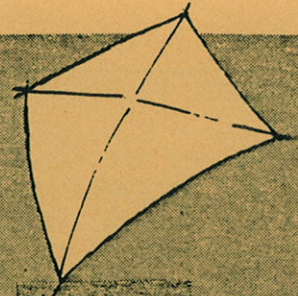


# Kite flyer

The San Francisco Bay Area Kite Flying News



Vol.1 No.2 No. 6

May-June 1979

THANK YOU NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SAVINGS \_\_\_\_\_

Starting with this issue we are most fortunate to have KITE FLYER NEWS printed courtesy of NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SAVINGS. This service will enable us to bring you an even better newsletter without raising subscription rates (again). Our special thanks to Services director Bess Hunt and to member/subscriber Robert Van Valkenburgh.

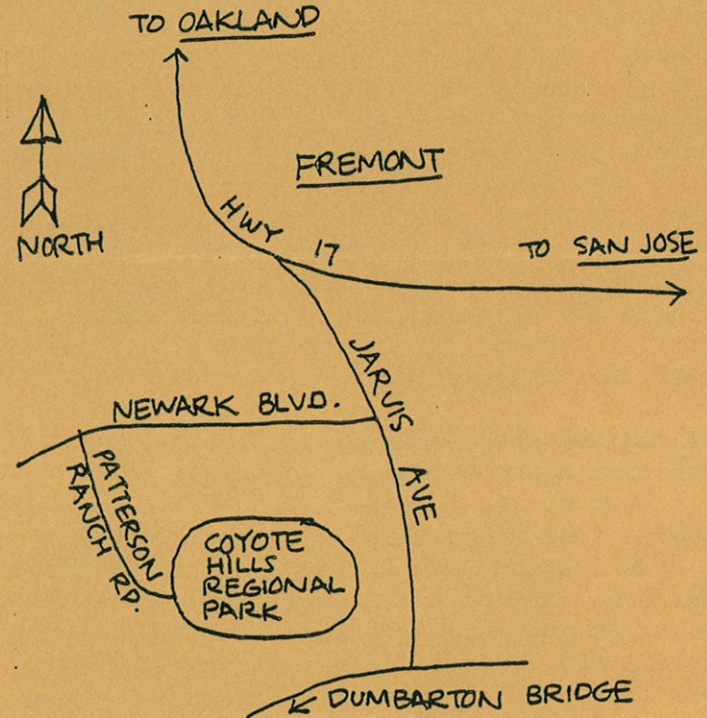
FIRST ANNUAL COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK KITE FESTIVAL \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday, May 20, Jan Southworth and Norm Kidder, naturalists at Coyote Hills Regional Park, will sponsor their first ever kite festival. This event came to life because of the interest both Jan and Norm have in kites and because they are always looking for new, exciting ways to promote the use of the park they preside over for the East Bay Regional Park District.

Plan for a very full day. Vic Landry, Lee Toy and Paul Walker will conduct a kite building workshop from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. We will be demonstrating how to build paper and plastic kites. All are welcome and supplies are free. We will be building kites in the Visitors Center presided over by Julius Squeezer the resident and very friendly snake.

After lunch (Les you better be prepared!) at 1 p.m. kiteflying demonstrations and contests will be held until we are all flown out. Bring your best high wind kites as the afternoon winds are often gusty. Jan and Norm will present ribbons for various fun oriented contests.

For this day only all Kiteflyer subscribers will get into the park free (usual fee \$1.00 on weekends). Just mention to Mark Taylor at the toll gate that you are from Kiteflyer Newsletter and are there to help with the Kite Festival.



Plan to spend some time exploring the beautiful marsh or climbing Redtop where the view will knock you out.

HAVE YOU SEEN THE FLAG? \_\_\_\_\_

Not to tout the obvious but those of you who have not seen George Ham's latest parafoil creation should make a point to ask him to fly it for you. Approximately 60 square feet of a highly accurate United States flag graces the face of George's latest heroic parafoil.

