

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2008

Zion National Park in 2009

The **2009 conference** of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers & Photographers will take place in Zion National Park in southwestern Utah from March 25 to 29. The conference is scheduled in March - much

earlier than usual - to beat the heat and crowds, and also because we were offered an excellent rate at Zion Lodge, the only accommodations actually within the park.

Conference attendees will pay \$75 plus tax per night for motel rooms, \$85 plus tax per night for cabins, and \$125 plus tax per night for suites, and these rates will be honored for a few days before or after the conference (through March 31 only) for those who want to spend additional time in the park. Room and cabin rates would be more than double if we chose to go after April 1.

The lodge has four handicap accessible rooms (two with

roll-in showers), an excellent restaurant, an auditorium, and a gift shop. All units are non-smoking and have phones but no televisions.



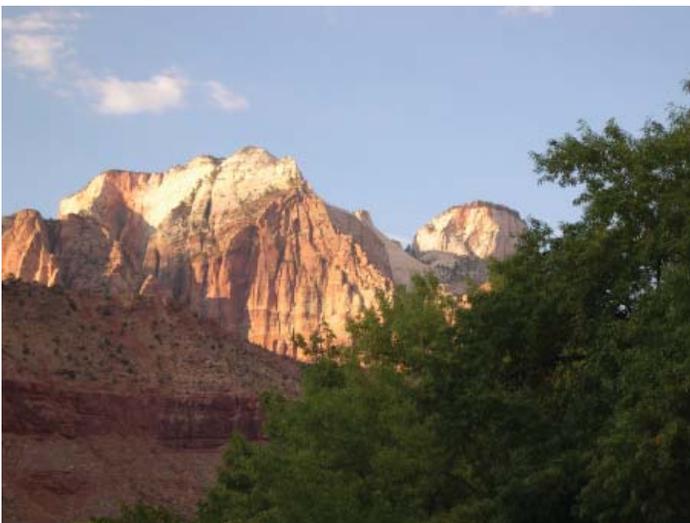
Angels Landing
Zion Canyon, Zion National Park

(c) Jack Olson

Zion National Park, which celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2009, varies in elevation from 3,666 feet to 8,726 feet, and Zion Lodge rests at about 4,000 feet. In late March be prepared for nights dropping into the upper 30s and daytime highs in the upper 60s, with the possibility of rain or light snow.

Conference registration forms, the tentative schedule, and additional information will be sent out by early December, with registration due by the 25th. In the meantime check out www.nps.gov/zion and www.zionlodge.com.

Closest airports are in Las Vegas, NV and St. George, UT.



(c) Barb Laine

Don & I spent 4 days at Zion National Park looking at lodgings and meeting rooms. The highlight of our stay was relaxing each evening watching the changing light play on the massive rock walls of Zion Canyon. This is one of the stunning sunset views we enjoyed from our campsite in Watchman Campground.

EARLY DEADLINES for Conference and Contest!!!

December 25, 2008 - yes, that's
Christmas Day.

So send in your registration forms &
contest entries before you get down to
that last minute shopping.

Details will be in the Holiday issue
of the newsletter.

And online at www.rmowp.org.



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Lost Socks

Story & photo by
Richard Holmes

The season was nearly two weeks late this year. Alpine wildflowers refused to open on schedule. But open they did, bursting forth in an explosion of color late in July.

So with camera and tripod I drove with a friend to Shrine Pass, about two hours west of Denver at nearly 11,000 feet. We began the gentle two-mile hike to Shrine Ridge at mid-day, counting on afternoon clouds to give us varying light conditions.

Jack Olson, in a previous newslet-

flowers kept changing as we walked. The air smelled clean and the weather was crisp.

The trail steepened as we approached the ridge, a long band of winter snow cornice remaining. Crossing the snow to the ridge a panorama of western Colorado unfolded, Mount of the Holy Cross prominent in the distance. Time to sit down for a late afternoon lunch break.

As we had hoped the weather began changing once we headed back down. Clouds moved in, the light became softer, and we re-photographed some of the same subjects under different lighting conditions.



Alpine Wildflowers

ter, had written this was one of his favorite places to photograph wildflowers. After a couple hundred yards I could see why. The photo opportunities along the trail were endless. Such a variety of compositions—flower fields, rock outcrops, flowers clustered around decaying stumps, meadows, small streams, close-ups, and distant scenics. We stopped often to photograph on the way up. The variety of

As we neared the trailhead the sky was almost black and lightning crisscrossed the peaks in the distance. It was a dramatic backdrop for scenics. We were really overwhelmed with the beauty of the experience.

Upon reaching the car I realized I was missing my socks. I don't usually take my boots off while hiking, and seldom my socks. I didn't find them

in my pack. Then while putting away my gear I remembered something Jack Olson had said—that the flowers along Shrine Ridge Trail will knock your socks off.

