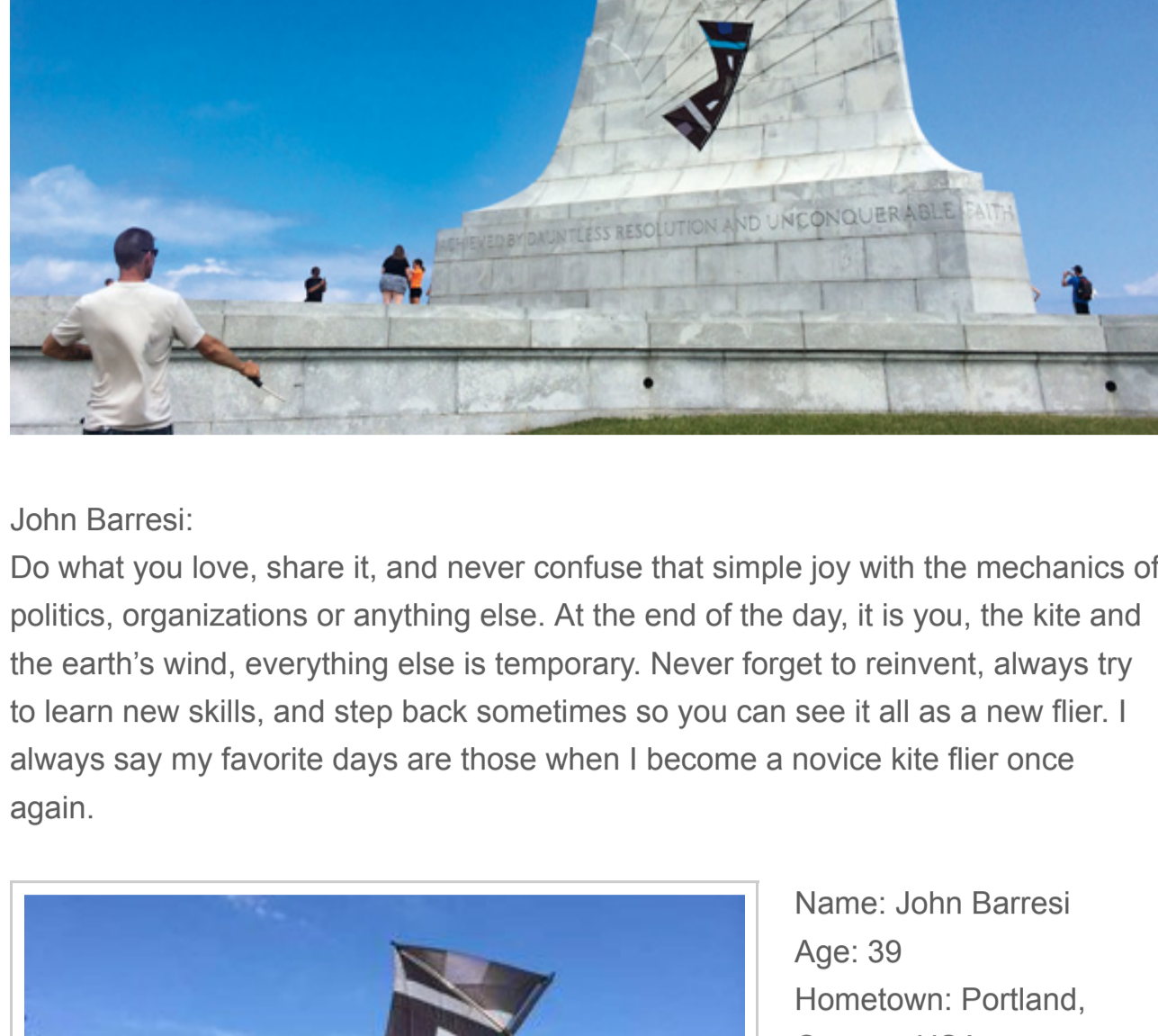
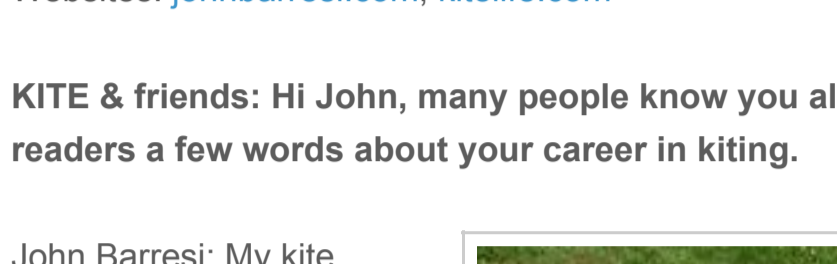


John Barresi interview

20. November 2015



John Barresi:
Do what you love, share it, and never confuse that simple joy with the mechanics of politics, organizations or anything else. At the end of the day, it is you, the kite and the earth's wind, everything else is temporary. Never forget to reinvent, always try to learn new skills, and step back sometimes so you can see it all as a new flier. I always say my favorite days are those when I become a novice kite flier once again.