Those of us who take George's kites for granted because we see them often might reflect on the fact that probably no one in the world has made as many successful large parafoils as George except for Dom Jalbert himself. And not only large and successful, George's kites have the most amazing designs and presentations on their faces.

Keep up the good show George and Thank You!

AN EVENING WITH THE BRASWELLS \_\_\_\_\_

This Spring certainly has been momentous for visits from people notable in the world of kiting. Takeshi Nishibayashi, Ed Grauel and the president of the American Kiteflyers Association, Red Braswell and his wife Lee have all spent time with us during the past six weeks. Red and Lee were traveling the West Coast from their home in Virginia at their own expense to tell A.K.A. members and anyone else interested what has and is happening with A.K.A. As anyone who was here the evening of March 16 can tell you, we got a gem of a president in Red Braswell. Truly a lover of kites and all that goes with them. Red and Lee and the newly elected people of A.K.A. are spending an incredible amount of time and energy to assure the continued well being of the A.K.A. but most importantly are supremely confident and optimistic about the future of the American Kiteflyers Association.

Lee and Red both emphasized that the most important thing we can do to assure the continued success of the A.K.A. is to support it with your membership. For your convenience we have included a membership form here for your use. If you are like me and don't want to cut up your copy of Kite Flyer News just include the information on a piece of paper, your five bucks and mail as indicated.

AMERICAN KITEFLIERS ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_  
single membership \$5.00

Mail this application with check or money order to:  
Red Braswell, President, AKA  
10,000 Lomond Drive  
Manassas, VA 22110

TELL THEM KITE FLYER NEWS SENT YOU

Lee and Red also joined us for our rainy March kite fly. Red sews a mean kite that flies as good as it looks.

A VISIT FROM ED GRAUEL \_\_\_\_\_

After considerable and valuable correspondence dealing with his kites (see Ed Grauel's Journey From a Yaw to a Bullet in last issues kite plans) we had the pleasure of spending some time with Ed Grauel, truly a giant in the world of kiting. Ed holds the patents on numerous kites including the Zephyr Delta, the Swallow Tail Sled and one of my favorites, the Bullet.

One of the most incredible things about Ed is that he has met almost all, if not all, the kite greats around the world and has tried so many variations of so many kites that he has at his fingertips a storehouse of detailed information. Invariably when he was asked the question "have you tried thus and so" he would be able to answer yes and what was good and bad about the idea or innovation. All this knowledge has not stopped Ed from going onward and upward in his quest for better kites. Even now Ed is working on "eight or ten" projects that sound sometimes exciting, sometimes impossible, but always innovative.

Ed usually visits the Bay Area each Spring (what could be better for us) and we look forward to talking and flying with him next year.

Thank you Ed for such a memorable experience.

LOOKING BACK, MARCH AND APRIL KITE FLYS \_\_\_\_\_

Kite Flyer News has established a new law of kiteflying. The weather will behave in an inverse relationship to the importance of the out-of-towners in attendance at one of our kite flys. Thus it rained at our March kite fly in honor of Lee and Red Braswell and it rained at our April kite fly in honor of Ed Grauel and Takeshi Nishibayashi. BUT, the weather did give a little at both events and we did fly a lot of kites, and tested the water worthiness of several kites!

During our March fly the rain just sort of lingered and lingered. We all flew or a while, ran for cover, flew for a while etc. The day was highlighted as usual by George Ham (Marion at his side) and his fabulous parafoils, by Dale Vanderhoof and his manlifter (almost) Cody War kite and by Red Braswell and his star kite. I was also inamoured by a Sam Urner roller kite--fantastic to fly.

Continued on page 3

\*Looking Back continued

April weather cooperated much better, After a morning and early afternoon of HEAVY rain the skys cleared, the sun came out and the wind prevailed. Again George Ham flew a fantastic kite, his new FLAG PARAFOL (see article) The most fantastic reel work was displayed by our guest from Japan, Nishi, flying his fragile looking kites in our big San Francisco wind. Only a master could fly a kite like Nishi but to fly in a light gale was awe inspiring. Speaking of masters, Ed Grauel was there flying his wonderous creations. Ed had his wallow Tail Sled up and away like a bird.

