tight.




Knot in the next issue: the Bowline! k

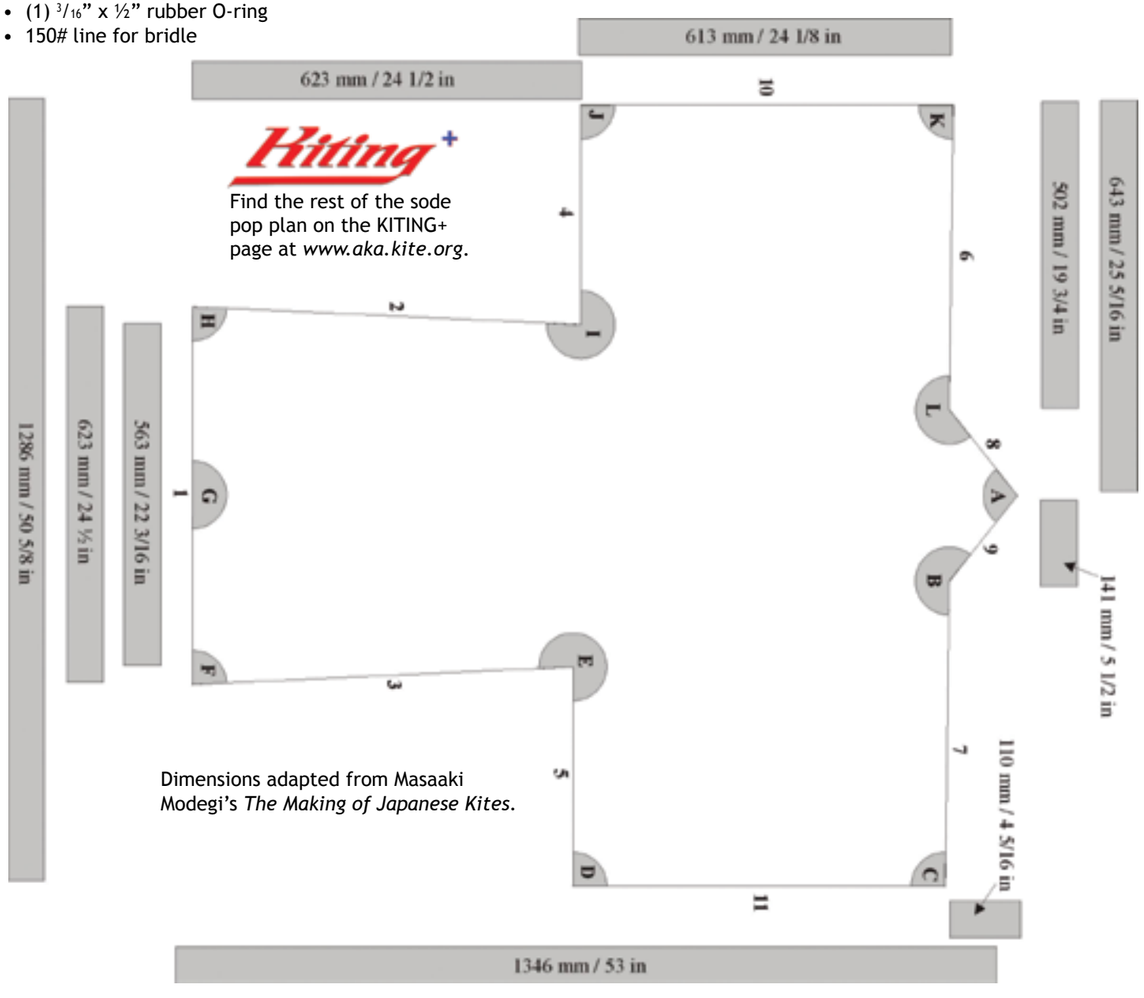
# Kite Plan

## Sam King's Sode Pop

**Materials**

- Spine – (2) .265" x 32.5" carbon rod
- (5) 4" diameter Dacron circle
- (1) .265" arrow nock
- (½) 3" diameter Dacron circle
- (1) .265" external aluminum ferrule
- (2) 5" piece of 100# line
- (1) .234" vinyl end cap
- (3) 3" pieces of flat braid
- Spreaders – (4) J65 fiberglass rods
- (8 yards) 1" strip nylon
- (2) .276" internal ferrule
- (7) 1" x 5" pieces of Dacron for pockets
- (4) .281" vinyl end cap
- (1) 1" x 1½" piece of Dacron
- Bottom spreader – (1) .157" x 40" solid fiberglass rod
- (5) 1" x 2" piece of Dacron
- (2) .156" vinyl end cap
- ¾ oz. ripstop nylon
- (1) 3/16" x ½" rubber O-ring
- 150# line for bridle

Find the rest of the sode pop plan on the KITING+ page at *www.aka.kite.org*.




Dimensions adapted from Masaaki Modegi's *The Making of Japanese Kites*.

# Sign It With Colour

by Robert Brasington

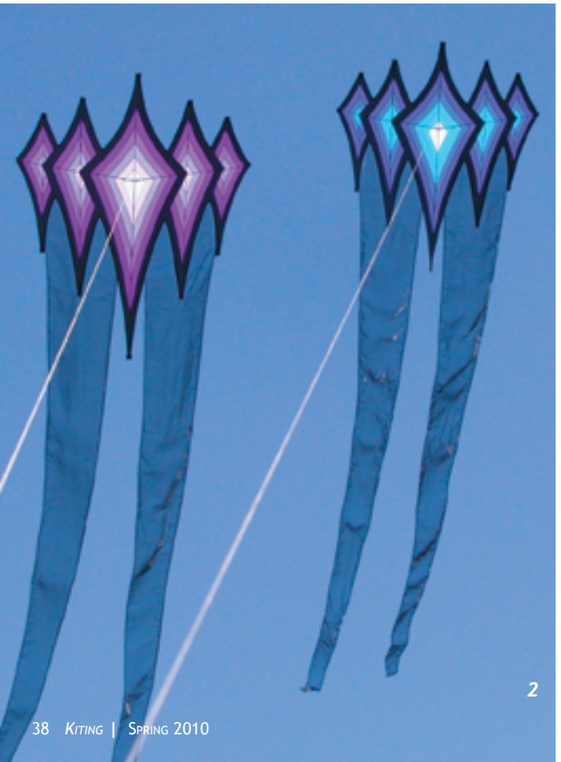
All kitemakers use colour to a greater or lesser extent, and it is the way we use colour that gives some kitemakers a signature. This signature can be so recognisable that it immediately identifies their kites as being made by them. Examples of this would be George Peters from Colorado or Reza Ragheb when he used his browns, burnt oranges and dark yellow hues. Other kitemakers use base colours as their signature, where, for example, all the kites made are red, white and black. Distinctive kitemakers using distinctive colours make their choices consciously; I don't believe it is one of random thought.