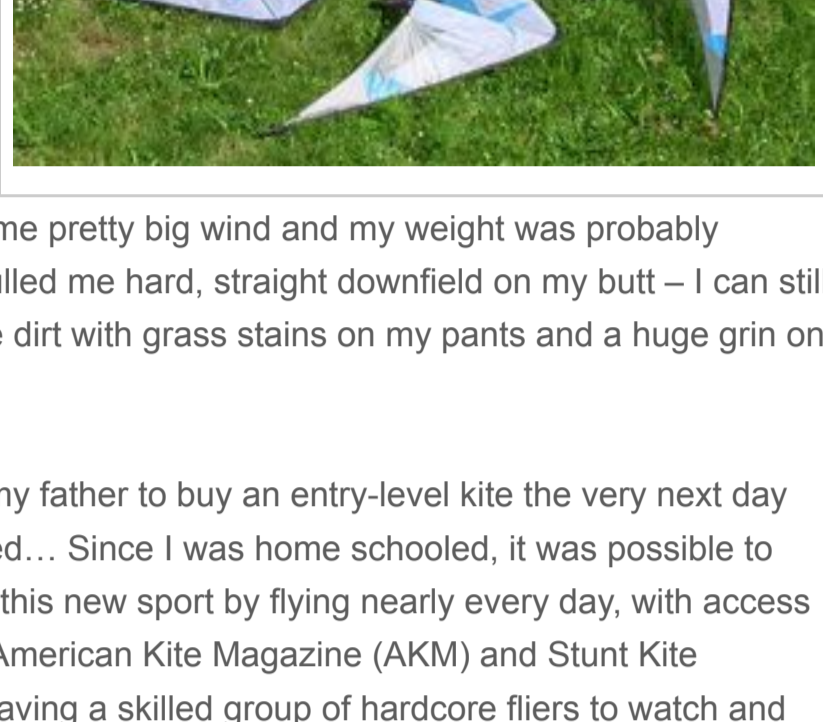


Name: John Barresi
Age: 39
Hometown: Portland, Oregon, USA
Profession: Kite performance and instruction
Titles: 26 US national championships in solo, pair, team, dual and quad
Sponsors: Revolution, The

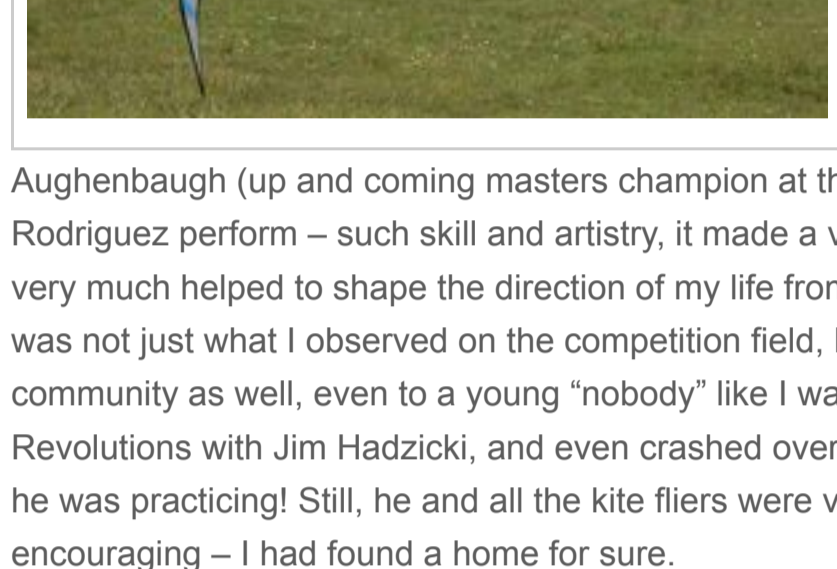
Kite Shoppe, KiteLife
Websites: johnbarresi.com, kitelife.com

KITE & friends: Hi John, many people know you already. But please offer our readers a few words about your career in kiting.