It was quite an experience to see Ed and Nishi compare notes, check each others kite out and fly together. We were all entertained by Nishi singing his kite song in Japanese , taking pictures of all of us and signing autographs.

WOW!!! What a kite fly---maybe people are more important than the weather.

PABLO DIABLO \_\_\_\_\_

Up to his old tricks, the Peninsula's mysterious Pablo Diablo has donated his binary fold Delta kite design to the American Kiteflyers Association to be used for promotion of the A.K.A. and other worthy kite causes. This kite which uses four bamboo fondue skewers for structural members has kite safety rules printed on one wing and usually the name of the sponsor on the other wing. Pablo attests to this kites air worthiness, and he should know.

Look for this kite at future flys.

STEVE EDEIKEN \_\_\_\_\_

Buckminster Fuller once stated, "time is what you wait in," and Steve Edeiken, creator of the "RAINBOW STUNT KITE," is presently in that element of time.

The Rainbow Stunt Kite is just what the name implies. Six stunt kites, the colors of a rainbow, hooked in a train formation. Some months back Steve wrote us about his trials and tribulations of putting together his own stunt kite. It makes for an amusing tale and we thought we would pass it on to you.

"I was hooked the first time I saw a stunt kite in 1972. It was a very windy day and this kite was darting all over the sky. I got off my bike, went out on the beach to the flyer and found out is cost 39¢ and where to get it.

"Off to the toy store--one hour later I was on the beach, set up to go--ten minutes later the kite was torn to shreds.

"Off to the toy store again--this time it lasted about one week.

"I gathered some scrap ripstop from local sailmakers and made my first cloth skin. The next weak spot was the frame, so I went to aluminum. Things progressed like that--I was always improving what I saw and flew. My construction techniques constantly improved and the kites became better and better.

"People would come up to me and plead with me to make them one. At first I said NO...too costly, time consuming etc. But, I finally got the message and they became available with or without custom work to anyone who came to me and could afford it (they ranged from \$50-\$100) I never sold through stores, just word of mouth.

"I heard you could hook more than one together, so naturally I tried. I made myself four custom kites, went out to the beach and flew one, then I added another and they flew...and another and they flew. I was amazed. I did have trouble with the fourth one at that time.

"Anyway that's how it started. Fifteen was the most flown at one time (these are all twice as big as the Rainbow Stunt Kite) flown with 200 lb. line they would easily pull you down the beach when the wind was strong.

"To fly more than 15 I needed to make a smaller version. So, after months of intense experimentation and at least 1½ dozen different designs I came up with the kite.

"I decided to go commercial when I realized they were easier to manufacture, cheaper to the public and they flew much better than what was currently on the market.

Continued on page 4

Steve Edeiken continued

"I designed a system on the framework of the kite that allows the flyer to hook together, very easily, as many as wanted. Today my record is 36.

"My favorite combination has always been the six rainbow colors in a train. That train is a real joy to watch and fly. They are so easy to fly that a six-year-old boy on my block as become an expert (well--give him one more year). He does all the tricks, can set them up, land and launch them and fly them safely.

"I think the market is ready for a top quality stunt kite that will last, perform beautifully and be safer than its hard pulling, hard hitting competitors."

So, folks that's the Steve Edeiken story. Buckminster Fuller also describes wealth as "energy directed by knowledge," so if you want to acquire your very own Rainbow Stunt Kite and present Steve with some wealth while he waits in time, you can write him at Rainbow Kite Co., 26 Park Avenue, Venice, CA 90291.

#### TAKO KICHI

If there is one word (or is it two?) to best describe Takeshi Nishibayash it would be Tako Kichi or "Kite Crazy" as the Japanese call those people who are bitten by the kite flying bug.

