

# ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

HOLIDAY 2007

## Presidential Musings

Tom Cummings,  
RMOWP President

Well, here it is a week or so before Christmas. Where did 2007 go? It seems just a short time ago that we were all worried to some degree or another about the year 2000 and what it would do to our computers. I know of a family that stored several months of supplies convinced everything would come to a standstill. It didn't come to a standstill but I swear instead, it sped time and life up.

Do you realize that within a month or so Maryann and Frank will be calling for our entries in our photography and writing contests? Have your entries ready yet?

We in Oklahoma are just coming out of the worst ice storm that anyone can remember. Two-plus inches of ice took down power lines and trees like they were plastic. At one time we had 600,000 homes/businesses without power and even after a week since the storm, many will be without power for another week. My 40-foot oak trees are now 30 feet. The trees in town look like they've been topped and stripped by a tornado. Why didn't I get out, look for and photograph that winning entry for the contest's Events category? Well, I was busy trying to catch up on things I needed to get out 30-40 days ago, doing some Christmas shopping and just didn't think about the Events category. We were fortunate that we only lost power for a couple of hours but we were without cable TV and Internet for several days. I lost several pounds during that time. How do you expect a person to eat without having the TV on? Things got so drastic that I came within a few hours of having to start talking to Lynda when the cable was finally reconnected. But too busy to photograph? What is wrong with me?

But that seems to be the way our world has become. We seem to be always on a dead run from one obligation to the next. I belong to the local Lions Club and it is extremely difficult to recruit new members even though we are the most active, well known civic organization in town. Most beg off citing packed schedules due to family obligations of children's sports, music lessons, or school activities that leaves very little time in their daily

### ATTENTION!

Included with this newsletter you'll also find important information about the **2008 Writing & Photography Contest** plus the **2007-2008 Membership Directory**.

schedules other than shuttling kids. And older adults are already involved in a number of other charitable volunteer activities. Any of this sound familiar?

These are the obstacles that can and will impact our organization. RMOWP will only be as strong as the quality of our members **and** their involvement in our organization. We have been very fortunate to have a core of quality members these past 5-7 years that have stepped up and



© Tom Cummings

Tom Cummings discovers beauty in a devastating ice storm.



## Rocky Mountain Outdoors

Published bi-monthly by  
Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc.

Editor: Don Laine

Send editorial materials to Don Laine, [laine@newmex.com](mailto:laine@newmex.com); PO Box 1200, El Prado, NM 87529; 505-758-8922.

Deadline for newsletter submissions is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding month of publication. Newsletters are published:

Jan/Feb	Mar/Apr	May/June
July/Aug	Sep/Oct	Nov/Dec

Copyright © 2007 by Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the author or editor.

### Officers

President, Tom Cummings, Cushing, OK  
Vice President, Maryann Gaug,  
Silverthorne, CO  
Secretary, Betty Minor, Golden, CO  
Treasurer, Lee Carr, Cedaredge, CO

### Board of Directors

Becky Minor, Golden, CO (2008)  
Jack Olson, Denver, CO (2008)  
Cecilia Travis, Golden, CO (2009)  
Jim Blakeslee, Cody, WY (2009)  
Richard Holmes, Boulder, CO (2010)  
Joe Zinn, Monte Vista, CO (2010)  
Jim Baker, Stillwater, OK (2009)

### Communications Director

Don Laine, El Prado, NM

### Awards Co-Chairs

Maryann Gaug, Silverthorne, CO  
Frank Zurey, Golden, CO.

### Conference Committee

Don Laine, El Prado, NM  
Jack Olson, Denver, CO  
Cecilia Travis, Golden, CO

### Photo Workshop

Coordinator:  
Nic Showalter, Villa Grove, IL  
Instructors:  
Jack Olson, Denver, CO  
Tom Ulrich, West Glacier, MT

### Scholarship Committee

Mike Hammond, Lubbock, TX  
Ruth Raupe, Orlando, OK

### Past-Presidents' Council

Jim Baker, Stillwater, OK  
Barb Laine, El Prado, NM  
Lee Carr, Cedaredge, CO  
John Catsis, Chandler, AZ  
Kelly Gatlin, Datil, NM  
Beto Gutierrez, Edinburg, TX  
Jack Olson, Denver, CO  
Dusty Fullinwider, South Fork, CO

### Webmaster

Barb Laine, El Prado, NM

### Supporting Member Liaison

open

### Medical Advisor

A.H. "Beto" Gutierrez, MD, Edinburg, TX

[www.rmowp.org](http://www.rmowp.org)



© Jon Sheppard

Jon Sheppard finds a friend in Wyoming.

willingly given of their time and resources to RMOWP and hopefully they will continue. But, there comes a time when those volunteers will ask to take a breather.