1

Over the years friends have said they knew I was around because they saw my kites flying, even if the kites were totally new designs. When asked how they knew it was my kite the response was invariably "nobody uses colour the way you do." At that time I didn't consider the colour choices were unique, I simply chose them because I liked them. On thinking about that statement now, I realise there are a number of strategies or formulae to which I adhere to achieve the desired effect.

1a

Primary colours are rarely used, and when choosing colours to complement each other, those next to each other on the colour wheel are the first considered (fig.1 & 1a). Jumping across the wheel to combine shades appears to me to give a naive feel to the work and can undermine a great graphic. The graphics I use are generally all original so I have no preconceived idea of what shades should be used. As the graphics develop a colour theme will become apparent. A theme that is popular and reoccurs is that of the "fades" (fig.2 & 2a). This is where four, five or six shades of one colour are brought together, highlighted with a beam of white and then bordered in black. This generally gives an understated simplicity and grace.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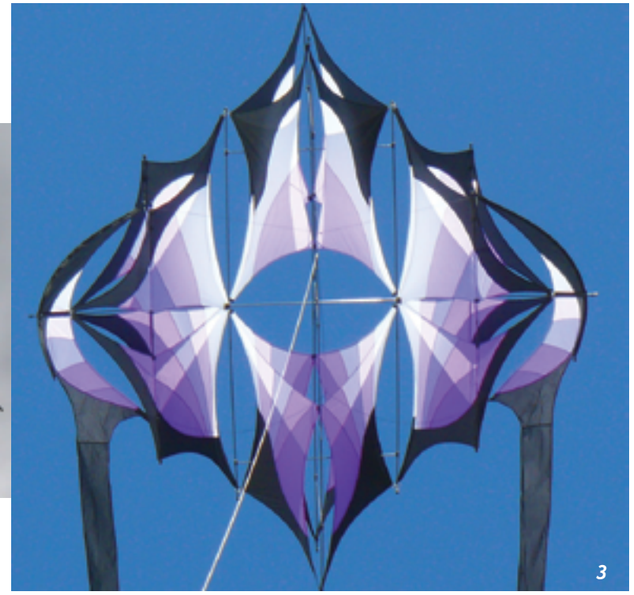
As the structure of kites are finalised the panels are broken up and allocated colour. The majority of the kites I design are nonrepresentational and so there are no restraints on the decisions as to the graphics. The panels are divided so that the darker colours are on the outside of the panel, grading inwards to the lighter colours. These lighter colours are generally towards the centre of the panel, or the centre of the kite. As the colour grade lightens, more area is assigned to that colour. This colour density/intensity versus area ratio has rarely let me down when it comes to harmony and balance of shades (fig.3)

In the early days as a kite maker I was told we could not mix manufacturers' cloth on the same kite. I was also told that all panels of a kite must be on the same directional warp and weft. These days I am not so sure on either adage. I use up to four different manufacturers' cloths on one kite to get the desired tones (using similar denier grades). I do this to get the desired tones, particularly these days as manufacturers are dropping colours from their range, not adding to them, and every time they drop a colour we are the losers. As I travel to festivals around the world, one of my missions is to return home with at least two new shades of cloth

2a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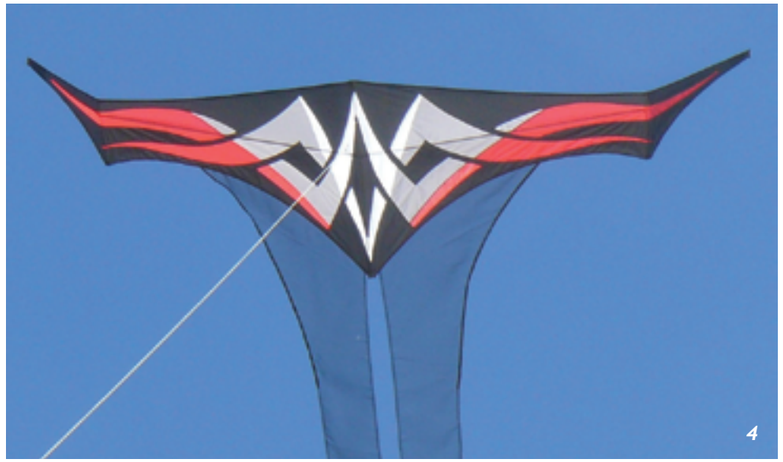
Finally I would like to share some quick tips that work for me.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1) Everything goes with black, white or silver (fig.4).
2) Make up quick colour combo swatches as they present themselves (fig. 5)
3) Use cameras often to harness colour or design ideas (buildings, posters, fashion, make up)

5

4) If a design looks "wayward" border it in black.
5) Persevere with colour selection. A "that will do" choice will always be aggravating when the kite is flying.
6) If I can't get excited about a colour or design, I could never expect anyone else to either.
7) If in doubt, ask the wife. k

# Quilts That Fly

by John Freeman

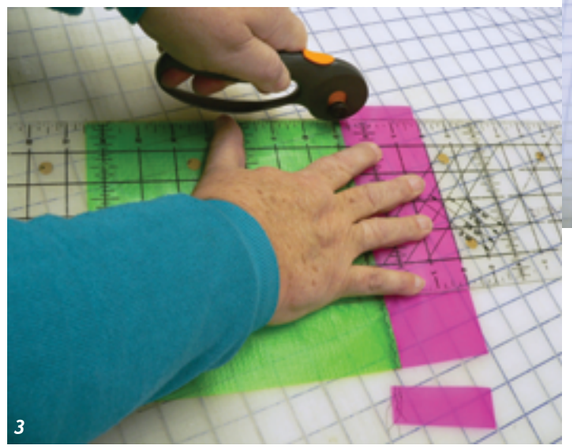
10

For some years now Marzlie and I have been exploring the graphic possibilities of quilting techniques used on kites. We have found it to be a limitless source of good, strong designs. There are several methods, with variations on each. For this article we will only talk about the Log Cabin square — one of the most simple types.

At its most basic, it is just a center square, with straight "logs" laid around it to build the "cabin." Then the variations begin, starting, of course, with your choice of colors and their arrangement.

The first variation is whether the center square is really in the center, or off toward one corner. By varying the width of the "logs" you can move the center square off center a little bit, or a lot.