Nishi, as he is called by his friends, is a retired Tile contractor from Tokyo, Japan. He has been flying kites since he was ten years old and has written two books on the subjects of kites (both in Japanese). He has designed many different kites some of which are in commercial production in Japan but are not available in the United States as of yet.

Nishi is a true Tako Kichi in the best sense of the word, he enjoys teaching others how to make kites as well as how to fly the finished creations. We were fortunate to attend an informal get together for Nishi at the home of Gordon and Joyce Teekell (somewhere in the Oakland hills, some people are still lost, I think.) After clearing some space in the living room, we got down to some serious kite making and some

not too serious tale swapping. Although Nishi's English is somewhat limited he was able to show us how to make two kites of his design as well as sing (he has a good voice) a song he has written about kites all within one very enjoyable evening.

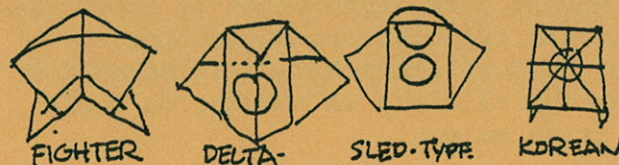
At the April 22nd kite fly we were given a visual treat in the form of watching Nishi maneuver his kites in the air far out over the S.F. Bay. Many of the kites he flew were the ones he had shown us the evening before and each preformed flawlessly. To watch Nishi handle his "spool" was to experience a master at work, confidence in his flying ability and great pride in his skilled craftsmanship of his kites.

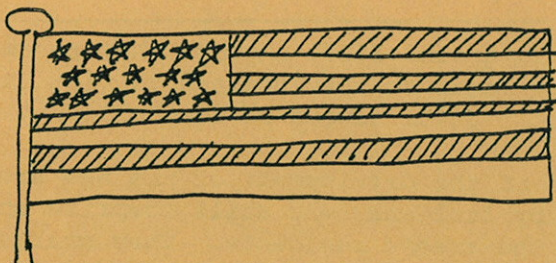
Among some of the various designs he flew was a circular fighter kite, an accordion sled (a sled with multiple sections) and a number of unusual delta forms with open keels with circular vents.

Most of Nishi's kites are constructed from a paper like plastic sheet which he has printed in a rainbow of colors. He also used some plastic film that he gets in a rainbow of colors unavailable here. His structural members consist of cypress, bamboo, plastic straws and spring steel and he usually uses tape and a double stick tape to hold it all together. His designs express simplicity and accurate symmetry to produce guaranteed high fliers.

The last kite Nishi flew before packing up to leave was a 5 meter wide keel-less delta with a Japanese flag on one wing and an American Flag on the other. We all gathered around it for a parting photograph which will bring back memories of a wonderful friendship found in flying kites. Thank you Nishi for a remarkable evening and afternoon of kite making and flying.....

Nishi may be up for the Oakland kite fly on May 19.





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DATE- Sunday July 8

TIME- Noon until we get tired

PLACE- Meet at the Marina Green. If there is too much Summer wind we will go to the Polo Field

PARTICIPATION AWARDS IN RED, WHITE AND BLUE

GET A PATRIOTIC HIGH  
COME TO OUR KITE FLY

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THE SECOND ANNUAL CITY OF OAKLAND  
KITE FLY

When.... May 19,1979  
12 noon to 3pm.

Where.... Estuary Park (near Jack London Village)

What.... Awards will be given for  
HIGHEST KITE  
LARGEST KITE  
SMALLEST KITE  
FASTEST KITE  
MOST ARTISTIC KITE

For more information call...  
Rosemary Chadwick 836-0928

THANK YOU

Many thanks are in order to all of the kite shops and dealers who donated prizes to our March 18 kite fly.

- Air Time... San Leandro
- Come Fly a Kite... San Francisco
- High as a Kite... Sausalito
- Kites, Kites, Kites ... Oakland
- Quicksilver Kites ... San Francisco
- Shanti Spools... San Francisco

WHERE HAVE ALL THE COWS GONE?

