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Kiting

The Journal of the American Kitefliers Association

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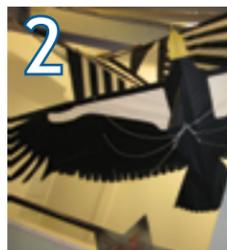
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CONTENTS



2 Feathered Friends
 The World Kite Museum takes up ornithology



4 Brazil 2K
 A Kiwi goes for a ride... a really, really long ride



6 Flow
 The psychology of "the zone"



7 Cape Town
 Where two oceans meet, thar she blows!



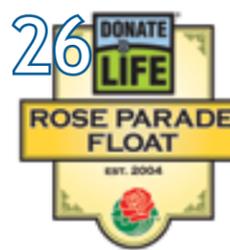
16 Tobago
 A pro learns a lesson about soul flying in the Caribbean



22 Voices From The Vault
 Bill Bigge is a kite engineer



25 Oregon Kitemakers Retreat
 Sand Fleas infest Rockaway Beach



26 Don't Rain On My Parade
 For really big kites, just add Miracle-Gro



28 Kite Plan
 The Ginga, a glider for indoors and out



30 Pairs Flying
 2 people + 4 lines = 1 pair



37 Maryland Kite Society Retreat
 A Tasmanian devilishly good time in Ellicott City



38 K-Files
 The 4 P's in Ohio



40 KAPTions
 Hawaii, fly oh!



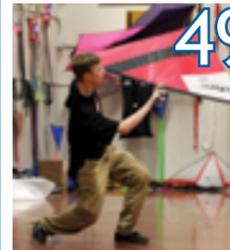
42 Tug Hill
 The Empire State is windy and white



44 Kite Trade Association Showcase
 The hip, the new, and the now for 2011



46 Gujarat Int'l Kite Festival
 Our teen champ makes his first overseas trip



49 Windless
 Still air in Long Beach



50 Indoor 101
 Everything you need to know to fly inside

- 8 Regional Reports
- 17 Knot In This Issue
- 18 AKA Directory
- 19 President's Page
- 20 Merchant Members
- 24 Empty Spaces In The Sky
- 34 Sporting Life
- 36 National Kite Month
- 52 People Places & Things

On the cover: Lee Sedgwick flies a stack of Revolutions on the beach in Wildwood.

Coming in the SUMMER issue...

- > Montana Snowkite Rodeo
- > Kites and Cherry Blossoms
- > Kite Fest Louisiane

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



BIRDS OF PLAY

BY MARGIE COCHRANE

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WORLD KITE MUSEUM

In the Pacific Northwest, most songbirds fly south in the winter, but at the World Kite Museum in Long Beach, WA, you'll find that ours never left. They've been spreading their wings in the most colorful flight you'll find anywhere in a display appropriately titled "Birds Of Play." Not only has the museum been host to these flighty birds as winter residents, but they'll be around for spring and summer visitors to enjoy.

From winged dinosaurs to doves, the kites soaring overhead have been culled from the museum's own 2,000+ kite collection, or are on loan from English, Canadian and German fliers.

"We'd recently done theme displays featuring fish or water-related kites, and one showing people, usually faces painted on kites, a Guys and Dolls thing," says director Kay Buesing. "But we became aware that we had a healthy number of bird kites in our collection and we'd never featured them. So once we'd

selected birds as the next theme for a new display, we began a search for other possibilities that would broaden the scope of what we already had. We checked through articles in old kiting magazines or ads for possibilities. We sent e-mails to let kite-makers or collectors know we were considering a bird exhibit."

The delightful results include bird-shaped kites, or others whose shapes vary but feature birds in some way. Materials differ as much as the designs themselves. You'll see quilted birds, appliquéd birds, and painted birds. You'll see a Brazil-



ian bird of colored tissue. You'll see W.J. Brick's use of colored plastic bags and Gil Bloom's appliquéd parrots. You'll see German designs made by museum members Bob and Charmayne Umbowers, plus an inflatable parrot by Bernhard Dingwerth. Australians included are Bushell, Mathews and Brasington.

Among those whose kites are in the exhibition are other designers whose names are well known to fliers. Tyrus Wong, who celebrated his 100th birthday in October, made his first kite when he was 67: a swallow, the Chinese omen for happiness. He's still designing kites and flying them. Marguerite Stankus provided 275 dove kites for the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, and one of these is on display. Joel Scholz produced bird kites when he first began his cottage industry, Sky Delight Kites. Beth Mathews is known for her realistic bird kites and a flight of four seagulls is from her. Interspersed with the bird kites are bird photos by Dan Brown.

Not surprisingly, many of these designers and fliers are also fascinated by live birds and have studied their flight patterns and behaviors for many years. They have incorporated these observations into the development of their kites. Brick designed a tunnel keel after watching birds in flight. Helen Bushell's interest in aerodynamics led to a folded keel delta kite patent. Beth Mathews is intrigued with the behavior of real birds in response to the bird kites she flies.

Bird kites also have unique qualities. The Nerd Bird, made by Roger Maddy, is flown on eight lines: four lines come from two four-pronged handles he developed. Another kite, Stan Swanson's 9' condor kite, was built to help stay the extinction of the

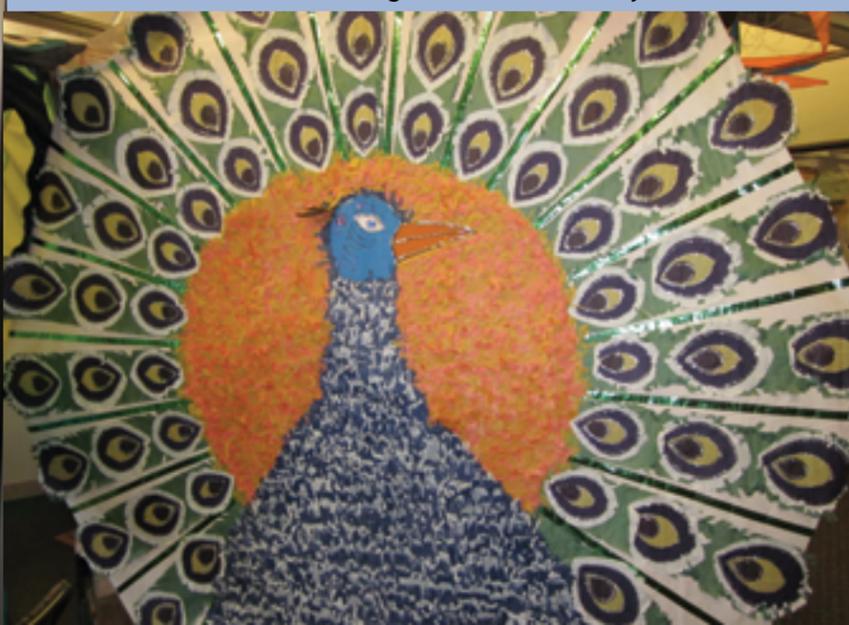


condor bird. His condor kites were flown by Fish and Wildlife biologists to attract the birds to safe nesting areas in California.

Two bird kites in this show are a means of artistic expression. Robert Trepanier's purple-tinged owl's eyes look askance at museumgoers. Steve Brockett's dyed cotton design and long narrow body structure, plus wings of graphite trimmed with fringe depend on the viewer's imagination and fascination with lack of realism.



Winter weather in western Washington wasn't the optimum season to unfurl a kite on the beach and the display's opening then was a great time for doing what was next best: admiring all these Birds of Play. Now as the weather warms



they'll be an added attraction for fliers here to enjoy both the beach outside for flying and the displays soaring indoors. K

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WHY 2K

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LOUIS TAPPER

[HTTP://YAKERS.CO.NZ/](http://YAKERS.CO.NZ/)

In shark infested waters off the coast of Brazil last summer, a New Zealand man set a new world record. Armed with one kite, one board and a backpack, Louis Tapper started on the 23rd of July on a 2000 km kitesurfing journey.

"To put the scale of 2000 km into perspective, crossing from Australia to New Zealand in a straight line or following the coastline of New Zealand from

top to bottom is the same distance," he said.

"I had the choice of anywhere in the world and there is consistent wind there this time of year and there is just long stretches of beach. It's warm, the food's good and the people are nice, so why not?"

"I know many people, including my parents, think I'm a bit mad doing this

but it is a way for me to test my limits both physically and mentally, and also pushes the sport of adventure kitesurfing to the next level," says the 35-year-old IT risk manager.

The current non-official kitesurf world distance record was held by Eric Gramond who completed a 1450 km, 13-day trip, also along the coast of Brazil.

The official Guinness record up until this point has been for distances completed in less than 24 hours, 333 km.

Tapper says there were many risks involved in doing the solo journey. "Gear breakage, being lost at sea, but the main one I was worried about was getting mugged. There is a quite high incidence of crime in Brazil with muggings and stuff like that so that is something I definitely worried about," said Tapper. "There is a spot there for about 20km that has the highest number of shark attacks anywhere in the world so that is something I was pretty worried about as well."

For safety Tapper carried a



From Tapper's blog during the trip, on a day when he had to repeatedly dodge fishing nets and deal with a major wind shift... "There is a fine line between adventure and misadventure and fortunately today I stayed on the right side of that line. . . . I had no choice, I had to swim back to shore, but I was wrapped in my kite lines and the more I swam the more tangled I

got. I felt like a floundering fish in a fishing net and when I finally got back to

dry land, I was lucky that a passing local fisherman was able to help me. It took two of us over 1½ hours to detangle the lines from my ankles, and although in hindsight it would have been easier to cut the lines off my legs, I was hoping they would have been repairable. Hindsight is a wonderful thing, and I think back to the decision I made not to carry a knife with me, as I assumed I would be able to cut lines with the sharp c3 Venom fins on my board."



Spot Messenger Satellite Tracker and a cell phone.

Light winds and shallow reefs during the first half of his journey caused headaches, and that wasn't his only issue. "Couple of close calls with broken gear; had some line wraps around both of my feet at one point," he says. "It took myself and a passing fisherman a good hour to unwrap me."

With no support crew it was that kind of local hospitality that made Tapper's journey a lot easier. "Some stretches of the coast are very remote so I was having to stay on the beach or with fisherman in their huts with them."

The flying Kiwi also became quite a hit with the locals. "Every place I'd stop they'd be like, 'Oh, you're the guy that's doing this kitesurfing mad mission,' so I think they had this word called loco which translated in English means crazy."

This is not the first kitesurfing adventure for Tapper. In 2008, he traversed New Zealand's dangerous Cook Strait, and in 2009 he kitesurfed 260 km in 13 hours from Auckland to the Bay of Islands for yachting's 2009 Coastal Classic race.

He trained a lot more for this journey, with about 20 hours each week of kiting, yoga and running on a gym treadmill.

Tapper also raised money for SurfAid International, a charity that delivers humanitarian programs to remote parts of Indonesia. k



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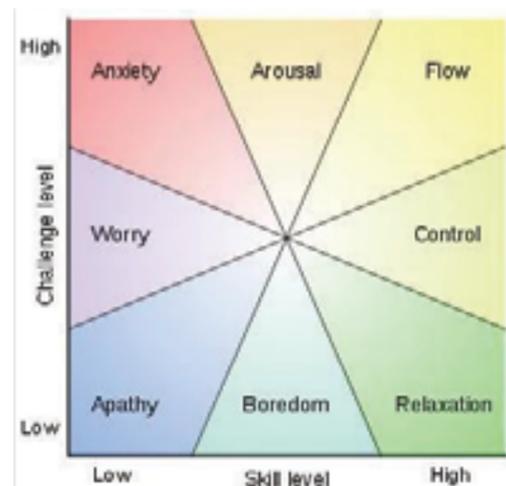


KITEFLYING: IN SEARCH OF FLOW

BY LOUIS TAPPER

I have contemplated for some time what this “adventure kite-surfing” malarky really means. Many of my friends who have done big and even small adventures talk about the inevitable post-adventure restlessness and in many cases depression. All complain about the big Visa bill and having to work again. Most also get viewed by their nonadventurous friends as just another crazy adrenaline seeking person and can’t really relate to what they have been through. So is adventure really worth it if all you have to look forward to is post-adventure depression, a big Visa bill and being viewed as a crazy person?

I am an avid follower of other people’s adventures and am really interested in the psychology behind why people go and do adventures like I have just done. Many cite reasons such as leading a more fulfilling life on return from pushing themselves to the edge. I am somewhat skeptical about these claims and think many people, without realising it, are really in search of something called “flow.” I hope to explain this concept further and introduce factors needed to achieve it.



What is flow? Before you start thinking this is just about sport, it’s not, the concept also applies to other aspects of your life such as work and has been well-studied among artists, musicians and scientists. The best explanation of flow I have seen is

from the work of Hungarian psychologist Mihály Csikszentmihályi:

“Being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you’re using your skills to the utmost. To achieve a flow state, a balance must be struck between the challenge of the task and the skill of the performer. If the task is too easy or too difficult, flow cannot occur. Both skill level and challenge level must be matched and high; if skill and challenge are low and matched, then apathy results. The flow state also implies a kind of focused attention, and indeed, it has been noted that mindfulness, meditation, yoga, and martial arts seem to improve a person’s capacity for flow. Among other benefits, all of these activities train and improve attention. In short, flow could be described as a state where attention, motivation, and the situation meet, resulting in a kind of productive harmony or feedback.”

I experienced moments of flow on the Cook Strait crossing and definitely during the Coastal Classic race. It’s almost like time just accelerated and everything worked harmoniously to make the goal. I felt it at times on the Brazil trip but not as often. Mostly I was just pleased to be safe at the end of each day and there was no big euphoria on finishing at the end of 2000 km.

A friend of mine also summarised a concept I have advocated for some time called “Feed The Rat.” In reality feeding the rat is just describing a lifestyle that is seeking flow and a break from boredom.

“I was once asked about why I do jujitsu, and I remember clearly stating that it was the only time in my life when the noise inside my head stopped. My brain is going at a million miles a minute, there are always thoughts about work, life, money, goals etc, it never stops. In jujitsu, another person is either trying to choke you out into unconsciousness or break your arm. You stop thinking about jujitsu in your mind and you allow it to become you. You give everything you have, all of your senses to the artform and use it to not only survive but prevent further danger by attacking your opponent to unconsciousness. I found that it was one of the few times in my life when the noises in my head stopped, time almost stood still and I could focus intently on something else. I craved that feeling again.”

How to achieve flow? People search a lifetime to experience flow moments and sometimes they can be few and far between. How to achieve flow is probably another subject and requires some more research on my part to explain properly. For the moment this is the simplistic explanation.

1. One must be involved in an activity with a clear set of goals. This adds direction and structure to the task.
2. One must have a good balance between the perceived challenges of the task at hand and his or her own perceived skills. One must have confidence that he or she is capable to do the task at hand.
3. The task at hand must have clear and immediate feedback. This helps the person negotiate any changing demands and allows him or her to adjust his or her performance to maintain the flow state.

Just in case you were wondering, I haven’t been affected by the post-adventure depression or restlessness yet. Maybe because it’s still the honeymoon period or maybe because I am pleased to be done putting myself at risk every day. I certainly have a big Visa bill however, and yes, the media are happy to frame me as just another crazy guy because that’s just easier for people to grasp. It was, however, nice last week to be interviewed by someone who actually understands adventures and didn’t immediately ask “what about the sharks.”

Funny enough I don’t have a desperate urge to go out kitesurfing and am quite happy contemplating other activities to occupy my time. Activities this week have included yoga sessions, a social run and my first Copeira session.

If only more people understood the concept of flow maybe the world would be a happier place. K



REGIONAL REPORTS

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



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End of term: 2013

In the past our region has been one at the top with flies, workshops and kite programs. Let's keep our region number one by listing your events on the AKA calendar to be counted. Issue a challenge to Archie Stewart and Glenn Davison on who will do the most events.

Your AKA Regional Director represents you to the AKA and represents the AKA to you. Keep those cards and letters coming in. Let me know any activities, comments or concerns.

See you on the flying fields soon.

Hello Region One. We have had many activities put on by our clubs. The holiday parties and flies were great. As I'm writing this the snow is blowing but kiting activities are still being held. New Years Day saw many Region One members flying in the region. NYKE had the challenge of flying on the ice in February.

Clubs have been busy with workshops. NYKE was the first club with a workshop in 2011. It was held January 8, and was led by Gary Sharp making a 6' rok. Another workshop in the region was led by Tony Heeschen of Portland, ME. The workshop for the ConnectiKITEERS was held on March 13. Blue Hills Observatory held a kite aerial photography workshop. Don McCasland is the program director and kite specialist who puts on many kite-related programs. Look on the AKA calendar for future programs and events going on in the region.

The New York Kite Enthusiasts were challenged with flying on the ice at the Winter Carnival in Lake George, NY.

Now that spring is in our sights we need to think about National Kite Month.

Kevin Reynolds
and his rok at the
NYKE workshop.



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



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End of term: 2013

SJKF held their annual holiday party early in December and it was well attended by 42 members. There were all kinds of fun and games but the highlight this year was "Guess the weight of the Malay," the kite the club built at their February workshop. The prize was a kite-shaped clock from the Scott Spencer/Betty Hirschmann estate. Our winner this year was Jim Davis, whose guess was accurate to within 25 grams.

Also, SJKF is preparing to have the AKA Convention in our own backyard and we plan on being very active in the things going on. A lot of our members have volunteered to be a very active part of this. SJKF is looking forward to another great flying season with the 25th Annual Wildwoods International Kite Festival over the Memorial Day weekend. As has happened the past three years, there will be a kitemaking competition to honor Scott Spencer. This could be a warm-up for the Convention which happens at the same location in late September. Why not come out and see what a great time you can have at these events? Check out <http://sjkf.webs.com/>.

Fly Pittsburgh founding members Pat Mills and Marlene Blazak had the privilege to make a kite and participate in a press conference for the Center

for Organ Recovery & Education (CORE) at their event titled "Seize the Day: Celebrate Life," held on December 16 at CORE's Pittsburgh headquarters. The event paid tribute to the Donate Life float, which was part of the 122nd Rose Parade, on New Years Day in Pasadena, CA. The float soared with colorful kites that inspired people to seize the day and register as organ, eye and tissue donors. The kite that Pat and Marlene made just for this is proudly displayed at CORE's Pittsburgh headquarters!

