

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

JULY - AUGUST 2009

Headin' to Yellowstone

Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers goes north in 2010 for a rare fall conference in Yellowstone National Park, America's first national park. The dates are September 8 - 12, 2010, and conference headquarters will be inside the park in the Old Faithful area, providing us quick and easy access to Yellowstone's numerous famous attractions, including Old Faithful Geyser, the symbol of Yellowstone.

Conference 2010

When: September 8-12, 2010

Where: Yellowstone National Park, Old Faithful area

Headquarters: Snow Lodge Meeting Room

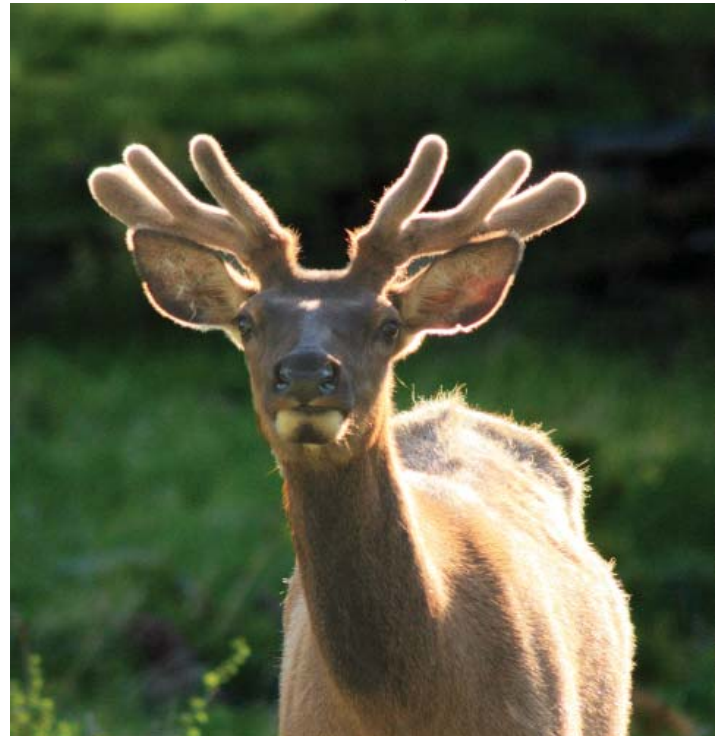
Conference details have not been nailed down yet, but there will be photography field trips and workshops with internationally-known wildlife photographer Tom Ulrich and other renowned nature photographers, plus guided hikes, craft improvement sessions for photographers and writers, and the ever-popular sunrise photo shoot and photo and writers' critiques.

Details on lodging choices will be in the September-October issue of *Rocky Mountain Outdoors*, so please wait until then to arrange your accommodations. In the meantime check out the park website, www.nps.gov/yell, and for info on the facilities we'll be using visit www.travelyellowstone.com.



Defensive Line
Humorous photo
entry 2009

© Jim Baker



Glowing Elk

© Rick Lesquier

Honorable Mention 2009 Photo Contest
in the Image from Last Conference category
(The last conference in this instance being 2008 in Estes Park, Colorado, the eastern gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park.)



Presidential Musings...

Tom Cummings

Greetings to all

Finally, after 6 days of 102-106 temperatures, a cool front has come in and lowered temperatures to 92 or so. But, at least it is a wet heat.....not too much to photograph here.....animals & birds are sluggish and plants are turning brown. But it's home.

It may be difficult to find subjects here, but RMOWP gives me plenty of other opportunities. I just have to pick an area. Let me explain.

The middle of April we drove to Texas to do a program for RMOWP member Richard Youngblood. Richard teaches photography at Katy, a Houston suburb. This was the fifth year to do this and I always enjoy his students and we usually have dinner with Richard and his lovely wife Betsy. It is also an excellent time to photograph bluebonnets in that area as well as work a couple of wildlife refuges on the east side of Houston. We then drove down to South

see Prez... page 2



Rocky Mountain Outdoors

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

Editor: Don Laine
Layout/Design: Barb Laine

Send editorial materials to Don Laine, don@rmowp.org; PO Box 1200, El Prado, NM 87529.

