

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

THE NEWSLETTER OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOOR WRITERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS

NOVEMBER - DECEMBER 2012

Have you made your reservations? Conference 2013 isn't far off.



Art on the Corner in Grand Junction

Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers & Photographers heads to western Colorado and Colorado National Monument for the 2013 conference, May 15 to 19. We'll explore the national monument, talk with the locals about the movement to elevate the monument to national park status, dip our toes in the cool Colorado River, and hunt for ancient petroglyphs and dinosaur bones.

Workshops aimed at photographers include a program on how to shoot prize-winning images by Tom Ulrich, an internationally-known photographer and RMOWP's longtime photo contest judge, and a program on manipulating images to create something new and exciting by Bill Horton, photographer, author, and computer guru.



In the writing department, special programs include a presentation by writer, photographer, and lecturer Virginia Staat titled, "If the World's a Stage, Then Who's the Audience?" The workshop will help writers of all levels determine their voice, purpose, and audience when preparing and selling manuscripts. Also scheduled is a program by western Colorado writer Bill Haggerty, an expert on the area's

natural areas, on how to make money from your outdoor adventures.

What else?

- Guided walks and hikes in and near Colorado National Monument
- Tracking down pre-historic petroglyphs and dinosaur bones
- Jack Olson's famous sunrise photo shoot
- Writing & photo critiques
- Showcase of selected members' photography
- Photo scavenger hunt
- Seeing Art on the Corner and other sights of Grand Junction
- Auction to benefit the scholarship fund
- And more!

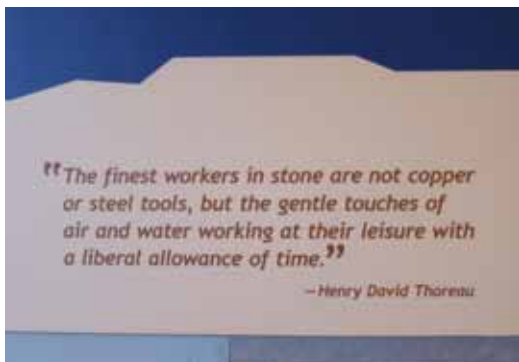


More Art on the Corner

Conference headquarters is the La Quinta Inn at Fruita, just west of Grand Junction, which is giving us group lodging rates of \$79 per night for one or two people. This rate will be available only until April 15. Based on availability, the La Quinta will also offer these rates for a day or two before and after the conference.

Our rooms have fridges and microwaves, rates include a continental breakfast with a do-it-yourself waffle bar, and the Fruita La Quinta accepts pets.

We have reserved 25 rooms - 10 kings and 15 doubles - and suites and other upgraded rooms are also available at discounted rates. Those making reservations should call the motel directly at 970-858-8850 and tell the reservations clerk that you are with the Rocky Mountain Outdoor Group.



Words of wisdom at the Monument

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Anne Sullivan Dies

Longtime RMOWP member Anne Sullivan, of Datil, New Mexico, died October 28, with services at the Catholic church in Datil and interment in the Datil Cemetery. Anne was an EMT with the Datil Volunteer Fire Department for over 20 years and the procession from the church to the cemetery was led by a fire engine. Survivors include a number of cousins from her mother's side of the family.

Born in 1931 in New York City, Anne received a degree in drama from Smith College and then went on to a career in stage management for both Broadway and national tours, in shows including *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Cabaret*, *Gypsy*, and *The Wiz*. In 1987 she received a lifetime achievement award, the group's highest honor, from the Stage Managers' Association.

Anne moved to New Mexico in 1970, and by the mid-1980s had become a true westerner, living in a log cabin in Swingle Canyon near Datil with her two horses, two dogs, a cat, and a pickup truck.

A writer of non-fiction and childrens' stories, Anne was

published in *New Mexico Magazine*, *New Mexico Wildlife*, *Fiberarts*, and *Serape*, and wrote columns for the *Magdalena Mountain Mail* newspaper under the pseudonym and persona of her dog Sylvia.

Anne was an active member of RMOWP for many years, serving on the board of directors and as secretary-treasurer, and setting



Anne Sullivan

up several conferences. She also instituted the writers' critique, now a regular program at the annual conference, and received RMOWP's Spark Plug Award in 1999, for

going above and beyond to further the organization's goals. Anne was also an active member of New Mexico Outdoor Writers and Photographers Association, serving as president and vice-president and organizing many of their conferences.

Cousin Penny Engel of Washington, D.C., called Anne "an original" who was caring and generous, and wrote, "She was a one-of-a-kind observer, thinker, and doer who didn't hesitate to opine on the ironies of daily life she frequently encountered."

Pocket Camera in time for Christmas

Al Perry

If you want a true pocket camera that also takes high quality images, you might want to consider Sony's RX100 digital camera priced at \$650. Important features include: 1) a one-inch 20 megapixel sensor that is about four times the area of most point-and-shoot cameras, 2) Carl Zeiss zoom lens with aperture of f1.8 to 4.9 over a zoom range of 28mm to 100mm along with optical image stabilization, and 3) Excellent video capability including 60 progressive frames



per second of high definition at 1080 x 1920 pixels for each frame.

Other features include aperture, shutter, program, auto and other exposure modes plus HDR and built in panorama. Finally, built in flash and raw uncom-

pressed file format are included. Two items missing in my opinion are eye level viewer and tilt LCD viewer.

Shown below is an image I took with the Sony RX100 from 35,000 feet while flying over Greenland. You can clearly see floating icebergs, glaciers and fjords on the western coast of Greenland.

