

The AKA Kite Club Organizer's Handbook



Kite Club Organizer's Handbook

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This handbook about and for individual kites and kite organizations was originally compiled by Victor Walton of the CONNECTIKITERS with the help of fellow kitefliers and kite clubs around the world. The updated edition again uses the knowledge, experience, and expertise of many of these same people as well as input from those currently involved kite organizations and kiting activities. Photos were taken by Chuck Sigal, Jerry Houk, Eddie Zihlman Jr., and David Gomberg.

It remains, though, your manual, designed to help you get the greatest enjoyment possible from the simple pleasure of flying a kite.

This publication is available from the AKA website in a downloadable "PDF" format or in printed form from the AKA Store at 636-376-6055.



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PREFACE

Not since the “Golden Age” of kiting has there been so much excitement and interest in the hobby, art, sport, craft, science, and technology of kites and kite flying. A vigorous, competitive industry has emerged and there is a steady increase in the number of people who, last week, were only casual spectators and who, today, are active participants.

This hunger is much more easily satisfied when there is an established group in place to encourage affiliation with and participation in kiting activities. I believe the very keystone for sustaining this momentum is the nurturing of a strong, nationwide network of local clubs.

Unfortunately, while there are several clubs that have enjoyed sustained success and stability over the years, there have also been many clubs that began with much fanfare, sputtered, and then passed on like the seasons. Too often, it is realized too late that planning, organizing, and maintaining a successful kite club requires careful attention to positive human relations and considerable leadership mastery.

Unfortunately, with the exception of a few outstanding examples, kite clubs seem isolated and lack a sense of community with one another. I believe that a strong network of local clubs, who are engaged in an active system of sharing, feedback, support, and cooperation would be a good thing for kiting. The best resources available for learning about the options and alternatives in running a successful kite club can be found in the experiences of other clubs who have “been that route before”.

On the other hand, with the exception of the obvious fact that all clubs are focused upon getting people together to fly kites, the universal similarities seem to end there. Groups vary widely in terms of size, formality of structure, purpose, emphasis, scope of activity, internal dynamics, involvements, and evolution. It would be indeed difficult to establish standard, sound criteria for insuring success.

Those that survive and flourish, whether large or small, simple or complex, appear to have enjoyed the committed support of basically mature individuals with applied leadership skills who have focused their energies primarily upon the club rather than upon themselves. These clubs also have a core of members who are prepared to plan for and adjust to inevitable changes and who can resolve inevitable conflicts. They are also clubs that do not lose site of their fundamental original purpose for getting together in the first place.

The diversity of clubs presents us with a cornucopia of information, ideas, options, and alternatives to consider. The free exchange of ideas and the open sharing of positive and negative experiences coupled with attention to the basic proven factors that appear to hold successful clubs together can be very helpful. But the important thing is to be yourselves and do what your membership wants to do, not what other clubs do.

The fundamental purpose of this effort is to bring together as much contributed information as possible that would be of direct and practical help to kite clubs. It is intended to be a useful resource for individual kites and their kiting groups and to encourage the process of exchanging ideas and resources and to reinforce a sense of community, mutual sharing, and support.

Victor Walton



INQUIRING PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW

- What are the different ways to go about organizing a local or regional club?
- When and how should a club incorporate?
- When should a club consider liability insurance?
- Where and how do you get insurance, what does it cover, and how much does it cost?
- How do you put together a good newsletter and establish a good team to produce it?
- How do you establish and maintain a good system of volunteerism in a club?
- Should you have “officials”, a statement of purpose, and/or by-laws?
- Where do you find sample club bylaws?
- How are nominations and elections handled?
- How do you set up a budget, set financial priorities, and handle the finances.?
- What sorts of kiting activities have been found to be successful?
- What’s the best way of integrating new members into the core group?
- How do you run a successful workshop?
- How can you (or should you) prevent cliques from forming in a club?
- How do you plan, organize, and run a good kite festival?
- How commercial should a club get selling patches, T-shirts, publications or kites?
- How do you get involved with community service?
- How do you insure safety at events?
- How do you reward people for their efforts or accomplishments?
- How do you set up a good display?
- How do you negotiate with people and organizations for a place to fly?
- How do you set up a good in-club communication system?
- How do you encourage inter-club participation?
- Should a club get into “group purchasing” and, if so, how is that accomplished?
- How do we not “reinvent the wheel”?
- How do we set up a communication link with other clubs?
- How may we encourage people to join us?

...AND MUCH MORE. THERE IS SO MUCH TO SHARE!

GETTING A GROUP TOGETHER

NOTE: While there may be many additional ways of getting started depending upon your circumstances, location, or time of year, the following are offered as suggestions:

- Kite festivals are logical places to meet potential club members. National and international kite festivals draw many people. But even a small local fun fly, if effectively advertised, will attract interested people. A table or area might be set up to introduce “non-club” people to the idea of starting a club and to supply them with helpful handouts and advice on how to proceed.
- Many individuals have contacted the American Kitefliers Association (AKA) for a list of all AKA members in their area. A letter of invitation was sent to each one and that led to an organizational “brunch” and that led to a “fly”...and that led to a core group of people who thought it would be nice to make it a regular monthly get-together...and that led to a name...and so on.
- Kite merchants, in an effort to create a market for the sale of their kites and related merchandise, often begin to take the names and addresses of customers and suggest that they meet at a particular location to fly together. This can lead to the assembly of “frequent fliers” who decide to organize, choose a name and agree to meet on a regular basis. Often people buy a kite, but really don’t know the first thing about flying it. If this becomes a part of the “service” of the kite shop (provided a time and place can be negotiated), people generally appreciate the help...and that’s good for business.
- There is frequently a location, such as a beach, park, or open field, where people randomly show up to fly kites but do not take the initiative to meet one another. Making a simple flyer suggesting the formation of a club and then passing it out to people flying kites can bring people together. A large sign saying something like “Kite Club Forming...Sign Up Here...” can be placed near a table with a person to answer questions and arrange with interested kites for a time and place to meet as a group.
- Posting an announcement in kite shops or stores that sell kites about an organizing meeting for people

interested in joining together to fly kites can help in getting a group together. Radio stations and cable T.V. will often make “public service” announcements of this sort if asked tactfully. They are often looking for interesting spot interviews about such things.

