

WAKA

Washington
Kitefliers
Association

- newsletter even-numbered months

NEW YEAR'S EVE GATHERING!

Bob and Suzanne need to know by Dec. 21st if you can attend the New Year's Eve Inaugural Gathering at their warehouse. Please call 623-7095 for more details. - 8:30 PM -

INAUGURATION for JACK VAN GILDER

Be sure to attend the annual New Year's Day Kite Fly at Golden Garden's where we will be installing Jack into his new office! - 10:00 AM -

HAIL TO THE CHIEF(S)!

The big news this issue is that WKA's own Jack Van Gilder was elected, unanimously and in absentia, to the presidency of AKA at its national convention in Houston. In fact, a whole slate of WKA nominations was unopposed for next year's leadership: Dave Checkley, Carl Brewer, and John Dusenberry are AKA's new vice-presidents; Bob McCort is Corresponding Secretary; Milly Mullarky is Recording Secretary; and Bill Lee is Treasurer. New directors-at-large include Ken Conrad and Brooks Leffler; Brooks will continue to edit the AKA newsletter from Maryland.

Jack's new duties will keep him too busy to get out our WKA paper, though, so WKA News, as of this issue, has lost his sure, experienced touch. Can't be helped; a sacrifice for the greater good. Bear with us for awhile, and we'll try to get it back up to his standard.

US? ME? Louise Crowley and Milly Mullarky will be responsible this year for the editorial, and production aspects, respectively, of this newsletter. More about that later. Now, back to:

AKA CONVENTION, HOUSTON, 10/15-18, 1981

Attendance was smaller than last year—70 were registered, about half of whom were in the trade. Gevan Brown, 1981 AKA president, reported that current AKA membership is about 950.

The most encouraging news from the convention is that relations between AKA and Kitelines have improved. Kitelines has agreed to run ads for AKA in exchange for the AKA newsletter's running ads for Kitelines, and there is hope that if Kitelines can establish a regular schedule of publication it will become the official organ of AKA, replacing the present AKA Newsletter. Improved cooperation between AKA and the magazine should accomplish that.

Bob Price proposed, and the convention approved, a method of facilitating the affiliation of local kite clubs with the AKA. Any club with a minimum of five AKA members may, on the payment of a nominal contribution (say 25) per member, become a chapter of AKA. Also passed was a proposal to publish the AKA roster for the information of all members (with a provision to delete the names of any members who ask not to be put on the list). And AKA has applied for most-favored tax status as an educational non-profit organization.

The big job for next year will be to increase AKA membership—with all those thousands of kites out there and only 850 of them in the AKA, obviously a lot of people don't see much advantage in joining the organization despite their interest in kiting. The 1982 administration hopes to develop new programs and publications to attract members and to give them more for their dues money.

Now the discouraging news: as usual, finances. AKA income for 1981 to the date of the convention was about \$6,000; expenses about \$8500. Current assets, in cash, savings, and accounts receivable: \$3,383. The association management firm, employment of which was the principal decision made at the last convention, costs AKA \$7,200 a year (for the services of receiving mail, answering routine inquiries, setting up the newsletter, maintaining the mailing list and handling accounting and mailing); postage and printing costs are additional. Auction proceeds were lower this year, too—about \$2,300. Well, we know Jack is a miracle-worker, and that's what AKA needs if its going to balance its budget and increase services to members at the same time.

BUT IT WASN'T ALL WORK

The day for flying kites was pleasant and windy, with beautiful clouds. Convention-goers flew at a large field awaiting development, not far outside downtown Houston. Ken Conrad and Dave Checkley drew a lot of attention with their centipedes; so did

John Jordan (Author of a new book on making kites from salvaged materials) with his complex, rotating "Space-station" kite of roled-into-circular-cells computer-cards, spinning on a bearing extracted from a dead ball-point pen; and Steve Eideken, with a spectacular train of about two dozen Rainbow Stunters. A writer free-lancing a magazine story on the resurgence of kiting hired a local photographer and a big cherry-picker, to get a kite's-eye-view of the proceedings; watch for that in the Smithsonian magazine, about March.