Unless you have a really strong idea about what you want to build, it is a good thing to try it out with paper before you cut any fabric. There are lots of quilting books out there with line diagrams that are easily scanned and printed as many times as you like. Or, find a picture like figure 7 and trace the lines — then scan and print it. Now you can try out all sorts of color schemes without wasting fabric. Just color your drawing with colored pencils, or, if you are not comfortable handling sharp, pointy objects, you can use crayons.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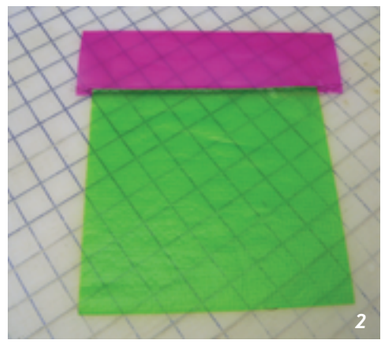
A word here about cutting. All quilt work requires accuracy, not just with the sewing, but also with the cutting. You will cut strips of fabric that must be straight, and accurate in width. Every strip you add will need the ends trimmed even. The very best way to do these chores is with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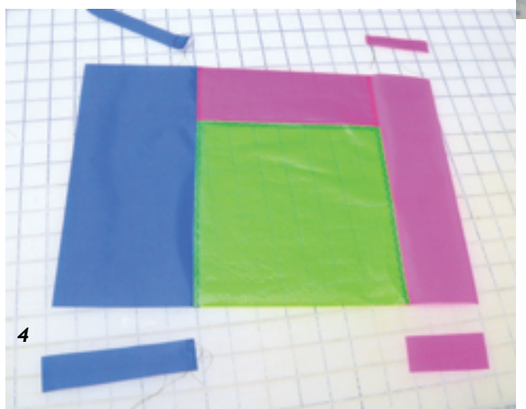
a roller cutter on a proper cutting mat. A large, gridded mat makes the job of cutting multiple strips of a certain width much easier and faster. If you have not yet used a roller cutter, now is the time. Just like any tool, it will take a while to be comfortable with its use, then you will wonder how you ever got on without it!

OK, let's build a square. The hardest parts come first: choosing your colors, choosing your basic arrangement, and choosing a size. Once you get past these hurdles, with the help of your coloring experiments, the rest is easy!

Make all your seams about a quarter inch. The actual size of the seams is not so important, but making them all the same is. When quilters do this with their cotton fabric they press all these seams as they go. We can't do that, but we still want our seams to lay flat, so we must top stitch them. Some folks top stitch using a straight stitch, but I strongly recommend against this. Maybe I'm just not a good enough sewer, but a straight stitch shows every tiny wandering from a perfectly straight line. On the other hand, a zig zag will hide a multitude of evils. Just fold the seam allowance over to one side and stitch it down. Be consistent in the direction of your folds.

A note here about top stitching. I know it is counterintuitive, but lay your skin-in-progress with the face side up. Reach underneath to make sure the seam allowance is where you want it to be, then stitch, using both hands to keep the seam pulled open tightly. (Fig. 1) If you sew from the back side there is a real danger that the seam may not be flat, as it is not so visible. This can bring on an unwelcome time spent doing "reverse sewing."

1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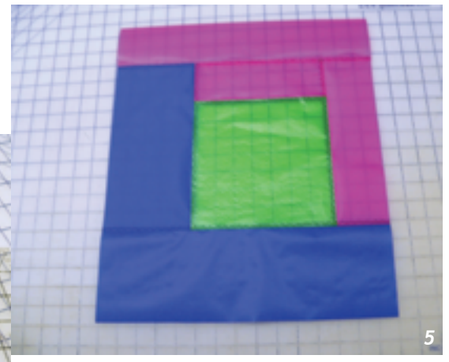
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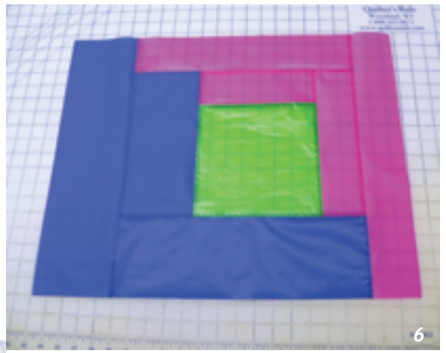
For this sample we are starting with an 8" center square. I could have chosen to put 4" strips (those building logs!) all around, and the square would have ended up right in the middle. Instead I chose to use 5" and 3"strips. These add to the same size as two 4" strips, so the end result will be the same size. The difference is that with this one the "center" will no longer be in the center.

Start construction by sewing one strip (of either size) to one side of your center square. Top stitch as you go. Always let the ends stick past a little bit so there is something to trim exactly with the sides of the square. (Fig. 2) Trim the strip ends even with the sides of the square. (Fig. 3) Sew two strips, one of each color, to opposite sides of the square. Trim again. (Fig. 4)

Again add one strip of each type to opposite sides and trim. (Fig 5) Note: If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the side you are sewing to has no seams across it — stop. You are on the wrong side. You will always sew to an edge with two seams in it.

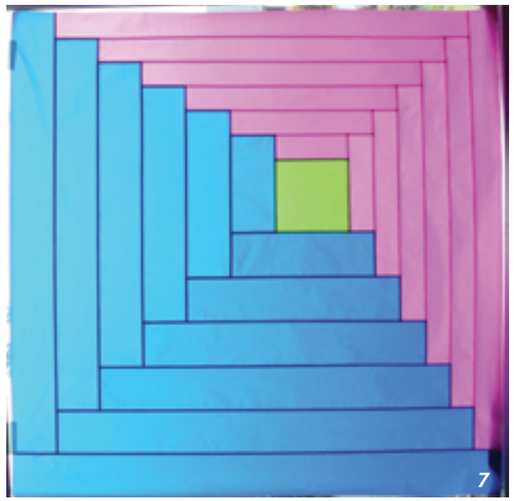
Do it again. (Fig. 6) Keep adding pairs of strips to alternating sides until your square is full sized. Note: You will have to add one lonely strip at the end to balance the one strip you started with. For this square we are adding six strips all around, which gives us a square about 4' on a side.

It is a good idea to check once in a while to make sure you are staying square. If it starts to wander off a bit, a tiny trim here and there won't hurt.

We use quilt squares a lot to make square diamond kites. These have been all the way from 4' on a side, to 10½'. They all fly reliably in almost any conditions.

8

We will finish this square off to be a square diamond kite. Here is a picture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of the finished Log Cabin Square, before being made into a kite. (Fig. 7)

This is not, of course, your only option. You can add several squares together to create something totally different — join three together for a Sode, for instance, or a Poster Genki. Or join four together to make a larger and more complex square diamond. How about six joined together for an Edo? Or you can cut the square diagonally to create the wings of a Delta, or Delta Conyne. (Fig. 8, 9)

You can also choose to make your "square" not square at all. It can be a diamond, or a hexagon, or an Eddy shape, as one of my workshop kites is. (Fig. 10) These options may require an adjustment in the assembly process, but you can think that one through.

