

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

JULY - AUGUST 2010

Jack's Jaunts

It's a Grand Valley

Story & photos by Jack Olson



Colorado's Grand Valley

Many people are unaware that the Colorado River was once called the Grand River. Hence, we have the Grand Valley and the city of Grand Junction, at the intersection of the Grand and Gunnison Rivers in western Colorado.

The Grand Valley offers not only a vast and varied playground, but agricultural products to tempt the discriminating taste. A serious wine industry has developed within the vineyards east of Grand Junction. Visitors may sample the creations of eight wineries. Wine tours are even booked from Denver; the annual Colorado Mountain Winefest is held this year September 16-19. That's just enough time to hustle home from Yellowstone, unpack, repack, and make it there.

In close proximity to the vineyards are peach orchards centered around the town of Palisade. "To die for" is a phrase that must have been invented to describe Colorado peaches. A certain Denverite has made frequent annual trips to Palisade at the time of the harvest, to the point where he is recognized at the Herman Produce fruit stand. Palisade will host the 42nd Annual Peach Festival August 19-22, which is fun and filling.

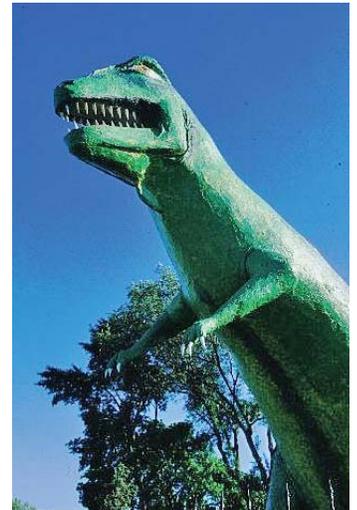
But you can't eat and drink all the time. Well, you could, but let's look at some of the attractions and adventures



Peach eating contest at the Palisade Peach Festival

in the Grand Valley. A visit to Grand Junction wouldn't be complete without an exploration of Colorado National Monument. The park road starts near the city, rises to the top of the plateau and traverses the rim as Rim Rock Drive for 23 miles. There are frequent pull-offs to view the sculpted rock formations, and trailheads along the road allow hikers to descend into the exciting valley.

The signature feature of the park is Independence Monument. A free-standing monolith, it can be viewed from several pull-offs. Monument Canyon Trail from the rim will take you right to the base of this dramatic spire, and I especially recommend this trail to those who enjoy a good hike. The trail actually has two trailheads, one on the rim and one in the valley, but you would need to have two cars or someone to pick you up. The total trail length is six miles. I've made the hike from the upper end, down to Independence Monument and back up, and would guess that the total distance is also around six miles. It can get hot on this trail in summer.



Gr-r-r-r-eta, in downtown Fruita

The Grand Valley is one point of the Dinosaur Triangle, which includes Dinosaur National Monument in Colorado and Utah plus Vernal, Utah. If you like to learn about dinosaurs, or know some children who do, there are sites you should explore. There's The Trail Through Time at Rabbit Valley, just off I-70 a mile or so east of the Utah state line. But the preeminent dinosaur draw is the Museum of Western Colorado's Dinosaur Journey Museum in Fruita, west of Grand Junction. It's an interactive hands-on museum, with a working paleontological lab. They've just added a new exhibit, "Fruitadens," one of the smallest dinosaurs in the world.

Like living history? Cross Orchards Historic Site in Grand Junction takes you back to an earlier time to show how apples were harvested and packed. Presenters explain how unusual machinery was utilized. Maybe you'll even get there when apples are ripe!

cont. on page 2

See pages 5-6 for CONFERENCE INFORMATION



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 |

Copyright © 2010 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, Al Perry, Evansville, IN
Secretary, Kathleen Turner, Fairplay, CO
Treasurer, Barb Laine, El Prado, NM

Board of Directors

Richard Holmes, Boulder, CO (2010)
Joe Zinn, Monte Vista, CO (2010)
Kenita Gibbins, Denver, CO (2011)
Richard Youngblood, Katy, TX (2011)
Sherry Zurey, Golden, CO (2012)
Clare Gutierrez, Edinburg, TX (2012)

Awards Co-Chairs

Frank Zurey, Golden, CO
Richard Holmes, Boulder, CO.