Fly Pittsburgh Kite Club will celebrate it's 20th anniversary this year. What a way to start off 2011, with a New Years Kick Off Party with 20 members in attendance! Con Engels reports, "This year we will have several Anniversary events, starting with our April monthly fly, and then our Big Spring Fly on May 7-8. We will also travel to Presque Isle State Park in July for Discover Presque Isle Days and a special 20th Anniversary Celebration. Presque Isle is where founding members Dan and Pat Mills first met John Kish (founding President). So this year is looking like it will be an exciting year for members." Check out the Fly Pittsburgh schedule at <http://windstarkites.com/FlyPghKiteClub.htm>

The Keystone Kiteers held their winter party in January this year, combining it with their winter workshop. The club members enjoyed a delicious meal together and completed another fabulous

The CORE kite
by Pat Mills and
Marlene Blazak.



project. Upcoming plans for the Keystone Kiteers include a rokkaku workshop and their annual Summer Retreat. Also, be sure to look for another Club Challenge, Mystery Mass Ascention (or both?!) at the 2011 Convention.

Pocono Kite Symphony continues to grow and is getting a good foothold in the mountains. They have been doing "Meet 'N Greetings" around

the Poconos. PKS put out a good showing atop Big Pocono Mountain and again in the center of East Stroudsburg, PA. They've completed some in-house workshops and will be doing more this winter to make stand-alone club signs, more 5' feather flags and one large photo album that tells the history and events of the Pocono Kite Symphony/Lehigh Valley Kite Society. The club has a "merit system" where members are awarded points for hours of work at kids kitebuilding, attending workshops, meetings, events, etc. Instead of a Christmas Party or a New Year's Kick Off Party they decided to have an Appreciation Dinner and have the club pay either a portion or all costs for those members who qualified depending on their level of involvement with PKS throughout the year. Just more incentive to get out there and work with and for the club.

In the Lehigh Valley, the Bethlehem School District's ScienceFest has become a regular kids kitebuilding event for the past eight years. PKS has other kids kitebuilds lined up for the spring both in the Lehigh Valley and in the Poconos. They're looking forward to a bigger and better Kite Day in the Park, their 21st, on the first Saturday of May. Hopefully 2011 will be a good year of kiting for PKS and all other clubs out there.

Hope to see everybody out on the kite field.

Region Three was pretty quiet after convention with RAF and WOW reporting only their First Sunday fly except for New Years Day. Stoney Stonestreet of the RAF said, "A great day at the field. Decent temperatures, steady wind out

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



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End of term: 2013

of the south all afternoon, lots of new fliers. I didn't count but there were at least 20 fliers throughout the day and there were several new faces." RAF also held their annual holiday party at the home of Stephen and Ensign Corbin with lots of kite-related (sortof) gifts being exchanged.

There is a new club forming in the Roanoke-Salem area that also held a New Years Day fly.

Jeff King wrote, "Wings Over Washington has been attending and supporting a mix of small and large festivals. The club welcomed in 2011 with their annual New Years Day Foolish Hat Fly at Sandy Point State Park, and thankfully Mother Nature cooperated with reasonably good weather conditions. Club members on the whole do travel a fair distance to events (particularly on the East Coast), including several club members who flew to Trinidad and Tobago in December and others to the Treasure Island Kite Festival in January. The club's annual Picnic in January party and auction was held January 22. As winter sets in, the club is still planning a workshop and a number of indoor flies before things start getting busy again in March with the National Air and Space Museum Kite Day and the big DC festival (formerly Smithsonian Kite Festival), which now will be under the auspices of the National Cherry Blossom Festival beginning this year." There were two kite building events, one put on by

the Maryland Kite Society over Presidents Day weekend, and another by RAF the following weekend, organized by Adrienne and Mearl Balmer.

Spring brings National Kite Month and the kick-off for our area has been the Annual Smithsonian Kite Festival. As Jeff mentioned it has been taken on by the Cherry Blossom festival and will be held on Sunday instead of Saturday. The weekend prior is the Air and Space Museum's indoor fly, dedicated to Margo Brown, long-time member of AKA and prominent supporter of kiting in the Washington area.

As long as April has not slipped past, there is time to register an event for NKM. All you need to do is put up a display, or visit a classroom, club, retirement home, or library, or have an extra kite club fly. Please get out and share your joy with someone. If you want to visit an event please check out the Frederick County Kite Fest on April 2, Rockfish Valley Kite Festival on April 9, Blue Ridge/Salem Kite Festival on April 16, and MIKE/MASKC from April 29 through May 1. It does not end there though. In past years there have been events at Virginia Beach, and Fluvanna County in May, and the Old Dominion Sport Kite Competition in June. Region Three also has been present at events such as Wildwood over Memorial Day weekend, and the Rogallo and Wright Kite Festivals on the Outer Banks in June and July.

If you have not visited the new AKA website I urge you to take a look at www.aka.kite.org. They have had a Café Press outlet for quite a while but this year there is also an AKA Embroidery Store with lots of items with AKA logo's embroidered on them.

I hope to see you an kite field somewhere, and please write and let me know what you are doing, what you plan to do, and what you would like to see your AKA doing.

WOW's Paul Dugard at play in Tobago.



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



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End of Term: 2013

made it for one of the Carolina Kite Fests, just remember the 24th annual is coming up this fall, October 29-30.

Due to the holidays, one of the last festivals of the year is the Cape Fear Kite Festival in Wrightsville Beach, NC, on November 6-7. This two-day festival is one that can go either way: lots of fabric flat on the ground, or the most perfect flying conditions for every type of kite and news coverage. This year Mike and Judy Agner as usual put on a great end of year festival, and I'm not just talking about the seafood boil, and great friendships for all kitefliers at the end of the first day. This year was no exception. The first day started with great winds and lots of kitefliers. Dual, quad, and show kites were up and down the beach. Later in the day the shifting winds brought down a bunch of the big kites for safety reasons. But making an appearance was the largest blue whale you've ever seen, a little bigger around the middle than those in the wild, but this full size overly-large kite version is amazing to see, especially with the mid-sized versions flying with it, it looked just like a whale pod swimming together. Day two was a little different, winds started a little higher and as the day went on the winds continued to build. At one point there were four fliers being dragged across the beach trying to get a maxi-gecko under control and a large pop was heard. Not the gecko, but a large red devil meanie had been hit by a sudden gust and popped and tore. It's on its way for some reconstructive surgery; we hope that the doctor will keep the facial scars to a minimum. All in all another great festival, and everyone who attends seems to enjoy one of the last festivals of the year.

Mary and Phil Tuggle had a great time KAPing over the Atalaya Castle on New Years Day. The resulting photos were put up by the South Carolina State Parks on their Facebook page.

John Lutter says, "Kiteman Productions is an Orlando-based kite show company. They do shows for Sea World, Disney, Universal, and many other locations. On January 4, I flew with them to celebrate the arrival of the Disney Dream to Port Canaveral, FL. We flew stacks of 6' diamonds and two 17' deltas from the back of Sea-Doos as the cruise ship came into port. There's a nice video of the event at www.youtube.com/watch?v=b1eSqMhVAKc. This gives a new meaning to night flying."

With the old year behind us, and the new year moving forward we start com-

ing into our core flying season, check the kite calendar on the AKA website, and remember National Kite Month is right around the corner. If you have an event or workshop please share it. Make sure you keep checking the new AKA website and if you haven't been receiving my e-mail updates let me know at rd4@aka.kite.org.

Keep the wind at your back.

Region 5 ~ Great Lakes
MI-OH



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End of term: 2011

Hello everyone. It has been a long and quiet winter here in Region Five. But we are in a new year and a new season of kiting. I flew at Reeds Lake Ice Fly on February 5th in East Grand Rapids, MI. What a great time with friends from Mackinaw Kite. It was a small event but an awesome time of flying. Plus, hot chocolate and hot dogs. I hope to see you at Airwaves in Cincinnati, April 9-10, with friends from Pigs Aloft Kite Club. That is always a blast. Then Breeze on the Bay in East Tawas, MI, June 4-5, with Jack and Diana Quinn. Then onto Michigan Kite Fest, June 11-12 in Richland with friends from Back 2 the Wind Kite Club. I hope to see everyone somewhere flying a kite.

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



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End of term: 2011

A moving and astounding event took place in West Des Moines, IA, over the Christmas holidays. The Lutheran Church of Hope was looking for an indoor kiteflier to help with their worship services. The worship center holds 2400 people. With the help of Sis Vogel and Linda Larkey, Peter McMasters re-arranged his schedule to accommodate the church's worship schedule. Peter flew



Peter McMasters gets religion.

Rick McCubbin

his kite as part of eight worship services witnessed by 18,000 people. The setting on stage was a person playing the part of Mary and a white dove (kite) portraying the Holy Spirit flying into her life. The event was very moving to all who had the privilege of witnessing it.

Many of you may know that Brian Blaeske, of Wauwatosa, WI, had some medical problems in 2010 and as a result was forced to retire. While he was out of commission he was pleasantly surprised to find out that someone had anonymously renewed his AKA membership. Brian says he "...has a renewed belief that there are really good people out there. Hopefully I will be able to 'pay it forward' in the same way in the future." He wanted to say thank you to whoever was so kind.

On a sad note, Merritt Beck, a founding member and an icon of the Hoosier Kitefliers Society, has passed away at the tender age of 98 years young. He learned to sew kites from the "Kite Man" himself, Ansel Toney. For many years, the club has held a Beck Kite Reunion event that celebrated his prolific talent by having a mass ascension of Becks. This year's event will take place in September at the AMA in Muncie, IN.

This winter's events began on January 1 with the Kite Society of Wisconsin and Illinois' 24th Annual Cool Fool Kite Festival at Veteran's Park in Milwaukee,

attended by some hearty fliers. The 11th annual Lake Harriet Winter Festival happened on January 8th. The event included kite flying, horse-drawn wagon rides, ice fishing, food and refreshments, and more! It was a beautiful sunny winter day. A bit chilly, the winds were lighter than forecast but some kites were able to fly. Everyone had a great time.

By the time this edition comes out we will have had the 10th Annual Flying Colors Festival in Clear Lake, IA. on February 19, and we should be close to having the new U-MAKE kite workshop and retreat in Des Moines, March 4-6.

Please check the AKA calendar on the website for information about events in your area. There are many events that will be happening in March and April and I ask that you please send me a report on any event you sponsor, organize or attend.

Thanks and keep looking up and hold on tight!

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



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End of term: 2011

Hello and happy New Year. Kevin Bayless here, your new Region Seven director. I want to thank everyone who supported my appointment to take over for Don Murphy as the Regional Director. No one was more surprised than I to be in this position. No doubt I have a tough job and big shoes to fill. I am honored to have this opportunity and will do all I can to make a difference.

Don writes, "Hello all. As some of you may have already heard, I have stepped down from my position as Regional Director of Region Seven. A new representative has been named and I will support him in his new position. I will continue to promote kiting and hope to fly as much if not more than I have in the past. These past 12 years as your Regional Director have been a great experience and I have thoroughly enjoyed it all. I will remain an active member

of the AKA. Thank you for all of your years of support and I hope that we can remain friends though kiting. Enjoy the sky."

I have been asking members from the region for information on events that have taken place or are planned and I would encourage you all to use the event calendar on the website. Another great networking tool is the AKA group page on Facebook. The exposure for the AKA on Facebook is major. There are over 500,000,000 people on Facebook, that's right 500 million. Worldwide! I plan to post a lot on the AKA page.

In Salt Lake City, January saw the Outdoor Retailers Expo. Nic O'Neil and the HQ kite team were in town showing their mad skills in power kiting. I am currently working on a few events for NKM and a charity fly on May 15 with a local group. On April 16, in the southern part of Utah is a wonderful event. The Dixie Escalante Kite Festival aims to promote reading as a habit and encourage students to engage in family-oriented physical activity. On the day of the event, qualifying students earn a high-quality kite or book for their reading efforts. Entrance to the festival is free.

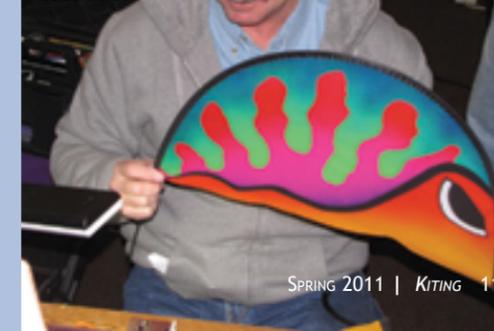
There are a number of events going on in North Dakota that deserve a look; two are long running events with solid backing and organization, the other is a new event. Rena Rustad sent this info to me on them;

April 30 - May 1 — Coal Country Kite Festival, Beulah, ND
May 28 - May 30 — Skydance Sakakawea, Ft. Stevenson State Park, Garrison ND.
June 11-12 — Kitefest, Jamestown, ND

John Ferrel has a couple events in Colorado and sent me this: "I have been working with the City of Fort Collins organizing an annual spring kite festival. This will be our fourth year and we are growing. It is more a festival for the community as opposed to one for the

Rich Durant

Scott Hampton teaches the Sand Flea at the Oregon Kitemakers Retreat.



A lady and a leopard watch the Carolina Kite Festival.



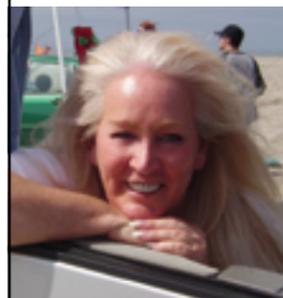
addicted like us. We emphasize community participation. Heavy emphasis on kids. The participation has been growing every year. Last year we had about 2000 people attend. The 2011 festival will be April 17 in Spring Canyon Park. We have a companion event, a wine and cheese party with an auction. We get Phantom Star rokkaku kits and distribute them to local artists. They decorate them however they see fit. We use the proceeds for kids programs at the city rec center. Last year we had 12 kites on auction. We are doing that again this year and we will have a kite from Scott Skinner."

The Rocky Mountain area has some other events too. At Arvada's Robby Ferrufino Park, on April 9, is a fun, family kite festival, with kite competitions for two age groups: 10 & under and 11 & over, in four categories: highest kite, smallest kite, most visually appealing, and largest kite with the top four winners getting trophies.

I want to give a shout out to Robin Allen McCracken out of the Denver area. Robin is with the Rocky Mountain Kite Association and they have a monthly 4th Saturday fly in Littleton. If you get a chance go meet up with these folks. Robin is very active in the region and for that I thank him.

If I can finish this report with one thought it would be this: we are all into kiting. Some of us make kites, some sell kites, we all fly kites and I am pretty sure we all love kiting in general. The AKA needs all of us and we all, whether we admit to it or not, need the support, information and social aspects afforded us by the AKA. Let's try to keep that in mind as we get into this busy 2011. Happy days.

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



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End of term: 2011

Spring's in full force down he'ah in Region Eight, and the season for kites is all too short. By Memorial Day weekend, it's generally too hot and the air's too still to consider planning a kite festival; therefore we try to cram everything we

possibly can into the months from January through May. Often, this creates overlapping kiting events and the dilemma of choosing to attend one venue over another. Be sure to check the calendar on the AKA website, and then to DOUBLE check it again in case any changes, or even cancellations, have occurred. Remember that we're kiteres; we like flexibility!

One of the Region's top notch events, Kite Fest Louisiane, kicks off on April 1st and runs through the 3rd. The venue is Port Allen (West Baton Rouge), and is geared toward the AKA goal of education. To that end, these folks do an amazing job of coordinating with the area schools. They manage to stagger school buses of local children throughout the day on Friday to arrive at the festival for a multitude

Jim Day's Spirit Man at
White Sands National
Monument, NM.



of activities. To maintain an orderly sequence, the children are directed to "stations" on the kite field to learn about the various disciplines of kiting. They also have the opportunity to make and take their own kites. Ben Franklin (a.k.a. Marshall Harris) actually taught a class at the festival last year. Of course, all of those school kids then brought their families out over the weekend. Kite Fest Louisiane continues to be a priority event!

Plan to be at the Mitchell Resort & RV Park in Perrin, TX, from April 8-10 for the 6th Annual Cloud Buster Kite Festival. The festival is held in a beautiful park in north central Texas, with both RV availability and cabins. Card-carrying AKA members get free access to kite fest activities. Organizers Doris Reed and Kevin McGrath even changed the date of the event this year specifically to avoid a conflict with Kite Fest Louisiane. With that in mind, there's absolutely no reason to not attend both events! So, just plan on it! Really — go ahead and write it on your calendar right now. I'll wait.



Marshall Harris
as Ben Franklin
at Kite Fest
Louisiane.

On April 30th, cruise on over to Doc Stewart Park in Clovis, NM, for the 8th Annual Cannon Kite Carnival. This event attracts over 1,500 spectators from the surrounding area who appreciate the joys of kiting.

The weekend of May 7th brings in the 19th Annual Tulsa Wind Riders Kite Festival. Larry Stiles remains at the helm of this landmark event which is a fundraiser for a local education center. On that same weekend, if you're in the neighborhood of Waco, make plans to attend the Heart of Texas Sertoma Club Kite Festival, a fundraiser for McLennan County students. The following weekend, plan to attend the Trinity River Wind Festival on May 14th. This festival is in Sylvan River Park in

Dallas.

Naturally, the always incredible Junction (Texas) Kite Retreat then follows on the weekend of May 27th through the 30th. What is Junction? Junction is... well, Junction. It's a one-of-a-kind, ya-just-have-to-be-there-to-understand-it experience. Ask around. I'm thinking that you'll get a different answer from everyone who's attended, but the common denominator will be "GO TO JUNCTION - there's nothing like it!" Better yet, just go to the web site at <http://windweavers.tripod.com/junction-retreat.htm>.

Phil Broder was on a cruise ship in the Caribbean during Christmas vacation when he discovered that he was sharing a hot tub with an employee of Richard Dermer's Hideaway Pizza in Stillwater, OK. He now has plenty of interesting stories about the former AKA president.

As of this writing, there are still quite a few festivals which are still in the planning stages, so be sure to check the AKA calendar regularly. Keep looking up!