The day before the contest, when the field was still mud-puddled from a recent rain, some of the kilters put on a show for the local media, and Steve let Ken Conrad ride herd on his long stunter train. It has to be kept in motion all the time it's flying and develops tremendous pull as it moves, so that at times Ken was actually skating behind it on the wet ground. A real thrill, he says.

The next day was strenuous for Tom Sisson, too. Here and there in the rough grass of the flying-field were little, harmless-looking mounds Tom didn't pay any attention to — until he stepped on one, and the outraged fire-ants that inhabited it swarmed up inside his pants-legs, biting as they came. Between the fire-ants and an equally vicious sunburn, Tom spent his last day there in a hospital, but he still says the convention was worth it.

MKA MEETING, NOVEMBER 11

Mostly, this was a report on the Houston convention, by MKA delegates Tom Sisson, Dave Checkley, and Ken Conrad. The decision to distribute AKA's membership roster means that all of you who are in the MKA will soon receive that list, and will be able to contact AKA kilters on your travels and to correspond with others throughout the country—only the first, we hope, of a series of new inducements for joining AKA. And there was a happy surprise: the presence of southern California's Ted Norton, who's hoping to move north to Oregon or Washington if he can find a job in the area. He'll be back, he says, for our New Year's Day fly. Let's find him that job by then, and keep him. He's an inventory analyst, when he's not making or flying kites.



Above, Brooks Leffler with his big winged triangular-box kite, at Houston.

LOCAL SOURCES

A new local source of Japanese handmade papers (Washi) is DANIEL SMITH INK COMPANY, 1111 West Nickerson, Seattle WA 98119 on the north slope of Queen Anne Hill. Prices range from \$1.24 to \$3.50 a sheet (about 21"x29"), less for more than 10 sheets. Many weights and qualities available, suitable for kites, block printing, sumi painting. Out of towners can write for catalog, samples (for kites ask for samples of A.K. Toyama, Kochi), best to go in and look at all of many samples.

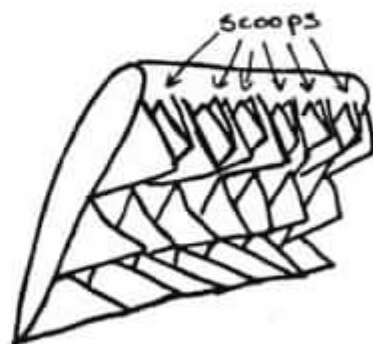
Best local source for bamboo is DISPLAY & COSTUME SUPPLY, 2nd and Bell Streets, Seattle, WA 98101. Some of the larger pieces are cracked lengthwise from drying, which is not important as you'll be splitting them anyway. Catalog also available, although small quantities are hard to ship due to length (mostly 9-10 feet long). Best for groups to order by the bundle, to be shipped by truck.

From England: John Spendlove, of the Northern Kite Group, learned that your new editor is collecting kite photos and sent a pack of them, some taken in England and some at the 8th Annual International Kite Festival in June at Scheveningen, Holland. In the folder of newsletter material I took over from Jack was this discription by by Carl Poshler of Boston of a kite he saw at that Scheveningen festival: "The largest kite of the day appeared to be a parafoil--it was inflated, strutless, and wing-shaped--but the leading edge was closed. The inflation air was scooped up at each end and must have distributed through equalizing holes in the middle panel ribs. This giant was about 800 sq. ft. with a width of twice the depth. It had three main keels, one at each end and one in the center with small leading edge keels, one at each end and one in the center with small leading edge keels in between..." In the packet of photos from John was this shot taken there.



Carl adds that the kite was easily launched and flew unattended for hours, tied down to a Land Rover.