Conference Committee

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

Webmaster

Barb Laine, El Prado, NM

Photo Workshop

Coordinator:
Nic Showalter, Villa Grove, IL
Instructors:
Jack Olson, Denver, CO
Jared Gricoskie, Boulder, CO

Scholarship Chair

Mike Hammond, Amarillo, TX

Past-Presidents' Council

Jim Baker, Stillwater, OK
Barb Laine, El Prado, NM
Lee Carr, Cedaredge, CO
John Catsis, Silver City, NM
Beto Gutierrez, Edinburg, TX
Jack Olson, Denver, CO
Dusty Fullinwider, Apache Junction, AZ
Bob Hyde, Sterling, CO

Communications Director

Don Laine, El Prado, NM

Supporting Member Liaison

Lynda Cummings, Cushing, OK

Medical Advisor

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

www.rmowp.org



Janes M. Robb - Colorado River State Park near Fruita

The James M. Robb-Colorado River State Park is called a "string of pearls", five separate park areas on the river above and below Grand Junction. Boating, hiking, fishing, and camping are just some of the activities available in this lovely state park. Spot pictographs in the BLM McDonald Creek area, and hike down to the Colorado River.

The Grand Junction-Fruita area has recently become nationally famous for its mountain biking adventures. Most well-known is Kokopelli's Trail, a 142 mile bike trail from the western Grand Valley to Moab, Utah. There are also shorter trails for all degrees of experience.

The Grand Valley is at the edge of the desert, but a forested playground, Grand Mesa, lies just to the east. At 10,000 feet, this flat-topped mountain is sprinkled with lakes and trails. It's always cool up there.

If you enjoy shopping, the Grand Junction

area can meet most needs. The award-winning Downtown Grand Junction Shopping Park can be a pleasure with its shops, restaurants, and delightful and whimsical sculptures.

Grand Junction Regional Airport offers service to Denver, Phoenix, Salt Lake City, and Dallas/Fort Worth.

I've run out of space but you won't run out of ideas to enjoy a stay in Colorado's Grand Valley. It's worth several days. You won't be disappointed.



Grand Junction Downtown Shopping Park

For more information on Grand Junction and the Grand Valley, go to www.visitgrandjunction.com. And for more information on Colorado National Monument, go to www.nps.gov/colm.



Grand Mesa



RMOWP Members Win OWAA Awards

Tucson, Arizona resident **Lee Allen** and West Glacier, Montana resident **Tom Ulrich**, both long-time members of RMOWP, recently won Excellence in Craft awards from the Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA). Awards were presented at OWAA's annual conference in Rochester, Minnesota, in June.

Allen won a first place award for his magazine article "Watchable Wildlife," which appeared in the July/August 2009 issue of *The Desert Leaf*. He also took third place honors for his article, "Pathway to Paradise," which appeared in the September/October 2009 issue of *Arizona Wildlife Views*. "Pathway to Paradise" also received a second place award in a contest recognizing excellence in communicating the value, enjoyment and/or instruction of camping/backpacking, outdoor recreational travel, biking and/or climbing.

Ulrich won two awards for his color photography. His photograph "Swiftcurrent Gorge" won first place in the scenic category, and "Kermit Country" took third place in the fauna category.

The 1,100-member Outdoor Writers Association of America, founded in 1927, is the oldest and largest association of professional outdoor communicators in the United States. The association is headquartered in Missoula, Montana, and more information is available at its website, www.owaa.org.

RMOWP Scholarship Winner Named

A North Carolina college student has been named this year's winner of the \$1,500 Scott-McKenna Scholarship, according to RMOWP Scholarship Chairman Mike Hammond.

Winner Christopher "Tyler" West is a resident of Topton, North Carolina, and attends Elon University in Elon, North Carolina, where he has a declared major of broadcast journalism and a minor in international studies. For the scholarship competition Tyler submitted



Tyler West

a video on Glacier National Park, along with still images he has taken at different locations throughout the U.S., Hammond said. He also submitted his website, <http://student.elon.edu/cwest3>, that contains numerous other works.

"I have had a camera in my hand almost every day at Elon," Tyler tells us. "I enjoy nature photography and am quickly running out of wall space for pictures. I also co-host 'No Signal,' a webisode series encouraging college students to discover the outdoors (www.youtube.com/nosignal-web)."

Tyler also recently produced a short documentary on students from low-income schools, and held an internship

at Barrett Productions in Missoula, Montana. He says he knows his future will involve visual storytelling, and for a career he would like to be an international news correspondent in the Middle East.