Region 9 ~ Intermountain ID-MT-OR



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End of Term: 2012

I think I hear the whir of sewing machines as I am writing this report. By the time this issue of *Kiting* lands in your hands, hundreds of new creations will be being test flown in preparation for the new season of competitions and festivals all over the world. The best part of that is it will be something that we all benefit from, and that perhaps people we have never met, never spoken to, may benefit from. It is a gift that each one of you has to share, even if you have not realized it. That gift is the ability to reach out to someone in the world who may need a moment of hope. I for one am proud and happy that this gift was shared with me seven years ago on a beach in Lincoln City. Looking back on where I was then and all that has happened since makes me realize how important it is to continue to pass along those moments to others. I was lucky enough to share it with my son Connor... need I say more? It is an honor to be sharing what we love with people who have never experienced kiting before, as well as being able to see our kiting family. I hope this year you will continue to share the gift of kiting with others, to give them happiness, hope, and perhaps even change their lives for the better.

Cari King

On that note here are the upcoming opportunities for you to share what



Zach Colbert
and his Sand
Flea at the
Oregon Kite-
makers Retreat.

we love. Remember it's the simplest of things that sometimes change a life. In other words, it's just kites.

March 26-27, the Lincoln City Indoor Kite Festival will be kicking off 2011 with a fantastic show. Deb and Lee Park of Aerial Experience Productions will be joining some of the top indoor fliers in the world for a full production show and AKA competition. For more information: www.oregoncoast.org/kite-festival/indoor-kite-2007.php.

May 14-15 brings on the Rockaway Kite Festival. This sleepy romantic coastal city hosted a fantastic festival last year, and the plans for this year are getting even bigger! We hope to see you there! For more information go to www.rockawaybeach.net/.

June 25-26 is the Lincoln City Summer Kite Festival. This is not to be missed. Fantastic beaches and lots of great fliers and activities keep everyone busy and happy. For more information: www.oregoncoast.org/kite-festival/kites-summer.php.

July 16-17, the Southern Oregon Kite Festival in beautiful Brookings is always a hit. This year looks to be better than ever. Brookings brings spectators from all over the United States year after year to enjoy the show. Master kitemakers and fliers from all over come to paint the skies at this wonderful harbor. For more information: www.southernoregonkitefestival.com/.

Hello Region Ten members! I hope everyone is ready for Spring! I sure am. It has been a long cold gray winter. Sadly, we have lost two members of our kite family from the Pacific Northwest this winter, John Freeman and Jerry Fincher. Marzlie and Mary, our prayers and thoughts are with you both.

Coming soon! April is National Kite Month. Please remember to check the NKM calendar for events happening in our area. Better yet, plan on adding one to the calendar. The goal is to have 600 events held worldwide from March 26th to May 1st. Please visit www.nationalkitemonth.org for more information.

As the season gets underway, many will be looking ahead to AKA Nationals this fall in Wildwood, NJ. If you would like to make a kite to donate to the Friday night Auction, donated fabric is available to build your project. Contact Brad Weiner, Region Two Director, for more information and get sewing!

The World Kite Museum and

Region 10 ~ Northwest AK - WA



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End of Term: 2012

iQuad will be holding their 4th Annual Rev Clinic in Long Beach, WA, the third weekend in March. If you have thought about getting up close and personal with a Rev, but are worried about all those strings attached, join everyone on the beach for a great weekend of instruction and hands on fun. Contact the museum for registration information.

The 29th Annual Fort Worden Kite-makers Retreat is March 25-27. Fifteen instructors from near and far will be offering something for everyone in varying skill levels. If you haven't been to this conference before and want to learn how to make your own kites, this is the best of the best in my opinion. If you haven't already registered, please put it on your calendar for next year, as this is a great way to meet, learn, and create. And the food's not too bad either!

The same weekend, some of us will fly south to Region Nine to attend the Lincoln City Indoor Festival. Maggie Conrad puts together one heck of an all-star line-up not to be missed. There are three gym spaces to fly in, plenty of room to get some practice in a great space. Open fly, demos, show, competition, and lessons are just a few of the highlights. Check out the links on the calendar page for detailed performance times.

And a reminder about WSIKF: I have heard that accommodations are booking up fast for August. Yes, it's still months away, but I caution you to BOOK EARLY! See you on the beach!

Bary Crites built this
delta in Cari King's
class at OKR.



Cari King

Region 11 ~ N. California
Northern CA-NV



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End of Term: 2012

tion. The club members held an indoor clinic, inviting members of the community to come watch and try indoor flying. Afterward, a competition was held. John Quitugua placed first, Francisco Navarro placed second, Mark Quirnbach placed third and Steve Lewis placed fourth. BASKL hopes to be able to hold more indoor clinics here in the future.

Each year, BASKL tries to bring in someone from elsewhere in the kiting world to share their expertise and enthusiasm. This year, on February 5, Steve Bateman from San Diego was invited to hold a Fighter Kite Making workshop at the Skinner residence. Steve showed the workshop attendees how to make one of his outdoor kite designs.

In late February, BASKL held a free outdoor kite flying clinic at Cesar Chavez Park in Berkeley. This outreach clinic offers to help people of all skill levels learn new skills or improve their abilities, taught by world class BASKL fliers.

March will be a busy month for BASKL. It starts off with a trip north to Bodega Bay's Doran Beach for a day of fun flying on March 5. Last year's meet had sunny weather and light winds. Then on March 19th, the first outdoor competition event of the spring season will be held back in Berkeley. The sound system will be out, and fliers will be able to demonstrate all of the new skills they developed over the last month.

In April, BASKL returns to Baylands Park in Sunnyvale. For details and times of all BASKL events, check their website at www.baskl.org, or check the AKA calendar.

April is National Kite Month, and I hope we get lots of Northern California members to put on a kite event of some kind. Work with your local Parks and Recreation department to hold an event. Lots of good information on organizing an event is available at www.national-kitemonth.org.

Kite festival is no more. Lack of physical energy, fresh volunteers and willing sponsors are all to blame. Add to that, recent disastrous flooding to that part of the country, and the need to focus on getting Queensland back to normal. On the plus? Michael Alvares will again represent Australia at Canada's Dieppe Kite Festival in August. Theme in 2011 is The Beatles!



Jerry King brings home the hardware.

CHINA – Jerry King grew up with U.S. blood in his veins (Region Ten in reality), but China has his heart. Currently living in Chengdu, Sichuan, PRC, he's flown his kites in Zhuhai, Taipei, Yang Jiang and Shenzhen and recently collected a trophy or two. Other festivals on his list are Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam – almost next door! Jerry is also President of the "American Flyer Kite Club of Chengdu." Busy man! Finally, an open invitation from the Qingdao Kite Festival for 23 - 27 April welcomes kitefliers worldwide, offering hotel, meals and local transportation. Contact Mr Liu Yukui NOW to register (closing 20 March) at wfkliu@126.com. Why not visit Qingdao after Weifang International Kite Festival, April 19 -22? Write to Weifang organiser, Mr Liu Zhiping, at wfkite2006@gmail.com or see details on Facebook.

JAMAICA – Anyone using Facebook? Search for "Jamaica" and discover the Jamaica International Kite Festival Group page. Time for a holiday, hmm?

CANADA – get ready for Swift Current, Saskatchewan, June 25-

26, by Windscape Kite Club. Ask Shann Gowan for details. www.windscapekitefestival.ca/ I've heard Debbie Conlon of Lethbridge, Alberta, attached lights to kites for a night fly over Christmas, but darn it... no wind!

FRANCE – is readying for the 25th anniversary of Berck Sur Mer Festival, 16 - 25 April. Kudos to Olivier Reymond (Switzerland) whose kite appears at www.cerf-volant-berck.com. New Year wishes came from the team at Dieppe's Kite Festival, showing them in sunshine! Not taken in December, I'll bet?!

UNITED KINGDOM – the poll agreed on "UK" when searching the Clubhouse for AKA members' names. It's all encompassing, leaves no one out, right? (Doug Jones suggested "Possums", but...?) Who wants to be at the Swindon Kite Festival, (celebrating my birthday!) 7-8 May, thanks to the White Horse Kite Flyers? www.whkf.org.uk Get in early, it's always a rollicking good time. Trevor and Hilary Hughes along with Michael Goodey suffered at the hands of the postal system (too cold to deliver their Kiting on time?) but things soon thawed. Harry Douglas wrote to say "great new website AKA."

ARGENTINA – Gustavo Di Si congratulated AKA on the new website. Still a lot to discover, keep searching! Look at www.cafepress.com/akalogostore – that Calendar is a great value, if only for July.

DENMARK – Finn Andersen earned a medal for "most patient." Still with AKA, and thankfully, Kiting now arrives on time!

Want to publish something of your own? AKA Website now has a separate section for writing enthusiasts: log in, click "Clubhouse" tab, and then "Submit Web Article." Start writing! Make it educational or anecdotal, technical or purely your own observations. The AKA



*L'équipe du Festival de Dieppe vous souhaite une excellente année 2011
The Team of the Dieppe Kite Festival wishes you an excellent year 2011*



Two beauties from the 13th Festival International De L'Air in Frejus, France, October 30-31, 2010.



website is how we stay in touch with each other, being so widespread in our locations.

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

Heitt Gebelt

Region 12 ~ Southwest
Southern CA-AZ-HI



Ben Dantonio
Spring Valley CA
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End of Term: 2012

ed with a moving performance by Connor which left no eye dry in the audience, followed by an afternoon of sport kite lessons.

Ron Despojado was referred by Corey Jensen to help with the Stars on Ice show. "I met with the choreographer Rene Roca at a Southern California ice rink to teach her the basics of indoor flying. They were exploring the possibilities of kites in their show production," says Ron. "Ice skaters have an almost natural ability to skate backwards which has a huge advantage in flying indoors, not to mention they fly in an arena with a high ceiling. It would seem to be a natural match."

Team Too Much Fun (Mark & Jeanette Lummas, and Ron Despojado) along with Glen Rothstein were contracted to fly kites at the Rose Bowl Corporate Party in Pasadena on New Year's Day.



Rene Roca and Ron Despojado on ice.

The locale was about 60' x 60' amidst tents and displays which blocked the wind. A full day of effort was put into the "barely there" wind coupled with small arena to give spectators a sampling of what kiting has to offer.

passed away 2010.
AUSTRALIA – January 2011 newspaper reported that Coolum International

Holm Struck and his John Freeman kites.



KiteTalk Forum and this quarterly report is written by you all and e-mailed to me, so, if you've not participated yet, get started! (Tip: check your e-mail SPAM folder first, as Philippe Thibault found....)

GERMANY – Holm Struck flew kites to honour dear friend, John Freeman, who

Let's chat, Region Thirteen. My e-mail newsletters are sent once monthly, our Region has its own discussion area on

Region 13 ~ International



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ISLAND TIME



BY BEN DANTONIO

I had the chance go to down to the island of Tobago right after Christmas and spend ten days there with some old friends and the local kite community of this lush tropical island. My kiting travels have taken me around the world many times but never to a place that was this economically poor. It was a tough trip for many reasons, but it was also one that will give me memories for the rest of my life, and these memories will always make me smile and remember how good I really have it in my little kite world. I traveled this island from one end to the other and what I saw and experienced were kites in the purest sense.

These builders had no ripstop or carbon fiber, but they did have a love of kiting and were ready to go to any lengths to fly their handmade kites. They made kites out of trash bags or anything else they could find. Spars were old 2"x4"s shaved down and bound together with whatever string they could find. Tails were ripped up old sheets, and flying line was anything they could tie together to get them up in the air. Then they would carry these 10' or 12' monsters miles just to get to the field. Some of them didn't fly well or at all but they never stopped having fun and they never complained. All they did was laugh and just have fun. They may not have had a bunch of fancy kites and every thing I take for granted when I go to a festival, but they have a pure love of kiting and flight. All they wanted to do was share this love with others around them, and I think this is what kiting is all about.

One of the high points for me was the reef at Nylon Pool where we launched Revs from the boat while we flew up to our waist in the ocean, far away from land. All of the flying I did and the people I met and flew with will always remind me of why I love this sport and how it does not take a bunch of money or a fancy kite to have fun. All it really takes is putting aside the differences we have and enjoying what me have in common: kites.

I was proud to get the chance to share some sky with the local kiting community on the island of Tobago and with some old friends, including Scott Weider, Sammy David, Rich Comras, Paul Dugard, Jim Cosca, Ralph and Jean Gore, Tom and Sandy Miguel, plus Valerie Critten-Stewart who put this all together for us. K

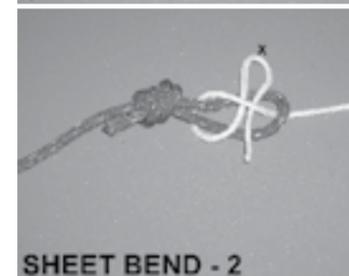
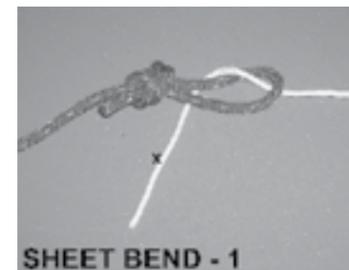


KNOT IN THIS ISSUE

BY ROD BEAMQUARD WITH RONDA BREWER

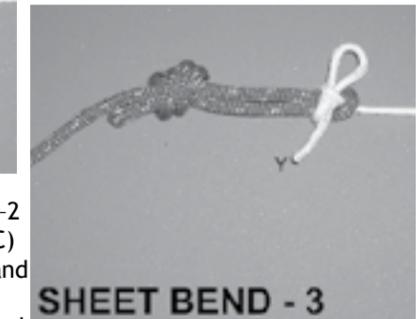
THE SHEET BEND

Simple to make and easy to untie. This knot is great for tying your flying line to an anchor loop of nylon webbing or for attaching your kite line to the bridle loop. The knot is stable under pressure and I regularly tie it with one hand while my kite is in the air by holding my flying line with one hand and tying the knot with the other. I modify it slightly by adding a bight or bend to the working end of the line so that when all tension is off the line, you can pull the loose end to untie the knot. When the tension is relaxed, the knot loosens easily.

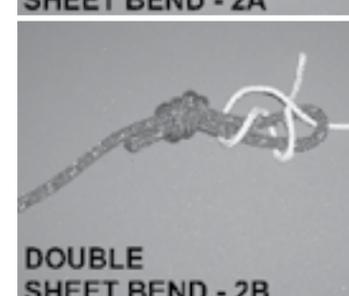


In the photos for the sheet bend, the colored rope takes the place of the anchor loop.

A) Run the loose end of the line up through the loop. Then, bring the end around the doubled loop lines and extend enough past the loop to have line to finish with a bend in the line as shown in SHEET BEND-1. B) Grasp the working line at "X" and fold the line to make a bight (folded loop) in the line. Pass the bight between the anchor loop and



the working line. SHEET BEND-2 shows the "X" loop in place. C) Be sure to take out any slack and tighten up the knot to the end of the loop before putting a load on the line. SHEET BEND-3. To easily untie the line, just pull on the loose end "Y".



THE DOUBLE SHEET BEND

This knot will stay in place without loosening up by itself. I commonly use it to tie tails to loops at the bottom corners of my kites.

A) Steps 1 and 2 of the DOUBLE SHEET BEND are the same as for the SHEET BEND. You should arrive at the result shown in SHEET BEND-2A. B) Take the loose end and make another wrap around the loop to arrive at DOUBLE SHEET BEND-2B. C) Work the knot tight. You will have to pull at both



sides of the knot to make sure it is tightly wrapped around the loop as shown in DOUBLE SHEET BEND-3A. K

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american kitefliers association

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

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Send address changes to
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THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

What events do you have planned for National Kite Month? Festivals, workshops, displays, lectures, and anything kite related are eligible to be registered as a National Kite Month event. Who knows, you may even be lucky enough to win a prize! Watch your e-mail for notices about how to earn those prizes, mostly donated by our partners at KTAL.



At India's Gujarat International Kite Festival, Chief Minister Narendra Modi flies Barbara Meyer's kite, while a submachine gun-armed police officer keeps Barbara at a safe distance.

This is the time of year to spread the word about what a wonderful, all encompassing passion we all share. Take a few kites, a copy of *Kiting*, and the new poster for your wall at work. Remind your office mates of the fun to be had. Offer to do a display of kites and kite books at your local library. Simple things, yes, but oh so effective!

In this issue there are two articles about National Kite Month. One is a bit of history; the other outlines a new program that encourages workshops. Our goal is to award at least eight prizes of \$100 each to help offset workshop costs. Be creative! What about miniature kites to be flown from a wheelchair in senior homes or hospitals? Or, plastic bag dragons for middle school students? Sewing a small delta through community education? All of these and more are eligible for submission. Thanks to Glenn Davison and the Education Committee for this fabulous new program.

In an effort to improve transparency of the financial reporting of the AKA, and to comply with recommendations from the audit, our fiscal year has been changed. In the past, our fiscal year was from November 1 to October 31, with convention profit/loss and auction proceeds held over to the next year. In January, the board approved the new fiscal year of September 1 to August 31, retroactive to August 31, 2010.

All convention profit/loss and auction income will now be reported in the year they actually occur. Another major advantage is that financial reports presented at the annual business meeting will be for an entire year, not a partial year with estimates. Members will review accurate, complete, more understandable reports.

Don't believe it? Well, join us at the next annual business meeting to be held Wednesday, September 28,

2011 in Wildwood, NJ.

Convention is a weeklong celebration of all things AKA. Mike and Cel Dallmer and committee are busy organizing challenges and just plain fun for the week. Competition is but a small part of the week. Join in the fun and fellowship; see fabulous kites; treat yourself to a new kite or two at the auction. Reserve your vacation time, start saving money. See you there!

While in India for a festival week, the billboards proclaimed, "Fly the kite within you!" Isn't this advice each of us should follow? Yes, all the year round, not just at festivals, not just during National Kite Month, but every day in our daily lives. Sometimes it is too easy to get caught up in arguments, politics and worries about organization that the ultimate reason for the existence of the AKA gets forgotten. The AKA is an association of members, run by volunteers, devoted to sharing the joy of kites of all sizes, shapes, and styles. Our strength and reason for existence is the membership. Your voice is important, and heard by your officers and directors. At the same time, those officers and directors are first and foremost fellow kites sharing their time. Programs happen because someone volunteers time to implement.

Let that kite out to fly every day. Take a few moments during the daily grind to indulge in some thoughts about your favorite activity. Relax: go to that flying field and the perfect wind, savor the moment, let your blood pressure drop, approach the rest of the day with a smile.