- Business organizations like hospitals, banks, or insurance companies are natural places to include kite flying as part of a corporate outing. If they are successful and people have fun, a more formal group can be organized.
- If three or four people come together and learn that they have a variety of kites, shopping malls often will pay money to have those kites on display for a week or two. A convenient table in that location could be set up to meet people interested in a kite club.
- Colleges and universities often have a wide variety of student activities in which students may become involved. They could be encouraged to include a kiting club as a school sponsored activity, especially at schools specializing in aeronautical technology or Asian studies.

SOME THOUGHTS ON LEADERSHIP

Kite clubs are founded as an outlet for the avocational interests of their members. They are voluntary in nature. They, for the majority, offer an escape to the simple pleasures of flying kites with friends. This is why it is often difficult to gain the commitment of truly qualified people with that unique combination of personal characteristics and organizational skills to take on a leadership role.

Yet, if there is one factor upon which the success of a kite club depends most during its formation and evolution, it is probably to be found in the quality of its leadership. Few, if any, decisions made by a kite club are more important than those made regarding who shall lead; few problems are more difficult to resolve the finding an effective leader.

Kite clubs, because of their “avocational” and “voluntary” nature, are unique. Tangible, material rewards for leadership are limited. The group is asking for the committed consent of certain members to make extraordinary contributions of time, energy, personal resources, talent, and skill that could be just as easily devoted to more

personal priorities. As well as expressions of sincere appreciation for these extraordinary efforts, it is incumbent upon kite club members to recognize and commend the role leaders play in the success of the club through active contributions, support, and direct “voluntary” help.

It may be observed that, in most clubs that succeed, there is great care taken in determining leadership and there is a good balance between leaders and non-leaders in helping the club to achieve that success.

SOME GUIDELINES: EFFECTIVE LEADERS ARE...

- in touch with and focused upon the wants and needs of the total group as opposed to exclusive attention to the “in” group.
- dedicated and committed to serve and lead the membership in a positive, constructive direction during their tenure.
- tactful, courteous, positive, self-assured, and proactive.
- good communicators in regular communication with the membership.
- good and fair delegators.
- trusting and willing to take interpersonal risks in an effort to keep things honest and open.
- in touch with other clubs and informed on matters relating to kiting.
- anxious to find ways to reward others for their efforts.
- ready to “bury the hatchet” and move on.
- focused upon a positive future rather than being hung-up on a negative past.
- finders of solutions, not the creators of problems.
- open to reasonable yet high expectations of themselves and others.
- able to generate excitement and enthusiasm.
- able to build, with the group, a clear vision and direction for the club.
- determined to protect the club’s “culture”.
- focused upon delegating responsibilities that challenge people.
- able to make people feel welcome.

This starry arch was a club project of the Liberty High Spirits of 14B, a New York City area club.



IDEAS FOR KEEPING MEMBERS INTERESTED AND INVOLVED

- Keep people thoroughly and accurately informed.
- Make sure ALL members feel “in” on things.
- Delegate! Give people things to do, to be responsible for.
- Give honest and frequent praise for the things people do.
- When people don’t live up to your expectations, forget it and move on.
- Learn and call people by first name; mention people by name frequently.
- Seek out, listen to, and implement good ideas giving credit where it is due.
- Utilize the talent, skill, and resources of your members.
- Encourage people to learn from each other.
- Make compromises in favor of what the group wants to do.
- Encourage people to car pool to events and festivals; organize delegations.
- Encourage “community service” projects; do something for someone else.
- Reward yourselves as a club for a job well done.
- Keep in contact with non-participants; they may be loyal but unable to attend.
- Contact nearby clubs and set up a visitor exchange. “We’ll put you up over night if you put us up over night.”
- Cultivate and nurture new potential leaders. Take risks to share power and control.
- Lighten up! Have fun! After all, that’s what it’s all about. All work and no play make for a heavy, stagnated club. All play and no work makes for a short lived club. Work hard! Play hard!

SHOULD OUR CLUB BE FORMALLY ORGANIZED?

Source: GETTING ORGANIZED: A Layman's Guide to Legal Requirements for Kite Clubs

It may not be necessary for your club to organize legally but it is very difficult to draw a clear-cut line between a group of individuals sharing a common interest and an organization requiring legal definition. Here are some guidelines:

1. DOES YOUR GROUP HANDLE MONEY? If your club handles money to any degree, it must be accountable. State laws vary as to the level at which a group must begin to file reports. If your club collects dues, has one or more bank accounts, or purchases goods or services in the name of the club, it should be formally organized.

2. DOES YOUR GROUP SOLICIT DONATIONS? You should look into whether your state requires groups which solicit donations or conduct fundraising of any kind to register. The general rule is that organizations which solicit funds are carefully monitored to prevent fraudulent charitable activities.

3. DOES YOUR GROUP MAKE CONTRACTS? "Contracts" need NOT be formal legal documents in order to bind your group. Does your club make agreements with other organizations? Do you ever rent or borrow meeting space? Do you purchase goods or services in the name of the club?

4. DOES YOUR GROUP INCUR LIABILITY? Think long and hard on this one. People love to sue today and damage awards are getting out of sight. Does your club sponsor festivals or workshops where someone may be accidentally injured or their property damaged? Who would be liable in the case of civil action?