"I love to travel, and I enjoy producing stories for both radio and television," he says.

This year's scholarship response was great, according to Mike Hammond, who says he had 84 applicants from 36 states, with California leading the pack with nine applicants followed by Texas with seven.



© Tyler West

Buick near Mexican Hat, Utah

The Scott-McKenna Scholarship is awarded annually to a student with a career interest in communicating about the outdoors.

RMOWP

created the scholarship in remembrance of two special members, according to Hammond. In 1973 Joe McKenna and J.B. Scott founded the organization, Hammond says, and we honor these two men for all their work in the fledgling years of RMOWP by offering this scholarship to a student pursuing a career that promotes Joe's and J.B.'s love of the great outdoors. All proceeds from the annual auction fund the scholarship.

Additional information about the scholarship program is at www.rmowp.org.

American Sportfishing Association Works to Keep Fishing Waters Open

The American Sportfishing Association (ASA), one of RMOWP's supporting members, recently announced a renewed effort to unite the sportfishing industry and the country's anglers to keep our nation's public waters open, clean, and abundant with fish. The announcement was made during the sportfishing industry's 53rd International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades, which took place in Las Vegas, Nevada, earlier this month.

ASA officials said that preventing or limiting recreational anglers from accessing public fishing waters is being touted as a new way to manage fish populations, undermining the achievements of proven fisheries management methods that focus on conservation and promote sustainable fishing. As a result, officials said, the past 10 years have seen a dramatic increase in bans and efforts to ban recreational fishing from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the Gulf of Mexico to the Great Lakes.

"If this alarming trend continues, anglers nationwide may risk similar restrictions being implemented on their favorite lakes, rivers and streams," ASA President and CEO Mike Nussman told over 400 sportfishing business lead-

ers. "The voice of 60 million conservationist anglers who promote conservation over preservation must be heard by legislators, regulators and environmentalists."

The group's effort, called "KeepAmericaFishing," works to minimize access restrictions, promote clean waters and restore fish populations, and with its conservation partners works to limit closures to areas in which they are clearly beneficial to the health of the fishery.

For additional information see www.KeepAmericaFishing.org. The American Sportfishing Association is the sportfishing industry's trade association, committed to looking out for the interests of the entire sportfishing community.

Adventures in Yellowstone

by Maryann Gaug

Back in 1963 or thereabouts, my family made its first journey to Yellowstone National Park. In those days, bear jams occurred all over the park. People stopped to watch the bears along the side of the road. I remember staying in the little log cabins near Fishing Bridge. A trip to the shared toilets among the cabins meant keeping an eye out for bears in the nearby trash cans. Old Faithful was as wonderful then as it is today. Finally people figured out that a fed bear was a dead bear, kept garbage in bear-proof containers, and the bears decided, for the most part, to stay in the backcountry.

Twenty-some years later, a friend and I backpacked from the Old Faithful area to Shoshone Lake. The trail sounded nice, but seemed to go on forever. The black flies or gnats drove my friend crazy, and I remember it being very hot. Our campsite was near the lakeshore. We decided to go wading in the lake to cool our hot feet. However, the shore



© Frank Zurey

Old Faithful - the symbol of the park

wasn't nice and sandy – it was more like black obsidian (read volcanic) and hurt like heck! We went for a little walk around the lake to see what we could see. Well, hiking like that in Yellowstone can be very interesting. That hot spot that creates Yellowstone can create warm to scalding areas even in the grass. My very

tall friend found his foot sinking in the grass and pulled it out quickly while yelping – it was very hot underneath that grass!

Later that evening we enjoyed a can of smoked salmon we had just purchased on the Olympic Peninsula in Washington, while wondering if that was really a good thing to eat in grizzly bear country (like would a bear smell the empty can and come visiting?).

Over the years wandering through Yellowstone, one of my favorite areas is the Mud Volcano and Sulphur Cauldron, north of Fishing Bridge. An interpretive trail takes you around this interesting area. The mud volcano is a

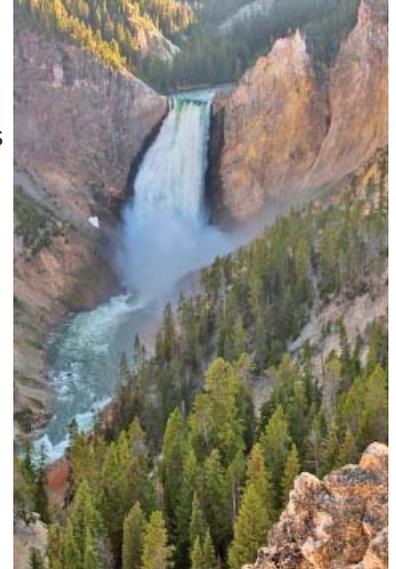
thick gooey muddy mess that bubbles and gurgles, like thick Cream of Wheat cooking. The word "sulphur" should give you some idea of the general odors wafting through the air.