Whether it is to the frozen ice fields of the north, or the sunny beaches of the southern hemisphere, take your kites out and fly, make some new memories for those dreary days stuck at work.

Why are you still reading? Get that kite bag and hit the road!

Time to fly!

Barbara Meyer



The kite is down, the line is tangled in the crowd, and Meyer is lost in the paparazzi swarm.

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VOICES FROM THE VAULT

BILL BIGGE

BY PATTI GIBBONS

When you think about it, many times life puts you just where you need to be. Growing up outside the Beltway in suburban Washington, DC, Bill Bigge set roots in an area that blossomed into a kiting hub at a time when his professional and leisure interests coalesced. As a plucky youngster haunting the eastern seaboard, Bill grew up with an eye on the sky and hands that would tame the wildest of kites.

Son of educators who met at the Paris Institute, one doesn't have to look far to see where Bill inherited his nimble mind and intellectual abilities. Bill's father taught economics at Brown University until 1937, designing social security models that turned international heads. A family of smarty-pants, there was a time when Bill, his sister, and his brother were enrolled simultaneously at the University of Michigan. It was there, as a Wolverine, that Bill began making kites. Inspired by simple nylon thread, an inventive Bill thought, I can make a real neat kite using nylon thread as a line. That was the first of many fliers and kites that accompanied Bill beyond the ivory towers of his college days well into adulthood. A constant companion, kites became a pleasurable part of a larger life's work.

Although keenly interested in joining the Air Force and becoming a pilot like his older brother, Bill was too young to enlist during WWII



nature. Respected by others as a physicist at the National Bureau of Standards, Bigge's professional life primed him to make achievements and collect great joys in his off-hour aerial pursuits. As an avid model airplane builder and kitemaker, Bigge cross-pollinated his pockets of knowledge letting his work influence his play and his play influence his work. Even at rest sketching kite designs during his lunch breaks, Bill's understanding of physics and aerodynamic principles found their way to the drawing board for testing and scientific scrutiny.

and government recruiters handed Bill deferment papers during the Korean War. Yet, even with dreams of being a pilot dashed, Bill played in the sky and studied aerodynamics throughout his life. Bigge declares, "I'm an old-style government scientist," a stripped-down summary that hints at his modest

Applying model airplane-making techniques to kiting, Bill came up with innovative solutions and opened the door to using a wider range of construction materials. As a material scientist, Bill fearlessly coupled composite materials to improve flying performances, showing that high-tech epoxies and

plastic films are cozy bedfellows with traditional wood and wire parts. A believer in exploring a never-ending series of adjustments, Bill's constant adaptations made his kites fly better and better. A working scientist and a walking encyclopedia on how to fly kites, Bill tinkered with wobbly kites and learned to make even duds soar.

Bill is known primarily for his trademark airplane kites and his thoroughbred line — the Janus. As a master flier, Bill's kites are aloft in as little as a whisper of



Bill and a student test a Janus glider at the Fort Worden Kite-makers Retreat in 2004.

air and smoothly traverse blustery days. Always improvising and open for solutions, Bill is known for his kiting innovations and inventions — many cooked up with spare parts and discarded household items. Bill's impressive, albeit gadgety, self-powered reel uses a recycled concentrated juice can as a reel and a ballpoint pen as the axel. For under a buck he can show you how to toss out line evenly. The practical and clever homespun solutions in Bill's kite bag reflect his keen understanding of mechanics and his eye for simplicity.

Known and beloved by many fliers and kite friends, Bill met people over the years at kite gatherings. An early fixture and now bona fide icon at the Smithsonian Kite Festival, Bill makes friends one at a time by observing their kites and offering simple suggestions and minor adjustments that will make them fly better. It is his friendliness, his helpfulness, and his insights into improving the kiting experience that have won him a legion of friends in his 50+ years of kiting, and recently earned him the AKA's top honor, the Steve Edeiken Award. It was a well-deserved accolade that humble Bill took in stride as he quickly found his way back to the flying field to help others enjoy the sky. K

Coal Country Kite Fly Beulah, North Dakota



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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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EMPTY SPACES IN THE SKY

Merritt Beck

The Hoosier Kitefliers Society and the kiting family have lost another icon. Merritt Beck, 98, of Winchester, IN, passed away November 6, 2010. Merritt was a lifelong educator and a former student of Indiana's "Kite Man," Ansel Toney. Merritt was a kite builder in his own right and prolific in a hobby he pursued with passion. He learned the art of kitemaking while helping Ansel get caught up with Christmas orders. Merritt's wife, Ethyl, had ordered kites from Ansel for Christmas presents and, seeing the backlog of orders, she told Merritt he had better go over and "help that man." The rest is history. Merritt continued to make kites well into his 90's before deciding to retire from sewing. He was also one of a group of people who, in 1986, formed a club known as the Hoosier Kitefliers Society. Over the years, he helped to guide the club to become what it is today — a group celebrating its 25th anniversary.



Merritt Beck (right) shares a delta with Glen Tranbarger.

When attending a kite fly anywhere in the Midwest and you see a patchwork delta, you will probably hear someone remark, "It's a Beck." The Hoosier Kitefliers Society celebrates Merritt's creations every year in Muncie at the Merritt Beck Kite Reunion.

Clark Shute

John Freeman

John was a fixture on the West Coast kiteflying scene but sometimes traveled to festivals such as Windscape in Saskatchewan and the Toronto International Kitefest with his wife and partner kitemaker Marzlie. He was avid in sharing his knowledge and was a frequent instructor at the World Kite Museum in Long Beach, and at the famous Fort Worden Kitemakers Conference. Most notably, he and Marzlie founded the Parksville International Kite Festival in 2006 near their home on Vancouver Island which has now become a must-do event on the kite festival calendar in July.

In a 2007 interview, John said, "the thing that probably gives me the most pleasure in kiting is being at a festival and seeing kites in the air that were born in a Freeman workshop. Now that's a real high!"

John and Marzlie were active with the British Columbia Kitefliers Association, the Westport Windriders and the Washington Kitefliers Association. No doubt hundreds of kites have been made with his guidance and instruction over the years and this will be a lasting legacy in the kite community. I am saddened by his passing and very much touched by his enthusiasm for sharing his love for kites and kitemaking to the world.

Gary Mark



Jerry Fincher

An enthusiastic and generous member of the Northwest kiting community, Jerry passed away January 8, 2011. Jerry first got interested in kiting about 25 years ago, and this interest evolved in a true renaissance form. From participation in Fort Worden kite building, to kite aerial photography where he won a trophy his first contest entry, to opening his own kite store, Fincher's Aire Force, he was learning and sharing his experience and resources with anyone who showed an interest. He enjoyed attending festivals and trade shows, and always had a new project or kite to introduce. Wherever there was a raffle or fundraiser for kiting, Fincher's Aire Force would be there with amazing support. The Whidbey Island Kite Festival was a favorite, and he was the soul of the children's Bear in the Air parachuting event held there each day. He and fellow kiter Glen Austin provided the equipment and expertise to make the event happen. And I will never again hear the cry "Bear in the Air!" without seeing Jerry doing what he loved. There will be a memorial event at WSIKF 2011.

Linda Barnes



Jerry alongside Ray Bethell.



Ken Conrad

Debbie Fitzgerald

José Sainz's class

Dana Suttell

Rod Beamguard

Scott Hartley

Alan Fossum

Gerry Pennell



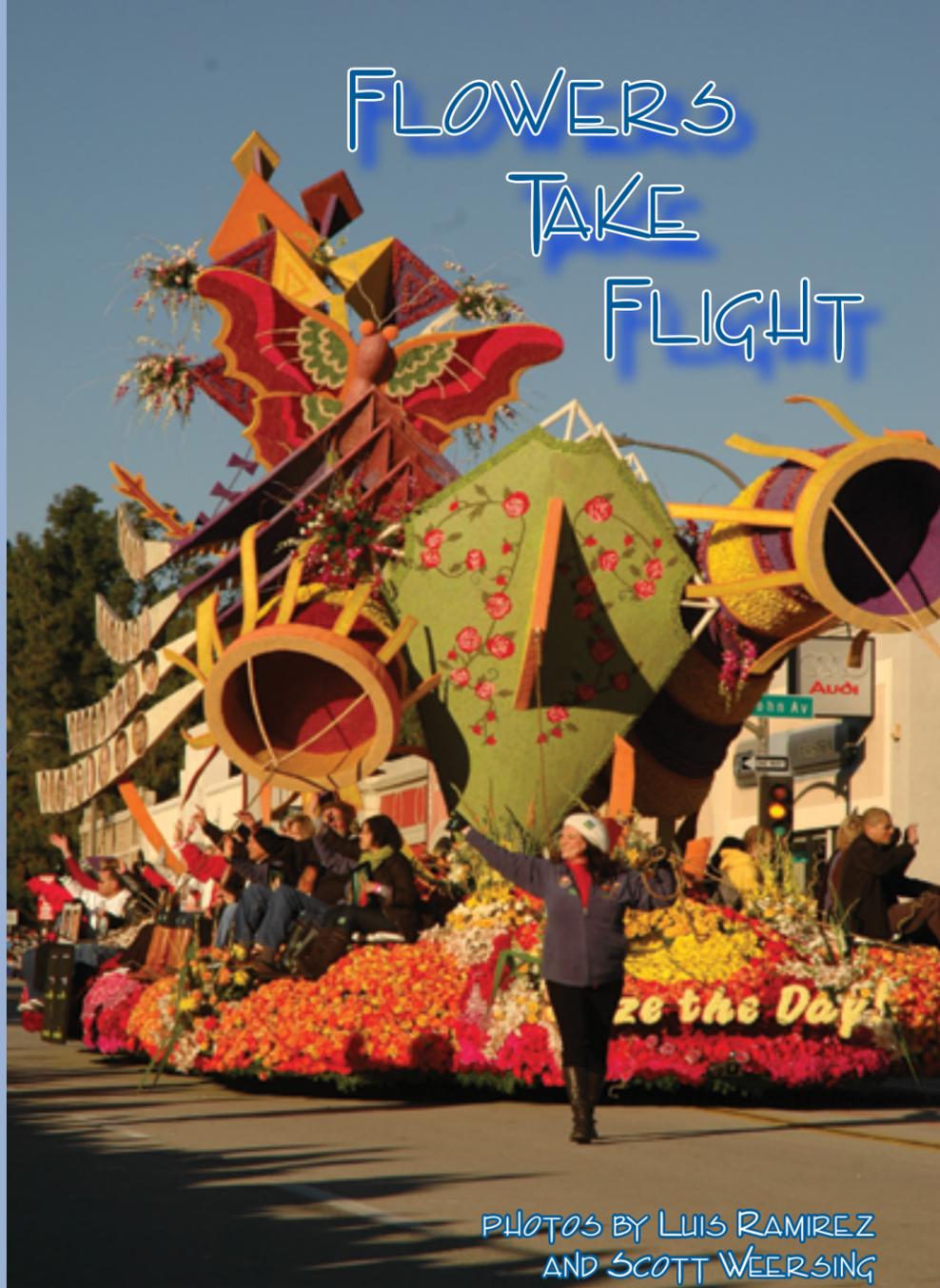
PHOTOS BY ZACH COLBERT, CARI KING AND RICH DURANT

Alexa King

On New Year's Day, millions of TV viewers in more than 120 countries saw giant kites flying down Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena, California. Built to a size usually only found in Peter Lynn's workshop, they were part of a float sponsored by Donate Life in the 122nd annual Tournament of Roses Parade.

The parade's theme this year was "Building Dreams, Friendships, and Memories." Donate Life, an organization that promotes organ, eye, and tissue donation, chose the idea of "Seize The Day" for their float. "The kite direction came from the Donate Life Rose Parade Float Committee, which I chair," said Bryan Stewart of OneLegacy, a southern California transplant donor network. "We had been exploring an entirely different direction for months, but it just wasn't working. With only about seven weeks to go until we were scheduled to unveil the design, we brainstormed visual concepts that were uplifting, inspiring and soared. The previous three years we featured hot air balloons, a shower of stars ascending to the sky, and a rising phoenix, so I suppose you could say we have somewhat of a brand when it comes to our Rose Parade float entries."

FLOWERS TAKE FLIGHT



PHOTOS BY LUIS RAMIREZ
AND SCOTT WEERSING

Float designer Dave Pittman mostly relied on memory to create the kites, including a train of diamonds, deltas, giant spinsocks, a Peter Lynn box kite, and a Chinese butterfly. But at his side were two books: *Chinese Artistic Kites*, and Maxwell Eden's

classic *Magnificent Book of Kites*. Asked about the float's kites afterward, Pittman sounded relieved. "I am pleased that it sounds like we got it right with the kites on the float. A tremendous percentage of the world's population sees our work, and believe me, we hear about it when we don't. Ever put too many toes on a koala, or put bicycles in the wrong century? Trust me, those koala people are passionate!"

Building the float's structure — 55' long, 35' high, and 17' wide, with a working vehicle at its center — was only half the challenge. Volunteers (many of them family members of organ donors or recipients) had to decorate it in the hours before the parade. In keeping with Tournament of Roses rules, all exterior



surfaces must be covered in organic materials. For any kite-maker who's ever layered ripstop nylon to create a new color, or covered fabric with DesignMaster paints, imagine working with this palette: five colors of strawflower, ground rice, lima beans, kidney beans, mung beans, soybeans, onion seed, lettuce seed, three colors of static, five shades of mums, a trio of carnations, two irises, silverleaf, and of course, roses.

Adorning the kites' tails were sixty "floragraphs" (portraits made of floral materials) of deceased organ and tissue donors. Riding on the float during the 5½ mile parade were thirty organ donors, transplant recipients, and their family members.

In the end, Donate Life's float won the Theme Trophy for best presentation of the parade's theme. The float's builders said, "Flying a kite is an opportunity seized to share laughter, sun, wind, and the visual beauty of the moment. Through their life-changing experiences, the families of organ and tissue donors, living donors, and recipients of life-saving transplants teach us all a profound lesson: to Seize the Day and make the most of every moment to build dreams, friendships and memories with loved ones." K



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KITE PLAN

The Ginga kites are single line freestylers steered as fighter kites but also able to glide and make all kinds of figures depending on your skills and imagination. Hence their name: ginga, the basic move of the Capoeira, the Brazilian martial art that combines fight and acrobatics, exactly like these kites. They are larger and more curved than fighters. They are well balanced, able to glide, to flat spin and more. Let it glide away with a gentle tension control on the line, then block and pull, the kite will turn and rise. Other figures are possible, like belly launch, dive and land, up and over, half-looping/half barrel and glide away, looping, circle around yourself. Try different bridle tuning: from as flat as possible to have it gliding to its max but unstable, to as heavy as possible for steady flying like a fighter. The trick comes from the bow that combines carbon fibre leading edges with a central glass fibre section that acts like a spring: keeping the fabric tensioned and the wings spread for smooth gliding, but also when pulling/releasing, the wings will bend inwards, giving directional stability. Last but not least, when releasing the line, the wings will flap to propel the kite in a horizontal or vertical loop.



central cross fitting that is ideal to snap the spar into it. In fact, any (modified) fitting, opened central cross, that will act like a hook should work.

Building Steps

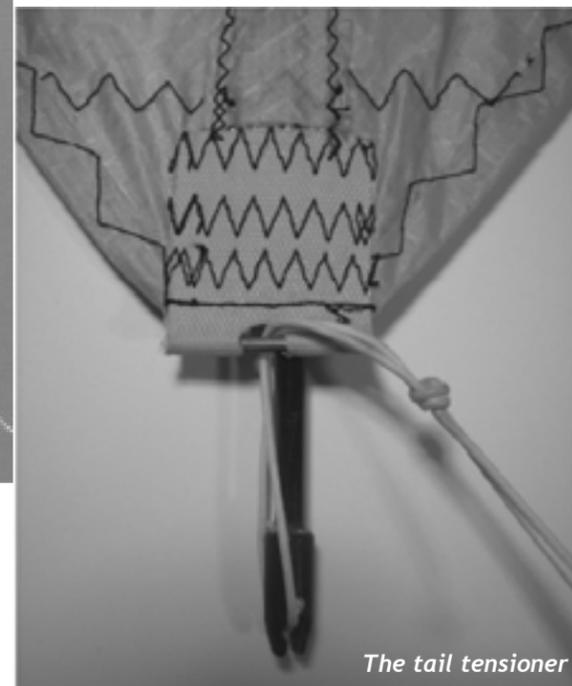
- Print, assemble the plan and make the cutting template. (Templates are available online in the *Kiting+* page at www.aka.kite.org.)
- Lay two layers of fabric on each other.
- Lay the template in the fabric, aligning the straight grain of the fabric with the leading edge.
- Pencil the central curve (spine), assemble both layers along the central curve with a soldering iron, making thin dots.
- Cut (with a blade, not hot cut) the leading and trailing edges.
- Cut along the central curve, 1/2cm away from the pencil line/soldered dots.
- Straight stitch along the pencilled central curve.
- Open both wings, open the left 1/2cm and crease it flat on both sides of the central stitch. Keep it flat with a

triple zig-zag stitch.

- For the vented version, you must first prepare the two



future wings by pencilling the shape on the fabric, including the ventilation holes, cut these holes out, and stitch the grids. Then lay those two wings on each other, lay again the template on top and cut the leading and trailing edges, then solder, cut and stitch the central curve as explained above.



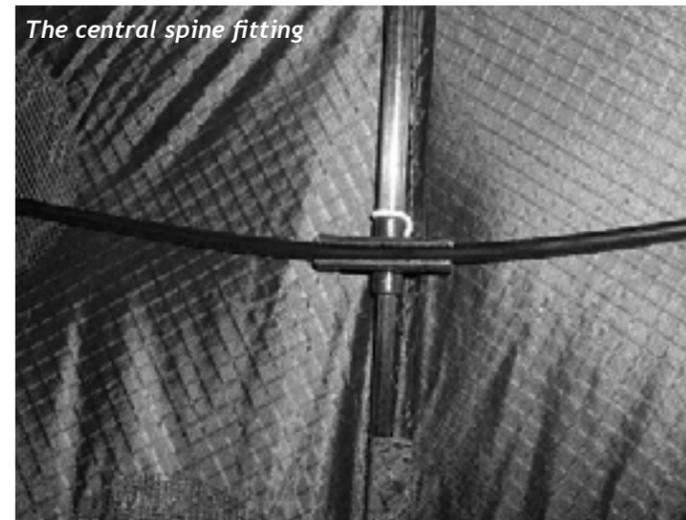
The tail tensioner

- Apply reinforcements at wing tips, tail.
- Hem the trailing edges.
- Apply the mylar reinforcement along the leading edge: between nose and spar pocket.
- Make the leading edge spar pocket (minimum 5cm wide) and close the end with some Dacron.
- Make the nose with 3.9 ounce Dacron; it must be bulletproof as it will take the

whole tension of the sail, plus the crashes.