5. DOES YOUR GROUP INTEND TO GROW? Obviously, every club starts small and most intend to remain that way. However, as time passes, you collect dues, then hold a festival, then start a newsletter, then sell ads to fund it, then conduct a small auction, and then sell patches, pins, bumper stickers, and "T" shirts. Soon, you are faced with all sorts of state and federal regulations and reporting requirements. You should consider formal organization BEFORE things get out of hand. It is much easier to start with a clear and clean formal organization than to try to play catch-up later.

6. SHOULD WE INCORPORATE? It is not absolutely essential to incorporate. In many cases, unincorporated associations are treated exactly like incorporated ones from the standpoint of government regulation. However, the advantages are worth considering.

- A corporation is a legal entity in its own right. It has the legal and financial obligations for its actions and the liability of the individuals is limited. In most cases, liability is limited to the amount of corporate assets. If your club is not incorporated, the directors and individual members may incur personal liability for the actions of the "association" whether or not they were involved.
- Incorporation helps to insure continuity. A corporation exists under the laws of the state and continues to exist until it is legally dissolved. So, if leaders lose interest, others can assume the "club's" direction.
- Actions of corporations are clearly delineated under state law. In other words, you have a set of clear legal guidelines. You have better luck with banks, businesses, and donors when you are incorporated.
- Your incorporation gives you the "appearance of stature". It is a signal you have taken the time and energy to be serious about your association. It implies that you intend to be active for a long time to come; that you are committed and energetic.

7. HOW DO WE INCORPORATE

STEP 1. Be sure your name is not being used by any incorporated group in the state. A telephone call to the Charter Department, Corporation Commission, or Secretary of State in your state should suffice.

STEP 2. While you are on the line with them, request a form to use as a guide for preparing your "Articles of Incorporation". Feel free to request a copy of AKA's Articles of Incorporation from AKA headquarters.

STEP 3. For non-profit corporations, three things must be included in your "Articles":

- Purpose Clause. For the most tax advantages, your main purpose should be educational. Your other option is to incorporate as a "social club." With this option, you will have fewer requirements but, also, fewer advantages.

- **Non-inurement Clause.** “No portion of the assets of the corporation will inure to the benefit of the individual members.” In other words, individuals cannot profit directly from their membership. For example, you cannot hold a kite festival and split the proceeds among the members.
- **Dissolution Clause.** If the club decides to disband, you need a plan for distributing assets no matter how small. The assets must be distributed to other non-profit organizations. They cannot be distributed among members. If hard goods, like office equipment, are sold, the profits must be used to pay debts and the remainder to non-profit organizations. Neither goods nor cash can be distributed to members at any time except as reimbursement for expenses incurred on behalf of the club.

STEP 4. Prepare By-Laws. By-Laws simply specify how your corporation will operate. When writing these, reiterate the purpose of the club and then specify things like:

- Who the members will be.
- How often meetings will be held.
- How the Board of Directors will be chosen.

Be complete enough to offer a real operational guide to your group but flexible enough to eliminate the need to be changed too often. **HINT:** Do not specify dues. Say, instead, “Annual dues will be collected at such time and in such amount as the Board of Directors shall determine.”)

STEP 5. Hold A Formal Organizational Meeting. This is absolutely necessary. Elect your officers and directors of the corporation. They, in turn, accept the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws as the governing documents. Keep minutes of the meeting so far as actions of the Board of Directors are concerned. This is primarily for the use in the rare case of an IRS audit and they are proof that the officers and directors acted in good faith in managing the affairs of the corporation should there ever be questions of liability.

8. WHAT ELSE SHOULD WE DO ONCE WE ARE ORGANIZED? Here are a few other legal issues to consider:

- **APPLY FOR AN EMPLOYER IDENTIFICATION NUMBER.** Even if you will never have employees, you will need this number if you, for example, open an interest bearing bank account. Ask your nearest

office of the IRS for Form SS-4. This number identifies your club on all the state and federal forms you may be required to have on file.

- **APPLY FOR FEDERAL TAX EXEMPTION 501(c)3.** How far do you want to go with your organizational efforts? To achieve the maximum benefit, you should file IRS Form 1023 applying for recognition as an “educational organization” under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Act. Under this, your club can seek special mailing privileges, sales tax exemption, and other special benefits available to “charitable, educational, religious and scientific organizations”. Donations to your club will be tax deductible. To get this status, you will have to show proof that education is your principal activity involving kite workshops, seminars, kitemaking classes for children, informational newsletters and pamphlets. Request Publication 557 from the IRS as a guide
- **APPLY FOR FEDERAL TAX EXEMPTION 501(c)7.** Another alternative is to file Form 1024 to apply for recognition under Section 501(c)7 as a “social club”. This status is less difficult to get and will exempt the club from tax on any excess of income over expenses for the year. However, it does not offer the other benefits under 501(c)3. Request Publication 557 from the IRS as a guide.
- **APPLY FOR STATE SALES TAX EXEMPTION, SPECIAL THIRD CLASS BULK MAILING PRIVILEGES, FUND RAISING LICENSES, AND OTHER BENEFITS.** Take advantage of your tax status once you obtain it! If you mail 200 or more pieces at a time at least once a year, there are significant money saving mailing privileges available to your club if you have achieved your special tax status. While they vary from state to state, sales tax exemptions and fund raising privileges are also available to your club if you have your new tax status.
- **FILE FORM 990 AND ANY STATE REPORTING FORMS ANNUALLY.** To protect your tax status, you must file an annual federal tax Form 990 if your gross income is over \$25,000. If your club does generate that level of income, contact AKA headquarters for advice and assistance. Be sure also to check you state tax authorities to determine their reporting requirements for non-profit and tax exempt organizations. Many states simply require that you file a copy

of your annual Form 990.