This is a tiny introduction to quilted kites. There is much more! See more quilted kites on our site at *http://2oldkiters.smugmug.com/*. Want to talk about it some more? Drop me a note at *marzlie@gmail.com*. I'm always ready to talk kites! k

9

# Kite Plan

## Dick Maciel's No Sew Dunton-Taylor Box Kite

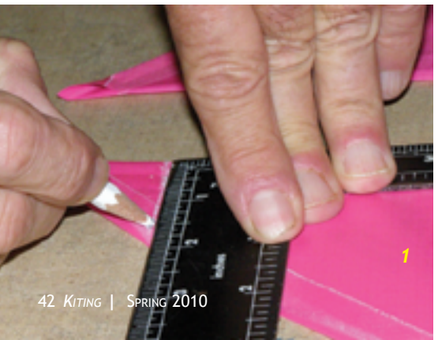
Plans for the Dunton-Taylor Box Delta are available on the web. Here's one source: *www.richmondairforce.com/Files/DTplans.pdf*. I use these plans and most of the measurements with some adaptations. It is probably best for you to print the file. This article assumes the use of ¼" 3M 9460 VHB tape. If you use ⅜" or ½" tape you may need to rework some measurements. I'll mention a couple of measurement changes as we go along. I use a hobby iron to seal each seam and hem as soon as I make it.

**Wings**

Symmetry is extremely important in a delta. Since the bridle is only in the center, any left to right asymmetry will result in skewed flight. All the parts of this delta start out as rectangles. As you cut each one, make sure they are squared. The sides of a rectangle are parallel and the diagonals are equal. Remember to check those diagonals. I make the wings oversize and then trim them down. During the trimming I make sure they are identical.

Read the first page of the plans and decide how you want to lay out your parts on your fabric. I do it the simple way. Cut two triangles from a 35" square of cloth. Check the diagonals of the square before you cut.

To calculate where to mark the fold-to line for a rod sleeve, take the diameter of the thickest part of the rod (usually an end cap or ferrule), multiply by 4 and add twice the width of the tape. My end cap is .15", so 4 X .15 + 2 X .25 = 1.1. I'll use 1.125" (1⅛"). To make the leading edge sleeve, mark a 1⅛" fold-to line on the long side. Apply tape to the edge and make the sleeve. Mark this side of the wing as the SKY side with masking tape. Turn the wing over and mark one edge the same way. Make the sleeve. I put this sleeve on the ground side because the SKY side is for more important connections. Don't fuss over the point where the two sleeves overlap. It's going to be trimmed away.


1

Make up the other wing. Be sure to make a left wing and a right wing.

These wings are oversize. From each tip measure down 1⅞". Cut off the tip (fig. 1). Make sure these tops of both wings match.

Now from the flattened top, measure down 31". Trim the bottom of the wings to this 31" height. This is where you can make sure your two wings are identical. Take 5" off the trailing tip. If you're hot cutting, every time you make a cut, poke a long rod through the sleeve to open the melted weld. That will save a lot of probing later to open the sleeves.

This is the time to cut the hole for the horizontal cross spar fitting. It's 17" down the leading edge, 2" long.

To reinforce the trailing edge use "crack and peel" nylon. Insignia cloth might be better, but I never have a long enough piece. Depending on your design, it might go on the SKY side or the GROUND side. If you have trouble handling thirtysome inches of the nylon, try using a masking tape hinge to position the nylon before you pull off the paper. Mark and cut the curve as on page 1.

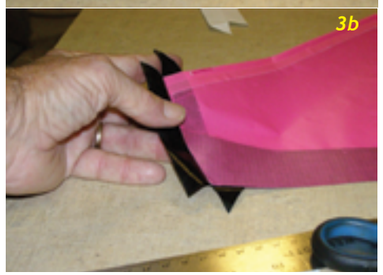
Also cut a slit for spar insertion 1" long, ¾" from the trailing edge. Insert a wooden dowel so that you don't pierce both sides (fig. 2).

2

I cap the trailing edge of the wing rod sleeve and then cap the entire 5" edge with insignia cloth. First I make a scrap paper template using the edge of the cloth as an approximate measure. Then I make a cap about ¾" X ¾" on each half to fold around the end of the sleeve.

Now make a quick paper template for an end cap for the entire tip. From a strip of paper 1½" wide folded in half, trace the edges of the tip (fig. 3a). Cut away the the excess from half of the strip. Put it back on the tip, fold the ends over the tip, and mark where the fold needs to be trimmed. Make the same out of insignia cloth and place so that the final extra tabs fold onto the SKY side of the kite (fig. 3b).

3a

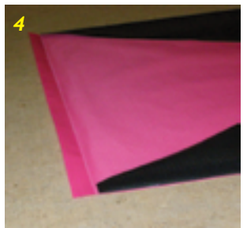

3b

Your wings are now complete. This is a good time to do any appliqué you want on the wings since you know their size and they lay flat.

**Box Back**

Cut a rectangle 13" wide and longer than needed. Check the diagonals to be sure it's squared. Cut the color insert as indicated. Since this is the front of the leading edge, the part that's going to hit that chain link fence first on a dive, I double roll this hem and make it wider. Mark a 1" fold-to line, put down two rows of tape, and hem the top once.

Cut the notch out of the back and take off ½" from each point (fig. 4).


4

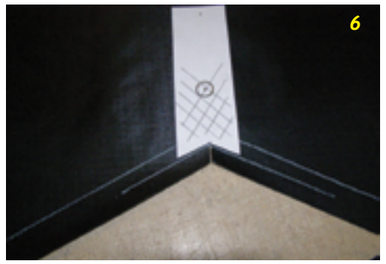
This provides more surface to hold the two pieces together. Put tape on the back of the notch, line up the points with the bottom the hem and glue into place. Mark a 1" fold-to line, put down two rows of tape, and hem the top (fig. 5). Back trim the excess color insert.

5

Now trim the trailing edge long enough to hem it and have it finish the same length as the wings it will join. Make that hem.

**Box Front**

On page 1 of the plans find where it says 0.5" TYP and change that to ¾". Cut the box front longer than needed with that little change. Mark a ¼" line near the bottom of the V. Slit the middle of the V down to this ¼" line. Mark a ½" fold-to line for hemming along both sides of the V. Before hemming, cut an insignia cloth reinforcement that will sit inside the hem. I cut this on the bias of the cloth. Since there will be a bridle hole 1" below the V, cut the reinforcement longer, maybe 2½" (fig. 6).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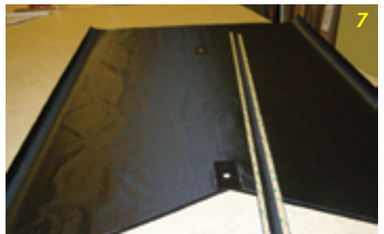
Glue down the insignia cloth, and them hem both sides. Cut a hole centered 1" from the V for the front of the bridle. Reinforce the area for the other bridle hole about 17" below the first with insignia cloth. Cut that bridle hole.