- Make the central spar pocket. The trick is to straighten the sail on a curved surface and then to apply the pocket. This strip of fabric is cut in the bias of the fabric.
- Make the tail tensioning system with a piece of strap and some 2mm carbon fiber. Make the thread loop as seen on the pictures.
- Apply the battens; they are pointing towards the nose just to make it easier to fold the kite. They then align with the central spar. Note that the small Ginga has no battens.
- Make the central spar, 4mm (3mm for the small one) carbon fiber, insert it in the central pocket, stretch the sail as much as possible and cut the spar 5-6cm longer. Adjust the length of the tensioning loop so that the sail is strongly tensioned and the compression on the spar makes it bend!
- The central cross is kept at the right distance of the nose with a segment of 6mm spar positioned over the 4mm bar.
- Make the bow: carbon fiber of the same length than the leading edge pocket. Then make the length of the central glass fiber segment in order to have the bow intersecting the central spar approximately 1/3-1/2 of the nose—central connector distance. Push the bow into the central connector. Now the kite has gained its 3-D hollow shape. If you feel that the tension is excessive, shorten the central segment (half a centimeter at a time). If the kite remains flat or with too many plies along the central spar, make a new central glass fiber segment somewhat longer.

The central spine fitting



The length of the glass fiber segment depends on its stiffness. The stiffer the shorter, but if too stiff, the kite will not bend as required in flying conditions, hence use the softest possible glass fiber.

The bridle is as simple as it can be: two points. It should be as long a possible but short enough not to be tangled in the wing tips. A three point bridle works too. On some pictures you can see a three points bridle that is another option.

If you have questions or would like to share pictures, contact me at chtournay@yahoo.fr. For more building tips, look in the "Kite Plans - Reviewed" section of the Kitebuilder's Forum. Thank you to Marion Steeves for her assistance with this plan. Good winds, bon vent, have fun. K



They of course fly in steady winds but are also great fun with a shorter line in unstable winds because they will react to any wind shift but keep on flying. You should be able to fly them in parks behind trees or any place that you would normally consider unsuited for kiting. The more wind shifts, the more fun as you'll have to continuously recover the kite.

There are different versions:

- the small one, compact and agile
- the standard, for light winds, fast flying
- the standard vented, for medium wind, or gentle flying in light winds
- the stretched one: maximum glide, slower flying, for lighter winds.

The plan is a series of pages that have to be assembled to create the template. On the plan you'll find the three sizes and the design of the ventings. The recommend fabric is Chikara or ripstop nylon, with some mylar (or Dacron) reinforcement at the leading edge. The spars for the standard and stretched ones are 4mm carbon. The central glass fibre section of the bow is also of 4mm. For the small one, all spars (carbon and glass fibre) are 3mm. The central connector is an open

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PAIRING UP

BY DONNA & JEFF MCCOWN

So you've had a sport kite for a while, and you've flown to the point that your control is together: left, right, up, down, various geometric shapes, you can land and launch at will and maybe even learned a trick or two. You now find yourself wondering what is the next dimension or level to which you can take this new skill. You may want to consider pairs flying.

It can be said that pairs flying is the best of both worlds. You have the creative freedom of individual flying (you're only limited by your own skill), and the challenge of precise formation flying afforded by a team; plus, the pairs format gives more space for throwing in tricks (two can learn a new trick faster than three or four on a team).

Getting Started

Now that you've decided to fly pairs, the first thing needed is a partner. Your partner should be the most important consideration, because the issue of compatibility can make or break most pairs. One issue to consider is time. Do your personal schedules match to be able to put in the amount of practice time needed to reach a common goal? The more technically advanced your flying becomes might mean more practice time would be needed. On the other hand, you might just need an occasional flight to relax after the occasional bad day at work.

Time scheduling is, for the most part, directly tied to the common goal. This is another key point to compatibility. The common goal will typically determine how much time will be spent practicing. If you both decide to fly only for recreation, for fresh air and exercise and just the thrill of having your kite in the air, then one or two sporadic nights per week will suffice. If you both decided, eventually, to pursue exhibition performances, or competition, then it might be necessary to schedule more practice time. Bottom line is, kiting is one of those things that the more you put in, the more you get out of it.

The idea of flying style is another point to be addressed. Will your pair be content to just fly the basic geometric shapes and curves, or will you pursue the more technical side by adding tricks? If one member chooses a simpler style and the other wishes to fly a more technical style, the technical partner may feel

held back. Conversely, the less technically-oriented partner may feel unduly pressured. A good compromise can be reached by keeping the geometric and loopy style but add in two or three of the simpler tricks like stalls, axels, or slides.

A correlation can sometimes be drawn between flying style and musical taste. If your pair decides to try choreographing flights to music, agreement on the music to which you fly will be important. The most direct way to do this is each person brings a selection of music to be considered by both partners. The selections are given a listen by both partners, and eventually a choice is made that suits the technical ability, musical taste, and aerial vision perceived by each pilot.

Now that you've found a partner, the next thing to do is get the kites to match. If you were fortunate enough to find a partner who flies the same model of kite you do, then at this point you're ahead of the game. The reasons for having "matching" kites are pretty simple. They need to fly the same speed, turn the same corners, and have the same flight envelope in general. Also, when the sail colors and graphics are the same, it all just tends to look better in the sky. If you and your partner have different kites, you might be able to get them close after some tweaks and adjustments, but to fly your best, a matched set should definitely be given some thought. If you're not sure about which kites to check out, talk to other pilots in your area, particularly those who are experienced in pairs and/or team flying. If no other pilots are close by, you can do Web searches for kite dealers or club forum pages as well as kite manufacturers. You'll be surprised where a chain of Web links can lead you.

While you're thinking about kites, you should also think about line sets. Things to remember when deciding what lines to fly and how many sets to make are wind variances where you live or fly,



type of kite(s) you might fly and size of your flying field, and also, lest we forget, your budget. If you can, try to have two sets of lines, one shorter lighter set for light winds and a heavier longer set for high winds. For my own pair, Wind-junkies, we fly four different sets: 90# by 110', 150# by 120', 200# by 135', and 300# by 135'. The 200# set tends to be the one we fly most with either a standard or vented kite. These line sets are also repeated so we have one set for practice and one set for performance or competition. Line lengths between each pilot should also be the same length. It has been found that staggered lines can make the kites fly unevenly and usually this also makes the wing (follow) pilot have to move or run more to keep the same speed control.

The next order of business is to get into the air. First, we need to define the role of each pilot. As each pilot is standing side by side ready to launch, the pilot on the right is the captain or lead pilot. The person on the left could be called the second or follow or wing pilot. The job of the lead pilot is to make the calls for the maneuvers and set the pace and flow of the routine being flown. The job of the follow pilot is to answer or obey the calls given by the lead and hold the formation, be it single file, line abreast, or echelon, as well as holding horizontal and vertical lines when being split from the lead.

The most basic maneuvers are follow maneuvers, turns in an up and down or

left and right direction as well as basic shapes. As you begin to get better at follow drills, you will see your lines not only crossing and touching, but even twisting or wrapping around each other. Don't worry. This is actually a useful skill and can be used a number of ways to construct parts of a pairs ballet. Just remember that when flying shapes, the lines will wrap around each other. In order to undo this, simply fly the maneuver in the opposite direction. The key is to keep your cool the first few times this happens. Once you get used to the feel of a compound wrap, you'll be able to fly out of just about any mistake like a pro.

Once you have mastered follow the leader drills, flank drills are next. For purposes of this drill discussion, we will reference the basic square. Begin by flying a single file ground pass about 10' in altitude from left to right across the wind window. Just before you reach the right side, the lead pilot would yell "turn" or "now," some type of call to cue the turn. As the turn from the horizontal plane to the vertical plane is made, the kite orientation also changes. When both kites turn at the same time, the orientation changes from single file to line abreast (side by side). When you turn from horizontal to vertical, the #1 kite should still be on the right and #2 on the left. As your kites climb, cue the next turn (left) before you reach the top of the window. This time going to the horizontal plane, the kites will travel single file again, but this time from right to left, but the #2 kite will be the lead kite. The next turn (down) will have the kites side by side again, and before reaching the ground, cue a right turn back to the ground pass. If everything went right, the #1 kite should once again be the lead and #2 following single file and both kites flying from left to right as when the square was started. You've just completed your first flank maneuver. Just remember that horizontally, the kites fly single file, and vertically, the kites are side by side. This orientation can also be reversed. In the horizontal plane, the kites will look "stacked" wing tip to wing tip and nose to tail vertically. Don't be afraid to experiment. Even the wind window can be divided in a number of different ways. Use your imagination.

Eventually, you will want to take these basic moves and try to make them a bit more exciting. Usually, this would mean adding in music. A good way to start is to have some tunes you like playing in the background. Make your turns on a given beat of the music. Sooner or

later, you will start trying to interpret the music. To do this, you will have to take into account the overall style of the music. Often, this is difficult to put into words, but the several components to think about would be specific style or type (rock, jazz, classical, new age, etc.), overall tempo, and dynamic. The overall mood of the music should be thought of as well. Is it sad, uplifting, or intense? Typically, music that is slow, open, and flowing might be interpreted with curves and flowing lines; music that is fast, driving, and intense might be interpreted with hard angle turns. Breaks or stops in the music are typically good places for stalls or landings, depending on their length.

Just as your kite has to be launched, it also has to be landed. Sharply executed snap landings or trick landings and launches are a good way to add interest and excitement.

Calling Maneuvers

Now that you've decided to plunge headlong into pairs flying and found a compatible partner and maybe even matching kites and line, it's time for synchronizing your aerial daring duo. I have heard many stories, legends, and myths about the early days of sport kite flying among pairs and teams. I have been told that every team probably had different methods of calling a routine. This would almost certainly make any type of mega-fly impossible, unless all members got together beforehand to discuss cueing maneuvers. Teams or pairs that lived or flew in the same general area and saw each other on some semi-regular basis would work out their own commonality of calls; however, they would still be different from other areas of the country. These pockets of commonality eventually became known as "tribes," but for bigger mega-flies, another step needed to be taken.

Sometime in the 1990s, three books

were published to show kite flyers a way to start teams: *The Basics of Team Flying* by Troy Gunn and Jerry Hershey, *The No Secrets Handbook of Team Sport Kite Flying* by Al Hargus, and *Kite Precision* by Ron Reich. To my knowledge, these three publications probably did the most for defining common calls. Another thing that had to be worked out was direction. Some folks called maneuvers by "kite" direction, and others based their calls on "window" direction. Kite direction meant that if all the kites were flying upward, a left turn would go towards the physical left side of the wind window; but if the kites were flying downward, a left turn would go towards the physical right side of the window. You can imagine the confusion and havoc this could cause. Now directions are standardized by window direction, meaning that right and left turns always move to the right or left side of the window regardless of whether the kite is flying upwards or downwards.

In order to start making calls, a basic understanding of the parts of the call is necessary. Basic calls happen in two parts: the maneuver or direction, then the execution. The maneuver portion is where the lead is stating a maneuver and/or direction to be performed. An example would be, "Roll left," meaning the pair would execute a tight roll maneuver in the left-hand direction. Another example would be "Fall in and follow." Here the lead is stating that the follow pilot should meet with the lead coming into the lead's tail and following the lead kite in a single file manner. The second part of the call is the execution. This part of the call determines when a turn or maneuver is to begin. Usually it is a single syllable, staccato word, such as "now," "turn," or "go." Using the previous call for a roll as an example, the two parts together would be "Roll left ...now." We already know that a roll maneuver is going to be done in the left-





hand direction, but the execution command of “now” is what actually starts the roll so both kites can be together and clean.

The next important thing to remember when learning to make calls is timing and cadence. Timing the call is critical to getting a turn or maneuver to happen in the right place and at the right time. You should give the call early enough to be able to state it clearly but not so early that your partner loses the call mentally before the execution command. If the call is too late, you will be giving it in a hurried fashion to the point that your partner may not hear or understand the call properly. This, in turn, can lead to a maneuver not happening cleanly and/or the pair being spatially out of position in the wind window. The main thing to remember is to THINK AHEAD! As you are flying the current maneuver, you should already be thinking about the next move coming up. This will do more towards getting the call made at the right time than anything else.

On the flip-side of timing is cadence. Cadence refers to the rhythm in which a call is spoken. Usually, a call is two or three short words followed by a one-half to one second pause, then the execution command is given. The time delay between the maneuver call and the execution command should be long enough for you and your partner to be able to comprehend and mentally let it filter through but not so long that over-anticipating the call will make you jump the execution command. This space between the parts of the call is a little different for everyone. You and your partner will have to experiment some to find what works best. The key thing to remember here is that whatever call rhythm and command delay works best, you should

stick with it. After you get used to it, you will find that your flying will tighten up significantly.

Now that there is some understanding of the mechanics of calling maneuvers, let’s take a look at some of the actual calls and how they are described. The most basic to start with are follows and flanks. A follow maneuver is just what its name implies. The follow pilot falls in behind the lead pilot and follows wherever the lead pilot goes in “follow the leader” fashion. The follow pilot should aim at the outside wing of the lead pilot on curves. This will keep the spacing between the two kites better through the curves. Typical calls for follow maneuvers are: follow right, follow left, fall in and follow (typically used when recalling the wing pilot from a maneuver where he/she has been split from the lead), follow up (or down) the center (typically used for climbing from a ground pass or dropping from full sky to make ready for some type of split maneuver). These are just some ideas of how to use a follow command. All that is needed is to make it fit how you fly. An interesting reverse is “tail lead,” where the captain puts the wing pilot in the lead while the captain still makes the calls.

The next type of call to consider is the “about,” also called the “U-turn.” This call most likely has its roots in the military command of “about face.” An about turn is simply a tight U-turn where the pivot point of the turn is on the wing tip of the kite or just outside the wing tip. When flying a horizontal line, abouts would be called as “up about” or “down about.” If flying a vertical line, this turn is called as “left about” or “right about.” The thing to remember when flying “about” turns is that these are 180°

maneuvers. If the kites are flying side by side, the turn happens at the same time for both kites. This means side by side entering the turn; side by side exiting the turn. The left kite stays the left kite and the upper kite stays the upper kite. If the kites are flying in a follow form, when the turn is made, the following kite will then become the lead kite when flying the opposite direction.

Next is the “flank.” These are interesting because each turn changes the formation from follow to side by side alternately. In the same manner as about turns discussed previously, flank turns are also up, down, left, right, with the command being “flank up,” “flank down,” etc. Instead

of a curved turn, the flank turn is considered a “hard angle” maneuver. Typically done at 90°, the flank should be flown as a synchronous snap turn but slightly rounded off. It has been found that ripping the turn too hard takes away from the turn happening cleanly. It’s just about impossible to get two kite sails to snap together as if they were one kite.

As stated earlier, each flank turn changes the formation being flown. If flying a horizontal ground pass in follow, the captain could call “flank up...now.” Both kites would turn up at the same time and would be flying vertically side by side with the lead kite still on the right and the follow kite on the left. Assuming that this turn was made at center window, the captain could call “Flank right...now.” Both kites would snap turn right 90° and the lead is once again lead. At the right side of the window, the call could be “Flank down...now.” The kites now once again fly side by side but downward. At half-sky, call “flank left...now.” This time going to the left, the follow kite becomes lead kite since the direction is the opposite. At the left side of the window, the call could be “Flank down...now.” The kites turn to a side by side formation downward. At the bottom of the window (before crashing!) the call could be “Flank right...now.” As both kites turn at the same time, the lead kite is, again, in front where it started.

The next maneuvers to discuss are loops and rolls. Both are 360° figures, but it’s their diameters that define them. Rolls are set with the pivot point being on the wing tip. Loops are defined by a degree of sky. This will be talked about in more detail later. Rolls only have four essential directions: left, right, up, or down. However, there is also the split roll where one pilot flies an up or down

roll and the other pilot flies the opposite roll. In the vertical plane, they are split left and right. Calling a roll happens just like you might think. A typical roll might be upwards such as “Roll up...now.” Vertically, it might be “Roll right...now.” In the case of split rolls, the lead pilot’s direction would be stated first, “Down up split roll...now.” In this case, lead flies a downward roll, and wing flies an upward roll. When the roll is completed, both kites continue along their original path in the same orientation as when the roll was started.

Loops are the same maneuver as rolls, just larger and modified by the “degree of sky” to define its size. Degree of sky is a dimension of distance from the ground to the top of the wind window. The typical modifiers divide the window along horizontal lines of one quarter, half, three quarters, and full. If you’re flying 100’ to 120’ lines, a one-quarter sky loop would have an approximate diameter of 20’, a half-sky loop about 40’, a three-quarter sky loop about 60’, and a full-sky loop about 80’. The additional modifier of up or down is only needed if the loop is started from a path at about mid or half sky. If flying at ground or one-quarter sky, the loop direction is generally accepted to be upwards. If the flight path is at three quarters or full sky, the direction is generally accepted to be downwards. Examples of loop calls are: “full-sky loop...now.” (If started from ground, it flies upwards. If started from full sky, it flies downwards.) “half-sky loop down...now,” or “three-quarter sky loop up...now.”

About turns, mentioned earlier, can also be modified by degree of sky. In review, we remember that about turns are 180° instead of 360°; therefore, when the kite reaches the next altitude or degree of sky, the kite will be flying in the opposite direction. The most common of these turns are half sky and full sky. Here are some examples: “half sky up about...now,” “full sky down about...now.” These are the same U-turns described earlier only modified by an altitude. They allow you to move fairly quickly through the vertical plane of the window in an orderly yet showy manner.