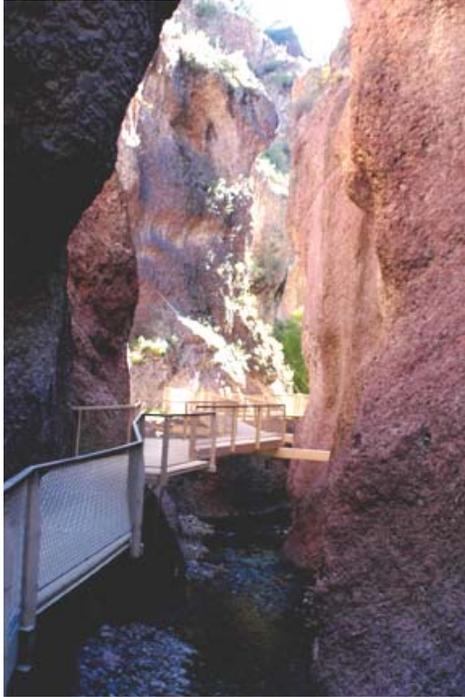
I'm hoping to find them when I return next summer.

(Ed. Note: The referenced newsletter is the September-October 2007 issue, Jack's Jaunts.)

NMOWP Conference just around the corner

Story & photos by John Catsis

Members of the New Mexico Outdoor Writers and Photographers organization will meet in Silver City the weekend of October 24-26, 2008, according to conference co-chair and RMOWP member John Catsis.



Catwalk at Whitewater Creek

He and wife Connie are planning an "exciting and educational conference" in what is fast becoming one of the more popular areas of New Mexico to visit and live. "We picked those dates because they should be at the height of fall colors," John said.

"Silver City is one of the most culturally diverse cities in the Southwest," he continued. "It's got 30 art galleries, a four-year univer-

sity, and an historic downtown that celebrates its rich and often-bloody past."

Geronimo roamed the area, Buffalo Soldiers protected settlers, and Billy the Kid became irascible here as a teenager.

"We will have speakers on writing, photography, and history," John said. Former Bay Area newspaper writer Jim Kelly will discuss humor writing, while professional photographer George Austin will examine the 12 major elements of winning photos. Former professor Luis Perez will take us back to the days when the Butterfield Stage came through the area.

Members will visit one of the largest llama rescue operations in America. The next day they will tour the dramatic Catwalk at Whitewater Creek where miners tamed a narrow canyon to bring ore down to a smelter. They will also tour and learn about the famous ghost town of Mogollon, which has been featured in half-a-dozen Hollywood movies.

All members of RMOWP are welcome to attend the conference, and to join NMOWP, regardless of where they live in America. The New Mexico group is one of the few state outdoor writers and photographers organizations that continues to thrive in America.

For a mailing that contains complete information on the conference, contact John at 575-534-3910 or at johncatsis@hotmail.com.



Silver City, New Mexico has all the modern amenities.

Writers Needed

Rocky Mountain Game & Fish magazine is looking for hunting and fishing writers from the Rocky Mountain states, according to editor John Geiger. He said that he especially needs writers/photographers from Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Pay for articles is usually in the \$150 to \$300 range and photos can boost the package total to \$250 to \$425. Those interested can contact Geiger in Marietta, Georgia, at 678-589-2039 or John.Geiger@IMOutdoors.com.

Musings on the 2008 Conference...

Anne Sullivan

NO NEED TO WONDER

-- if the weather's going to be at its absolute worst for Jack Olson's Early Morning Photo Shoot...

It is.

-- if you're going to get enough to eat at the RMOWP Conference...

You will and you did. Enough for four years. And good, too.

-- if Tom Cummings is going to tell the worst joke you ever heard...

He just did.

-- who's going to beat RMOWP photogs at great nature photos...

No one.

-- if MaryAnn Gaug's stuffed animals are coming to the conference in her knapsack...

How else would they travel?

-- if you're going to meet a bunch of wonderful new members at the conference...

You are, top bananas all.

-- if there are more at home to add to the major number of Minors attending conferences these days...

We certainly hope so.

-- who has the most beautifully furnished guest diggings in New Mexico...

Connie Catsis, and I want to reserve her tent.

-- if Hawaiian shirts are de rigeur for the banquet...

Fashion follows Don Laine.

-- if RMOWP is ever going to get some younger and more active members...

We have, thank you for joining.

-- if Angelo Sciulli's collection of humorous photos is going to make you bust your sides laughing...

Wide open.

-- if it's going to be windy for any outdoor meals...

Any and all.

-- if you're going to learn something at the conference...

Yes, unless you're dead or asleep.

