



## Letter from the President

Three weeks ago, I called a special AKA Board meeting to discuss our plans for the upcoming Convention, October 11-16, 2021, in Ocean City. At that time the Board voted unanimously to move forward with our plans for 2021. In the last three weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic has surged across the country and many experts now project that it will peak during October. Last night we had another emergency Board meeting to discuss this and the Board voted unanimously to cancel the 2021 Convention and to postpone it to October 2022.

On behalf of the Board, I want to express our disappointment in needing to cancel our Convention for a second year in a row. This decision was not made lightly. Hundreds of volunteer hours have gone into preparation for this year's event, and we share the excitement many of you have expressed about being able to gather again. However, the current developments cannot be ignored. There are large cities, even whole states, that now report that they have no hospital beds available. The Board did not feel it was reasonable to risk spreading the virus to our community in such conditions.

This decision was based on the wellbeing of our members. It was made now to give our members as much time as possible to adjust their plans. Here are some key points regarding this decision which might affect you...

1. Everyone who has paid fees for the 2021 Convention is guaranteed 100% refund of money paid for registration, apparel and/or other items. Unless you specifically request otherwise (see item #2 and #3 below), a full refund will be paid to each registrant between August 23-31, 2021. If you paid by credit card, the credit will be issued to the same card. If you paid by check, you will receive a check. **If you want a full refund, there's nothing you have to do. It will come to you automatically.**
2. Some registrants have asked to have their registration fees converted into a donation to the AKA. As with most nonprofits, the AKA always welcomes donations. The Convention generates important revenue for our association and cancelling the event strains our budget. If you choose, you may convert all or some of your registration fee to a donation. For example, if you paid \$230 for early bird, you could ask for \$230 to become a donation, or you could ask for

\$100 to become a donation with \$130 refund, or any combination that you wish. If you wish to make part of your refund into a donation, contact Daniel in the AKA office 609-755-5483 or [xd@aka.kite.org](mailto:xd@aka.kite.org).

3. One other option regarding your registration fees, is that you can request that the fees be applied to your registration for the next AKA Convention. It is the goal of the AKA to hold the next Convention in Ocean City in October 2022, and at the same fee schedule as set for 2021. If there are changes, you would be advised accordingly and you would be able to request a full refund anytime up to August 1, 2022. Instead of asking for a refund for 2021, you can simply register now for 2022! If you're interested in this, contact Daniel in the AKA office 609-755-5483 or [xd@aka.kite.org](mailto:xd@aka.kite.org).
4. Per the Bylaws, the AKA is supposed to hold an Annual Business Meeting (ABM) with the members. The Board voted unanimously to hold the 2021 ABM via a teleconference call, the same as we did last year. **The ABM call will happen at the same time as previously published: October 12, 2021, at 7:00 p.m. (EDT).** The information on how to attend this call will be sent to active member email accounts 30 days prior to the meeting. It will also be posted on kite.org.
5. Per the Bylaws, there are certain elections that are to be held at the ABM. Since there won't be an in-person ABM, the Board voted unanimously to hold the 2021 elections by mail-in ballot, same as last year. Those ballots will be mailed no later than August 28, 2021.
6. As a reminder, the AKA does not have any control over your hotel reservations. Cancelling the AKA Convention does not cancel your hotel reservations. Please remember to deal with the hotel regarding your personal arrangements.

In closing, I'm very sorry that we won't be flying our kites together in Ocean City this October. I hope you and your family stay well, and that you may have the best breezes.

Phillip Whitaker  
President