Once some basics have been worked out, they can be called more quickly and efficiently by using a series call. A series is defined as a collection of basic maneuvers arranged in a specific order to create a larger maneuver. The name of the series should be given at least a small amount of thought. The key in naming the series is to be able to accurately

“trigger” the series from your memory. In the case of Windjunkies, we had a maneuver that started as a horizontal split with returns and splits about vertical, horizontal, and both diagonal axis. We named it “starburst series” because to us that is what it looked like. When the series came up in our ballet, it was called as: “starburst series...go,” then each turn was cued as it came along as “turn...turn...turn.” Once the series has been rehearsed to the point of being second nature, individual turn commands and descriptions may be eliminated. The whole idea is to get down to the basics of name and cue. Name the series, execute, then just cue the turns with “turn” or “now.” Just remember that if the turns happen on a specific beat in the music, you must give the turn call at the right time so that reaction time puts the turn where it should be.

The next level is what could be termed as flying by execution only. When you have flown a routine long enough and have it fully memorized, the entire routine becomes a series. This could be the ultimate level of calling. It allows the captain to more precisely place turns and maneuvers because you don’t have long, cumbersome, and sometimes confusing calls. All that is needed are three words, “now,” “go,” “turn,” and mostly you will only use two words. In the current Windjunkies ballet, I’m only using “turn” to cue turns and “now” to cue tricks and landings. If flying to music, certain sections may not need calls at all. Specific turns or tricks are cued by the music itself and, therefore, can be placed even more precisely.

We have just covered a good number of the specifics in regards to calling maneuvers, but there are some calls that are more general in nature. These are “coaching” calls. To my knowledge, there is no standardized form of coaching the pace of a routine. There will be

times, particularly when flying to music, that the pace might speed up or slow down to where you are either ahead or behind the music. When this happens, you can try to fit in a quick line like, “just ahead” or “just behind.” Also, a good old-fashioned “speed up” or “slow down” works just as well. The idea here is to find a way to communicate with your partner or teammates that works best for you.

The final type of call is probably the most important and is the only one that can be made by either partner. This call is “stations.” The main reason for calling “stations” is for safety. Since many of us fly in public areas such as parks or beaches, someone unknowingly wandering into your flight arc is a very real possibility. The second reason for “stations” is if something goes wrong during a practice routine. When working on a new maneuver or series, come confusion is bound to happen. When it does, “stations” can be called, and like in an emergency or safety situation, everything immediately stops and all pilots break from the formation and go to a pre-designated place in the sky, typically some form of arch across the top of the wind window. Because this is the only command that can be given by any pilot, I cannot stress enough its seriousness. The “stations” command should never be given in jest or as a joke, and when heard, should be executed with all dispatch.

We have just scratched the surface of how to call maneuvers. For further information, try to find a copy of one or all three books mentioned earlier. Since they all have these calls illustrated, they will be able to make more sense. Just remember, the idea is to have fun. Use your imagination and experiment. K

Hitting+ Read more at the Kiting+ page on the AKA website.

kitebuilder.com
A website for kite builders

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email: steve@kitebuilder.com

KITES OF THE YEAR:
2007 - “Cody” by John Whibley
2009 - “Andromeda” by Simon Crafts
2008 - “Nightfall” by Peter Ross

THE SPORTING LIFE

A GAME PLAN FOR SPORT KITE COMPETITION

BY MARC CONKLIN

The decline in the number of sport kite competitors over the past decade has been well documented. There are many contributing factors to this decline: the increasing complexity of competitive flying brought about by the introduction of slack-line tricks, the coming of the Internet and online forums that allow for community without travel, the steady increase in travel costs, etc. Over the past several years, I've been involved in many live and online conversations about these trends and what to do about them. Unfortunately, these conversations usually follow a similar pattern, beginning with a lament about the "good old days" followed by pie-in-the-sky ideas about ESPN, corporate sponsorships, and the Summer Olympics.

It's time to face facts. As far as niche hobbies go, we are as about as niche as it gets. I remember discussions about the obscure sport of curling during the last winter Olympics. There were several comments made about how if curling was an Olympic sport, surely there was room for sport kiting. Those folks were right about one thing: curling is obscure, a niche sport if there ever was one, at least in the USA. However, a quick perusal of the US Curling Association website reveals that the organization boasts 13,000 members from over 130 clubs in the US alone. Compare that to the number of sport kite competitors from every AKA competition for 2008 and you'll find that we had 205 sport kite competitors in the 2008 season, 1.6% the number of curlers. [Editor's note: the US Curling team is sponsored by a condom manufacturer and a whiskey distillery. There's a lesson to be learned there!] Now for the really depressing news: out of those 205 (and because I'm lazy, I included teams and pairs as competitors in that count), 74 (36%) only competed once. So, while we started with a number equaling only 1.6% of curlers in the US, we could only retain 64% of that number. So rather than dream about the Olympics or even a return to the "grand ol' 80's", I feel it's more productive to focus on actionable, attainable efforts directed toward two main goals. The first of these is obvious, bringing new sport kite fliers to competition. The second goal is to improve our retention of those competitors.

I am convinced that the best way

to attract new competitors is to offer frequent, regional, "no-frills" competitions/clinics with a focus on providing local novice fliers with a comfortable environment where they can learn the field craft of sport kite competition as well as the rules and regulations without the expense of travel. When putting on a competition, there are two primary considerations for the continuance of that event: participation and finances. Of course, these considerations are tied together; the more participants, the more money made by the event, at least if you're counting on registration fees to fund the event. However, if you can minimize the financial needs of an event, you can offer minimal or even free registration for at least your novice fliers. To be clear, what I'm suggesting is a grass-roots event. Find a soccer field, a local park, a large yard, anywhere where you can have the field for free. This is possible thanks to our access to the AKA event insurance. That insurance is a great selling tool to convince a potential landlord that, while they won't make rent off the event, they at least won't have any liability. Call your local parks and recreation department, you'll find that many are open to family-friendly events like kiting competition.

Once your field is set, then all you need is a judging panel and sound. Sound is easy; if you don't have a PA system available to you, use a boombox! If you're willing to factor out spectators (and let's face it, sport kite competition, even ballet, is not a very spectator-friendly aspect of kiting), a strategically placed boombox is sufficient for the flier and judges to hear the music. A judging panel is a little more difficult. You want at least three (preferably five) folks who have competition experience to act as the judging panel, and more importantly, to explain to the novices how to improve their skills as a competitor. The best way to get experienced competitors to the event is to offer an open competition where those folks can gain some AKA points competing against each other. If you run the open competition before the corresponding novice competition, you also provide the novices with an opportunity to see the discipline run. The best case scenario is to get the novices on the judging panel as shadow judges so they can see how that process works. If

you can't put together a judging panel for the open competition, run it anyway as a demo, or use the novices (with your Chief Judge) as the judging panel.

The scheduling template is simple. Start your day with an hour or so of "Flight 101." If possible, pair up each novice flier with an experienced competitor to teach basic precision flight skills such as cornering, straight lines, landing, and recognition of the wind window. Then, run your open competition and follow it up with the novice version. Before each novice comp, hold an extended pre-flight briefing to make sure that the novices are as familiar and comfortable as possible. After the novices compete, hold a debriefing to gently let the novices know what areas they can improve on, and allow the judging panel to offer advice on field craft that they wish to share. Repeat the process for all disciplines run at the competition. An example schedule:

8 - 8:30 AM - Novice registration
8:30 - 9:30 AM - Novice flier mentoring sessions (Flight 101)
9:30 - 10 AM - Pre-flight meeting
10 - 11 AM - Open Ind. Dual-Line Precision
11 - 11:30 AM - Novice Ind. Dual-Line Precision
12:30 - 1 PM - Open Ind. Dual-Line Ballet
1 - 1:30 PM - Novice Ind. Dual-Line Ballet
1:30 - 2 PM - Open Ind. Multi-Line Precision
2 - 2:30 PM - Novice Ind. Multi-Line Precision
2:30 - 3 PM - Open Ind. Multi-Line Ballet
3 - 3:30 PM - Novice Ind. Multi-Line Ballet
4 PM - Awards, closing comments

Obviously, the times are adjusted according to the number of fliers in each discipline, but the pattern is clear: show the novices how to do it and then have them do it. If time allows, you can feel free to add disciplines like pairs and team events. However, especially for the purpose of these regional competitions, it is much more important to have the time available to provide as much instruction as possible to your new competitors.

Supplies for a competition like this are also simple. You need 6-10 clipboards, 10-12 pencils, a stopwatch, a wind meter, a copy of the IRBC rule book as well as the AKA Appendix. Both are available in PDF format from the AKA website. It's also a worthwhile investment to have a case or two of bottled water in a cooler full of ice, your par-

ticipants will thank you. You also need something to mark off the field. Obviously, the optimal setup is to rope off the entire field, but if you don't have that resource, get some banners or flags, mark off the corners of the field, and use anyone available to act as line judges to enforce the boundaries of the field.

This is a blueprint for the most simple of sport kite competitions. As your event grows, you can re-invest registration fees into improving your supplies, field setup, etc., with the goal of building your one-day regional event into a two-day, full sport kite competition. However, in order to get to that point, you've got to not only offer opportunities for your new competitors to learn, but you've also got to build the reputation of your event so that those competitors that come this year will return for the next event.

The most prevalent complaints I've heard about sport kite competition:

1. "It's too much like work" — because of the small number of participants, competitors are often pressed into service as judges on multiple panels.
2. "It's too disorganized, nothing runs on time" — anyone who has ever attended a competition has heard the joking term "kite time", and it's easy to laugh at that, but the bottom line is that no one wants to run on "kite time", they want the event to be scheduled in real time, with a dependable schedule that folks can plan around.

The good news is that both of these problems can be resolved with mandatory pre-event registration for all non-novice competitors. In other words, require that any non-novice competitors turn in their event registration one week before the event is to occur. This allows you to know exactly how many competitors you have in each discipline, as well as knowing who is available to fill judging assignments. Once you have this information, it's easy to figure out how long each discipline will take using the following formula:

Individual Precision: 11 minutes per competitor
Individual Ballet: 5 minutes per competitor
Pairs Precision: 12 minutes per pair
Pairs Ballet: 9 minutes per pair
Team Precision: 13 minutes per team
Team Ballet: 10 minutes per team
OIOU: 10 minutes per competitor

Once you've received all your competitors' registrations, set up a spreadsheet that places the disciplines as columns, competitors as rows. Plot out

each competitor's disciplines to get your total number of competitors per disciplines. Multiply the number of competitors by the time per competitor number listed above, and you know how much time each of your open disciplines will take. You can then adjust your event schedule accordingly to reflect the exact amount of time required for each discipline. Hopefully, your novice competitors will also pre-register so you have an idea of how long the novice disciplines will take as well, but always add a little extra time for the Novice events; you never know when someone will show up, see the competition, and decide they'd like to give it a try!



Having a complete list of all your participants also makes it much easier to spread out judging assignments amongst all competitors so that no one is overworked. When setting up judging panels, take care to note who is competing in the discipline before and after the discipline you're setting up the panel for, try to avoid having anyone work back-to-back disciplines. Giving folks a chance to sit and relax between disciplines will ensure that no one feels overworked.

Requiring all competitors to pre-register allows you to create a schedule that you can stick to, and gives you the time before the event to plan judging assignments in such a way that the workload is spread evenly between all of your staff-eligible participants. By running your event in a professional manner, you create an environment that will comfort your novice competitors,

which will in turn inspire them to keep coming to events. For your experienced and masters competitors, spreading the judging assignments evenly eliminates the "this is too much like work" feeling that accompanies a disorganized competition, thereby motivating them to keep coming as well. In other words, taking the simple step of requiring all competitors to pre-register will enhance the ongoing reputation of your event, which is the best way (besides having 100% guaranteed lab-grade wind) of ensuring that your event grows from year to year.

This formula for growth is simple. Offer as many opportunities for novice competitors to develop their competitive skills as possible. This means that the events need to be done as cheaply as possible. The good news: kitefliers don't ask for much! Just run your event on time and in an organized manner, and do what you can to provide a fun, friendly, and educational environment for your participants. All it takes to make this happen is for a few people to make the decision to put on the event, and a little legwork to find a free field to hold the event on. Remember, if the competition doesn't cost anything (or very little) to put on, then it doesn't really matter if folks show up or not. If you don't get any competitors, you've got a nice bit of time blocked out for you to fly. Either way, you can talk about what a great time you had at the <insert your name here> Sport Kite Challenge/Competition/Invitational/Unlimited/Championships!

The methodology presented here has already proven itself in a small event in central Virginia, the Richmond/Washington Regional Sport Kite Championships (RWRSKC). There have been six RWRSKC events following the exact formula described here (the annual budget for RWRSKC is somewhere around \$125). As an average, there has been three first-time competitors at each of these competitions. Out of those, an average of one novice per year have gone on to continue to compete in other AKA and Eastern League events. Out of those are two current Masters level competitors, three Experienced, and one current Novice competitor, all of whom have competed at multiple events this season. I think it's safe to say that 20 such events, producing similar modest results, would generate a lot of excitement for our niche community. Of course, lucky you, you don't need to worry about 20 events, you only need to focus on one: the one you're setting up for this spring! k

NATIONAL KITE MONTH

The AKA Education Committee has put together a promotion for National Kite Month. We'd like to encourage broad participation in the creation of kite activities with education in mind by giving grants to groups who design NKM programs. The programs could be in places like schools, parks, community centers, libraries, churches, or hospitals. These programs could be workshops, demonstrations, presentations, etc.

We'd appreciate donations so we can increase the number of grants that we award. Most importantly, we're looking for YOU to submit ideas for educational kite programs so you can collect a prize. It's not only rewarding, it's fun too. AKA members, club members, teachers and community members are encouraged to apply.

Eight grants of \$100 will be awarded to the best proposals. If more funds are available, more grants will be awarded. We recognize that it may cost more or less than \$100 to run a kite program.

- Grant requirements:
1. Using kites as an educational tool, each person or group should submit an idea for a local kite program. The program should include art, science, math, history, etc.
 2. Only programs that are held during National Kite Month 2011 will qualify.
 3. Each proposal should be submitted to the AKA Education Committee at DAL6@aka.kite.org. The committee will judge which programs warrant the grants. The proposal must include how the funds would be spent, the number of expected participants, the location, the educational aspects, the leaders, the organization/school, and the proposed date of the program.
 4. A written report on the success of the program and photos of the activity are required. All entries will be posted on the Internet.
 5. One proposal per person or organization. Members of the AKA Education Committee are not eligible.
 6. The deadline for proposals is April 1, 2011.



NKM Poster Contest winner by Twyla Meyer



Cheryl Kear



Ron Petralito



Paul Keeler and Bob Matteo



Robert Brasington and Drake Smith



Jon Burkhardt



Bob Kelly



Cinda Shannon on sliver removal duty



National Kite Month is off to a running start. This year's program runs from March 26 to May 1. The Kite Trade Association started the program in 1999 as a way to promote the joy that kiting can bring to the community. It was a perfect fit to combine their efforts with the American Kitefliers Association to increase visibility. The support of both Associations with manpower and finances has helped to grow the program to where it is today. This year the Committee and the Boards of Directors have been working hard to make this year's celebration the best ever. The added exposure for kiting is a perfect opportunity to increase the membership in your local club and the AKA.

The first activity was the annual poster contest. This year's winner is Twyla Meyer. The poster was selected from all the entries as best representing the program. Twyla was presented with an AKA store gift certificate for \$50 along with \$50 in cash to support her kiting projects.

The AKA website has undergone a dramatic face lift and I hope everyone has had the opportunity to sign in and look around. The Education Committee has added numerous resources for individuals or groups to learn more about kite activities. The NKM site has also received some attention to develop it as a one stop shop for various kite program information including hosting workshops and including kiting as a fun part of the school day. The site presents information on how to request proclamations and to assist your club in gaining exposure in your area. You can download the packet and fill in the blanks to make the request. Of course we hope that you assisted in declaring April as Kite Month in your town, but it can also be used to promote festivals and events all year long. The event area is also available to publicize the events that clubs and individuals host to promote kiting during the celebration. Events can be as simple as a bulletin board promoting kite safety at the local library, to hosting a huge festival. A great guide to event organization, written by past NKM coordinator Phil Broder, is available for download. He takes you step by step through how to plan and execute a festival that can grow to an annual event.

Take a moment to follow the link from the AKA site or use www.nationalkitemonth.org to check out all the information. While you're there register your event and you could win a prize. As in the past we will recognize the top performers in the event and workshop category. We will also award bragging rights to the region with the most events. There is still time to get your entries in. The registration will close on May 1 but the site and all of its resources are available all year long.

K-FILES



Andromeda Px9, the 2009 Kitebuilder's Forum Kite of the Year.

Patience. Planning. Persistence. Precision. The 4 P's of kite building. At least, that's my approach.

My name is Simon Crafts. I'm a Midwesterner who grew up in St. Louis but now lives in little old Vanlue, OH. I've enjoyed kites since I was a child; I remember flying Gayla deltas of all sorts with the kids in the neighborhood, as well as a few sleds and trash bag kites we made with mom and dad to occupy our spring and summer days.

I rediscovered kites in general when my boys were young, buying a variety of "grown up" kites made of ripstop and

modern materials. But what really sparked me and my imagination was when my wife bought a sewing machine in 2008. She thought she was going to make cute little dresses for our daughter. (She did, but she still gives me a hard time about how much more I ended up using her machine!) I've always been fascinated by a

variety of kites — particularly cellular kites — that I'd seen on the Internet, but not on retail sites. I wanted to make my own so I could add some of those marvelous creations to my bag. I quickly found the Kitebuilder website and with my wife's help, learned to sew. It was nowhere but "up" from there. I jumped right in with both feet, studying plans, studying photos, and studying kites that I had previously purchased. I asked lots of questions on the online forums, and started drawing in CAD... which brings me to my approach.

I'm an engineer by trade and a stickler for details. As I stated, I've always been fascinated by cellular kites and the seemingly infinite possibilities that they present. Studying them, you will find an extraordinary amount of details and interdependent parts. This was right up my alley, so, naturally, this is where I went with most of my efforts to learn

SIMON CRAFTS

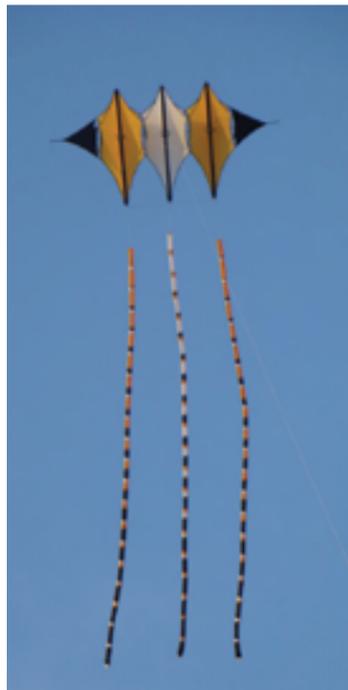
about making kites. But I wanted to go that extra step and put my own twist or signature into what I made. Maybe it was simply taking a known plan and making it bigger. Maybe it was changing some of the details so that the finished product suited me and my building skills more.