Now trim the trailing edge long enough to hem it and have it finish the same length as the wings it will join. Make that hem.

To make the center sleeve, cut a strip 1" wide and longer than needed. Hem one short end. That will be the trailing edge. Apply tape to both edges of this strip. Matching the bottom edges, glue on the strip. It will be too long (fig. 7).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Without gluing it down, test fold the excess strip over the edge and trim it off about halfway to the bridle hole. Put tape across the short end. fold it over the inside of the V and glue it to form a flattened V. Fold and glue a 3" x 1" insignia cloth reinforcement over the end of this sleeve. Don't cover your bridle hole.

**Joining the pieces**

The box front is joined to each wing with one line of tape. The box back is joined to both the box front and the wing with two lines of tape. First, put a line of tape along the inside edge of the wing. It will lie on top of the spar sleeve (fig. 8a and 8b).

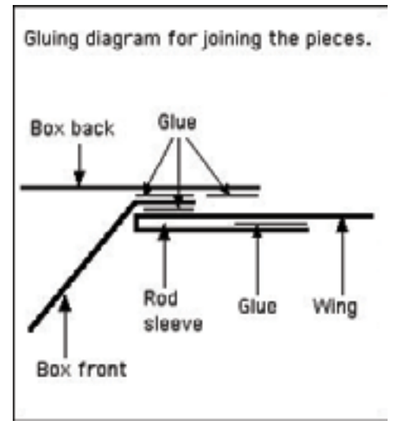
8a

8b

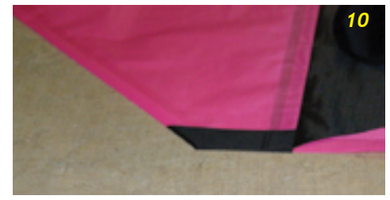
Line up the wing and box front, immobilize, pull the tape and attach them. Do that on both sides.

I attach the box top to both the box front and the wing. This helps hold the whole structure together. Lay down two lines of tape, one on the edge of the box front, directly over the joint you just made. The other goes beside it on the wing. Align the box back to just cover both. Immobilize, pull off the paper, and let them join. Repeat on the other side (fig. 9).

9




Finish off the flat front portion of each wing as you finished the 5" tip. Cap the top of each sleeve with a ¾ X 1½" piece of insignia cloth. Then cap the flat front portion of each wing with insignia cloth folded over it in similar fashion (fig. 10).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Follow the plans for spars and bridle. You can make removable caps for the ends of the three middle spars with Velcro and insignia cloth or just cap them with insignia cloth. k

# Recycled Kites

by Glenn Davison

Kites have a long history that goes back hundreds of years. In that time kites have been made from everything you can imagine, especially repurposed materials. Certainly Jell-O wouldn't work, but what about candy wrappers? Would they fly?

Bamboo and paper continue to be widely used for making kites. People have used old cotton bed sheets for kite sails and kite tails. Many people made their first kites from yesterday's newspapers and twine.

One of the great things about kites is that they can be made from a wide variety of thin materials that can be taped together into larger sheets. Those sheets can be given a framework then flown many times. Kite flying is an excellent hobby for that reason. When you have a completed kite it can be flown many times without additional fees or expenses. All you need is sunshine (optional) and wind.

Many modern kites rely on hollow tubes that were originally made for arrow shafts or golf club shafts. The tubes are ferruled together to make kite spars that are strong and lightweight.

In many parts of the world today, people use dried bamboo that grows wild in many areas. It's free! Certain dried grass is also popular, especially cattails. When I went to Antigua I heard that palm leaves are stripped, dried, and made into kites.

There's a great story about a NASA engineer named Francis Rogallo who took down his kitchen curtains and asked his wife to sew them into a unique shape. Because of their teamwork, that prototype is now considered the grandfather of the hang glider and the delta kite.

You can make a kite from recycled materials too. Here's how:

1. Collect a variety of recycled items, such as:
- Sails: paper, plastic, trash bags, wrappers, foam trays, junk mail, recycled umbrella, paper napkins, tissue paper or a plastic rain poncho
- String: heavy duty button thread, yarn
- Spars: bamboo, food skewers, used bamboo blinds, wood sticks, straws, dowels, broom bristles
- Tails: streamers, ribbon, strips of plastic, holiday tinsel
- Do not use: heavy things like metal, hot-glue or paint
- Do not use stretchy materials like plastic wrap or cotton fabric

2. Design your kite:
- Design and build a unique and interesting kite using recycled materials
- Eddy kites and sled kites are recommended
- The kite should be symmetrical so fold it in half to make sure it's even
- See the Kite Plan Database for detailed plans. *www.kiteplans.org*

3. Construct your kite:
- Your goal is to make the kite fly
- It should also be creative and unique
- Attach tails 7 to 12 times the length of the kite
- Use your imagination!

4. How to make tails from recycled plastic:

(a) Take a plastic sheet or bag and lay it flat.

(b) If you're using a plastic bag, start with the closed end and roll the bag into a long tight tube.

(c) Use scissors to cut the tube into many small rolls. They look like hot-dogs that are 2" long but still tightly rolled.

(d) Unroll your tails and use tape to attach the tails together to make long tails for your kite.

Here are some ideas for contests for kites made of recycled materials (all kites must fly):
- Best flying kite
- Highest kite
- Most artistic kite
- Most innovative use of recycled materials
- Smallest kite
- Largest kite
- Best photo of recycled kite

When I do kite workshops I often use tape or glue. I distribute the glue one drop at a time (less glue is better because it dries faster and weighs less). To distribute the glue I pass out used bottle caps and used Popsicle sticks to apply the glue. That's a great reason to keep them out of the trash.

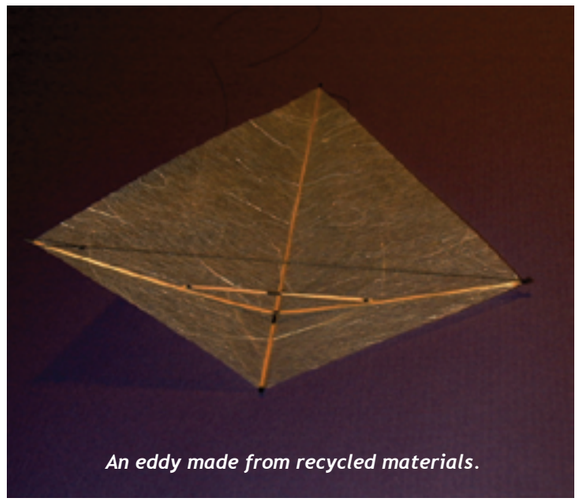
When you build a kite, remember to keep the tails on the bottom, keep the sticks on the back and keep the bridles on the front. On some kites tails are decorative, on others they are a necessity. Keep them light.