John Spendlove writes that there are between 50 and 60 members of the NKG, quite widely scattered geographically. Martin Powell, who designed the Tunnel Keel Delta, is one of them; another, Dave Green, has developed an interesting variant of the parafoil. He calls it a "Stratoscope". It's closed at the leading edge, and air enters through "scoops" between the forward fins, thus:

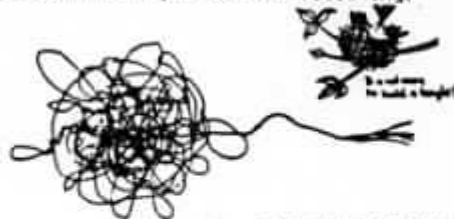


John says it is very stable in fresh winds and that it holds its shape, descending gracefully, when the wind dies. Mike Ware, also of the NKG, designed a ground-controlled system for low-cost air survey of archeological sites in North Africa, using a large Stratoscope, a Pentax camera, and electronic controls. A photo of Roman temple at Ghirzah, taken from the kite, is as clear as any aerial photography I've seen. John himself is the designer of the 14-0 Box Kite. (If you don't know what that is, ask Kevin Sanders, who made one.) He's International Correspondent for the NKG--imagine having an official "International Correspondent"; that's real class!

KITEFLIERS TOUR OF JAPAN

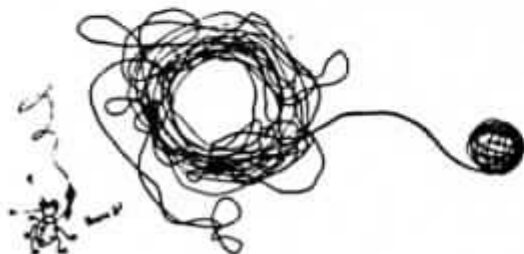
Dave Checkley is now in the final stages of planning his ninth annual tour for the latter part of April and the first part of May, 1982. Half of the spaces available are spoken for, so request information soon - write KITE TOUR, Box 9081, Seattle, WA 98109.

From Australia: A letter from Trefoil designer Helen Bushell to Jack VG: "I enjoy your whacky-whacky newsletters", she says, and gives permission to reproduce the following:

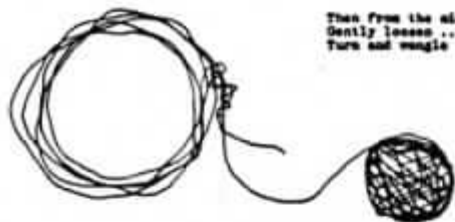


TANKLES

If you have a fearful tangle
Turn a doughnut or a beagle
Round an end



Then from the middle
Gently loosen
Turn and wrangle



Tying line
Out from the middle

She adds: "The amazing thing is that the system works. John Talbot told me about it. I had discarded a real horror of a tangle that morning, so went home, took it out of the MPB, drew it as I went, and, lo and behold I had my line back!"

CECIL AND DIPSTICK



Larry and Frances Chinn spent three August days in Astoria, Oregon, for the KITE-KAST flying competition sponsored jointly by the Wind Spirit kite shop and radio station KAST. A nice 15-mph wind from the Columbia and a fine place to fly; about 30 kites present. Larry won a trophy for Spectat Choice, and a car-visor billfold for Most Ingenious Kite. Nice certificates, too. We're all invited by the sponsors to go down to that next year.

But! (Larry's telling this, but if you weren't at the MKA meeting Nov. 11, you missed the hilarious pantomime that went with his narration) "...I flew the eyes-spinning owl on the Astoria Column ground alongside a few parked cars. The breeze was light so the owl was teetering at about 25 feet in the air. A dog inside a station wagon was watching it and barking at it, then suddenly the owl dropped to the ground and the huge dog jumped out the open tailgate and pounced on it and bit an eye off. The owner of the dog rushed over to rescue the nylon-covered kite in time to prevent complete destruction."

Kite-eating trees we've all coped with, and of us have been ripped off by kite-stealing aircraft, but dogs?

CALENDAR

December 31 **Bizzen Inaugural Gathering** (Call 623-7995 before Dec. 21st to R.S.V.P.)

January 1 **Inauguration and New Year's Day Kite Fly** at Golden Gardens.

ED' I_TOR (ed'i-ter) WEBSTER'S NEW INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY, 2nd EDITION, G.&C. MERRIAM CO.

"One who edits, as; a. One who prepares the work of another for publication; one who revises, corrects, arranges, or annotates, a text, document, or book... b. One who directs or supervises the policies and contributions of a newspaper, magazine, work of reference, or the like..." There's more (in an unabridged dictionary), but that's the relevant part; it defines, I take it, my job on this newsletter: I'm to revise, correct, arrange, etc. writings by others — to prepare this newsletter, not to write it — and to supervise the established policy of getting it published and mailed on a regular bimonthly schedule.