When elected to be your president, I felt we should obtain another member to take over my role as photo workshop coordinator, and Nic Showalter stepped forward. I am extremely confident that Nic will lead and move the workshop to higher levels of success. We may be a small organization but we do have a photography workshop that is one of the best available. And as other opportunities arise, we will need more of you to rise to the challenge.

So, I implore each of you – if you have been active in RMOWP, please continue. We need your experience and wisdom. If you haven't yet been

active, we need your new ideas and energy to help us grow our organization. I don't believe you can just maintain – you either grow or you retreat. I encourage you to enter our photography and writing contests.

Plan now on attending the conference this year in Estes Park, CO. What a wonderful group of individuals we have in our organization. Come and join us this year. The conference is only 8 days or so before our photo workshop and maybe you can even tie the two together. Individual opportunities will continue to present themselves and I ask that you give each of them your serious consideration. With your help and involvement, RMOWP will continue to be an outstanding organization..... one that you helped build.



# The Art & Craft of Nature Writing

By Mary Taylor Young

(Nature writer Mary Taylor Young presented a program on nature writing at the 2007 RMOWP conference, and at the request of attendees we asked Ms. Young if we could publish the outline for her talk, and she agreed - ed.)

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE – What are they expecting?

natural history

narrative nonfiction

articles and books

fiction – landscape can be a “character” in fiction, particularly in the West

FIND A UNIVERSAL THEME

We can find infinite universal themes in nature that connect our audiences to our writing because people are inherently connected to the natural world.

MAKE USE OF STORY

It’s a challenge to describe natural history without lecturing. Make use of story. Think *Into Thin Air* by Jon Krakauer.

USE OF METAPHOR

Metaphor = “A figure of speech in which one thing is likened to another, different thing by being spoken of as if it were that other.” – Webster’s Dictionary.

Nature is frequently used as a metaphor for human nature or the events of life—a bear emerging from hibernation may symbolize rebirth, resurrection, spiritual awakening.

CREATIVE WORD CHOICE

Description is the framework of imagery. There is an art to writing description. Use clear nouns and dynamic verbs first, and avoid over-reliance on adjectives and adverbs

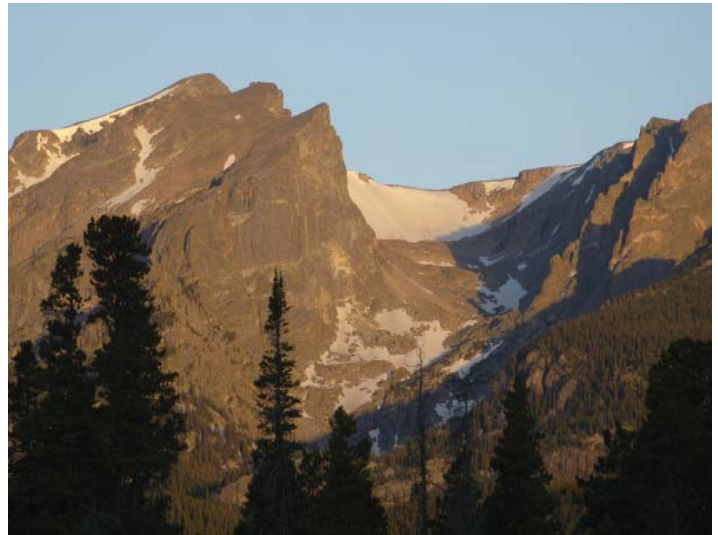
STRONG VERBS

Verbs, not adjectives or adverbs, do the work in a sentence. Choose the best and strongest verb, not the most familiar.

CREATING IMAGERY – most important of all!

The nature writer uses **imagery** to convey to the reader the beauty of a scene and the depth of the emotion it inspires. The techniques that make nature writing vivid can enliven any writing—fiction or nonfiction—drawing readers into a scene and making the action more real. You want to create a vivid image in the minds of your reader by using rich, full-blown descriptions that evoke feeling—a sense of connection, familiarity, sentimentality, disgust, memory or nostalgia, joy, sadness, amusement. I ask myself - What are the components of a scene that made me feel a certain way?