John Barresi: My kite journey began with dual lines, in August of 1990, when I saw someone flying a Top Of The Line Hawaiian Team Kite at the Marina Green in San Francisco. It was a really great first experience because although I was just 15 years old, the pilot actually let me try flying in some pretty big wind and my weight was probably around thirty-six kilos, so it pulled me hard, straight downfield on my butt – I can still remember getting up from the dirt with grass stains on my pants and a huge grin on my face!



Needless to say, I went with my father to buy an entry-level kite the very next day and that was it – totally hooked... Since I was home schooled, it was possible to dedicate quite a lot of time to this new sport by flying nearly every day, with access to excellent publications like American Kite Magazine (AKM) and Stunt Kite Quarterly (SKQ), as well as having a skilled group of hardcore fliers to watch and learn from at my local fields. Just a month later I attended my first kite festival (as a non-participant) and very much enjoyed seeing a number of skilled performances, as well as getting my first lesson on a Revolution kite.

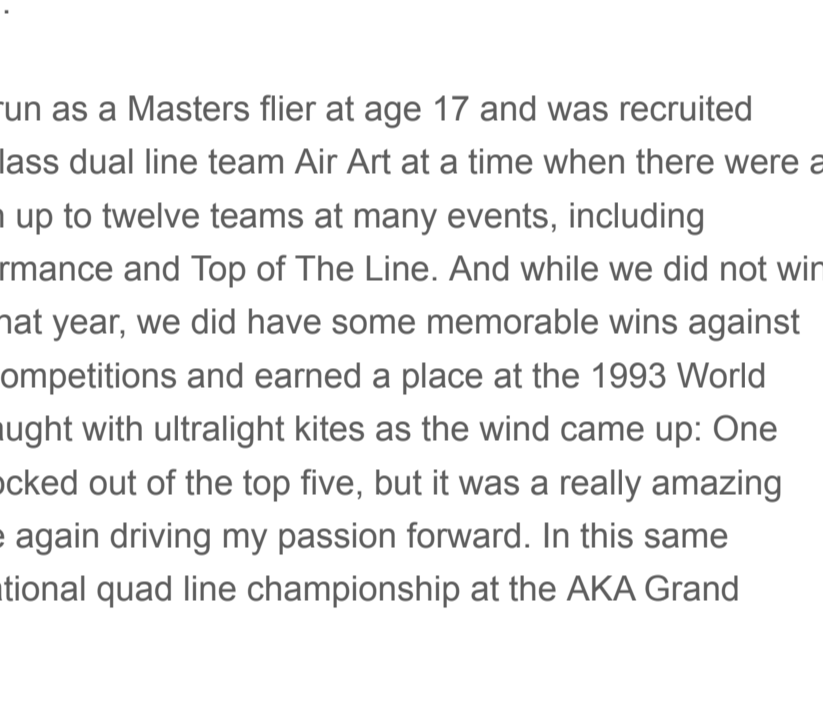


All of this cemented my passion for kiting, and I then attended the 1990 AKA Grand Nationals in Seaside Oregon as an unregistered spectator, to watch the top United States fliers competing for their end-of-year championships. I will never forget seeing Scott

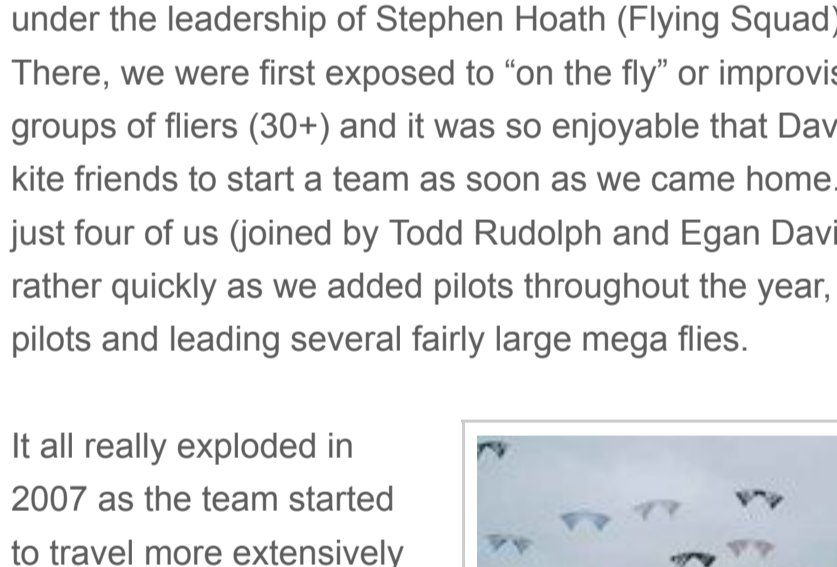
Aughenbaugh (up and coming masters champion at the time) and Miguel Rodriguez perform – such skill and artistry, it made a very strong impact on me and very much helped to shape the direction of my life from that point onward. And it was not just what I observed on the competition field, but the warmth of the community as well, even to a young "nobody" like I was at the time. I got to fly Revolutions with Jim Hadzicki, and even crashed over Aughenbaugh's lines while he was practicing! Still, he and all the kite fliers were very gracious and encouraging – I had found a home for sure.

