

Reception

From: Angel.Yabut@silganclosures.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 07, 2006 7:46 AM
To: Reception
Subject: FW: Kite photo

From: Darrell Goemaat [mailto:dgoemaat@garbc.org]
Sent: Monday, March 06, 2006 3:38 PM
To: ladynilly@hotmail.com; Angel Yabut
Subject: Kite photo

Angel,

Glad you liked the photo.

You would have probably liked it better if you could have seen it in color, like this.



Hope you are doing well. I would love to come see them fly once the weather gets a little warmer.

Kristen has seen a copy of this image in color.

Thanks for sharing your story with us.

Darrell Goemaat

3/9/2006

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Taking his hobby to greater heights

Design engineer hopes to fly highest kite ever

By Kristen Schorsch
Special to the Tribune
Published March 3, 2006

Often shaped like birds, the homemade kites look strangely at rest. Dozens of them are propped against the couches and walls of Angel Yabut's home. Others dangle from the ceiling of his garage.

Some, such as a sturdy kite Yabut nicknamed "Strongwind," are poised to soar with the slightest breeze. Others still need a touch of glue to get airborne, or maybe a strip of strategically placed bamboo.

"These are made for one thing only," said Yabut, 60, of Hoffman Estates, who said he has made more than 100 kites from scratch. "To go beyond the clouds."

With the spring kite season fluttering on the horizon, Yabut figures to get in plenty of hang time with his favorite hobby. Eventually, he would like to break a record by flying a kite 3 miles into the sky. That would beat the record set in 2000 in Ontario, when a monster kite measuring 270 square feet soared 13,609 feet, or more than 2 1/2 miles.

Remembering his youth

Yabut's passion for kites took off two years ago during a visit to a home improvement store. Looking at bamboo patio torches, he was reminded of his boyhood in the Philippines, where he played with kites fashioned from bamboo reeds and paper.

"I think everyone's got these wistful childhood memories of flying a kite and having fun with it, and a lot of people continue to do that throughout their entire lives," said David Gomberg, president of the American Kitefliers Association, which tracks world records.



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"There's a certain thrill you get from flying a kite until it's out of sight."

Yabut calls his work "bamboo tech," referring to the inexpensive garbage bags, cellophane, tape and braided string that hold his creations together. He doesn't use fiberglass and estimates it costs him \$2 to \$3 to make a kite. Most of them are about 4 or 5 square feet in surface area and can easily soar a mile, he said.

David Zavell, owner of the Oak Park store Chicago Kite, said kite flying is most popular in fall and spring and isn't age specific.

His store helps organize "Kids and Kites," which will be held May 6-7 at the Museum of Science and Industry.

"It's funny how adults get really into it," said Blythe Lopez-Modrowski, spokeswoman for the Mayor's Office of Special Events in Chicago. "Usually it's geared toward kids to make their own kites, but adults ... it's almost like they have free reign to become a kid again."

Joy of 'defying gravity'

What Yabut and other enthusiasts need are efficient fliers that get plenty of lift and little drag to keep air resistance away from the kite's string, said Charlie Sotich, 73, of Chicago's Southwest Side.

Sotich has been crafting kites the size of postage stamps for about 30 years.

"I enjoy the satisfaction of defying gravity, making something that can go," Sotich said. "Even my small kites, I say they soar in the air."

Yabut constantly works on perfecting his kites, a variety of the Filipino traditional gurion kite, which means "swallow." It takes Yabut about 10 to 15 hours to make one. He flies them in parks on weekends in nice weather, he said.

"What's exciting when he flies, you can see the birds and you can see the planes," said his wife, Olivia, 66. "You can see it all the way up there."

"It makes me feel like I have a pet bird on a string," Yabut said. "I feel so happy."

Yabut admits he isn't quite ready to go for the record. The string alone for a kite to reach 3 miles costs thousands, he said. The ideal kite would have a 15- to 20-foot wing span, said Yabut, a design engineer who works in Waukegan.

He will have to fashion a special reel to haul the kite back in. It takes him about an hour to reel in a kite from a mile high.

Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Elizabeth Isham Cory said Yabut also will have to take precautions to ensure he won't interfere with air traffic.

Yabut is looking forward to blustery spring weather and enjoying the feeling that he's high as a kite.

"It's when I fly them and they reach that height, it's like I'm attached to a higher being," he said.

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