American Kitefliers Association

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INTRODUCTION TO THE AMERICAN KITEFLIERS ASSOCIATION:

The American Kitefliers Association (AKA) is a non-profit corporation founded 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". We now enjoy a membership of over 4500. Our largest population centers are in coastal areas, with the East Coast having the highest density of members. Kitefliers are warm, friendly people who love to share both the art and sport aspects of their passion.

The AKA Convention is an exciting event that attracts up to 500 registered attendees and provides unique entertainment to the local community. Our annual gathering includes large outdoor demonstrations, national level competitions, and indoor workshops and programs. Our convention is a five to six -day event traditionally held in late September or early October. Sites rotate through east, central and west locations (2007 is a "west" year).

REQUIREMENTS SUMMARY:

Location:

- Geographically convenient & accessible by major international airports
- Affordable hotel accommodations for registrants**
- Available restaurants
- Shuttle services from a major airport a plus.

** Because hotel accommodations are made by registrants instead of through a rooming list, it is impossible for the Association to guarantee participants will stay at the designated convention hotel. However, convention analysis history tells us that participants PREFER the convention hotel, but the bottom line for them is affordability.

Hotel contracts that do not contain attrition clauses or tie room guarantees or complimentary meeting space to food and beverage purchases will be given extra consideration. The Association currently spends at least \$20,000 on F&B during the week, excluding tax and gratuity.

Flying Fields:

- Minimum of four fields 360' x 360'
- Open area
- Clear of obstructions and wind turbulence
- At least 5 miles from any airport

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Banquet Facilities and Meeting Space:

- Two banquets (350-500 people)
- One to three receptions (200-500 people), depending on sponsorships and need
- Meeting and exhibition rooms
- Administrative space for registration and storage
- Administrative space for auction and storage
- Indoor kite flying -- large room with at least 25' high ceiling. Though not preferable, the Indoor Flying Competitions are sometimes held outside of the convention and/or lodging facility. Min 50 ft x 50 ft area (75 ft x 75 ft preferred) for the competition area. Adjoining space for staging and set up by competitors (adjoining hallway with no traffic works well), judges stand (tables for 8 people) and seating for 300-400 spectators.

LOCATION CONSIDERATIONS:

Locations must be geographically central to a large percentage of the Association members. Our experience has shown this is a significant factor affecting the number of attendees. A major airport must be within a two-hour drive.

Affordable hotel accommodations and restaurant facilities for up to 500 registered attendees. Hotels that provide shuttle service from the nearest major airport are a plus.

Locations with the outdoor venue within walking distance of the indoor venue and lodging will be given a strong preference. Travel times and cost of shuttle service become important issues for sites that are not within walking distance.

An average wind speed of 4-12 miles per hour for the September / October time frame is desired. Seasonal chance of precipitation should be below 25%.

We require no FAA flight restrictions below 500 feet for kites. This can be an issue within 5 miles of an airport.

Areas with a strong local kite-flying club are advantageous. You can see if there is a club in your area by visiting www.aka.kite.org.

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OUTDOORS ACTIVITIES

Competitions and Exhibitions: For our outdoor activities we need an area large enough to mark out four 360 ft x 360 ft fields and still have space for spectators. This area needs to be clear of wind obstructions. It must be possible for the space to be reserved for the Conventions exclusive use for the entire week. The use of a powered sound system must also be permitted.

Lunches: Food vendors adjacent to outdoor venue or the option to bring in food vendors to provide lunch for participants. In the past sack lunches have been provided to the participants but this is not currently the practice. Permanent or portable restrooms are necessary.

Auxiliary outdoor activities: In addition, at most conventions we have "kite buggy" races that require an open continuous space. Kite Buggies are small three wheeled carts, which are powered by kites. Racecourse size and shape can be varied to suit the site but should be relatively flat, approximately 350 feet wide and a quarter mile or more long. While it is preferable to have the area for the full week, activities can be scheduled to accommodate availability.

Water front locations provide us the opportunity to have Kite Surfing competitions / demonstrations.

A lighted-kite night fly is included in some years, usually utilizing the competition flying fields.

INDOOR ACTIVITIES:

Auction and Award Banquets: The Convention has two banquets for the attendees, the Auction on Friday night and the Awards banquet on Saturday night.