I competed in three Experienced Class dual line competitions in 1991, with moderate success, and then started in the same class for 1992. This was a really big year for me at age 16, as my father drove me all over the United States to a total of fifteen regional and national competitions, which allowed me to take home the AKM National Circuit Championships in Experienced Individual Ballet and Precision (these two disciplines are divided here in the USA), Eastern League (east coast) Championships in the same categories (while living on the west coast), recognition by my peers as "AKM Rising Star" (like rookie of the year) – all the while spreading my wings and starting my experience with the Quad Line and Innovative competition categories, as well as playing with some pick-up (improv) pairs and teams along the way.

With the competition season restarting in the beginning of October, I entered my first Masters competition at Sandy Hook, New Jersey, and won first place in all three categories I entered (Ballet, Precision and Quad Line Ballet) against some of the best fliers in the country. It was quite an upset, coming straight from Experienced class and doing so well – very encouraging for me, and it proved to be just the start of things after only three years of flying.



In 1993, I started my first full run as a Masters flier at age 17 and was recruited mid-season by the Masters Class dual line team Air Art at a time when there were a lot of teams still in action, with up to twelve teams at many events, including legends like Team High Performance and Top of The Line. And while we did not win any national championships that year, we did have some memorable wins against big teams in regular season competitions and earned a place at the 1993 World Cup in Berkeley, only to be caught with ultralight kites as the wind came up: One broken wing and we were knocked out of the top five, but it was a really amazing and positive experience, once again driving my passion forward. In this same season, I also won my first national quad line championship at the AKA Grand Nationals.



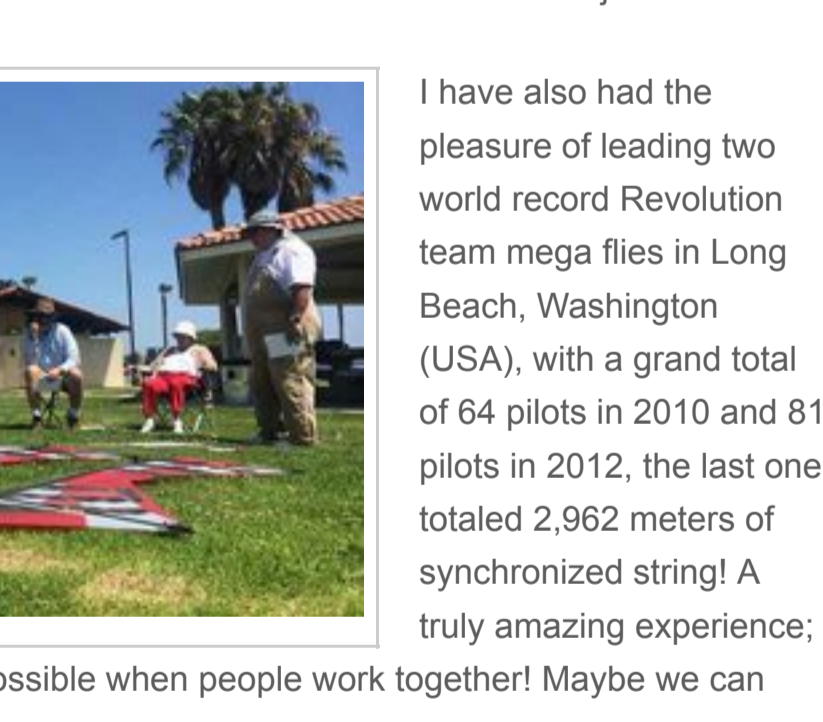
Afterward, I competed nearly every year (1994 to 1997, 2000 to 2010 and 2012 to 2013) and attended an average of 15 to 35 kite events per year with only an occasional break for personal reasons, for example when I moved hometowns or went through various

life changes. There were a great many successes and new experiences along the way.

