American Kiteflier's Association

Regional Director's Handbook

(Revised 07/23/02)

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Any misinformation, changes or conflicts should be brought to my attention immediately. I will attempt to clarify or rectify the situation.

Thanks, Alice Hayden AKA Director, Region 2

1. Regional Director's Responsibilities

You are the American Kiteflier's representative to the AKA Board of Directors. As such you are the members 1st choice of contact for the association.

Official duties include a quarterly regional report for KITING, welcoming new members and following up with estranged members and there are the occasional AKA Board meeting teleconferences. Familiarize yourself with the AKA committee structure. Know what the committees are, who chairs which so that you may forward questions from your members to the appropriate persons..

Additional and sundry duties, You should also expect to field inquiries about clubs and events in your region. You should expect to field inquiries about kite flying demos or classes in your region. And there is the member's input.

Often members offer suggestions. It helps if you can respond both to thank the member and to indicate the pursuing actions, or results or their suggestion, whether their suggestion was acted upon or not. Positively worded responses help to keep the members feeling like they have contributed to a working organism rather than shooting blanks into a void. Even a response to the effect of Thank you for the suggestion, we discussed it and it wasn't acted upon because.... makes them part of the process.

Support the annual convention. It is, of course, hoped that you will make every effort to attend the convention which hosts the annual meeting. At the convention, you will be requested to assist with some manner of volunteering (whether judging, registration, set-up, break-down, whatever you feel best qualified to assist with).

2. Support for You, the Regional Directors

You will receive AKA Regional Director's business cards, an AKA Regional Director's badge, an AKA banner and copies of the AKA publications. The Executive Director will contact you for correct contact information for your AKA Regional Director's business cards.

The Electronic Sub-Committee (Chuck Sigal) has provided a number of support mechanisms for the regional directors. There is

the AKA bulkmail system, an excellent means for communicating with your members via e-mail.

- the Virtual Board Room (http://www.aka.kite.org/data/board/) with the most current/up-to-date AKA membership directory.
- the Virtual Board Room with Compiled historical AKA Board e-mails
- o the Virtual Board Room with Board meeting minutes
- the Virtual Board Room with Board Action synopsis
- o the Virtual Board Room with AKA Financial Reports
- o the Virtual Board Room with Web statistics
- o many AKA publications are available online (see the web page table of contents for Publications).
- You can e-mail the entire AKA BOD by sending a note to bod@aka.kite.org

3. Quarterly AKA Board Teleconferences

The Teleconferences are usually scheduled for 9 pm est so that all BOD members may participate after normal working hours (except for region 13, can't accommodate everyone). The Teleconferences are extremely expensive. To help contain the expense, read the agenda ahead of time and prepare notes for the topics or issues to be discussed. Try to be succinct and to the point.

Can't make the meeting for whatever reason? Try to go over the issues and give your proxy to one of the other AKA board members. Just sent them an e-mail or give them a call. Then the secretary must be officially notified in writing (e-mail is fine). This can be done by sending a message to either secretary@aka.kite.org or BOD@aka.kite.org stating that xxxx will be your Proxy in all votes that night. Then should counts be necessary, your region will still have a voice even without your being there.

4. Regional Director's KITING Report Schedule

All regional director's are requested to write an article/report for each issue of KITING. The regional director's reports for each issue of KITING is due approximately 45 days before the print date.

The article should touch on goings on in your region and can include photos (.jpgs are good) which may be included based on space and KITING 's Editor's discretion. The article should be between 500 and 600 words long. It is a good place to help your region's clubs by reporting on their noteworthy workshops and flys, events in your region and highlight the region's star kiters (makers, competitors, volunteers, et al).

N.B. You don't have to do this all alone. Keep in touch with your clubs and ask them for input to writing your articles or look through their newsletters for info. But try hard to have something in each issue. Members do look for their region's reports and you will get positive feedback.

Kiting Issue	Articles Due	Print Date
Spring	January 15 th	March 1st
Summer	April 15 th	June 1st
Fall	July 15 th	September 1 st
Winter	October 15 th	December 1st

5. Contact with your Regional Member base

As a regional director it is nice to keep in touch with your area's member base. Sending out an occasional chatty note to pass on information about flys in the region or requests for kite demos or pass on club news reminds the members that they are part of a living club and have a person who is there for contacts, questions, etc. Again, you will find that members feel that you have a personal relationship with them and you will get positive feedback.

The Electronic Sub-Committee (Chuck Sigal) has provided excellent means for communicating with your members via e-mail. It is the AKA bulkmail system. To use it to communicate with your region, do the following:

- A. Before using the bulkmail system for the first time a new regional director must send e-mail to postmaster@aka.kite.org from their home e-mail account requesting access. Once access has been setup you will be notified.
- B. Write your article offline and spell check & grammar check it (amazing how many teachers we have out there 8^)
 Be careful with humor, via the written word, people can't see your face to know that you are making a joke. Imbedded smile faces help.
- C. Address the message to: bulkmail@aka.kite.org
- D. In the *subject line* indicate that the note is to your region (e.g. REGION 2) from your AKA regional director. For example the subject line might be:

AKA REGION 2, Happenings this weekend from your Regional Director

- E. Be sure to sign the note with your full name and title. For example: Alice Hayden, AKA Director Region 2
- F. Log on and send them e-mail.

When your e-mail hits aka.kite.org, the program kicks in to verify that the sending e-mail address, is in fact the regional director's e-mail address. It then sends the e-mail to everyone in your region with an e-mail address listed in the AKA directory.

6. Talking to the General Membership -- KiteTalk Inquiries

All postings to KiteTalk, the AKA member's chat in the Club House, are sent to the BOD. If you want to reply to the message, you must:

- A. log on to the Club House on THE AKA web site
- B. enter the KiteTalk area
- C. respond to the message.