Many times — including that first kite building experience — I found myself starting with a blank drawing and thinking, What would be cool and different to see in the sky? I started with shapes and different geometries, so the process that I've become comfortable with is somewhat "inside-out." Rather than start with a picture in my

mind of what I want the end product to be, I start with the skeleton, the structure itself. How about a different shape? What would I need to do to make that? How would I connect that structure with a skin that would fly as a kite? I'll be honest, having a CAD program helps. I have more memory space full of sketches and ideas than I'll probably ever build. I get a lot of enjoyment out of this design process.

When I hit on one that really grabs my attention, it's time to build! The way that I've taught myself to build kites can be summarized in the four P's of kite building:

Patience. When I started building kites, I soon learned that starting with an idea and turning it into a flying creation does not happen by sitting back, saying "Yeah, I want that!" and then waiting for the delivery man to show up. No, it takes work. Not hard labor, just time and effort. A key is to develop a vision of what you want, and then not rush things. Do not accept "good enough" in the interest of heading out to the flying field faster. It could very well mean the difference between building something you only



fly alone or something you'd be proud to show your friends.

Planning. All kites have a building sequence. Cellular kites, in particular, are like puzzles. I like to draw up an idea and roll it around in plan form in my head for hours, studying it. Sure, it looks cool, but how would I build it? Where will the reinforcements need to be? How would I do spar tunnels and other details and keep the look? What about material selection? Spar sizes? Color? Try to anticipate the problems and plan them into the build. Rarely do I start on a project that I couldn't at least talk through the entire build sequence from start to finish before I begin. This helps make sure I've got every detail covered.

Persistence. The more complicated the kite, the more details there are. Once the sails are cut out, the work has only begun. Don't short cut. Don't turn that sewing machine speed up to full blast just to get it done. Work at your speed, being careful and persistent. The results will be worth the wait.

After a kite project has been on the build table for a while, your mind might be wandering to something else (like the next project!). Keep your mind's eye on how cool your new kite will be when it's finished and stay with it!

Precision. Or at least your best attempt. In my opinion, precision is the most important thing in a kite. It is true, every millimeter counts. It could be the difference between a loose, sloppy sail and a tightly crafted sculpture. I like to think of kites as exacting systems of interrelated parts, acting in harmony. Small errors or miscalculations can

compound themselves, leading to a lot of work ending up in the scrap pile. Precise workmanship is truly what makes a fine kite.

Putting together the four P's, and approaching kites from



the inside-out, I've built a few kites that I'm very proud of, and have received some positive feedback on my work from other members of the community. For 2009, the Kitebuilders Forum members did a first: in their annual voting for the Kitebuilder of the Year and Kite of the Year, I was selected for both awards. A truly, truly humbling and exciting experience to be recognized by your peers in that way.

But that said, I believe I've found a fifth P of kiting that I'm enjoying even more: Passion.

We read from time-to-time about just how darn good and enjoyable the people in the kiting community are. I believe it's because we all share a passion for flying (and building!) kites. There is nothing quite like sharing that joy and amazement of seeing something you dreamed up take to the skies with people who just plain "get it," or holding the string of a kite on a whimsical, breezy day like that kid that still lives in all of us with other "kids."

I've been very fortunate to meet and enjoy the company of many people on the flying fields and through online venues. Some folks that come to mind that I am thrilled to have had fuel my passion for kiting are Adrian Conn, Cliff Quinn, Peter Ross, David Wilkinson, Rich and Sherry Ispan, Brian Blaeske, Kevin Bayless, Grant Lovett, Craig Lovejoy, Justin Turner, Darryl Waters, William Watson, Steve Ferrel, and hundreds more who deserve mention. It's the kites that get me interested, and the people that get me excited to fly. There are so many other people I look forward to meeting and just plain enjoy being a kid around. As I continue to play with designs and build kites, I look forward to those friendships, new and old, the most.

I still feel like that kid who is learning and growing. A wise and talented kite builder and friend once said that building kites is "a blend of engineering and art." By themselves, these two disciplines are often at odds with each other. Something that functions well may not have an attractive form, and something that is visually beautiful may not perform practically. I am amazed and awestruck by the wonderful pieces of flying art I see in our global community, and think that those artists must start with the art and work their way back into a kite. Me, I'm backwards. Seeing the examples of that artistic talent inspires and challenges a guy like me to keep searching for that harmonious marriage of design elements.

If you see me on the flying field or come across me online, please, take the time to stop by so we can share our passion for kites with each other. I know there is something to learn or be inspired by in everyone, and the thought that I might provide the same for you is quite thrilling.

Good winds to you! K



KAPTIONS

DESTINATION: HAWAII

BY TOM BENEDICT

the country often don't cover Hawaii as well. Of the websites available, the most useful one I have found is that of a local sailplane club, Mauna Kea Soaring. The club runs wind models for all the islands; www.mksoaring.com.

Depending on your interests, the Big Island offers a range of subjects to photograph. Even after only doing KAP for three years, it's hard to choose which to share and which to leave for serendipitous discovery by the KAP traveler. But in broad strokes, this is a sample of some of the places to fly on the Big Island.

Beaches

Beaches in the islands range from sandy, to rocky, to mixtures of the two. Some of my favorite beaches are Manini Owali at Kua Bay, Wailea Bay, Kiholo Bay, and Green Sand Beach at Ka Lae, though there are countless others. Most of my beach flying has been done on the west side of the island

I was first exposed to the idea of kite aerial photography while living in Texas over ten years ago, when I ran across Cris Benton's KAP website. I knew I wanted to do it, but for a variety of reasons the time just wasn't right. My start in KAP came seven years later, after I had moved to the Big Island of Hawaii. In many ways I regret not jumping into KAP earlier, but I couldn't have picked a better place to learn and fly.

If you're planning a trip to Hawaii, bring your KAP gear with you. The island has numerous places to fly kites and do photography, and the wind blows year round. If you're starting at your kites and camera gear, and wishing for new vistas to photograph, consider planning a trip to Hawaii to do KAP. And if you already live in Hawaii and have wondered what the place looks like to the i'iwi, 'apapane, and other birds that live in the islands, I can say first hand it's tough to find a better place to start.

Winds come in two general varieties in the Hawaiian Islands: trade winds and konas. Trade winds come in from the east, and are generated by the earth's own rotation. Kona winds typically come in from the west, and are generated by the sun's thermal action. Depending on where you're flying, trade winds can range from balmy tropical breezes to howling gales. Kona winds are almost always calm by comparison, but can be unstable, especially toward sunrise and sunset or during cloudy weather. If in doubt, watch the winds at your chosen flying site before launching. Depending on location, wind speeds vary from zero to forty knots, though a good number of flying locations can be managed by a handful of kites spanning half that range.

Finding good weather information in Hawaii can be challenging. Most of the weather reports focus on the island of O'ahu, where the city of Honolulu is located. Weather reporting for the surrounding islands is often spotty at best, and weather websites that are useful in most other parts of



Pololu Valley beach

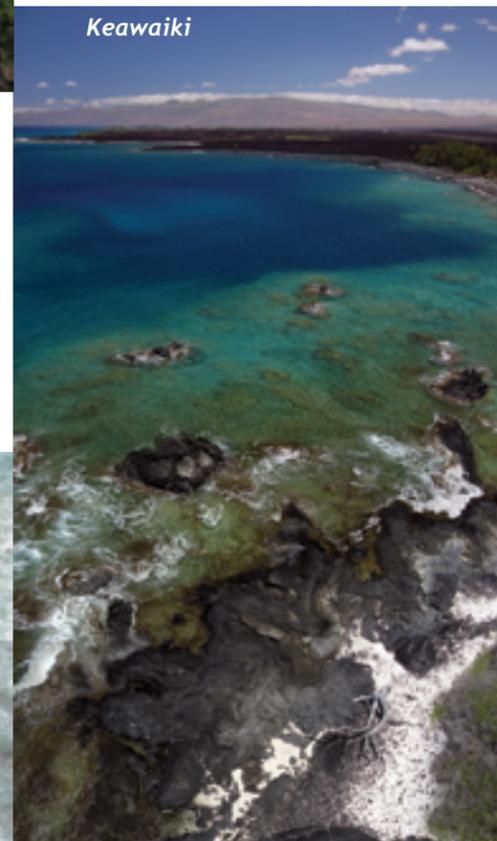
where kona winds prevail. This can make it difficult to fly toward dusk and dawn, though this is not a hard and fast rule. Beaches on the east side, such as the Kapoho Tide Pools, are usually dominated by trade winds, where aerial photography can often be done well past sundown.

If the winds don't seem particularly stable, watch and wait before launching, especially at beaches where there is little room to move around. With kona winds, it's possible to get large wind shifts in a short period of time. On wide sandy beaches like Hapuna, this can be inconvenient at worst. On tight rocky beaches with overhanging trees like Wailea Bay, it can be disastrous. If the wind is shift, it's best to wait.

Valleys

The eastern slopes of Kohala Mountain, at the north end of the island, are dominated by a series of valleys with Pololu Valley at the northern end and Waipio Valley at the southern end. The valleys are dominated by trade winds and by the geography of the valleys themselves. It is possible to fly kites and

Keawaiki



do KAP in the valleys, though the winds can be challenging even to an experienced kiteflier.

If you've heard of the black sand beaches of Hawaii, the valleys offer an excellent opportunity to experience and photograph them for yourself. But be careful of swimming at any of them. There is no protective reef beyond the beach, and the cross-currents are treacherous. Except in times of drought the vegetation in the valleys is a range of brilliant greens that can benefit from the use of a polarizer to make the colors pop.

Urban KAP

"Urban" is a strong term to use on the Big

Island, where the largest city boasts a population of around 50,000, and where you can't find an overpass or an eight lane highway. But the island does have two main cities, Hilo and Kailua-Kona, and numerous smaller towns including Waimea and Honokaa. Wind conditions vary from place to place, so use best judgment. Don't expect skyscrapers on the Big Island, but do expect to find excellent subjects on a smaller scale.

There are two main points of caution regarding urban KAP on the Big Island. The first is airports. Because of the relatively small sizes of the urban areas, you need to check to make sure you are further than five miles from the nearest airport before launching. The second is overhead power lines,



Kiholo Inlet

which are a common sight on the island. It pays to check what's downwind of you to make sure you stay safe.

Hikes

Depending on your style of KAP, there are a number of subjects that can be photographed with a little hiking. Some of my favorites are the anchialine pond systems of the Kona Coast, the summit of Mauna Loa, Keahole Point, Pololu Valley, and countless stretches of coastline that are accessible no other way than to walk there on foot. Wind conditions will vary, depending on location, but since the only way to get there is to walk you have ample time to get a feel for the wind before launching a kite. Each hike will present its own challenges, but it's possible to find out about these ahead of time by consulting a hiking guide for the island.

As with any hike, it's important to bring sturdy shoes or boots and plenty of water. Because of the volcanic nature of the island, the biggest risk to be aware of is the risk of cuts from rocks. Lava rock almost always presents sharp edges that can catch an unwary hiker's ankles, or the kite line, bridle line, tail, and sail cloth of the unwary kiter or KAPer. Be careful when kiting on lava rock and be aware that without due precaution it's possible to wreak havoc on your kiting gear. The practice of walking down a kite is very difficult to accomplish on lava rock without damaging the kite line, so it's not a bad idea to practice other methods if you plan to hike and KAP on the Big Island.

Even if you don't plan to do any KAP when you come to Hawaii, bring your kites anyway. Kites are a rare sight on the Big Island, and seem to be welcome almost everywhere I have been. It's rare to put up a kite here and not have someone come and tell you how much they enjoy seeing it. It's instant aloha. K

Manini Owali



ADIRONDACK SNOWTACULAR



BY BOB DIEHL
PHOTOS BY JAN BRABANT AND BOB DIEHL

The Tug Hill Snow Kite Festival always delivers wind and snow and the 4th annual festival was no disappointment. “Last year we had 2’-4’ of powder that many people experienced for the first time in their lives,” said Bob Diehl, Lewis County Recreational Trail Coordinator, and one of the event organizers. This year we’ve had a slow start to our winter, and we were a little nervous about the snow conditions for the festival. Luckily we had a fresh foot fall the night before the event,” Bob, along with Jan Brabant of T.I. Adventures Sport Shop in

Clayton, NY, and the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce all do their part in the organization and running of the festival. With the largest wind farm east of the Mississippi, and average snowfall of over 300”, Lewis County is a snow kiter’s paradise. One of the main assets of Tug Hill is the generosity of our landowners, allowing the festival to take place for four years on private property, as well as letting kites use their fields throughout the winter. Lewis County is in a unique situation for snow kiting, with sites scattered over a 30 mile spine that runs from

Lowville to Adams Center. A kiter can pick the best site for their abilities; the wind and snow differ from one end of the Tug Hill to the other.

The Tug Hill Snow Kite Festival takes place on Martin Luther

King Jr. holiday weekend in January. This year the snow and wind didn’t disappoint. On Saturday, visibility was only a couple hundred feet, and the wind was blowing up to 40 mph, much too strong for even the best kites. Even though the weather was fierce, many still braved the wind and snow and flew as long as they dared. When the conditions were too dangerous, they came to the base camp tent and warmed up with good food and conversation. Zebulon Jakub, a power kite instructor from the International Mountain Climbing School in New Hampshire, has been attending the festival since its conception. “This is the best place on the East Coast for snow kiting, I love coming here, we want conditions to work, and this area happens to have better conditions than really anywhere I’ve seen.” Zeb offers lessons through the IMCS to anyone who wants them, and will come to Lewis County throughout the winter if he has students for a class. Jean Dunoyer travels with a group called Mass Kites out of Massachusetts and has attended and filmed all four festivals. “We’re here for the steady wind, the powder snow, the camaraderie, the group feeling, and a good time.”



welcome them here.”

Anne Merrill, the Lewis County Chamber of Commerce Director is happy with the festival. “The kites are friendly and grateful to have the opportunity to come here and fly. The festival takes a lot of behind the scenes work to make it happen, but we believe it will grow and continue to bring people into our County and make them happy.”

Patrick Nadel, the North American 2010 snow kiting champion attended last year’s festival. “This festival is all about promoting snow kiting, Lewis County, the Tug Hill Region, getting people outside in the winter to experience the beauty of snow country, and promote recreational tourism in our region,” Diehl said. “The County legislators understand the impact of recreational tourism to our County, and they not only encourage but embrace the snow kiting community, and

The future of the festival is bright. As long as we have participants, and funding from the County, we will continue to sponsor the event. Sponsors of the event are local businesses. Otis Technologies, a local manufacturer of gun cleaning kits, is a big supporter of this event and the Chamber of Commerce. Wake Robin Farms, four year sponsor of the festival, donates quarts of their all natural yogurt made with pure maple syrup from Lewis County.



If you haven’t checked us out, you can find us flying most weekends on the Tug Hill. Don’t be surprised if travelling across the plateau, you spot some kites dancing to the rhythms of the wind off in the distance.

Information on the Tug Hill Snow Kite Festival is at www.lewiscountyrecreation.com or by calling the Chamber of Commerce at 315/376-2213. As Lewis County looks to the future of snow kiting and the Tug Hill Snow Kite Festival, they will continue to hold it as long as the wind blows and the snow falls, which on the Tug Hill should be quite awhile. K



KITE TRADE ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONAL SHOWCASE



Gomberg Kite Productions International www.gombergkites.com and www.mycatalog.biz/GKites/

Gomberg Kite Productions now has a full range of products designed especially for your local kite store. Check out the entire line at the G-Kites online interactive catalog. We've got sport kites, soft stunters, performance lifters, inflatables, and tons of fun for experienced kites, new fliers, families, and kids. At G-Kites, we're focused on flying satisfaction, durability, and performance. Forget the fancy throw-away plastic packaging. G-Kites come in permanent fabric bags. All Gomberg Kites are now test flown and test marketed in our Northwest Winds retail stores. NWW has the largest kite retail space, and the largest inventory of kites and accessories on the West Coast. You can also see our custom show kites and advanced flying products at www.GombergKites.com.

Revolution

www.revkites.com



Utilizing the same design characteristics as the JB Signature Series, the B2 was made in a slightly different size as our classic Rev II, making it quicker and even more responsive than it's larger B-Series siblings, with all the same performance aspects, refined inputs and a great deal more speed. We've worked closely with John to bring everything that made his original series so popular into this small and explosive package. John says, "Small, fast and agile, the B2 just leaves me giggling to myself with its nearly auto-completing flic flacs and axels.... One hit that would give me a single on axel on the 1.5 B-Series sends this bad boy into double axels half the time. Sideways flic flacs are easier than ever, and it's so responsive that I've really found an opportunity to further refine my control! And for short line flying? Oh yeah! This kite is so easy to move around, 3D catch and throw flying is a breeze."



The next step in Revolution light wind flying is the 9' Zen which has taken the need for wind down to almost nothing. The Zen is created by Bazzar Poulter and as such you can expect both beauty, function and unsurpassed light wind flying. This is the project which gave iQuad the ability to team fly in near zero wind, with a wind range of about 0.5 mph to 5 mph. The Zen comes alive in those low to no wind conditions and gives the flier the ability to fly when nothing else is in the air. So for those days when nothing else will work, we here at Revolution have taken the time to develop and produce the next step in low wind kites.

Tori Tako Wind Designs

www.toritako.com

Natures Symphony Mobiles: laser cut, 18 gauge steel powder coated for durability, inside or outdoor on your patio/deck. Vibrant colors accomplished with our infusion process. Made in the USA.