iQuad and mega team flying

Probably one of the best known projects is my involvement with Revolution and Team iQuad. It all began when I went to judge at the 2006 WSKC with my friend David iQuad and experienced Revolution mega team flying for the first time, under the leadership of Stephen Hoath (Flying Squad) and Ben Howard (FLIC). There, we were first exposed to "on the fly" or improvised team calling for large groups of fliers (30+) and it was so enjoyable that David and I grabbed our nearest kite friends to start a team as soon as we came home. It started rather humbly with just four of us (joined by Todd Rudolph and Egan Davis) in April of 2006, but grew rather quickly as we added pilots throughout the year, ending up with a total of eight pilots and leading several fairly large mega flies.

It all really exploded in 2007 as the team started to travel more extensively together, teaching and sharing the fun of Rev team flying everywhere we could, and reached full speed by 2008 with a collection of twelve pilots all around North America that we could assemble in



groups of four, six, eight or ten, just as sponsorship and availability dictated. All the while, every show we did was still improvised (some of you may remember our Stairway to Heaven and Papa Was a Rolling Stone performances) with no pre-planned routines, totally made up on the fly with a rotating panel of fliers from event to event.

One of our goals was to "seed" our passion and experience with other fliers wherever we could. When we began, there was only one other small Rev team on our side of the world and only a handful of Rev fliers at most events, but by the time we retired the Rev team in 2013, we had attended over 125 events worldwide and helped establish Rev team flying as one of the most popular sport kite activities in North America, with several other teams in operation (some started by former iQuad members) and an abundance of active fliers at most of the major events.



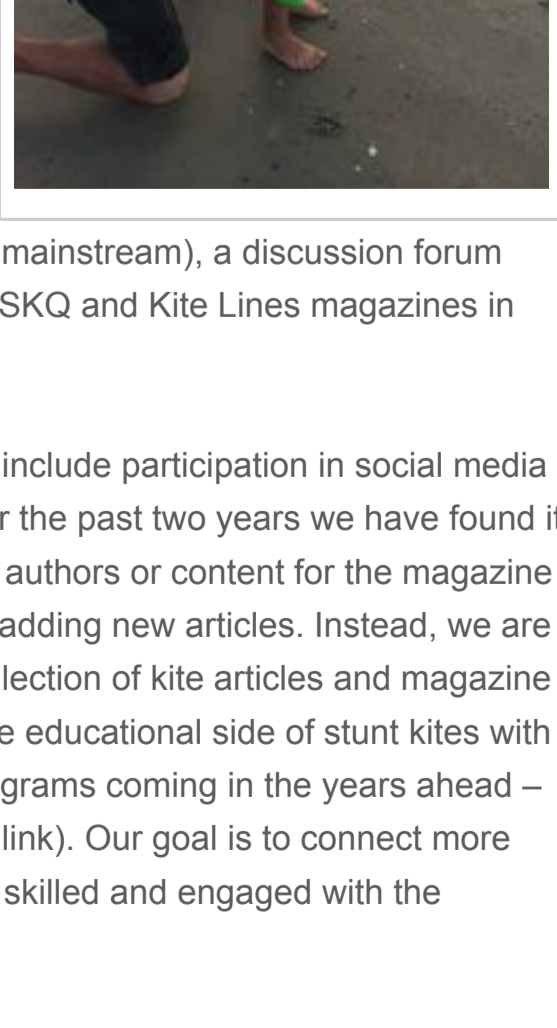
I have also had the pleasure of leading two world record Revolution team mega flies in Long Beach, Washington (USA), with a grand total of 64 pilots in 2010 and 81 pilots in 2012, the last one totaled 2,962 meters of synchronized string! A truly amazing experience; it is inspiring to see what is possible when people work together! Maybe we can see 100 pilots in Europe?

Revolution Kites In 2007, Revolution also approached me to use my experience toward developing the B-Series Revolution kite which has become one of the most popular controllable kites worldwide. Over the years, the B-Series platform has expanded into many models and variations. Additionally, I have also made a dual line design called the Kymera for Into The Wind Kites.