- (NOTE: Unincorporated organizations are not always exempted from filing returns. Consult your state department of revenue to see if you must file a return whether or not you are incorporated.)



IDEAS FOR CREATING BY-LAWS

You should not get too far down the road before you consider developing some by-laws for your club. You should not strangle your club in structure; on the other hand, you should have enough structure to hold things together. Several clubs have good by-laws. Ask around and you won't have to "reinvent the wheel". The AKA's by-laws can be used for a guideline.

A COMMON OUTLINE OF THINGS TO INCLUDE IN CLUB BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I: What shall be the name of your group?

ARTICLE II: What is the purpose of your club?

ARTICLE III: Membership

Who's eligible?

What are the classes of membership?

What are the privileges of membership?

What shall membership dues be?

How may members be terminated?

What is the grace period on overdue membership payments?

ARTICLE IV: Board of Directors

Who shall they be?

What power and authority do they have?

What are their duties and responsibilities?

How are they elected (or appointed)?

What are their terms?

How are vacancies filled?

How shall they report what they do?

How can they be removed?

ARTICLE V: Officers

What officers shall you have?

What power and authority do they have?

What are their duties and responsibilities?

How are they elected (or appointed)?

What are their terms?

How are vacancies filled?

How can they be removed?

How shall the transition period be handled?

How long should the transition period be?

ARTICLE VI: Meetings and Elections

When will the "Annual Meeting" be held and what is its purpose?

What other scheduled and "official" meetings are to be held?

When will they be held and for what purpose?

How shall the membership be notified of upcoming meetings?

Shall all meetings be open to the membership?

How are nominations to be received and elections to be held?

How will the membership be informed of elections?



The signature forest of banners marks the territory of the Lehigh Valley Kite Society.

ARTICLE VII: Executive Committee

Who shall constitute the executive committee?
How shall it be constituted?
What does it have the power and authority to do?
What is its relationship with the Board ?

ARTICLE VIII: Other Committees

What committees shall be established?
How are they to be elected or appointed?
What are their duties and responsibilities?
How shall vacancies be filled?
How shall they report to the membership?
When shall they meet?

ARTICLE IX: Contracts and Services

Who is to handle any contracts the club makes?
How are these contracts to be handled?
How about “letters of agreement” or “verbal contracts”?

ARTICLE X: Seal and Colors

Will you have an official seal or logo or official colors?
Under what circumstances may these symbols be used?

ARTICLE XI: Anti-discrimination Clause: “No person shall be discriminated against in admission to membership, election or appointment to any post, hiring for any position, or participation in any club activity on account of race, color, creed, national origin, political beliefs, sex, or age.”

ARTICLE XII: Amendments

How may these by-laws may be altered, amended, or repealed?
How may the club be dissolved?



SHOULD WE HAVE A NEWSLETTER?

NEWSLETTER QUIZ: A “Yes” response to more than a couple of these may merit consideration of having a newsletter.)

- Does your membership complain about not being adequately informed?
- Are decisions makers operating without a clear understanding of what the “will” of the total group is?
- Do you have a shrinking feedback and sharing system within your organization?
- Because of a growing, widely dispersed membership who may not always be able to attend club events but who want to be vicariously involved, do you find an “in” and an “out” group forming?
- Is your club now scheduling a variety of events at various locations and times?
- Is kiting information being hoarded by a few “in-the-know” people that really should be shared with the total membership?
- Are there esteem-building or pride-building accomplishments by individuals or the club that deserve broad club awareness but are not fully known or appreciated by the members?
- Are there good ideas, opinions, and observations that have no mass outlet for expression?
- Are there sub-groups within the club that have a special interest in a particular aspect of kiting but who are not recognized for their interests or accomplishments?
- Is your club losing its original purpose and direction?
- Are people not being invited to events because they are uninformed or, worse yet, are considered non-participants?
- Are meetings, both formal and informal, where things are decided attended by a diminishing number of people?

- Do you have poets, cartoonists, commentators, kite designers, etc. who have no outlet for their talent?
- Are other clubs asking for a copy of your non-existent newsletter?

NEWSLETTER CONSIDERATIONS

- Is there a person or team willing and committed to take on the responsibility of a newsletter?
- Do they have the talent, resources, time, and financial assurances to produce a newsletter as conceived?
- How committed are other members to making contributions and assisting in the production of the newsletter?
- What shall the nature, purpose, and general focus of the newsletter be?
- What shall we call the newsletter?
- How “fancy” or “simple” should the newsletter be? What are the parameters for quality, length, inclusions and exclusions, etc.? Should we, for example, include advertising to cover costs?
- How many issues will be produced and what are the deadlines for items to be included and for distribution?
- What creative resources exist within the membership that could be used in producing the newsletter?
- Should photographs or other graphics be used?
- What regular features should be included?
- Other than members, to whom should the newsletter be sent and under what circumstances?
- What tasks can be delegated and to whom?
- Considering telephone calls and letters that may be necessary in preparation, production, printing, and postage, what are the projected costs for each issue?



THINGS THAT MAKE A NEWSLETTER INTERESTING

A newsletter can take a variety of forms. If your group is small and if available funds are minimal, your newsletter could be simply that: a “news letter” to the membership once a month. As your club expands in membership and activity, you may need for a more sophisticated newsletter. Consider adding:

- An accurate schedule and description of upcoming club events which includes all known details for motivating members and for making individual planning clear and convenient.
- Articles about recent past club events. Use lots of names. Even the most humble among us likes to see their name in print.
- A “President’s Corner” feature which makes a regular statement on the status of things within the club and continually expresses the philosophy and focus of the club. It can introduce the club to the life, times, kiting involvements, and accomplishments of individual members for the purpose of enriching relationships and increasing individual communication.
- An “Elsewhere in Kiting” feature which informs members about other major news and kiting events.
- Articles on kiting history. Many people are quite unaware of the interesting and rich historical events and personalities marking the development and evolution of kiting.
- A feature with answers to the “most often asked questions” about the club or kiting in general.
- A publication review feature where someone discusses source material on kiting, makes recommendations, and clarifies how to obtain good materials on kiting.
- A “Personal Side” feature which discusses some of

the interesting things people in the club are doing, i.e. trips, birthdays, graduations, children, anniversaries, accomplishments, etc.