That's the details about the theory of kite design. In practice, I doodle, I sketch, I take notes, I fold paper, I try new things and I test new ideas. Then I keep all of my designs in a sketchbook. When I'm ready to build a kite I have a book of ideas that are waiting. There's plenty of information online.

Kites don't have to be hard to make. "There's nothing remarkable about it. All one has to do is hit the right keys at the right time and the instrument plays itself," said Johann Sebastian Bach.

My final recommendation: don't over do it. Keep it simple and don't worry about it. k

*Some of the best sources of kitemaking materials have drive-thru windows.*

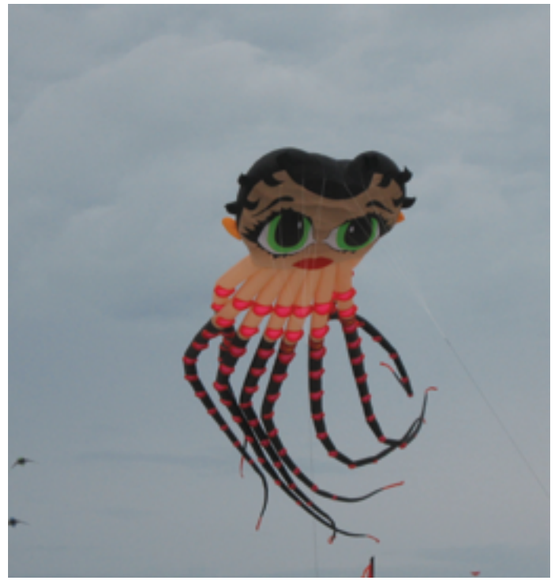


*An eddy made from recycled materials.*

# Toastin' on T.I.

by Sherri Pigeon

After almost three weeks of record low temperatures, Floridians came out by the hundreds for the Treasure Island Kite Festival. Even though the local forecast was calling for severe thunderstorms, on Treasure Island Beach it was sunny and 70°. Barry and Karen Ogletree from Whatakite treated us to an awesome display of large show kites. Their huge Betty Boop octopus was a big hit! With the help of the Tampa Bay Army Cadets, the large creatures were flying and amazing kids of all ages. Through the efforts of Robbie Boerth we saw the return of the Treasure Island Sport Kite Championships. Competitors enjoyed two days of competition on the flat white sand. On the main demo field the attraction was the Rev Riders. Scott, Laura, Rich and Sammy did a great job entertaining us. Scott gave us an inside look at what it was like to be on the line with the fliers by calling the commands through the PA system for everyone to hear. Martin Blais set up his beautiful butterfly banners; as you walked by them all you could hear were children laughing and playing. The Sunset Flyers Kite Club did an outstanding job! This small kite club worked hard to bring kiting back to its glory days here on Treasure Island Beach. k



# Chillin' on Padre

## 10th SPI Kite Fest
## South Padre Island, Texas
## January 28-31, 2010

By Donna McCown

Photos by Donna McCown and Beryl Isaacs

It was the middle of winter, and the forecast called for an artic front bringing snow and ice through the middle tier of the nation. What were kitefliers going to do? They headed as far south as they could go and went to the 10th Annual SPI Kite Fest on South Padre Island, Texas, hosted by Bill and Susie Doan of B&S Kites. Even though we didn't get the snow and ice, there was plenty of wind to deal with along with the colder than normal temperatures for this area. But that didn't affect the festivities nor the enormous turnout of our great Winter Texan spectators. Thousands braved the elements to come experience what others told them they shouldn't miss.

Each year the festival has added something new to entice the crowds. The traditional make-and-take kite building class on Friday afternoon was a new addition a few years back. Sis and Dick Vogel had their students make a no-sew dragon this year and had them put their own individual touch to their kite to make it unique. John Barresi decided to put on a Rev clinic last. It went over so well that he brought it back again this year. John and his iQuad teammates had their hands full this year teaching quad-line flying skills in the 20-30 mph winds, but everyone dug their heels in and flew like pros. The local South Padre Island Kite Enthusiasts started the festivities on Thursday, putting on a kitemaking workshop with a group of kids at the Laguna Madre Boys & Girls Club. They made indoor kites and got to try out their skills in the gym.

The new event this year was the indoor fly held at the Boys & Girls Club. We had the seasoned indoor fliers from iQuad, Phil Burks, and then some of our local beginners who decided it was time to give indoor flying a try. Bill Doan even put on a show for the spectators and did a great job. The grand finale got everyone on their feet, literally. We started with some volunteers from the kids in the audience coming out to fly. Then miniature kites made by Dick and Sis Vogel were passed out to the adults to bring out onto the gym floor for a procession of kites. After hearing all the glowing praise from the spectators, I think that this event could become a permanent fixture for years to come.

Saturday and Sunday morning, despite the cold temperatures and high winds, cars and buses began filtering onto the flats and surrounding the flying fields. Some spectators were lucky enough to be able to watch the show from the warmth and comfort of their cars. Others brought their chairs and blankets and braved the weather, and they were glad they did. There were continuous performances on the main field throughout the two days. iQuad brought their new five-man one-woman team. Takako Barresi, John's new wife, had her debut as a member of the team at the festival. She looked like she had been flying with them for years. Austin End of the Line and the local Team SPI have been regular crowd pleasers at the festival for years. Some of our very own Winter Texans were even part of the extravaganza. Phil and Barbara Burks braved the high winds and flew their stacks. Dennis Smith came down from the Eastern League and tried out the southern hospitality.

Gayle Woodul and her central Texas crew, along with the LaRocks, Burks, Milburns, Ashleys, Rob Cembalest, and Chris Shultz wrangled the big kites throughout the weekend. They had their work cut out for them in the high winds, but they managed to keep lots of color in the sky. Many other fliers could be found scattered throughout the flats getting some flight time in. You could always look up in the sky and find a camera hanging from Mike Swaim's kite or mounted on top of a pole getting lots of coverage of the festival.

There was even a surprise celebration on Sunday. Dallas Oliver decided to surprise his wife, Donna, for her birthday, and had her come onto the performance field thinking she had won a drawing. He then announced to her and the crowd that he wanted to renew their wedding vows, which they did with Gayle officiating the ceremony and all the kiting family there to witness.