-- who John Catsis is going to insult at the auction...

Everyone.

-- who's going to take home the most stuffed animals, books and odd bulky etceteras from the conference...

C'est moi.

-- if Barb, Don, Jack and Cecilia are going to surpass their previous reputation for putting on superb conferences...

They did and I bet they will next year. Go team!

Jack's Jaunts

Heritage & Surprises

Story & photos by Jack Olson

I recently visited southeastern Colorado with a whole new set of eyes. Whoa! Southeastern? You bet. I've been coming down here for years, gotten to know the communities, quite a few people, and sites along the main highways. And those are great. But there's so much more, and now there's an organization and information to help you get a handle on it.

Perhaps the most well-known site for visitors to southeastern Colorado is Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site, administered by the National Park Service. Bent's Fort, primarily a trading post along the Santa Fe Trail, flourished in the 1830s and '40s. At the time, the Arkansas River, along which it stood, was the Mexican border. The fort was eventually abandoned and over the next century plus, wore down to very low walls, not as high as your knees. But drawings of the fort's configuration were located and the fort was rebuilt, exactly as it had looked before, in time for the nation's bicentennial. The fort is not to be missed, and interpreters are on site. For more information, go to: www.nps.gov/beol, or call 719-383-5010. A colorful event is held annually at Bent's Old Fort, the Fur Trade Encampment, where living history depictions of traders, trappers, and tribes take place. This year's Encampment is scheduled for



Bent's Old Fort National Historic Site

October 11-12.

Southeast Colorado's heritage is Colorado's heritage. Ancient civilizations lived here and left pictures of their lives on the rocks. They were followed by native tribes. The Santa Fe Trail traversed the region. Pioneers, farmers, and ranchers gave the area its identity. Like much of the Great Plains, the region endured the Dust Bowl years of the 1930s. A self guided tour of WPA structures built during this period, to give people productive work, is available to visitors.

Museums of history and culture are located in many of southeastern Colorado's communities. Just one example is the widely-known Koshare Indian Museum in La Junta. Outstanding art and artifacts are displayed, and the Koshare Indian Dancers schedule performances throughout the year. Kit Carson seems to have gotten around a lot in these parts, and his last home has been restored just a couple of miles south of Las Animas on Colorado 101. The Boggsville National Historic District includes two homes you can visit on a self-guided tour, and a bookstore. There's also a Santa Fe Trail marker near the Purgatoire River.

In one of Colorado's saddest chapters in history, in November 1864 a Colorado militia attacked a peaceful camp of Cheyenne and Arapaho and killed some 160 individuals, mostly women and children. This sorrowful killing field is memorialized at the new Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site. The National Park Service has rangers on site, a trail to an overlook above the site, and interpretive signs. For more information, go to: www.nps.gov/sand, or call 719-438-5916.

Think this prairie is all flat? Nope. There are canyons abounding in the Comanche National Grassland, and they can be explored. I visited Vogel Canyon, south of La Junta, and had a wonderful short hike. There are four trails here, interconnected to drop you into the canyon, walk to an overlook, where I went, and paths to the remnants of a stage station. One trail follows the very distinct ruts of the Barlow and Sanderson Stage Route, which traipsed the prairie in the 1870s. Several other canyons are accessible as well, and feature rock art, springs, even dinosaur tracks. Dinosaur enthusiasts can hike or bike the six miles in Picket Wire Canyon, or sign up for guided four-wheel-drive tours.

You can now take a driving tour of the Camp Amache National Historic Landmark. Camp Amache was one of the internment camps where Japanese-Americans were relocated, by order of President Franklin Roosevelt, during World War II. Interpretive signs at the entrance explain the story and significance of this camp. Enter the camp on a

road a couple of miles west of Granada off U.S. 50.

If you travel to southeastern Colorado in summer, don't fail to stop at the numerous farm markets along and near U.S. 50. As summer progresses, these markets overflow with abundance, vegetables and fruit, especially the famous, luscious Rocky Ford melons. The markets are reason enough to visit at this time of year. You may just fill the trunk of your car.

Windmills have dotted the plains for decades, bringing precious water to the surface. But when you drive U.S.



Blanket tribute at overlook
Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site

385/287 between Lamar and Springfield, a new type of windmill appears, a garden of windmills, a forest of windmills. Huge wind turbines sprout from the prairie. Take a look at our future. And Lamar will soon be home to a manufacturer of the towers for these turbines.

There's a full plate of fine motels throughout southeast Colorado, but there are now new choices. Some families have opened B&Bs, in guest ranches and even refurbished historic bunkhouses. These entrepreneurs bring visitors a close-up experience of ranch activities, and some lead guided tours through natural and historic landscapes. In one, you can even study photography and yoga. A unique aspect of the preparations for new visitors is the identification and establishment of birding trails and events. No less authority than our own Don Laine says, while camping at John Martin Reservoir State Park, he saw more turkey vultures than he thought existed in the whole world.