- A feature on kiting technology which might include new kite designs, ideas and tips on kite construction, aerodynamics, etc.
- An “On The Humorous Side” feature with a cartoon, a humorous incident, or some other item to bring a smile or two.
- A club application blank for those non-members who come across your newsletter.
- A “Credit Due” feature giving praise for “good deeds” done for or in the name of the club.
- An “Editorial” feature where the publisher/editor(s) expresses whatever occurs to them.
- A “Letters to the Editor” feature.
- A “Network News” feature telling your membership about other clubs and sharing information people have come across through contacts.

All too often, doing the newsletter is a thankless job that takes time, effort, and energy. *Be sure that you frequently demonstrate your appreciation for these unusual voluntary efforts and do your part to help.*

KITE CLUBS AND THE INTERNET

The World Wide Web provides all kinds of opportunities to communicate, network, and reduce expenses. Here are a few ideas.

- Sending e-mails to a group of interested fliers is the most simple way to form the genesis of a club. You can designate someone to keep the mailing list and send them information for distribution. Or you can make the list available to everyone and let them send their own notices. Having a central message coordinator may help minimize frivolous mailings that tend to wear some readers out.
- Instead of occasional mailings on specific topics, you

may choose to distribute a regular e-newsletter. The advantage of sending club newsletters electronically is that they take less time to prepare, are delivered immediately, and are certainly much less expensive than a traditional “snail-mail” newsletter. The primary expense for most clubs is printing and postage. E-mailing your newsletters may allow you to operate without dues. The disadvantage is that not everyone has e-mail.

- A club web page is a great tool for promoting the club, letting potential members know what you do, and archiving interesting information like photos of your activities, flies and workshops. Find a member familiar with the web and keep your information current. Also make sure that the page is registered in the name of the club so that if your webmaster moves away, you still have control and access to the site.



- News and discussion groups provide another opportunity to communicate news of club activities and events. But remember that they are often topic-specific or cover a very broad geographical area.
- The internet provides many other opportunities to promote your club or minimize typical club expenses. One example is CafePress.com which allows you to submit designs for clothing and accessories which they will post to your “store”. Send them customers and they will prepare products and send you commissions. This way the club can have official tee shirts without the expense of printing, storing, and shipping.

SUPPORT FOR LOCAL CLUBS

The American Kitefliers Association provides a number of benefits to local kite clubs. Here are a few of them:

- The AKA Club liaison is a knowledgeable member with a great deal of background and experience in club organization and dynamics. Call or email them for ideas or suggestions. The purpose of this position is to help you.
- AKA encourages clubs to affiliate with the national organization. There is no charge for affiliation, and once you are officially recognized, AKA will provide additional publicity and support for your programs.
- Affiliated clubs can sanction (and insure) all regular kite flies for one annual fee. Normally each event would require a separate application and payment.
- The Club Liaison sends our regular updates to clubs with information that can be published in newsletters or shared with local members.
- Affiliated clubs are listed in Kiting Magazine, on the AKA web page, and in the AKA directory.
- AKA has publications and materials that are available to affiliated clubs at a discount or at cost.
- Regional Directors have the ability to send email to all AKA members in their region.
- Local fliers can sign up to receive the monthly E-Affiliate Newsletter from AKA, even if they are not members. A registration form is on the AKA site.
- Regional Directors publish reports in each issue of Kiting Magazine. Send them announcements of your activities.
- Each year at the AKA annual convention, a club leadership forum is scheduled to share ideas, concerns, and to suggest ways AKA can better support affiliated clubs.



A FEW WORDS ABOUT INSURANCE

Liability is a fact of life in the modern world. The AKA membership insurance program provides members with \$10,000 of liability insurance whenever they fly in North America. If they injure another person or damage someone's property, they are covered. However, if they injure themselves or their own property, the policy does not protect them.

For clubs that host events, festivals, workshops, or regular fun flies, the AKA event insurance program is of vital importance. Often parks, beaches, or building managers will not issue you a permit unless you show proof of insurance. Such insurance can cost hundreds or thousands of dollars per day. But when a club requests AKA sanctioning, insurance is included for the \$50 fee. And clubs may sanction all of their regular club events for one annual fee rather than register each of them individually.

The liability insurance that comes with AKA sanctioning provides the organizer and any co-insured parties (such as a park department) with \$2 million in liability coverage.

Clubs may also wish to consider indemnification coverage for club officers. This protects the members, and particularly the leadership from being named in legal actions in the event any suit is filed against the club. Some states do not allow suits to be filed against individuals who are club officers. Other states do not address this issue. Check with your local insurance agent for more information.

OTHER IDEAS FOR YOUR NEWLY FORMED CLUB

WORKSHOP OR SKILLS DAY: Organize training session on topics of interest — kitemaking, sport kite tricks, safety. Use your most experienced members as instructors or invite a special guest from outside the area.

NATIONAL KITE MONTH: Register one or more fun flies, workshops, school visits, exhibits, or demonstrations as part of the national effort in April. See www.nationalkitemonth.org for information.

AERIAL PHOTO DAY AND FLY: Emphasis is upon photography. Members bring and enter their best kite or club activity photos to be judged by a professional photographer in several categories. (Be sure to have a "People's Choice".) Aerial photo rigs are brought with subsequent workshops and experiments.