KiteLife

On another note: In 2001, I started a website project called Satori Kites that focused on gathering and publishing sport kite competitor biographies (individual, pairs and team) and photos online. By the end, it had nearly 150 bios from fliers all over the world and attracted a reasonable amount of interest from the competitive community. This led to my reconnection with an old teammate from Captain Eddie's Flying Circus, Mike Gillard, in 2002. With the demise of printed kite magazines like American Kite, Kite Lines and SKQ in the US, he had started an electronic magazine called KiteLife.com in 1998, with the interest of filling that gap, and it had found a good deal of success within the flying community. But as he became more involved with other projects (the new World Championships and the AKA's revitalized magazine), KiteLife had fallen by the wayside.

It was a simple start for me: Mike asked that I carry the project on as webmaster, so I did a few redesigns of the very simple pages (purely magazine style articles and images at the time) and worked to bring in some new content. Website technology was coming along very quickly at the time, and within the year I had a feeling, a vision in the back of my mind where I could take the project in the future and wanted to know I was building something for myself. So in 2003 he and I worked out the details for me to assume full ownership. From there, it was lots of hard work to build additional community resources around the online magazine, including a video archive of sport kite competition routines (before YouTube was mainstream), a discussion forum and an authorized, complete collection of both SKQ and Kite Lines magazines in pdf-format.



In recent years, I have expanded our format to include participation in social media and a growing collection of video tutorials. Over the past two years we have found it increasingly difficult to engage North American authors or content for the magazine and after much thought, we are now no longer adding new articles. Instead, we are keeping our archive healthy (still the largest collection of kite articles and magazine content online) and will be focusing more on the educational side of the stunt kites with many more video tutorials and instructional programs coming in the years ahead – keep an eye on this (learnkites.com is an easy link). Our goal is to connect more people with kiting and help fliers become more skilled and engaged with the international kiting community.

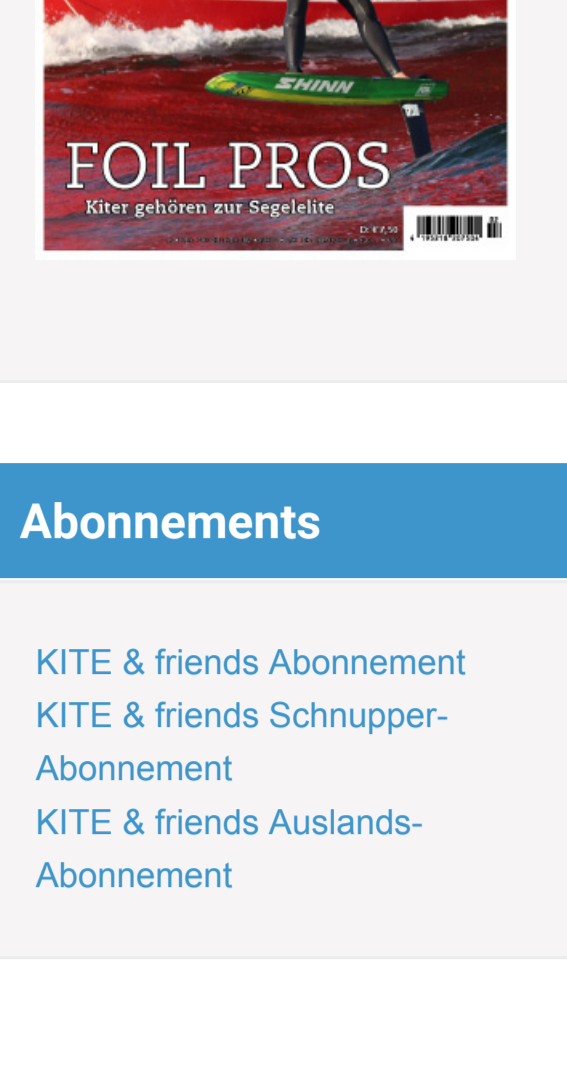
As of now, I have been flying actively for over 24 years and attended somewhere in the neighborhood of 500 kite events in 15 countries, with more on the horizon: Kiting is my deepest passion.

K&f: Would you like to bring a new kiting spirit to Europe as well?

JB: Of course! I want to fly anywhere and everywhere, with everyone, both to teach and to learn. The challenge are the travel expenses, particularly when you have chosen to pursue your passion instead of material success. Full time kite flying and promotion is a thin business, but I am always open to invitations and as anyone who has seen me at an event can tell you: I fly my butt off and share my knowledge freely.

Online tip: You can find out more about John Barresi and his biography here: www.johnbarresi.com

Aktuelle Ausgabe



Abonnements

- KITE & friends Abonnement
- KITE & friends Schnupper-Abonnement
- KITE & friends Auslands-Abonnement