---



© Jack Olson

Sunrise on the Continental Divide in Rocky Mountain National Park.

## So What’s Happening at the 2008 RMOWP Conference ?

The 35th annual conference of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers takes place June 8-12, 2008 in Rocky Mountain National Park, with conference headquarters in Estes Park, Colorado, at the eastern entrance to the park.

Conference program details have not been finalized, but organizers hope to get a tentative schedule put together soon. There will probably be at least two trips into Rocky Mountain National Park, including a journey to the high country and a sunrise photo shoot. A trip to a new and practically unknown local park is also planned, along with craft improvement workshops for both photographers and writers.

Headquarters will be the Estes Park Rodeway Inn, 1701 N. Lake Ave., and the special rate for conference attendees is \$88 per night (one or two people). Rooms have either one king bed or two queens, refrigerators, and microwaves. Rates include a continental breakfast and pets are accepted with a fee and prior notification. We will be using the Rodeway’s meeting rooms and having a number of group meals there as well. For reservations, call the Rodeway Inn at 800-458-1182 or 970-586-5363, and be sure to identify yourself as a member of RMOWP to get the special conference rate.

---

## Colorado's 5 Best Wildflower Hikes (Part 2)

Jack Olson

Here are the last two of Colorado's Five Best Wildflower Hikes. They're all within a hundred miles of Denver and are day trips from the Mile High City. Save this column, along with Part 1, which ran in the Sept.-Oct. RMOWP newsletter, for next summer, or your next trip to Colorado.

These hikes cover elevations from 10,100 to 12,500 feet. Some people have difficulty exerting at these heights, so take care. Take food, water, and proper clothing for possible cold or rain. Check forecasts and watch the sky. Don't get caught on a long ridge or other high location when storms threaten. Be prepared for exhilaration!

### Boreas Pass

Here's an area to hike in late July or early August. Trails here are a misnomer; they're more like paths of various distinction. There's a national forest visitor center on top of the pass and they may give you some ideas. I'll tell you my favorite path, chosen partly because a recent hip replacement makes a steeper, more direct, path in the woods trickier for someone whose balance is in question. As you walk toward the visitor center (an old log depot), you'll see a wide path to the left. Follow this path and soon you'll come upon a ditch. Stay to the left side and begin to encounter fields of Indian paintbrush and, in August, fireweed.

The path runs more or less straight north, over rocks, through tall chiming bells and other wildflowers measured in feet, and beneath overhanging pine boughs. When you get to open meadows, cross the ditch at an appropriate spot and build your own hike. There are no trails in this area. I suggest you bear to the left for a while, to stay away from larger streams to cross. Eventually you could end up at Black Powder Pass, above and ahead of you to the east. But you may never make it past the tall, bright yellow balsamroot, carpets of lavender asters, and Indian paintbrush of most colors on the palette. Bring lunch. You'll want to linger here.

*To get to Boreas Pass*, from Denver take Interstate 70 west to Exit 203, Colorado 9, Frisco and Breckenridge. Drive through Frisco and continue on Colorado 9 to Breckenridge. Turn left at the last stoplight at the far south end of Breckenridge. The Boreas Pass Road is paved for a while and then becomes dirt. It's slow, but fine for a car. Drive to the top of the pass and park in the large parking area.



© Jack Olson

Balsamroot with a ladybug on Boreas Pass.

### French Creek

This is an unknown jewel. Shhhh! Keep it quiet. It's in South Park, inspiration for a notorious cartoon TV show. From where you park, there is no noticeable trail sign, but on the west side of the road you'll spot a brown pole with the Forest Service symbols for what is allowed on the trail. There's a short walk and then an official sign proclaiming the French Pass Trail.

This trail just gets better and better as the hike progresses. If you're alert, you may spy some shy wood nymphs on an embankment. Late in the season, there could be a magnificent display of multicolored mushrooms in the woods. But the most impressive location on this trail comes after you cross the creek at about two miles in. You soon break into meadows carpeted with asters and about every yellow wildflower that grows up high, especially the balsamroot.

I've only been in about three miles on my two hikes on this new trail for me. The pass is about another mile up, around 12,000 feet elevation. French Creek can be enjoyed for several months, but the wildflowers will peak in mid-July to mid-August.