CHRISTMAS IN AUGUST FLY: As you can imagine, "the holidays" are celebrated complete with gift exchanges, holiday carols, Santa Claus, holiday punch, decorations, etc. Of course, there is a "Hanukkah bush" and appropriate cultural customs are observed. Oh, yes, kites are flown.

CAMPING WEEKEND AND FLY: Beginning on Friday evening and running through Sunday, an appropriate campground is selected and spaces are reserved for tents, RV's, etc. The weekend includes campfires, lots of great food, hikes, and, of course, organized flies to which non-campers are invited (usually Sunday).

SKY TRASH DAY: Everything you own, including the kitchen sink, is attached to kites and lines to their safe limit and prizes are given out accordingly in various categories.

FALL CAR RALLY AND FLY: You will need some help from someone who knows how to set on up. With fall color in mind, a road rally is organized that takes participants around and through the country side following a set of clues and ends up at a flying field that is new to the group. Scores are tallied (it is a competition) and prizes given followed by kiting and the usual food feast.

TURKEY DAY LEFTOVERS FLY: Just following Thanksgiving, everyone brings their leftovers (including house guests) and just eat and fly.

LOST KITE MEMORIAL FLY: This day honors those who have legitimately lost kites during the previous year to

“Mother Nature”. Losses must be documented prior to the event. Ceremonies are conducted and certificates of grief are given out. Black arm bands are worn by mourners. An honor kite, donated or bought jointly, is flown and eventually cut loose as a sacrifice to the gods.

KITE SKIING DAY: This can be done on snow, on loose sand, or in the water. Club speed and distance records are at stake and prizes are given accordingly. Just choose your favorite hard pulling kite, put on your skis (or other non-motorized vehicle), wait for a good wind, and WHEEEEEEE! Rules and a safety officer are a must. (Safety rules for kite skiing are available at www.aka.kite.org.)

BRING-A-KID KITE FLY: All members are encouraged to bring a kid or, if they already have kids, to bring another non-family kiter or two...and see to it that they have a good time. There may be games and contests that may or may not have anything to do with kiting, although kiting is the focus. Inexpensive kites are given to all inquiring kids...and kids' food is available to all. Special emphasis is on teaching young people about kites and the safe and correct way to fly them.

KITE MAKING SUMMIT AND FLY: This is a serious dead-of-winter activity. Members gather at someone's

home or some other meeting place to “GET SERIOUS ABOUT SPRING”. They review books and magazines to reach personal and group decisions about what kites to start for spring and to get first hand advice from fellow members. It is also a “show and tell” get-together where members are encouraged to bring something about kiting to share with the group. Weather permitting, a fly is organized at a nearby site.

VALENTINES DAY FLY: Romance is the theme. Valentines are exchanged; prizes are given for those dressed in the most “red”. Kites that are in the best spirit of Valentines Day are flown and a post-fly dinner-with-her-honey is organized (Dutch treat). Don't forget flowers and candy...

HOME MADE KITE DAY: For a specified period during the day, nothing is flown that isn't home made. A workshop and materials are provided for non-kite makers to create a kite on the spot. Prizes are given in several categories.

MOTHER'S DAY KITE FLY: Mothers (and mothers-to-be) are encouraged to attend, honored, and given special treatment. Various activities can be planned to make it a very special day.



CLUB STUNT COMPETITIONS: This is intended for wide participation by novice (in particular) and experts with (mostly) fun prizes given. Much emphasis is given to instruction and demonstration and members exchange kites to give each other exposure to several varieties of stunt kites. It's a sort of fun-with-stunters day. It can also include getting as serious as the club wants to get in terms of "real" competition.

"RIP THE RIBBON" OR "SNATCH THE SWATCH": A stunt kite is rigged with tiny "spears" on the wing tips. A small ribbon is suspended between two poles down field. "Snatch it three times out of ten passes and we'll give you, at least, a round of applause."

THE UNKNOWN KITEFLIER: Insure safety measures with this one. This is a fairly subjective event, so choose your judges carefully. You will be blindfolded and asked to do a nice figure eight with really round edges followed by a nose dive to the ground with recovery as close to the brink of crashing as you dare to come. Judging is based on the combined score (from one to ten) of symmetry and bravado. Oh, hey, you'll use your own kite for this one (if you borrow one from your friend, don't say what it's for).

GODZILLA'S REVENGE: Godzilla (a blow up figure) is placed down field with an apple on his head. You get ten passes to try to knock the apple off Godzilla's head. Do it without disturbing him and you get a point; 1/2 a point if he moves; "...trash him and we let Rodan gum your leg".

EXCHANGE WEEKENDS WITH OTHER CLUBS: This takes planning and good coordination. Club members sign up as willing hosts to house members from a nearby club including lodging and food. Contact is made and match-ups are coordinated. A special weekend of flying and entertaining is planned. A month or so later, the other club reciprocates. In its simplest form, other clubs can simply be formally invited to share a particular day in their honor...and they can handle their own logistics if they must stay over...with a little help for the host club.

PASS THE BANNER (OR FLAG): The club comes together to design and create a banner or flag. When a member visits another club, they leave the banner or flag and ask that it be signed and delivered to another club by a member who in turn signs it and moves it along. A date of return of the banner or flag to its home club is and the club holding the banner or flag at that time sends it or brings it home. As an option, the club retains possession at all times and sees how many clubs they can get (via

visitation) to sign their flag or banner in the course of one year.

JOIN THE PARADE: North America loves parades. Why not enter the club as a unit? The Carolina Area Kite Enthusiasts (CAKE) gets dressed up in a "club uniform", puts on roller skates, mounts bicycles, and "short line" flies down the street. If that sounds a bit risky and ambitious, why not just walk with a variety of kites...perhaps handing out membership flyers, simple kites, club fly schedules, etc. along the route?