San Francisco's Marina Green presents a parade of all oddities, as does all of San Francisco, one of them being the ever present kite in the sky. Since the Marina has become a second home to many of our readership, we thought a little historical insight to the Green might ease the pain felt the next time your foot lands in a "pile" during a critical kite maneuver. The following is a series of excerpts from an article on the Marina Green by Blaise Simpson for the March, 1979 issue of "San Francisco Magazine".

"A man with a remarkable memory, Vince not only knows all his customers by name, and remembers who gets what Sunday paper, but is also a walking encyclopedia of the events in the Marina since about 1915. That was the year of the Panama Pacific Exposition, a kind of World Fair, but on in what was then the Waterfront of "Cow Hollow", to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal. Vince says it was much better than the one in '39. According to Vince, the Marina didn't even exist before the Expo. "It was all Italian people then. Of course, a lot of 'em passed away. We called it Cow Hollow because there were lots of cows down here. "

"It's hard to imagine just how fabulous the Exposition was unless you do what Vince told me--walk down Chestnut Street to the Wells Fargo Bank and look at the panoramic photos of the Fair that decorate its walls.

"It was something. Not only was it better than '39, it was probably better than any fair before or since. The buildings were ivory-pink travertine palaces, twelve in all, dedicated to industry, commerce, agriculture and the arts. The Palace of Fine Arts, designed (as were most of the buildings) by Bernard Maybeck, is the last standing relic of the fair.

Continued on page 6

Cows continued

"One day I was talking to an elderly lady, originally from Lucca, Italy, who mentioned she never thought of the Marina as "the Marina," but as "the Lagoon." That made me think--why is it people alternately refer to the district bounded by Broadway and the Bay on two sides, and Van Ness and Lyon on the east and west, as "the Marina," "Cow Hollow," "the Lagoon," or even, "the Valley?"

"Turns out, it depends on the age of the person you're speaking with. Spring Valley was the original name. About 1840, the area was covered by springs that welled pure and sweet in every direction. In the middle of the Valley lay a lake called "Washerwoman's Lagoon" in local parlance. Here washing was done for residents throughout the City by "washerwomen" who, in fact, weren't women at all, but were shanghaied Sandwich Island natives who jumped ship and settled around the lagoon.

"Spring Valley became Cow Hollow after 1850, when ranches and dairies dotted the valley and the hills behind it. It remained so until the Panama Pacific Exposition when the area first became heavily populated. No one really knows where the name "Marina" came from, although one elderly man I met sunning outside the harbor master's office told me: "When the developers

came in around 1920, I guess they needed a catchy name, so they started calling it the Marina. It'll always be Cow Hollow to me."

"Part of the development of the new area was made by Italians, who still comprise at least half the area's residents. They started arriving in the Marina after the earthquake. As the Telegraph Hill area became populated and there was no more room for expansion on Grant Avenue, then known as Dupont Street, the more prosperous Italians moved to the Marina.

"Deanna Paoli Gumina, author of The Italians of San Francisco, writes: "For an Italian to live in the Marina as others had on top of Russian Hill, meant that one was in a special social class and higher economic bracket far superior to those Italians living above their shops in North Beach. To live there also indicated the immigrants and their children had accepted the American way of life."

"True. the Italians accepted San Francisco in a joyous way, grateful for the opportunities the area afforded them. But they didn't abandon their old values, and this is what gives the Marina its wonderful cleanliness and friendly spirit."

So, the next time you take that fatal step, just remember what it would be like if the Marina was still called "Cow Hollow."

By way of standard reference--KITE FLYER NEWS is available six times a year (weather permitting) at the minimal cost of a trip to Doggie Diner--\$5.00 a shot. Send all money, trading stamps or gold bars to 861 Clara Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

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# Kite flyer

861 Clara Dr.  
Palo Alto, CA 94303



Philip Toy  
1044 Sanchez Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110