The last time I visited Old Faithful, Mom and I walked over to watch the next eruption. Contrary to popular belief, you can't set your watch by the eruptions. The rangers estimate the next eruption based on the size and length of the previous eruption (and probably some other magic). We found a "comfortable" bench. What we didn't notice was that a breeze was blowing straight at us. That meant when the geyser burst forth with its full head of steam and water, we ended up taking an Old Faithful shower! We went back a little later to actually see another eruption as all we saw was steam the first time.

Since we're staying in the Old Faithful area for the RMOWP conference, make sure to wander around Old Faithful Lodge. It's a grand old building! The last time I stayed there, the steam pipes played an interesting symphony during the night.

Yellowstone is a beautiful ecosystem. The thermal features are very special and are located in various places around this large area. Make sure to keep an eye out for herds of elk and of bison. Nowadays you might run into a bison or moose jam. Keep your distance from both. They do charge people who intrude a little too close into their personal space. With some luck you might see a wolf! The Upper and Lower Falls of the Yellowstone River are impressive. Make sure to visit the colorful terraces at Mammoth Hot Springs. Even the recovering burned areas show how nature recovers from what humans thought was a disaster.

What I'm really trying to say is, if at all possible add several days around the conference to see the parts of Yellowstone that we won't have time to visit during conference. You'll be glad you did!



© Frank Zurey

Lower Yellowstone Falls

National Parks Offer Free Admission

To mark the 40th Anniversary of Earth Day and to celebrate the launch of the Obama Administration's America's Great Outdoors initiative, Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced a schedule of free admission days to many of the lands managed by the Department of the Interior. Free days remaining in 2010, at which time all national parks offer free admission, are August 14th and 15th, September 25th, and November 11th. Additional information is available at www.nps.gov.

Elk & Marmots Strut Their Stuff for RMOWP Photo Workshop

by Nic Showalter



© Nic Showalter

2010 Workshop participants & instructors

Nine participants from Alabama, North Carolina, Iowa, Indiana, Kansas, Colorado, and Wyoming attended this year's RMOWP Photography Workshop in Estes Park, Colorado. Clear skies and abundant sunshine, while not ideal photography conditions, allowed us to make good use of our time together both in the classroom and in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Each year's workshop seems to take on its own peculiar tone depending on the participants, the weather and conditions in the park. In years past, nesting birds were easily



© Brad Whitsitt

accessible and were a focus of our time. This year, however, the dependable nests and typical areas did not seem to be as active and so we concentrated more on other mammals in the park such as coyote and elk, and beaver outside the park.

Wildflowers have always been another point of interest, but the late spring snows seemed to delay the onset of abundant blooms. So, instead of celebrating the first Alpine Sunflowers with our cameras, we concentrated on some of the other smaller flowers blooming in the tundra. As was usual, Golden Banner and Wild Iris bloomed in lower elevations and afforded some compositional interest for our workshop participants.

Elk were, as always, generous with their modeling time. Marmots were happy to pose. The moon was well-positioned and timed to be included in some shots from this year's developing photographers.

Veteran instructor Jack Olson and second-year instructor Jared Gricoskie shared their plentiful wisdom and knowledge. And Jack's and Jared's efforts paid off.

As a participant from Hutchinson, Kansas commented, "Learned a tremendous amount – the guides and director are passionate about this workshop – A++++."

Yellowstone Conference Update!

The 2010 RMOWP conference, in Yellowstone National Park September 8 - 12, is right around the corner. Members have been registering and booking lodging in record numbers, so much so that the reservations people tell us that there is no lodging available within two hours of the Old Faithful area, our base in Yellowstone. To check on room and cabin cancellations or reserve a site in Madison Campground (about 45 minutes away), call Xanterra, the company that manages the Yellowstone lodges, at 307-344-5437, and talk with Lori Doss.