GOOD RESOURCES

- The AKA Club liaison is a knowledgeable member with a great deal of background and experience in club organization and dynamics. Call or email them for ideas or suggestions. The purpose of this position is to help you.
- **KITING** is the official journal of the AKA and is sent to each member household four times a year. It is currently the only kite magazine published in North America. It is a forum for the exchange of information regarding all aspects of kiting including kite plans, kite history, innovative and creative kite ideas, and general kiting information. **KITING** provides schedules of upcoming local, regional, and national events as well as accounts and highlights of recent past events.
- AKA Regional Directors in each of the 13 geographic areas report the activities and issues of members in their regions. Ample space is provided for members to express their opinions, ideas, and observations. In short, **KITING** is the complete information clearinghouse.
- The AKA's online Membership Directory lists members both alphabetically and geographically. You can quickly compile a list of active members by zip code, city, or telephone area code. E-mail addresses are also available. A printed version is available for those without computers.

Appendix 1: Sample Bylaws - South Jersey Kite Flyers

ARTICLE I - NAME: The name of this organization shall be the South Jersey Kite Flyers, herein referred to as SJKF or “the Club”.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE: The purpose of the SJKF, a non-profit, charitable and educational organization, shall be to educate the public in the art, history, technology and the practice of building and safely flying kites, and to advance kiting, its joys, and its values. To that end, the SJKF shall work to:

1. Share information about kiting and provide avenues of communication among kites.
2. Promote kiting as a rewarding form of art, sport, utility and scientific study for all ages.
3. Facilitate coordination and planning of kiting activities.
4. Provide a source of education as it pertains to safe kiting.
5. Seek the interchange of information with other kiting organizations, particularly the American Kitefliers Association, its parent organization.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Eligibility: Membership is open to all persons who favor the purposes of the SJKF, as stated in Article II.

Section 2. Types

- a. **REGULAR MEMBER** - A dues-paying person entitled to all privileges of membership.
- b. **LIFE MEMBER** - A person who receives all privileges of membership for life upon payment of a fee as established by the Board of Directors. Availability of this class may be closed and reopened at any time, for any period of time, at the discretion of the Board of Directors.
- c. **HONORARY MEMBER** - A person the SJKF wishes to recognize for outstanding and/or long term contributions to the SJKF, may be conferred an Honorary membership which does not require the payment of dues for a specified period of time. Honorary membership is awarded by a 3/4 vote of the Board of Directors. No person may be named to Honorary status while serving in

office Nominations for Honorary membership are to be submitted to the Board of Directors by any member in good standing. Honorary members are entitled to all privileges of membership unless rescinded by the Board of Directors.

d. **FAMILY MEMBER** - Any family member living in a dues-paying household, listed on the membership application.

Section 3. Privileges

- a. Subscription to the SJKF publication “WINDWRITERS.”
- b. Annual card of membership.
- c. Upon request, a copy of the SJKF By-laws.
- d. With the exception of those under the age of ten, the right to vote when present, at all general membership meetings.
- e. The right to place in nomination the names of members who have agreed to serve in the positions for which they are nominated.
- f. To participate in workshops and such other services as might be provided by the SJKF.
- g. To attend all official Club functions.
- h. To receive discounted prices on all Club merchandise.

Section 4. Term: Term of Membership shall be as delineated in Article VII, Section 1.

Section 5. Termination: The Board of Directors, by a 3/4 vote of all Board Members, may terminate or withhold a membership, which in their judgment would be detrimental to the SJKF organization

Section 6. Non-Transferable: Membership is not transferable, assignable or negotiable, although purchase of memberships for gift giving is acceptable.

Section 7. Lapse: Membership shall lapse 45 days after dues expiration.

ARTICLE IV - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Officers: The SJKF shall be managed by a Board of Directors consisting of:

- President
- 1st Vice-President
- 2nd Vice-President (Optional)
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Director(s) at Large Director (Optional. The Board of Directors shall always consist of an odd number of members.)

Section 2. Duties: The duties and responsibilities of these officers shall be as follows:

- President- Presides as chair of all meetings; oversees the operation of the Club; appoints committees to carry out such functions as required to meet the goals outlined in Article II PURPOSE; is ex-officio a member of all committees; signs all legal documents on behalf of the SJKF; Calls Board of Director meetings as required; appoints a Membership roll chairperson for the purpose of determining quorum status at each General membership meeting.
- 1st Vice-President - In the absence of the President, presides at all meetings; carries out such duties as prescribed by the President; may call for a Board of Directors meeting if he/she deems it necessary.
- 2nd Vice-President (Optional) - carries out such duties as prescribed by the president; presides at general membership meetings should the President and 1st Vice-President be unable to do so.
- Secretary - Takes minutes of all General Membership, Board and any official club meetings, and is prepared to present them for approval at the next meeting; retains copies of all official correspondence, Club records and files for the SJKF, with the exception of financial records and membership rolls; makes provisions for the carrying out of these duties in case of absence.
- Treasurer- Makes and maintains records of all SJKF financial transactions; maintains a checking account in the name of the "South Jersey Kite Flyers"; makes deposits into and writes and signs checks against such account; receives all payments made into the SJKF; provides a financial statement at each General Membership meeting consisting of: previous month's balance, monthly receipts, monthly expenditures and

new balance; provides financial reports for any special events; provides direction and guidance of the Club's activities to insure its compliance with tax-exempt status under Section 501(C) of the Internal Revenue Code; makes provision for the carrying-out of these duties in the event of absence at meetings or official functions.

- Director(s) at Large - Shall represent the General membership at all meetings; organize and provide management of those kiting projects designated for them by the President; shall assist in all areas of club activity for which they are particularly qualified; shall attend and vote at all Board of Director meetings. All members of the Board of Directors must be members in good standing.