At John Martin Reservoir, you can camp, fish, sail, take your motorboat for a spin, water ski, hike, go birding. Almost 400 species of birds frequent this area. John Martin Reservoir is the largest of many reservoirs in the region.

I can only cover a few of my favorite sites and experiences in southeastern Colorado. A group has been formed to advertise and inform the public about the great variety of attractions and visitor facilities which exist in the six counties of the region. The Southeast Colorado Regional Heritage Taskforce has established a web site which I suggest you visit: www.secoloradoheritage.com. There are many recommended trips with different themes. Check it out. And for more information, you can contact them at:

421 S. Main Street, Fowler, CO 81039 (719) 826-2060.
Or ask me.

New Members

The last time we brought you Member News was in the March-April issue of RMO. Since then 20 people have joined the ranks of RMOWP. In alphabetical order, they are:

Vic Anderson of Estes Park, Colorado
Kitty & Mark Cromwell of Enid, Oklahoma
Glen Cullinane of League City, Texas
Kelli Shayne Edwards of Bryan, Texas
Jared Gricoskie of Boulder, Colorado
Terry Guthrie of Alpharetta, Georgia
William Horton of Boulder, Colorado
Tammy Meadows of Brooklyn, New York
Kasey L. Muth of Lubbock, Texas
Daniela Negreda of Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Hunter Nichols of Birmingham, Alabama
Laszlo "Lots" Pook of Parker, Colorado
Mary Ratz of Evergreen, Colorado
Rosemary Rizzolo of Minier, Illinois
Marco Sewer of Salmon Arm, British Columbia,
Canada
Jimmy Smith of Richmond, Texas
Dan Tice of White Hall, West Virginia
Wendell Underwood of Vero Beach, Florida
Deanna Wise of Placerville, California
Robert Youngen of Toledo, Ohio

The Sportsman Channel joins RMOWP

The Sportsman Channel, available nationwide through cable and satellite television providers, has joined RMOWP as the group's newest supporting member.

Begun in 2003, The Sportsman Channel is the only network devoted to America's more than 50 million sportsmen, delivering complete hunting, fishing, and shooting programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Acquired by InterMedia Outdoors Holdings in 2006, The Sportsman Channel is now a part of the nation's largest multimedia company targeted exclusively to serving the information and entertainment needs of outdoors enthusiasts.

Check out its interactive website and sign up for a free program guide/magazine at www.thesportsmanchannel.com. Outdoor writers and photographers can contact Michelle Scheuermann, Director of Communications, at 262-432-9100 ext. 111 or mscheuermann@thesportsmanchannel.com; or Jennifer Gnas, Senior Coordinator for Event Planning and Public Relations, at 262-432-9100 ext. 134 or jgnas@thesportsmanchannel.com.

Support Our Supporting Members

American Sportfishing Association, the industry's trade association, keeping people informed about emerging laws and policies that could significantly affect sportfishing. www.asafishing.org.

Coleman Company, the world's leading manufacturer of camping and outdoor recreation equipment, including the legendary Coleman lanterns, camp stoves, and coolers. www.coleman.com.

Colorado Camera, a full-service imaging center celebrating over 50 years with state-of-the-art photo processing equipment specializing in digital photographic images. www.coloradocamera.com.

Delorme Mapping, a leading provider of mapping products for professional and consumer markets, including state atlases with detailed topographic maps in books plus Topo USA® software covering the entire country. www.delorme.com.

Maptech, producing Terrain Navigator Pro, CD-ROMS combining topo maps and aerial photos, plus specialty CDs of national parks, highest mountains, the Continental Divide, and marine charts and navigation display systems. www.maptech.com.

National Wild Turkey Federation, Inc., a grassroots, nonprofit organization supporting scientific wildlife management on public, private, and corporate lands as well as wild turkey hunting as a traditional North American sport. www.nwtf.org.

Remington, manufacturer of fine sporting arms, ammunition, gun care products and knives, plus factory-authorized gun parts. www.remington.com.

Singh-Ray Corporation, manufacturer for over 40 years of top-quality Singh-Ray filters for digital and film cameras. www.singh-ray.com.

The Sportsman Channel, available nationwide through cable and satellite television providers, is the only network devoted to America's more than 50 million sportsmen, delivering complete hunting, fishing, and shooting programming 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. www.thesportsmanchannel.



Coming home from Zion National Park last week, Don & I were lucky enough to hit the changing autumn colors just right as we drove over US 64 between Chama and Tres Piedras, New Mexico.

(c) Barb Laine