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She saw it on the face of her son Connor, who took up the sport as a way to cope with epilepsy. He advanced to the top 12 on the 2010 season of “America’s Got Talent,” thanks to a four-line kite. Now, Doran is excited whenever she see others wearing a similar expression of captivation.

“It’s pure joy,” she said.

The Windless Kite Festival features two days of indoor competition, performances, demonstrations and other activities that take place at the Long Beach Elementary School gymnasium. No fans are used to mimic wind. The kites swoop and glide in the air, propelled by the mere movement of the flyer.

The kiting community

The event is open to kite-flyers of any skill level. Creating a lightweight kite capable of flying indoors is as simple and cost-efficient as putting together dowels and a garbage bag with scotch tape.

“You don’t have to go spend hundreds of dollars on a kite to go out and have a good time,” said Jane Holeman, who sits on the museum’s board of directors.

In fact, at 9 a.m. Saturday, King will lead a workshop on making garbage bag kites. The workshop, which is limited to 25 participants, costs \$5 per person. Proceeds go to the World Kite Museum, the event’s main sponsor. In King’s view, the workshop gives people an idea of what they are capable of creating and the privilege of using a kite they designed themselves.

“That’s when you see a whole bunch of ‘kite smiles’ on those new flyers,” she said.

Performances will start



Don Ostey

Jerry Cannon approaches indoor kite-flying with flair at a past Windless Kite Festival in Long Beach, Wash. The annual two-day event features workshops, demonstrations, competitions and other kite-flying fun.



Amy Doran/Submitted by ConnorDoran.com

Connor Doran performs indoor kite-flying at a school in Milwaukie. He has been flying for about 10 years and competed on the 2010 season of “America’s Got Talent” with a four-line kite.

Saturday afternoon and continue Sunday. New England kite artist and educator Glenn Davison is the featured flyer. Davison will also host a workshop on designing miniature kites, small enough to fit in the palm of a hand.

Four years ago, Doran introduced a Pro/Am event designed to get new people involved in the activity, or “build up” the kiting community. Newbies who sign up for the Pro/Am Saturday morning will be paired with a profes-



Doug Isherwood

Glenn Davison is the featured performer at this year’s Windless Kite Festival in Long Beach, Wash. He also will be leading a workshop on how to create miniature kites.

sional. They get a designated time to practice their routine together on Sunday. Novices can be of any age and the routines are built around their abilities. If they don’t own a kite, the



Don Ostey

Amy Doran dresses as Charlie Chaplain to perform an indoor kite-flying routine at the Windless Kite Festival in Long Beach, Wash. She has been flying for about 15 years and helps organize and run the festival, sponsored by The World Kite Museum and The Kite Shoppe.

festival provides one.

“It works very well, because we are bringing in

IF YOU GO

Windless Kite Festival

When: 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 26, and 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 27

Where: Long Beach Elementary School Gymnasium, Washington and Fourth St. South, Long Beach, Wash.

Cost: Admission is donation-based; proceeds go to the World Kite Museum.

For more information: Visit the Windless Kite Festival Long Beach Facebook page, or call the World Kite Museum at 360-642-4020.

new people,” Doran said.

Benefits all around

The competitions are divided by various skill levels, as well as types of kite, to accommodate a wide range of flyers. Through two of the classes, competitors can qualify for the 2019 American Kite Association grand championships in Seaside.

The organizers often don’t know who will compete until the day of the event, but competitors come from across the Pacific Northwest and even out of the country. Holeman described the judging criteria as similar to that of ice-skating. Competitors have “compulsory figures they have to do, but they can work their routines around those,” she said. Otherwise, routines can involve a variety of costumes, music and additional special effects, like lights, to the delight of the spectators.

“There are benefits all around,” Doran said. “You don’t have to necessarily be flying to feel the benefits of the flying. It’s a performance art.” **GW**