Section 3. Resignations and vacancies: Should the President no longer be able to serve, the 1st Vice-President shall become the President, the 2nd Vice-President shall become the 1st Vice- President and the new President will appoint members to fill all other, non-elected vacancies. Should any Director-at-Large be unable to fill the position or continue to carry out its duties, a special election will be conducted to fill the vacancy. Resignations should be made in writing where possible.

ARTICLE V - MEETINGS

Section I. When and Where: Regular monthly membership meetings are open to the public and shall be held at a predesignated time, date and place. As often as possible the date shall be the same each month, i.e. the second Sunday of the month, and will be determined by a majority vote of the General Membership.

Section 2. Conducted by President: All general membership meetings shall be conducted by the President or his designate, according to Roberts Rules of Order.

Section 3. Quorum: A quorum of 20% of the total voting membership must be present at a meeting in order for the Club to conduct business.

Section 4. Voting: Except as noted within these by-laws, all motions made at any business meeting, shall pass or fail by a simple majority vote, taken by a show of hands, or a voice vote of "yea" or "nay".

Section 5. Special: "Special" general membership meetings may be called by the President or any two members of the Board of Directors, for the purpose of resolving any special problem that may arise requiring immediate

action. At such meetings only the emergency situation will be discussed and voted upon. All regular members shall be notified of such "Special" meetings in sufficient time as to permit their attendance at the meeting.

Section 6. Board of Directors: Meetings of the Board of directors may be called at any time by the President or, in special circumstances, by any member of the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Right to Attend: Except for "Closed Sessions", as called for and voted upon by the Board of Directors, all members shall have the right to attend Board of Director meetings. However only Board of Directors shall have the right to vote at Board of Director meetings.

ARTICLE VI - NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. Nominating Committee: The President shall appoint and announce a nominating committee of at least three members, at the September General Membership Business meeting. The nominating committee will select at least one candidate for the positions of the President and two Directors at Large and will place their names in nomination in the October general membership meeting. At that meeting the floor will be opened for additional nominations, with the provision that the candidate notify the nominations committee, within 7 days, of his/her willingness to run and serve in the office to which he/she is being nominated. This concluded, the nominations are then closed.

Section 2. Election Procedure: Nominations having been closed at the October general membership meeting, elections will be conducted at the November meeting, in one of the following two manners: a. If only one candidate for each position has been placed in nomination. then the entire slate may be elected by acclamation or voice vote at the November meeting. b. If more than one candidate has been nominated for any office, then the election will be conducted by secret mail-in ballot with the results being announced at the December general meeting.

Section 3. Assuming Office: All elected officers will assume their positions and responsibilities after the calling to order of the January general membership meeting by the outgoing president. The Incoming President will, at this time, announce his appointments for the remaining officers on the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII - DUES AND EXPENDITURES

Section 1. Determination of Dues: Dues shall be determined by a vote of the general membership, with the financial needs of SJKF in pursuit of its goals, as the guiding factor. Members shall be required to pay such dues on an annual basis to maintain membership in good standing. All dues are deposited to the SJKF bank account.

Section 2. Limits of Expenditure: All expenditures in excess of One Hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall require the approval of the General membership, and will be paid by check. Expenditures less than One Hundred dollars may be made at the discretion of the President or two members of the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Club Termination: Should the Club cease to exist, all monies would be contributed to a charity determined by the existing members of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VIII - LIABILITY

Section 1. Members and Guests: All members and their guests shall participate in kite flying activities at their own risk.

Section 2. Club: Neither the South Jersey Kite Flyers organization, its officers or its members shall be liable for Injuries incurred while kite flying at its meetings or any other club sponsored activity.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENTS: These By-Laws may be altered, amended or repealed and new by-laws adopted by a two-thirds (2/3) vote at any duly called meeting of the members, provided notice of the proposed change(s) be contained in the notice of the meeting and distributed to the full membership at least sixty (30) days before the meeting.

APPLICATION FOR AKA AFFILIATED CLUB STATUS

OUR CLUB NAME:

AKA Affiliated Clubs, upon approval and acceptance by the Board of Directors, receive copies of the quarterly magazine KITING, regular listing in KITING and on the AKA website, an invitation to compete in “club challenges” at the annual convention, and other benefits the Board of Directors may grant.

For a fee of \$75.00 USD, Affiliated Clubs may choose to have all their regularly scheduled club flies (as opposed to special or public oriented events) and club meetings covered by the AKA Liability Insurance policy.

We would like to be covered by the AKA Liability Insurance: _____

Signature:_____ Date:_____

AKA ENDORSEMENT

WE ENDORSE THE PURPOSE OF AKA AS SET FORTH IN ARTICLE II OF THE BY-LAWS:

“The overall purpose of the Association shall be to educate the public in the art, history, technology, and practice of building and flying kites; to advance kiting, its joys and its values, in all nations.”

Signature:_____ Date:_____

CLUB CONTACT INFORMATION

Club Name_____

Club Address_____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Country _____

Executive Officer _____ Title _____

Home Phone

Work Phone

Fax

Email

Second Contact Person

Title

Phone

Email

CLUB PROFILE AND ACTIVITIES

Year Founded _____

Current Membership _____ Number of AKA Members (Five are required for affiliation) _____

Please list five AKA members, with pilots license numbers, who are members of your club:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Dues _____ Newsletter Name _____

Do you offer newsletter subscriptions to non-members? _____

Are you willing to exchange newsletters with other clubs and the AKA? _____

List club merchandise for sale:

A brief history of your club and/or other comments and information: _____

Regular Club Flying Events and Meetings

Where

How Often

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Return or Fax Completed Form to:

The American Kitefliers Association

P. O. Box 1614

Walla Walla, WA 99362

(800) 252-2550

Please attach a copy of your constitution or by-laws, if any, and a clean copy of your logo. Payment for insurance may be made by check or major credit card. You may call (800) 252-2550 with your credit card information.