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

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

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www.rmowp.org

Prez... (from pg. 1)

Padre Island to meet up with Mark and Kitty Cromwell (RMOWP members) to participate in a workshop put on by RMOWP members Larry Ditto, Joe Zinn and Beto Gutierrez. What a wonderful time we had with the Cromwells photographing the birds coming back from their winter home in Mexico and parts south. The "3 Amigos" have a great workshop mixing terrific photo opportunities and during the heat of the day classes on conquering Photoshop. We, along with the Cromwells, were treated to a special opportunity as guests of Beto on his newly acquired ranch which he is working to turn into a photography ranch. The highlight of the day was capturing images of a bobcat coming in for a drink of water. And there were plenty of birds. This was the second workshop we have participated in with Larry and Joe as we attended their Bosque Del Apache workshop (sand hill cranes and snow geese) last December. I highly recommend both workshops. But wait, there's more.

On our way to Bosque, we stopped at White Sands and then over to Silver City, N.M. and had a wonderful lunch with RMOWP members John and Connie

see Prez... page 3



nature's fireworks ~ July in Avon, Colorado

© Jon Sheppard



Nuzzling Along
2nd Place Novice category 2009 photo contest

© Rosemary Rizzolo

Virginia Student Wins Scholarship

This year RMOWP has awarded a \$1,500 scholarship to Lauren A. Swisher of Henrico, Virginia, who has a 4.4957 GPA and will be entering Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond as a freshman this fall.

Lauren plans to major in art and education, according to RMOWP Scholarship Chairman Mike Hammond, who said that what made Lauren stand out were the photographs that she submitted with her application.

“They showed her eye for photography and her love of the outdoors,” Hammond said.

For additional information on RMOWP’s annual scholarship, see www.rmowp.org.



Prez... (from pg. 2)

Catsis who gave us several tips on photographic opportunities.

In January, RMOWP members Jim & Sue Baker had several local RMOWP members over for the annual get-together of food and sharing of images. We have done this for the last several years and I look forward to it every year. It is a great way to see old friends and to introduce prospective members to our group.

Although a date hasn’t been set, I do have plans to visit RMOWP member Jack Olson for a photo trip to some of his favorite spots in the Denver area. RMOWP members Frank and Sherry Zurey have given us an invitation to stop in on them in Golden when we are in the area. Member Kenita Gibbins has promised a special tour of the Denver Museum. And members Wayne and Kathy Turner (former Oklahoma residents) have made us promise to give them a call as well when we are in Colorado.

I am also itching to pay RMOWP member and workshop coordinator Nic Showalter a visit in Illinois to capture the local uniqueness of corn fields and lovely old barns and numerous other subjects Nic seems to find. It’s not that far from Nic’s to Evansville, Indiana to Al Perry’s. I haven’t been invited but that probably wouldn’t stop me from going. I feel like I owe it to him.

RMOWP member Terry Guthrie has encouraged Lynda & me to stop whenever we head East through or near Georgia. He’s not far from the Smoky Mountains and said he would share with us fantastic photo opportunities. We just might go that way this fall to try to catch some color.

So, what are the advantages to belonging to an organization like Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers & Photographers? Well, for one thing, you always have a photo opportunity waiting for you with warm RMOWP fellowship. In the words of that great philosopher, Yakov Smirnoff, “What a country”.



Outdoor Photography Groups Join Supreme Court Battle

A number of outdoor media groups and individuals have signed on to support a First Amendment amicus curiae brief in *U.S. v. Stevens*, a case scheduled to be heard by the Supreme Court this fall.

The case involves Robert Stevens, of Virginia, who was convicted of felony charges and sentenced to three years in federal prison for selling two documentary films and one hunting film, that he created, about pit bull dogs. He was convicted based on a federal law that bans depictions of animal cruelty, but the conviction was overturned by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals as unconstitutional based on the First Amendment.