As we all packed our things away at the end of the festival, compared raccoon eyes and sunburned noses, hugs soon followed. We hate saying goodbye to our kiting family, especially after such a great weekend, but we know we'll see each other again next year and will be working together again to make it an even better festival. So if you need an escape from the winter up north next year, make plans to join us for the 11th SPI Kite Fest. We would love to add you to our family. k

# Wisconsin Winter Wonderland

By Ed Grys

On this perfect February day the skies were blue and the winds were perfect. The ice was nearly smooth and lightly snow covered, just enough to give reasonable traction. The winds were off the bay toward the beach making them relatively clean by Door County, Wisconsin standards.

The first kite up for the 5th Annual Kites Over The Bay was one of Barb Meyer's. She and her husband Alex added some long skinny tails to accentuate the impact of her original design. A second one soon followed. It wasn't long after when Larry Day's "Hug Me" bear took to the sky, destined to stay up all day. Dale and Pam Bowden colored the stark icy landscape with a large school of colorful fish and a blue crab tied to a beautiful Sutton 252.

Al Sparling was able to put up a Trilobite, a large Gecko and an Octopus, once he located his pilots. Add a large Ray from Larry and Kay Day and the sky was full of color. Closer to the crowd were Kathy Brinnehl and Paul Koepke, wowing the folks with their precision dual line maneuvers. Ed Grys was flying a large fish that looked very much at home in the Fish Creek harbor. Toby and Val Schlick of the Fish Creek Kite Company were wonderful hosts and made sure all were safe and needs were met.

Of course there were kids flying kites they had made, and their parents who felt like kids themselves enjoying the day. The festival crowd was engaged, not only in kite watching, but ice bowling, football throwing and a variety of other outdoor winter activities. It doesn't get much better then this. . . in the winter in Wisconsin. k

*That nose looks presidential: Barbara Meyer (we think) flies on Fish Creek.*



# Kite Trade Association International Showcase

## Gomberg Kite Productions

www.gombergkites.com

Gomberg Kite Productions has criss-crossed the globe searching for the most interesting and fun-to-fly inflatable kites. Once licensed for production in our own factory, we've been able to reduce prices, maintain an inventory for immediate shipment, and offer custom colors that can be made in just a few weeks. We represent more than 25 designers from around the world and have 250 different products on our web pages. Come take a look!

Check out the new flying frogs from Bernhard Dingwerth. They are a wonderful, whimsical, attention-getting inflatable that flies well and packs up small. And at 19' long, they are hard to miss on the field.

GKPI remains the best source for large show kites, line art, and inflatables in your choice of colors.

## Flying Smiles Kites

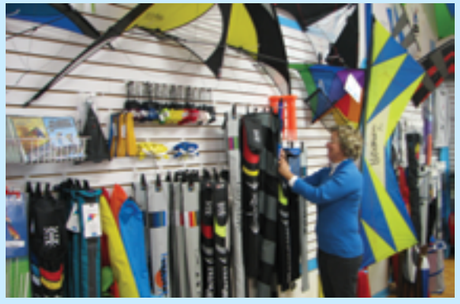
www.flyingsmileskites.com

On the Outer Banks at Corolla Light Town Center, Corolla, NC. We have kites and accessories, Shanti line, hand-made suncatchers and jewelry. We have family board games and jigsaw puzzles, too!

Customers say it best!:
"… can not imagine a better run kite store … satisfy every/any desire a kite flyer could have … with aplomb, smiles, and humor … I was expecting a store offering cheapo kites and more junk … I found a piece of heaven … so rare to find the level of service you provide anywhere and in any discipline."

Our Kite Hospital is always open. The Kite Doc is in residence with a full line of parts and rods!

We carry a complete line of Revolution and Skyburner.



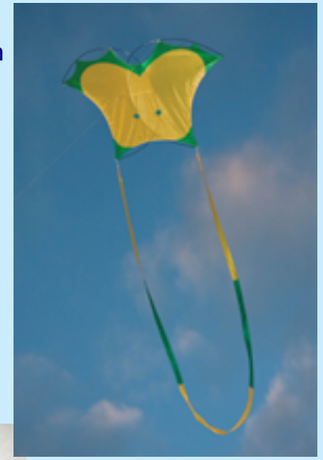
Look for our Custom SLE's in 2010 to add to our custom EXPs!

We love what we do, and hope that it showsc

## HQ Kites

www.hq-kites-usa.com

The Sky Photon: a beautiful and unique kite that uses only two spars but has neither a spine nor a spreader. Its opposed-bow frame is a dynamic shape that shifts and adjusts in a wide range of wind conditions. The Sky Photon folds in half for travel and to absorb impacts. Launch it with the tail for a highly-adaptive kite that anyone can fly. Remove the tail and take control of a very agile kite even in the lightest wind. Designed by Tim Elverston of Wind Fire Designs. Built by HQ Kites. Crafted with an Icarex sail, 2mm carbon rods and packaged with a slick cordura storage bag.



## Skydog Kites

www.skydogkites.com

Designed as a trainer and introduction for those pilots ready to move up to advanced slack line trick flying, the Black Dog is a Dodd Gross design. It comes with factory installed features normally found on much more expensive sport kites. The Black Dog has a durable high tech Carbon frame, a weight system, and yo yo stoppers. We covered the leading edge to avoid line catches, and basically gave it everything our higher end sport kites have for tricking. Don't let its 6' wingspan fool you, this kite is capable of all of the advanced big wing sport kite tricks and the smaller size allows the flier to learn these tricks without much pull. Includes Ready To Fly Dyneema fly lines on winder with fly straps.

The Black Dog Ultra Light was awarded the Top New Product at the KTAI show and Skydog Kites won Manufacturer/ Wholesaler of the Year!

# Sabarmati Flow

By Phil Broder

*Colombian Oscar Muñoz's prize-winning pre-Columbian kite.*

*A zebra train by South Africa's Greg and Jackie Mountjoy.*

*A big man needs a big reel: Brazil's Ezequiel de Souza Gomes.*

*Germany's Axel Kostros*

There's a blizzard raging outside my window in New Jersey, which is hard to comprehend because inside I'm still nursing a sunburn. But that's India, a land of dichotomies requiring constant mental gear changes. They have GPS, but no street signs. Four star hotels, and open sewers across the street. Camels sharing streets with BMWs. A constant din of honking horns outside the peaceful serenity of Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha Ashram. It's India.

I was in Ahmedabad for a week, the lone American at the Gujarat International Kite Festival. Fliers from 34 countries were there for the event, leading up to the January 14th celebration of the Uttarayan holiday. This was the 50th anniversary of Gujarati statehood, and the organizers were determined to put on a spectacle. The massive festival grounds, on the banks of the Sabarmati River, included not only a VIP pavilion, but a VVIP area as well. And each nation, as well as each Indian state, had their own stall alongside the field.