There is always road construction in Yellowstone, and this September is no exception. For current road construction and possible delays see the park website - www.nps.gov/yell - or call the recorded road condition report at 307-344-2117. Weather in early September is expected to be cool, with daytime temperatures in the 60s and nights dropping into the 30s, and snow is always a possibility.

All boats for the pre-conference boat trip are full. Those who signed up for the boat trip are reminded to take polarizing filters to capture images of the underwater thermal features, as well as telephoto lenses for distant scenics and to catch the eagles we're likely to see on Frank Island, one of our planned stops. The schedule includes early morning field trips with internationally-known photographer Tom Ulrich. Thursday morning is booked but there are a few spots left for Wednesday and one available Friday.

Those planning to fly to Yellowstone have a number of airport choices, although most will probably include changing planes in either Denver or Salt Lake City. The Gallatin Field Airport (www.bozemanairport.com) in Bozeman, Montana and the Jackson Hole Airport (www.jacksonholeairport.com) near Jackson, Wyoming, are probably the most convenient, and both offer rental cars and other services.

You'll find details in the conference registration form and schedule that were mailed to you earlier, and information can also be found online at www.rmowp.org.

Sunrise on Leigh Lake in Grand Teton National Park



© Frank Zurey

THINGS to BRING to the CONFERENCE:

PHOTOS FOR THE MEMBERS' CHOICE CONTEST

Members may submit up to two matted prints (not framed), either color or black and white, altered/manipulated accepted, and they may have been taken at any time. Maximum print size is 8 x 12 inches, matted to no more than 12 x 16 inches. Entries are to be designated as Scenic, Flora or Fauna. The images will be displayed at the conference and judged by conference participants. Place your name, photo title, category and "Members' Choice" on the back of each. Entries can be submitted at registration but no later than noon, Thursday, Sept. 9.

PHOTOS FOR THE PHOTO CRITIQUE

Entertaining and informative for all, this program looks at photographs with an eye to how they could be improved. Those who want their shots critiqued should bring 3 to 5 digital images on CDs or flash drives. The critique, led by Tom Ulrich and Jack Olson, is planned at the Snow Lodge Meeting Room Thursday, September 9, at 7:30 p.m. Spectators are welcome.

WRITING FOR THE WRITERS' CRITIQUE

Your written work will be gently and positively examined with the purpose of finding ways to improve it at this session, scheduled Friday, September 10, starting at 1:30 p.m. Participants should bring at least 5 copies of no more than 5 pages of double-spaced (or equivalent) unpublished work. It should not be your best work, but something you want help with. Spectators are welcome.

DONATIONS FOR THE AUCTION

We want your stuff! Please bring donations for the RMOWP Auction. Items donated by RMOWP's supporting members in past years have ranged from Coleman tents, stoves, lights, and ice chests, to mapping software and books, outdoor-themed art, and Remington rifles and shotguns. RMOWP's individual members are always equally generous, bringing their own matted photos, published books, craft and gift items, plus photo equipment, food and drink, and a variety of things they've found lying around the house (sorry, no useless spouses accepted). The auction will take place Saturday, September 11, starting at 3:00 p.m., and all money raised goes to RMOWP's scholarship fund, which provides scholarships for college students pursuing programs for careers in outdoor writing and/or photography. See page 3 for this year's recipient.

FUNNY SHIRTS

For the Yellowstone conference we are reprising the RMOWP Funny Shirt Contest, with judging by our peers plus worthless prizes. Any type of shirt is eligible, although we're expecting sweatshirts and t-shirts with humorous messages and/or images. The funnier and more original the better, and both store-bought and homemade shirts are welcome. Contest participants will wear their shirts to the auction Saturday afternoon, where attendees can vote for their favorites.

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.

Delorme, 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.

Freedom Group Family of Companies, the world's premier family of firearms, ammunition and related products, including such well-known brands as Remington, Marlin, and Harrington & Richardson. www.remington.com; www.marlinfirearms.com; www.hr1817.com; www.parkergunmakers.com; www.bushmaster.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.com.

World Fishing Network, the only 24/7 television network dedicated to all segments of fishing - instruction, tips, tournaments, travel, food, boating, outdoor lifestyle and more. WFN HD, a separate network, offers stunning high definition of all aspects of fishing. Both are available throughout North America via cable, satellite and telecommunications distributors. www.WFN.TV.