WARNING: Just hitting your response button, while viewing the BOD distributed version, results in sending your response to the BOD! Only the BOD!

7. New AKA Members

A. Snail Mail Welcome Package

You should have a welcome letter written that the Executive Director (Mel Hickman) can enclose in the welcome package sent to each new member. It should be a semi-personal welcome introducing yourself, indicating your interests in kiting and what contact/services you personally are willing to provide. Write it and e-mail it to Mel. You will be asked to review it annually for accuracy and consistency.

B. E-mail Welcome Note

The executive director sends out, on a monthly basis, a list of all new members by region. Sending a welcoming e-mail is an immediate way to welcome the new members (while they are still excited about the new membership) and often precedes their receipt of the official snail-mail welcome package. As such it is their 1st introduction to the club and you, their representative on the board.

To write the welcome e-mail begin with a welcome, your introduction, perhaps a note about events coming up in the region and information about the club's services. Save it and the cut & paste each month, altering the new member's name and the current events section. Note I leave the sections to change highlighted in a different colour so that it is easier to remember what to cut. An example of one of my welcome e-mails is:

Welcome to the American Kite Fliers Association

Hi. Welcome to the AKA. I am your regional director. As such feel free to ask me any questions about the association. My husband & I fly single line kites, we fly stunt kites; heck, we fly anything on the end of a line. Right now we are getting ready for the Sullivan County Community Kite Day on Saturday. And it looks like we are going to have good weather, this one is always a fun flying day to help introduce the locals to kiting.

An additional piece of information you may not be aware of, the AKA has a great web site that is a good source of information, also. It is at: http://www.aka.kite.org/

Our web site also has a calendar of events, a list of our publications (many available online) and a members chat line.

Again, Welcome and Smooth Winds, Alice Hayden AKA Director Region 2

8. Expired AKA Members

The executive director sends out, on a monthly basis, a list of all non-renewers by region. Sending a reminder e-mail is an immediate way to follow-up with the former members to determine if it was in fact an oversight or to determine why they are disenchanted with the AKA. If you know the member and can personalize the note, it is even better.

To write this follow-up e-mail begin with a welcome, your introduction, perhaps a note about events coming up in the region and information about the club's services. Save it and the cut & paste each month, altering the new member's name and the current events section. Note I leave the sections to change highlighted in a different colour so that it is easier to remember what to cut. An example of one of my e-mails is:

American Kiteflier's Association -- Membership Lapse

Hi, word is that you have not renewed your AKA membership. I hope this is simply an oversight and not due to dissatisfaction. Your membership means a lot to us. The AKA strives to support kiting in the US and serve as a resource to our members. Our association's newsletter Kiting has gone through a dramatic revision recently and now features some 4-colour photos. Our web site continues to be developed offering previews and sometimes even full access to the AKA's publications.

If it's slipped your mind due to the long dark Winter and just dreaming of excellent kiting weather this Spring and Summer, I don't blame you. But you don't want to miss out on the AKA and all the kite events going on right now. This weekend we have at least 4 events for our area (following description

and contacts).

If it is not an oversight and you don't want to renew, could you take a minute and let me know how we fell short of your expectations. The American Kiteflier's Association is made up of 5000 or so kite enthusiasts and we valued your membership. As a group we are pretty neat. Is there some way we could have improved your membership? Could we have made your membership more meaningful? Maybe we could improve for the next kiter, so we won't miss again.

Thanks,
Alice Hayden,
AKA Director Region 2

9. Regional Websites

A. a.) Techno-Peasant Instructions

B^) smile face with sun glasses

A nice function is to create (or maintain) a website for your region. You don't have to know any Java or HTML to set one up. There are free web development tools/engines available on the net (KITELIFE.COM from Mike Gillard offers free sites. It is the one I used. It is easy and straight forward for the less technically trained. You need **no** HTML skills at all. It's all point and click, plain English. So far, only a few regions have websites, but there's no reason other regions can't.) While that sounds like an endorsement, I've had no trouble using it, I have also been told that there are other equally as simple sites, it is just the one I have experience with.

When the web site is ready, let Chuck Sigal know and he will link it to the AKA web site. The Region 2 web site built using the tool is: http://region2.kitelife.com/

Then as an outgoing Regional Director you would need to pass the site off to incoming Regional Director.

B. b.) Computer Geek Instructions

;^) smirking or winking face

- a. Contact Chuck Sigal to set up an ID and password associated with your regional page.
- b. Create a local directory, or folder, to hold the files that make up your regional page (naming it 'regionX' where X is your region number will make things simple later on).
- c. Using any web page authoring software, create your regional page in that directory and name the main page "index.html" the basics of HTML are beyond these instructions, but you should follow these guidelines to ensure the page will transfer properly to the AKA site.
- d. All local links and image references should be relative to the current directory, do not used fixed paths unless the image/link are from another site or area of the AKA web site.
- e. For simplicity, until you know HTML better, keep all the pages and images in the same directory, this way all your links & image references will be straight to a file with no path information required.
- f. You should be able to look at your web page locally using a browser by opening the "index.html" page directly from the browser if the images and links don't work here, they won't work on the AKA site either.
- g. Once you have the page(s) ready, go to http://www.aka.kite.org/cgi-in/upload.cgi to begin the upload process.
- h. Enter the name & userid given to you by Chuck and then follow the prompts to upload all the files that compose your web page the upload software will automatically insert a link back to the main AKA site at the top of your

- page once you have uploaded the files.
- i. Visit your page at http://www.aka.kite.org/regionX/ where 'X' is your region number and make sure everything came out OK.

C. Change of Guard

Then as an outgoing Regional Director you would need to pass the site off to incoming Regional Director.