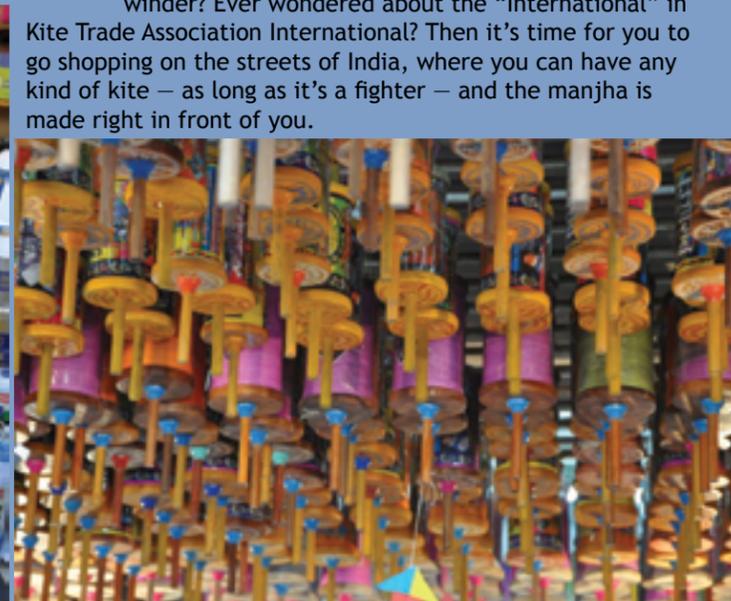


Sublimation House Banners and Garden Flags: new exciting designs! Floral, beach, hot air balloons, military. All vibrant colors with designs on both sides. 100% polyester blockcoat fabric with stable coating.



AT THE KITE SHOP

Been to your local kite shop lately? Frustrated that you can't find the latest Prism release, or that perfect winder? Ever wondered about the "International" in Kite Trade Association International? Then it's time for you to go shopping on the streets of India, where you can have any kind of kite – as long as it's a fighter – and the manjha is made right in front of you.



A TEEN IN INDIA

BY WILL STURDY
PHOTOS BY JORGE ROMÁN,
FEVZI KIR, WILL STURDY,
ERHAN TUFEKÇIOĞLU,
AND BARBARA MEYER.



The 2010 AKA Grand Champion surrounded by new friends in Ahmedabad.

The Gujarat International Kite Festival attracts fliers from all over the world to India to, as you probably guessed, fly kites. The festival is loosely based around the Uttarayan holiday. Uttarayan celebrates the start of lengthening days

This beauty by the UK's Michael Goddard was inspired by the view from atop the Empire State Building.



with a gigantic kite festival. The focal point of the festival is the flying of fighter kites, but the organizers schedule a few extra days to allow us to fly our Western style kites before the skies fill with fighters and manjha, the glass-coated kite line.

Held on the Sabarmati riverfront area in Ahmedabad, the international festival was quite an interesting affair. Unlike many American festivals, the local government was heavily involved in organizing the event so it ran very smoothly. They stretched out some sort of fabric across the whole field, so we didn't need to worry about getting messed up in the dirt. The police enforced the perimeter of the flying field, so there were no issues with spectators getting in the way. The general atmosphere of this festival was quite different from American festivals. Because of India's huge interest in kites, an immense crowd turned out to watch the kites. We did not have to try very hard to find folks interested in sharing the experience of kite flying. As

soon as any of the kitists approached the perimeter fence, a mass of people would crowd up to the fence hoping to feel the line, take a photo, or just shake hands. The Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd worked hard to make us feel important as well, organizing a full state function with the president and chief minister of Gujarat presenting the various awards for the kitists with outstanding kites.

At this festival one of the coolest things for me was meeting all of the other international kitists and seeing some of the amazing kites coming from other parts of the world. I hadn't attended any festivals with many other international folks before, so I really appreciated the opportunity to meet the people behind some of the kites I admire.

After flying for a few days in Ahmedabad, we went on an overnight bus trip to the White Rann, an area near the Pakistan border. Interestingly, during the monsoon season the entire area floods, but in the winter months the area is dry and people actually live in it. We stayed

in a little village of temporary tents; as soon as the winter is over, everyone there will pack up and head for higher ground. Because it's covered by the sea for a significant portion of the year, the ground isn't dirt or sand but pure salt. At a first glance the landscape looks like a huge desert of snow, but in reality the entire area is white salt stretching as far as the eye can see. Even though it was winter there, the temperatures were quite hot, approaching what we get in the summer in much of the States. Since the area is sparsely populated, very few people came out to watch us fly so the experience in the White Rann was very different from what we had in Ahmedabad. We focused on flying and socializing with the other kites. The wind was ridiculously good though, since it had had miles and miles of nothing, not even a wave, to cross before it reached us.

After a day flying in the White Rann, all of the kitists headed over to Mandvi Beach, which is a resort area on the Indian Ocean. There the tourism bureau treated us like royalty. As we got off the bus, we made our way to a red carpet that led us to the kite field, which was also covered in carpeting. I must say that I didn't exactly feel like I was at the beach since I didn't have to empty any sand out of my shoes all day. In India they sure know how to make you feel special!

The number of people at Mandvi Beach was once again jaw-dropping. Mobs pressed against the lines guarding the kiting fields. The kites all flew single-line kites that we bought locally. This was a really fun day. The local people were so friendly and so interested in talking with all of the kitists about their kites and countries that it was hard to pack up at the end of the day!

We then returned to Ahmedabad for the "big day" of the festival. For once, the international kitists were not the center of attention; the entire city turned out onto the rooftops to fly fighter kites in a giant free-for-all. This truly was a city-wide festival. In all directions, the city was covered in kites. Some in the air, many already cut down and mangled in the streets or on the power lines. The only stores open were those selling kite supplies!

Between the amazing number of spectators, the high caliber of the other kitists, and the generous hospitality of the Indian organizers, this was certainly a festival I'll remember for quite a while. K



Will Sturdy



Axel Kostros' kitemaking contest winner.



Jorge Román's hexagon



Carlos Soares of Portugal in the White Rann



GUJARAT INT'L KITE FEST JANUARY 10 - 14, 2011

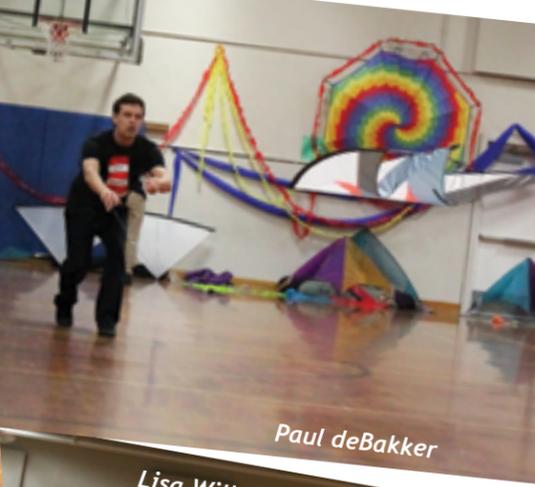
Contest winners Axel Kostros (Germany), Jorge Román (Ecuador), and Oscar Munoz (Colombia).



Spencer Watson



Kristian Slater



Paul deBakker



Scott Davis

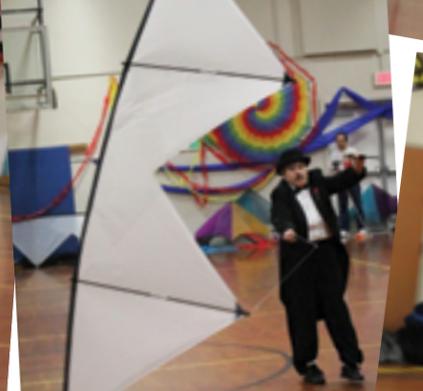


Lisa Willoughby

10TH WINDLESS KITE FEST LONG BEACH, WA JANUARY 15 - 16, 2011 PHOTOS BY DON OSTBY



Phil Burks



Amy Doran



Connor Doran



Jerry Cannon



Toby Arndt



Paul deBakker & Lisa Willoughby



INSIDE JOB

BY LISA WILLOUGHBY

I was asked once to do an indoor workshop at a school close to my home. I spoke to the principal when I arranged the workshop. We discussed what to expect and the specifics for the program. When I arrived the day of the workshop, I reported to the front office. The secretary told me that she would call the janitor to meet me at the back entrance of the gym to help me unload the fans for the kites. Well, you can imagine their amazement when I flew my kites without fans.

Indoor kites act much like outdoor kites. They require pressure on the sail to create lift in order to fly. While the wind creates the lift for the outdoor kite, the flier creates that same force for the indoor kite. The flier has to maintain constant pressure on the kite and keep the kite lifted and moving. If the flier stops moving, the kite will stop flying. The advanced flier learns how to manipulate the lift and pressure on the kite to do various tricks. Launching, catching the kite, throwing or tossing the kite, flipping, spinning, stopping, sliding, and fading are among a few examples of changing the way the pressure effects the flight of the kite. The flier learns to execute the right timing of hand movements and speed and rate of body movement to accomplish the tricks effortlessly. When you begin flying, it is important to remember one thing: every flier you watch started out exactly the same way you will. They launched and then they crashed and crashed again. They kept at it until they had moments of success that turned into minutes and finally into full routines. So let's start out with the basics.

The first step to learning to fly an indoor kite is to find a space to fly. If you talk to any indoor flier, this is the biggest hurdle to flying. Many gyms, auditoriums or large spaces are rented out to be used for sporting activities, community recreation events or private functions. Many of the people who run these facilities don't understand what an indoor kiteflier will be doing in their buildings. They will charge fees and require insurance policies. I've always commented that getting to use a gym is worth a million dollars and it's not far from the truth when you factor the amount of insurance needed. A few easy ways to get around some of this is to offer to give kite workshops to the community associated with the facility. This teaches them what an indoor kite does and promotes kiting in your community. Many school administrators love to have a kite-related program as part of their curriculum. Another way is to organize a group of fliers who can each give money toward the rent and insurance fees. Kite clubs are a nice way to involve members in a new aspect of kite flying and socialize as a club function. Sometimes it is as simple as knowing someone associated with a facility that is excited and curious about indoor kites. I've given lessons to many janitors, principals, and their children and grandchildren in order to ensure continued excitement and interest of indoor kiting in their facilities.

Once you have a facility, the next step is to decide what kite you want to fly. There are many types, but to simplify there are single line, dual-line and quad-line kites. Each type is designed to fly differently, but require the same technique of continuous movement away from the kite. The type of line



the flier uses is also important. The weight of the line can vary from 30# to 90# line. The height of the facility will determine the length of the line. Generally, the flier will fly on lines from 8' to 12'. Single line can be longer to accommodate the height and width of the facility. When flying a dual or quad indoor kite, Spectra lines are best.

When I teach someone who has never experienced an indoor kite, I find a single line kite is the easiest to use. The flier should remember that learning to fly an indoor kite requires an investment of time. Don't give up too quickly and become frustrated because you will miss out on a very rewarding experience. When first learning how to fly an indoor kite, the flier should learn to feel how the kite reacts to the air in the gym. The kite should become a continuous motion from the flier's body to the kite. The flier should feel how the kite floats and glides. As the flier continues to experiment with the movement of the kite, the next step is to learn how to pull the kite up and over the head. The flier will then learn to regulate how fast or slow the movements should become to look smooth and continuous. The new flier should remember to move their body during this process. Move away from the kite to give it more momentum and lift.

With dual-line and quad-line kites, the first steps to flying are the up and over and a 360. For the 360, the kite is launched (the kite can be propped up against a wall to start) and the flier will pull the kite up and level with his body. Then the flier turns the kite to the right or left and begins to move backward and in a circle away from the kite. Keeping the kite at a steady movement through the air will help to maintain control. When flying a quad kite, the flier's hands should be stacked and parallel to each other, with slight forward pressure on the handles. The up and over requires the flier to lift the kite with the nose facing to the ceiling. Then the flier will pull the kite up to its highest point in the arc, as the kite continues down the flier turns his body moving his feet to the opposite direction. When the kite reaches the bottom of the arch, the flier can move back and turn the nose up to do the process in reverse for another up and over. When flying a quad kite, the hands are in front and side to side with slight forward pressure on the handles.

A fantastic and comprehensive guide to indoor kiting was written and then translated from Dutch to English by Harold Slit, Peter Massey and John Farrell. The document can be

found at www.flyingkites.nl/video/Indoor_English_V2.pdf. New and experienced fliers will benefit from reading this manual. It gives detailed step by step instructions to many different basic to advanced moves with a dual-line indoor kite. It also gives great information on setting up lines, selecting a kite, and what to expect from different kite designs. I enjoyed reading this myself.

If the new flier is interested in competing in an indoor competition, they should become familiar with the rules and regulations for indoor flying in the AKA rule book. Finding music that best demonstrates the flier's skill with the kite, is entertaining for the audience and enjoyable to listen to over and over again can be a challenge. The length of the music is also important. The AKA rules dictate the music to be from two to four minutes in length. The indoor routine is judged on choreography 60%, execution 25% and entertainment value 15%. Flying indoor kites is much more intimate than outdoor flying. The audience is with the flier in the same room. The movements of the flier and the kite can be seen up close and immediately. Because of this, the audience is part of the indoor experience. They are excited, surprised, worried and enthusiastic throughout the performance. They can share the experience with the flier and help build the excitement of the program.

Many of the best indoor fliers attended the 10th annual Windless Kite Festival hosted by the World Kite Museum in Long Beach, WA, January 15-16. This is one of the longest running indoor competitions and festivals in the US with a solid field of 11 competitors from both coasts. Single gliders, dual, quad,



and fighter kite demonstrations were done as well as fun antics using a skateboard and lots of laughs during hot tricks. Indoor teaching time is part of the festival and allows new fliers and spectators who are interested in learning a new skill to have lessons by the experienced fliers. Here is some of the advice the experienced fliers have for new indoor fliers:

"Keep crashing. Know that you will crash a lot. Keep doing it, because the more you fly, the harder it will become to crash." — Amy Doran

"Practice and don't give up. The door to the really cool stuff will only be opened after you learn the basics. Also, style is more entertaining than tricks. If you can make it look easy, you know you're on the right path." — Paul de Bakker

"Practice, practice, practice. Every time you go back to indoor it's easier. Listen to music. It soothes you and gives you balance. Have fun and share the joy of kiting." — Penny Lingenfelter

"Don't give up. Kite flying is a lot of fun. If you need help, ask." — Toby Arndt

"Don't be afraid to ask an experienced flier for help. It is what we do best. A good lesson can take you a long way in having fun flying indoors." — Jerry Cannon

"Be willing to try new things. If something intrigues you, give it a try. The more experiences you have will make you a better flier and a better person." — Spencer Watson

"Relax and have fun. Experienced fliers are great at giving lessons and helping you learn. They also make good friends. Above all, don't give up. It's all worth it!" — Bob Wendt

"Relax, have fun and don't be scared. Start with simple things and once you get that down do stuff that's a little bit harder. Practice and come to the kite festivals because it's an opportunity for you to learn. Also, have an experienced flier help you." — Connor Doran

"Fly to music in your ears. Put a string of slow songs you like on your iPod and fly with the music in the background. It will help you find the calm you'll need." — Scott Davis

The most important thing to remember is to have fun and enjoy the experience. Think of it as a new adventure. Enjoy the times you will end up with the lines wrapped around your feet. Know that every time this happens you are one step closer to becoming an indoor flier. K

Taste the Season

Starbucks launched an intriguing campaign for the holiday season. The ad opens with graceful snowflakes falling from the sky. Person after person looks to the sky, intrigued by the cornucopia of interesting snowflakes that seem to be floating everywhere.

And then the perspective changes. You learn that they're not really snowflakes. That is, they're not snowflakes created by Mother Nature. These are man-made snowflake kites that are being flown by people. As an increasingly larger number of onlookers gaze upon these kites, you find yourself drawn to the kite strings, the unique shapes, the happiness that seems to be multiplying as more and more kites fill the sky.

What's amazing is that you have no idea whose commercial this is ... and you really don't care. It's just so enjoyable to hear the "Snow Days" music in the background and to watch the graceful and delicate snowflakes create artistic splendor in the sky.

The kites were made – hurriedly – by dean Jordan, Mike Dennis, Pam Kirk, and Blake Pelton.




You can find the commercial on YouTube, and the kites are now for sale online.

Listening To The Landscape Of Wind

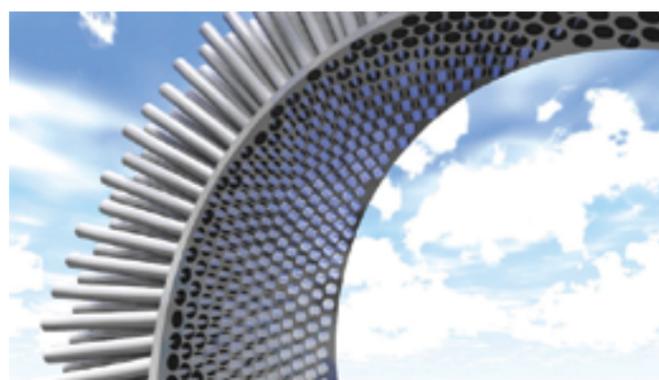
British artist Luke Jerram is about to give voice to the wind. His new installation, named for the Greek wind god Aeolus, is soon to begin touring the United Kingdom. Jerram explains, "An investigation into acoustics, wind, architecture and light, Aeolus was

inspired by a research trip to Iran where I interviewed a Qanat desert well digger about his life. The well digger spoke of the wells singing in the wind.

"Aeolus is an acoustic and optical pavilion designed for the public to contemplate the landscape; to make audible the silent shifting patterns of the wind and to visually amplify the ever changing sky.

"Beneath the arch a viewer can look out through a field of 310 internally polished stainless steel tubes simultaneously, each of which draws the landscape of light through the structure whilst humming at a series of low frequencies. These light pipes act to frame, invert and magnify the landscape around the pavilion enabling the viewer to contemplate an ever-changing landscape of light. As the clouds and sun move across the sky throughout the day, the visual experience for the public will dramatically alter minute by minute, hour by hour.

"Aeolus is designed to resonate and sing with the wind without any electrical power or amplification. Aeolus will sonify the three dimensional landscape of wind, using a web of Aeolian harps. Almost like cats' whiskers sensitive to the slightest touch, the tubes register the shifting landscape of wind around the artwork. The public will be able to visualise this shifting wind map by interpreting the sound around them."



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Women of Kiting
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Lisa Willoughby

Axel Kostros

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and more!



I will be attending this festival. I hope you can join me!

Barbara Meyer,

AKA PRESIDENT



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