The first day was devoted to competition, and I was dragooned into being a judge. The international panel looked at fighters, painted kites, appliquéd kites, and foreign kites, struggling amongst ourselves to pick winners from so many well-built, beautiful, and unusual entries. Oscar Muñoz of Bogatá drew raves for his pre-Columbian figure kite, beating out a French bicycle kite with spinning legs and pedals. This festival has less giant inflatables than a typical American event (in part because the hard ground offered no places to anchor big kites), so everywhere you looked there were smaller, dazzling artistic kites.

The day ended with a traditional meal. Not just traditional food; we ate sitting on the ground off of leaf mats, no utensils, drinking from clay mugs. We ate well throughout the week, with a variety of Indian fare as well as foods that we were more familiar with. I saw Dominos Pizza, but I preferred tandoori chicken with naan. And I'll miss fresh mango every morning, washed down with butterscotch milk.

Our second day in Ahmedabad was, curiously, the opening of the festival. Dignitaries and TV stars filled the podium, giant video screens showed the crowd a group of monks chanting a blessing to the sun, and 7500 children performed synchronized yoga. Then, Olympic style, we had a parade of nations. We waved flags and banners and marched up to meet Gujarat's popular leader, Chief Minister Narendra Modi. Then, with a perfect wind blowing off the river, we opened up our kite bags.

The Balinese launched traditional kites with wooden whistles. France's Crazy Drivers flew Revs. The Turks brought out fleds and genkis appliqued with mosques. The Brazilians put up kites with bright parrots on them, alongside the white doves flown by the British. Traditional kites from Cambodia and Thailand shared sky with modern creations from Austria and Lithuania. The Israelis flew unbelievable appliqué work, the South Africans held onto trains of zebras.

Despite the security guards and policemen ringing the field (and who of us hasn't been to a festival where we wished there'd been uniformed guards carrying whistles and bamboo sticks?), the spectators found ways to sneak past the fence. Children would tap your elbow, begging to just hold your string for a few moments. Adults seemed fascinated by my wooden and metal winders, so different from the traditional Indian spools, and were happy to hear that I was from the USA. India is a country of great pride, and everyone wanted to make sure that I was enjoying myself, that I thought well of their nation, that I'd be coming back next year.

Throughout the week, I served as the translator. Almost everyone in India speaks English, but it's heavily accented. I would take the Indian English and translate it into unaccented American English, for the benefit of Ecuador's Jorge Román, who would translate into Spanish for the Colombians and Brazilians. Likewise, the Swiss took my English and translated for the Dutch, Danes, and Austrians. All week long, I would hear Jorge's voice behind me, asking, "Uh, Pheeel. . . tell me... what is word?... when is deeenner?"

*Opening ceremonies in Ahmedabad.*

*A big blue snowflake by Italy's Patrizio Mariani.*

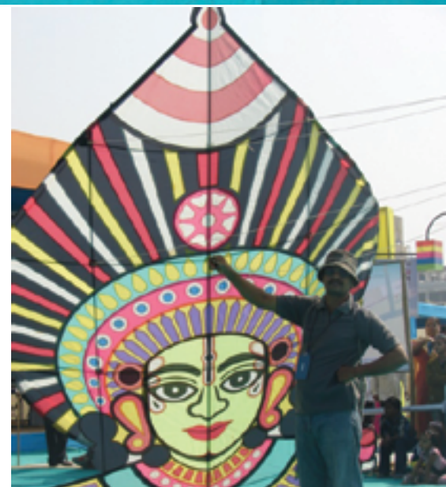
A surprise awaited us the next day. Half the kitefliers got on a bus and drove south to Surat, half went eight hours southwest to Gandhi's birthplace, the coastal city of Porbandar. Along the way we avoided one high-speed bus vs. camel collision, visited a spectacular Krishna temple and the Gandhi family home, and arrived in time for another welcoming ceremony and feast.

Our day in Porbandar started with still another ceremony, this time featuring dancers with swords, more children doing yoga, and marigold necklaces for everyone. A few of us caused a stir — and then much laughter — when we left the VIP area and instead sat on the ground with the children. But then the wind picked up, and we got to work.

Normally, I like the quiet of kiteflying. But in Porbandar, as my marconi lifted off and its 100' tail unrolled, the first kite into the sky, there was a noise like I'd never heard. We were rock stars, and with each kite that went up the crowd cheered. With such tasty wind we emptied our bags, each of us flying one kite after another after another. A final closing ceremony, a stop at a crown prince's riverside palace for dinner, and we were ready to sleep on the bus for the ride back to Ahmedabad.

The next day was Uttarayan, and though the festival was officially over, we went into the old city, a maze of narrow alleys, wandering cows, and kite vendors, and flew fighters from the rooftops.

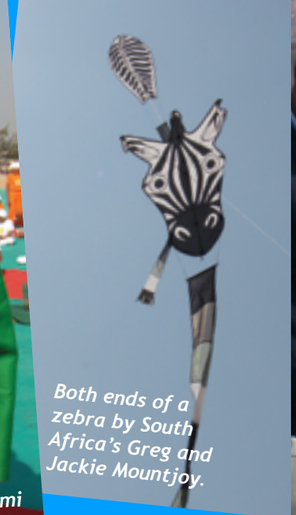
It's India. There's old and new, traditional and modern, things that surprise you alongside of things that seem completely familiar. Holding it all together was string, and sail, and wind, kitefliers from around the globe coming together to share a new experience while helping each other with something we've all done before. And that, really, is India. k



*India's Team Mangalore gets ready to launch.*

Colombian Oscar Muñoz's painted foil.

Lebanese kitist Rami Al Khal and Italian aquilonista Patrizio Mariani in Porbandar.



Both ends of a zebra by South Africa's Greg and Jackie Mountjoy.

Appliquéd delta and rokkaku by Israel's Eli and Shula Shavit.

# 20TH GUJARAT INT'L KITE FESTIVAL

## AHMEDABAD & PORBANDAR, INDIA
## JANUARY 10-13, 2010
## PHOTOS BY PHIL BRODER

Dilip Kapadia leads the Indian kitefliers into the festival.

The children of Porbandar open the festival with yoga.



Eugeen Palmers of Austria

More photos at http://picasaweb.google.com/kitephil



A painted fighter by Asghar Belim, president of the Sun City Kite Club in Jodhpur, India.

*India's champion: at the Gujarat International Kite Festival, Oscar Muñoz won top prize for kitemaking. Gujarat's Chief Minister Narendra Modi (in white with sunglasses) presented the trophy to the Colombian kitemaker. See the winning kite on page 50.*

L'International
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Dieppe KITE International

www.dieppe.ca/kite
for more information

# August 11 to 15 2010

The Dieppe Kite International is the most renowned kite festival in North America.

The best kite fliers in the world, from nearly 10 countries, will fly multi-coloured kites of all shapes and sizes in the sky above Dover Park in Dieppe, New Brunswick, Canada.