*To get to French Creek*, take U.S. 285 southwest from Denver. Drive over Kenosha Pass and in a few miles reach the small settlement of Jefferson. Take a right on 35 Road, with a sign for Jefferson Lake and Michigan Creek. Drive about four miles on pavement and then continue straight on gravel, passing the road into Jefferson Lake. Continue



about two miles and take the first right onto 54 Road. Drive several miles and pass a sign for Michigan Creek Campground on the left. Drive two and a quarter more miles and park in the open area on either side of the road.



© Jack Olson

Fields of arrowleaf balsamroot along the French Creek hike.

---

## Shoot with the Pros at RMOWP Photo Workshop

Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers offers an outstanding opportunity for people wishing to improve their skills in scenic and wildlife photography with its annual scenic and wildlife photography workshop. Award-winning pros reveal their secrets for obtaining exciting photos under all conditions during the five-day workshop, held in spectacular Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado.

The 2008 workshop will be June 24-28. Cost for the workshop is \$795, which includes all instruction, daily transportation, park admission fees, and one year's membership in Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers. See [www.rmowp.org](http://www.rmowp.org) for additional information or e-mail workshop coordinator Nic Showalter: [photoworkshop@rmowp.org](mailto:photoworkshop@rmowp.org).

---

## Member News

Browse through the pages of the December issue of *New Mexico Magazine* and you'll see a half-page photo of a snow-covered house, all decked out with holiday lights. The shot is by RMOWP member **Kelly Gatlin** of Datil, New Mexico, and Kelly, that house looks awfully familiar – isn't it yours? From Tucson we hear that **Lee Allen** has a new project. Lee's writing a monthly feature - Outdoor Observations - for *Inside Tucson Business* magazine that he says covers a wide range of outdoor subjects, from hard-

core hunting, fishing, and four-wheeling to lighter pastimes such as outdoor photography, panning for gold, hiking, and kayaking.

RMOWP has recently acquired several new members. These include **Dan McGrew** of Littleton, Colorado, a self-described photographer and web designer who is also interested in art, music, and shooting events. You can see a bit of Dan's work on his website, [www.danmcgrew.com](http://www.danmcgrew.com). And while you're wandering the Internet, check out [www.justfishingguides.com](http://www.justfishingguides.com), the website of another new member, fishing guide and photographer **Ken Richards** of Bentonville, Arkansas.

From Wellington, Colorado, **Rick Lesquier** tells us he is an avid hunter, fisherman, outdoorsman, and photographer who spends as much of his free time as possible in the field. He says he always carries a camera on these jaunts, and is looking forward to getting into northern Colorado's high country to photograph moose.

Writer, photographer, lecturer, and website developer **Fred Zeglin** of Casper, Wyoming, recently joined RMOWP. Gunsmithing custom rifles and creating custom knives are among Fred's talents, and you can see what he does on his websites - [www.z-hat.com](http://www.z-hat.com) and [4-dproducts.com](http://4-dproducts.com). Fred teaches a NRA gunsmithing course and has written a number of articles. His book, *Wildcat Cartridges*, was published in 2005, and he's working on another.



© Jon Sheppard

Maroon Bells, Colorado.

## Fellowships Available at National Parks

The National Park Service has announced that a fellowship is available for a graduate student internship at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. Sponsored by the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, the Bailey Fellowship provides for a graduate level student to spend three to four months conducting research in the park. Park housing, a stipend of \$5,000, and up to \$3,000 for expenses related to research are provided to one fellowship recipient each year.

Applicants propose a research project in areas such as wildlife management, vegetation and riparian studies, fire, cultural sciences, archeology, the preservation of historic structures, and geology. Information is available from the Rocky Mountain Nature Association, [www.rmna.org](http://www.rmna.org), and the deadline for applications is February 1.

The Rocky Mountains Cooperative Ecosystems Studies Unit (RM-CESU) has announced that applications are being accepted for student fellowships for natural resource management, cultural resource management, and social science research in Glacier National Park, Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site, and Little Bighorn Battlefield National Historic Site.



© Jack Olson

The Big Thompson River in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Applicants for the Jerry O'Neal student fellowship program should be graduate or superior upper-level undergraduates at RM-CESU facilities, which include colleges and universities in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, Washington, and the University of Calgary.

Fellowships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per project and may include housing if available. Information is available at the University of Montana's College of Forestry and Conservation, [www.cfc.umt.edu](http://www.cfc.umt.edu), and applications are due by February 15.

---

### *ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS*

Don Laine, Editor  
PO Box 1200  
El Prado, NM 87529