The Professional Outdoor Media Association (POMA) and others fear that if the Supreme Court reinstates the conviction that it has the potential to make it a felony for anyone to sell or publish images of hunting, fishing, trapping, or virtually anything else that’s ruled as a “depiction of animal cruelty.”

POMA is spearheading an effort to get groups and individuals to join the fight against the conviction, and claims that those supporting the effort include the Texas Outdoor Writers Association, National Shooting Sports Foundation, National Rifle Association, Society of Environmental Journalists, National Press Photographers, and American Society of Journalists and Authors. RMOWP has not taken an official position at this time.

For more information on the case see the POMA website, www.professionalooutdoormedia.org.



Wrangler Rugged Wear Announces Essay Contest

Anybody know how to write?

Wrangler, manufacturer of jeans and other western clothing, has asked RMOWP to let our members know about an ongoing essay contest it sponsors.

The assignment is to write an essay about your favorite outdoor adventure and how clothing played a role in its success. Entries should be 150 to 200 typewritten words on one side of an 8.5 X 11 page, and the contest is open to all outdoor writers and broadcasters who belong to an association of outdoor communicators in the U.S. or Canada.

Send your typewritten entry to Wrangler Rugged Wear Adventures, 5253 Dover St. NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33703, Attn: Bill AuCoin.

Individuals may submit only one entry in any calendar year, and Wrangler Rugged Wear will select and announce one winner each month or so. Entries not selected will remain eligible for the contest until the end of the year in which they were submitted.

Each winner will be awarded a certificate for three pants or jeans and three shirts from Wrangler Rugged Wear.

To read some of the previous winners, see the Press section at www.wrangleruggedwear.com.



Sunset reflected on the rocks of Zion National Park.

© Angelo Sciulli

The photo was shot from Zion Field Institute Director Michael Plyler's "special spot" on a mesa southwest of the park. The circuitous directions were imparted to RMOWPers when Plyler addressed the group during our 2009 conference, and member Angelo Sciulli lost no time in grabbing his camera and heading out.

Member News

RMOWP members **Mary Alice Murphy**, **Connie Thibeau-Catsis** and **John Catsis**, all of Silver City, New Mexico, are among several featured artists whose work is displayed on a web page of the Museum of New Mexico Foundation. Art by Connie and photography by Mary Alice and John, all available for sale, can be found at www.newmexicocreates.org. All of the art is of various New Mexico scenes.

Terry Guthrie of Alpharetta, Georgia, will be hosting a fall photography workshop in Rabun county, Georgia, November 2-4, 2009.

Instructors will be Terry and RMOWP member and nationally known photographer Joe Zinn, and will concentrate on the fabulous fall colors of the area.

The workshop will consist of three days of shooting in some of the most picturesque areas of North Georgia, and the two instructors will discuss techniques for photographing the fall scenes of the area and provide hands-on instruction. While photographing the many beautiful landscapes, the opportunity for some wildlife photography could present itself.

In addition to providing in-the-field instruction, photo enhancement techniques with Photoshop, critique of photos, and discussion will take place.

The workshop will be limited to eight participants with a minimum of five required, and cost is \$600.

See Terry's website, www.mostlynature-photo.com, or check the RMOWP directory for his e-mail address.

Terry Guthrie also e-publishes his own newsletter, *Mostly Nature*, which you can access through his website. It's just the kind of newsletter we like - lots of great photos

and not too many words. It's free and if you contact Terry he'll e-mail it to you hot off the computer screen every month.

Coleman Announces Online Media Discount Program

To make access to outdoor gear easier and more economical for professional outdoor media members, RMOWP Supporting Member **Coleman Company** has moved its industry discount purchase program online.

In a separate section of the Coleman website, accessible only to those who have the media code, discounted prices for items are displayed for each item available through the discount program. Comparison shopping – both online and at local retailers – is encouraged as some products may be available elsewhere at a deeper discount due to seasonal sales and other special promotions.

Members of RMOWP will find the media code and other access information in the newsletter received in the mail, or contact us at info@rmowp.org. The purchase program cannot be accessed directly from coleman.com.