The auction banquet may be a sit down or buffet style. To facilitate the auction activities a substantial amount of space beyond just seating the attendees is required. The perimeter or sides of the banquet room need to allow at least eight extra tables for display of the large auction items. One side of the banquet area needs seating on risers for six and a phone line for processing auction credit card sales. Because of set-up time for the auction items, access to the room is desired starting in the morning. The room must be securable. In addition to the loud auction, there is a silent auction that requires 50 undraped, 6' banquet tables, or 38 undraped 8' banquet tables. The silent auction precedes the loud auction, but will continue throughout the loud auction. The room for the silent auction can be the same as loud, or adjacent. It too needs to be securable.

The Awards banquet is traditionally a sit down meal. Some space to hang kites is desirable. Table space on the stage is needed to display trophies. A multimedia presentation accompanies the awards and requires a screen and pc projector near the stage that is viewable by all attendees.

All indoor activities are non-smoking. A designated smoking area that can hear the banquet proceedings is desirable but not mandatory.

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Workshops / Exhibits / Meeting Rooms:

Opening Reception: This gathering on the first night of the convention needs a reception hall for 250 guests with a cash bar and a few extra tables.

Workshop Rooms: On Tue – Sat mornings seminars are offered. Three seminar rooms each morning should be available and seat approximately 50 each. Two rooms to be set classroom style and one to be set theatre style.

Fly Market: Booth spaces for retail venders, which should hold 15-25 booths (10x10 foot). High ceilings are preferred. The room should be available the full week. This room must be securable. Booths to include pipe and drape and a 6' or 8' table.

Art Gallery: The room for the Kite Art Gallery must be available at least four continuous days but the whole week is preferable. High ceilings are a nice bonus. This room must be securable.

Indoor Kite Flying: Yes we fly indoors and no we don't need a fan. Ultra light kites that can be flown by simply walking at a slow pace are used indoors. A banquet size room with at least 25-foot ceilings is required. In the past we have used banquet halls, gymnasiums and even an indoor soccer field. Availability for the week is nice but activities can be scheduled based on availability. Indoor competition has traditionally been held on Tuesday evening and competitors will practice in the facility for the entire day, with competitions held in the early evening.

Registration and Auction Receiving: Two rooms are needed for registration and auction receiving. These rooms must be securable. The registration room requires a phone line for credit card processing and must be available on the first Sunday before convention for four hours, then from Monday 8 am – Sunday noon. The auction receiving room must be available Monday – Friday.

General Business Meeting: A room with seating for two hundred, a platform with tables and seating on risers for 22. The general meeting has traditionally been held on Wednesday evening.

Board of Directors Meeting: A large board meeting room capable of seating 22 at a single table is required. Timing of this meeting has varied but it is usually held early in the week. In addition, the balloting committee will need a room for four hours on the first Sunday before convention, capable of accommodating five people to count ballots.

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SUBMITTING A REQUEST:

Requests for consideration as an AKA Convention site should be submitted to the chair of the Annual Meeting Committee ("mailto:annual_meeting@aka.kite.org"). The name of the current chair can always be found on the AKA website ("http://www.aka.kite.org/officers"). Providing as much information as possible is important. As primarily a volunteer organization, we do not have the luxury to investigate first hand every site suggested. A local AKA member or kite club is helpful in evaluating sites.

At this time it is the policy of the association to rotate across the country with an East Coast, Central and West Coast location pattern. This may effect which year your site will be considered.

Based on history – Best room sizes are as follows:

Event	Ceiling Height – in feet	Square Footage
Registration	8-10	600-700
Auction Receiving Room	10	1200-1500
Workshop 1	10-15	1100-1300
Workshop 2	10-15	1100-1300
Workshop 3	10-15	800-1000
Annual Business Meeting	8	1800-2200
Board Room	8	700
Challenges	Workshop Rooms OK For Use	
Fly Mart	10-15	2500-3000
Kite Gallery	10-15	1200-1500
Raffle	8-10	1100-1300
Indoor Competition	25-35	10000
Silent Auction	35	10000
Friday Banquet	35	12600
Saturday Banquet	35	12600

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