So this is a warning: I'll be hounding you for contributions, because from now on this newsletter's going to be a compilation of what you send it. Kiting anecdotes, helpful hints, suggestions for WKA activities, whatever — you keep the stuff coming, and Milly and I will keep it going out. But that's all I'll guarantee; you'll get that sheet of paper every two months, but what's on it, beyond the letterhead, is up to you.



LEFT-OVERS

Largest kite record: The Edmonds Community College Kite Team's big parafoil, flown in Seattle during last year's convention, got its Guinness certification as the world's largest kite. It's in the latest Guinness Book of World Records.



John Dusenberry's "No-Contest" contest: Rules, proposed by John: during unannounced judging period, anonymous judges observe the kites being flown within the contest area. At end of period, judges compare notes and announce prizes 30 minutes later.

The first no-contest contest was held at Magnuson Park, Labor Day. Virtually no wind, except for an intermittent light breeze just above the ground, to about 15 feet. Kites never got much higher, until Harold Writer caught a blacktop thermal over the parking lot. Winners: 1st, Carl Brewer with an airplane kite; 2nd, Harold Writer, tissue-paper Eddy; 3rd, Jack Van Gilder, tissue-paper delta. Prizes were kite-shop gift certificates. But that windless day, more excitement was generated by John D's laid-back new bicycle than by the kites.

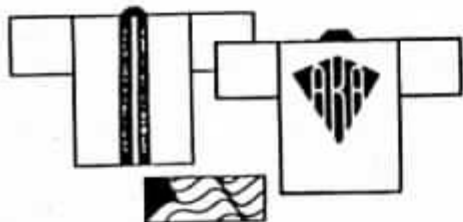
Schoolboy entrepreneur: Glen Stewart, age 13, was renting his kites out at Gasworks Park this summer to kiteless parents with wistful kids.

Mystery pilot: Remember the plane-and-pilot photo in your August-September newsletter, which the Piney Mountain Air Force challenged readers to identify? Jack Van Gilder spotted the engine, a Kinner, in the archives of the Public Library, and Elliot Couden correctly identified both engine and plane, a Fleet. Now Tight Lines, newsletter of the Greater Delaware Valley (New Jersey) Kite Society, reveals the pilot (are you ready for this?): Piney Mountain's Guy Audlett, himself.

NEW KITE BOOK

Eiji Ohashi has just published a new book with the English sub-title "Kite Trains Making" with complete instructions for making 25 kinds of trains, including several types of centipedes and a collapsable box kite. At Mt. Fuji Asagiri he had a train of vegetables, nine varieties from pumpkin to radish and a train of quintuplets. The book has 56 pages, 8 in color, 8 1/4x11" paperback, very well illustrated with Japanese text and metric dimensions, so it is easy to follow. Ohashi's book is a must for any train enthusiast.

As Ohashi's book is not yet being imported, the best way to get one is to write directly to the author, Eiji Ohashi, 1-8-1 Nakamura-Kita, Nerima-Ku, Tokyo 176, Japan. The book costs 1,200 Yen and airmail postage is about the same, so enclose 2,500 Yen (can probably get currency from your local international bank branch), or \$11 in U.S. currency - as personal checks are hard to cash in Japan.



A.K.A. Hapi Coats

Dec. 15 is the deadline to order a red and blue Hapi Coat and/or an A.K.A. Hachi-Maki (towels used as headbands by Japanese Kitefliers). For more information call THE KITE FACTORY 285-6262, or see the bulletin boards at the kite stores.

KITE CLASS II

A new series of Kite classes will begin Jan. 12 from 7-10 pm and continue at that time Jan. 14, 19, & 21st. They will terminate with a Sat. 9 - noon class and hopefully kite fly. Please be ready to lend your help when you are called to help with these fun classes.

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Jack Van Gilder
1925 Walnut S.W.
Seattle, WA 98116

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Kites

Our kites are made of the finest quality material. Inland of King
City, Utah. One year 14 months. In Alaska, Washington
12 months. In the States, 18 months. In the States, 18 months.
12 months. In the States, 18 months. In the States, 18 months.
12 months.



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