Great Sand -- plus Pests

Story & photos by Jack Olson

Just remember this. When you write for a living, you just can't please everyone. In fact, thank your lucky stars if it's only one. I recently wrote a travel article about Colorado's national parks for a AAA magazine. Included in that article was a review of the attractions and activities in Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve in southern Colorado. Pretty straightforward.

A disgruntled reader wrote to the editor complaining about how the author could have failed to mention the terrible mosquitoes. He recounted the misery he, his wife, and another couple endured as they got out of their car. They had to stay in it and their visit was ruined. He wrote an indignant letter to the editor, who reluctantly forwarded it to me, typos and all.

Well, I have been to the Sand Dunes many times over the years, even camping there over Memorial Day once, and have never encountered a mosquito that I remember. Nevertheless, I poured over the park's website, digging deeper and deeper into its nether regions. And I finally found that, in fact, in a wet year there can be mosquitoes in a couple of months. Now, in this short article, with only a small piece on the Sand Dunes, I couldn't cover everything, but gave readers the website address. The editor took it from there.



I tell you all this to warn you that if you choose to go to the wonderful Sand Dunes, there is a chance, just a chance, that there will be mosquitoes. There, I've covered it. Seems to me there might not be mosquitoes up in the dunes where most people want to go. But you've been warned.

It's fun to go up into the dunes. You might

cross Medano Creek at certain times. Sometimes the gently flowing water sinks into the sand before you ever get to it. At other times, it could be from one to six inches deep, 20 to 40 feet across. Kids like to play in it. There's a creek flow chart, updated regularly, on the park website. A note about climbing the dunes: the elevation here is around 8,000 feet and climbing in sand can be tiring. But running down the dunes is great fun. When you get back to your

car or camp spot, join your fellow visitors by dumping copious amounts of sand from your shoes.

Here are a couple of pointers for photography. There is often wind here; that's how the sand was deposited. Sand



and cameras are not the best partners. I keep my camera in my pack until I'm ready to use it. If I had to change lenses, I'd do it in a covered situation, and I very seldom have done it unless there was little or no wind. Second, because the prevailing winds are from the west, the dunes fall off more sharply on the east side.

That causes the shadows on the dunes, which create much of the best photography, to be sharper and last longer in the late day. Not only that, the sun sets very low clear across the San Luis Valley, so it paints the dunes right until sunset. The Sangre de Cristo Mountains loom just to the east, so the sun is higher before it reaches the dunes in the morning, also shortening the time for attractive shadows.

There's a campground at Great Sand Dunes, nestled in trees near the dunes. Hiking is unlimited in the 30 square miles of the dunefield; there are no trails in the dunes. As well, you can

hike along the edge of the dunes, especially to the north. It's possible that you will see mule deer, elk, bison, or pronghorn in the area. When Great Sand Dunes became a national park, a large region of grasslands, shrublands, and wetlands was added to the park.



The Great Sand Dunes are called great for a reason. They are higher and more extensive than most other dune deposits in the West. The Star Dune is 750 feet, the highest in North America. Find out more about this unique national park on their website at www.nps.gov/grsa. Among many other subjects, the website provides detailed information on various aspects of visitation in each season. Enjoy yourself. Bring OFF!, if you really want to.



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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.com.

Photo Workshop

2009 WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS & INSTRUCTORS

Left to right: Frank Lee (Odenton, MD), Donna Schaad (Bloomington, IL), Ken Nyborg (Barstow, CA), Ron Bettger (Omaha, NE), Marni Patterson (Phoenix, AZ), Jim Patterson (Phoenix, AZ), Instructor Jack Olson (Denver, CO), Matthew Harris (Mill Creek, WA), Debbie Partesi (Rahway, NJ), Instructor Jared Gricoskie (Boulder, CO), Harry Bastone (Littleton, CO), Coordinator Nic Showalter (Villa Grove, IL), Bryce Baker (Greenville, TX)



© Nic Showalter



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2010 Workshop

June 22-26, 2010

Rocky Mountain National Park

Workshop Participant Ron Bettger (left) getting tips from Instructor Jared Gricoskie