You don't have to take my word. *TIME* magazine just named Sony's RX100 as one of the top 50 inventions of 2012. Here is what *TIME* had to say:

"Digital cameras have been getting smaller and more capable every year, but that trend took a huge leap forward in 2012 with the Sony RX100, which bridges the gap between point-and-shoots and pro-quality digital SLRs. Sony's innovative design and 1-in. (2.5 cm) sensor allow the camera to take flawless photos even though it's 20% slimmer than your average digital SLR--small enough to fit in your pocket."



© Jon Sheppard

There's a moose on the loose at the Maroon Bells near Aspen, Colorado

We need to know: Will you come?

RMOWP is trying to plan ahead, and looking for locations for conferences beyond the 2013 meeting in Fruita, Colorado.

It's time to get back up in the mountains, so two places we're looking at are **Glacier National Park**, in Montana along the Canadian border, and the **Ouray-Ridgway area** in Colorado (see photos on page 7). Both offer spectacular mountain scenery and countless opportunities for hiking, walking, or just enjoying the clear, cool air of the Rocky Mountains. A major plus for Glacier National Park is member Tom Ulrich, who lives just outside the park, knows it like the back of his hand, and has volunteered to share his secrets about the park with us. In going to the Ouray-Ridgway area, we have several members who are on intimate terms with that section of the state including Jon Sheppard, who has been nagging us for years to go to Ridgway and has volunteered to share his secret photography spots.

One possibility under consideration is to go to Glacier National Park in mid-summer of 2014 and to the Ouray-Ridgway area in early fall of 2015.

What do you think? You don't have to commit now, but please email your comments and likelihood of attending to info@rmowp.org.

Thanks!

~ Don Laine

Jack's Jaunts

This could be the Death of me...

Article & photos by Jack Olson

We've wandered a bit from the Rocky Mountain region recently---Oklahoma and even Florida, for crying out loud. But that's what happens occasionally when you Jaunt. Somewhere along the line there had to be a venture into Death Valley National Park, one of my favorites. The park sprawls between mountain ranges mostly in California but sneaks into Nevada



And you wonder why they call it Death Valley?

which, as we all know, adjoins Utah, a Rocky Mountain state. That's close enough for me. Death Valley was named after the experience of some poor souls who stumbled into this desolate valley back in the days of the Gold Rush and couldn't for the life of them figure how to get out. Most eventually did, but it took only one luckless fellow to christen the entire valley.

At one time the hottest spot in the world was erroneously designated as some sand dune in Libya, which has likely relocated to the bottom of the Indian Ocean by now. An official recalculation properly ruled that the hottest spread of alkali in which to attempt to exist is near Furnace Creek in Death Valley. Furnace Creek! Well, sure, could it be anywhere else? I've only explored Death Valley in March and October and the high temperature hit 95 degrees every time. No one was hiking any great distance after about 10:00 AM, unless you're in the mountains. The highest temperature ever recorded is 134 degrees. Oh, my!

You wouldn't mistake Death Valley for a tropical paradise. An average of less than two inches of rain a year is squeezed from the infrequent clouds that drift from the Panamint Range to the west. The hottest spot in the



Badwater, no need to say more

world and the driest location in North America is also the lowest in the Western Hemisphere. Not far from seething Furnace Creek you'll descend to 282 feet below sea level at Badwater.

Death Valley is a huge national park, the biggest in the lower 48, at almost 3.4 million acres, half again as large as Yellowstone. Connecticut would snuggle nicely within it, with room for the hills of Rhode Island. There's an extreme spread of elevations, from the aforementioned Badwater to over ten thousand feet in the Panamint Range.



Sunrise paints the Panamint Range, viewed from Zabriskie Point



Remnants of the Keane Wonder Mine high above the valley

A multitude of unique and wondrous sites scatter throughout the park, but if you're a photographer, I'd highly recommend Zabriskie Point, which is fortunately located near the main park accommodations and campground. You'll need to get there before sunrise and you'll not be alone. Tripods abound, and for good reason because the view is unsurpassed, encompassing the entire width of the valley stretching to the mountains. Be sure to arrive very early to catch the first pink rays of sunlight as they gently tickle the tops of the peaks and then slowly creep down the slopes before sweeping across the valley. The best is yet to come as dramatic geologic features light up closer to your viewpoint. The star of the show, however, must be Manly Beacon, a formation like the prow of a desert ship,



Scotty's Castle nestles in the hills above the valley



Just a nice stroll at 95 degrees in Gower Gulch

which absolutely glows.

You'll discover sand dunes in the valley and a quirky feature called the Devil's Golf Course. But talk about quirky, Scotty's Castle may be the quirkiest. Scotty was an old scalawag

who talked an investor from Chicago into continually pumping money into a mining venture which may have been salted with a few chunks of gold. Nothing ever became of the mine but the benevolent foil built a "castle" where he lived out his life. He willed it to Scotty upon his death, who then spent the rest of his life in the lap of luxury.



Ruins of the Keane Wonder Mill, 95 degrees no shade

The Park Service gives tours of this extravagant structure, so out of place in the searing desert.

Death Valley once had an active mining industry. Not all gold mines were "salted" and gold was feverishly mined in the mountains. There's an excellent trail to the Keane Wonder Mine and Mill where gold was produced high above the valley. Borax production flourished for a while in the valley floor and



Borax mining wagon, Furnace Creek

you'll find exhibits of borax mining along the main park road. Oldtimers may recall Twenty Mule Team Borax products: that's what it took to haul borax ore from Death Valley. Boraxo soap was a sponsor of the

long running radio and television series, Death Valley Days, once hosted by Ronald Reagan.

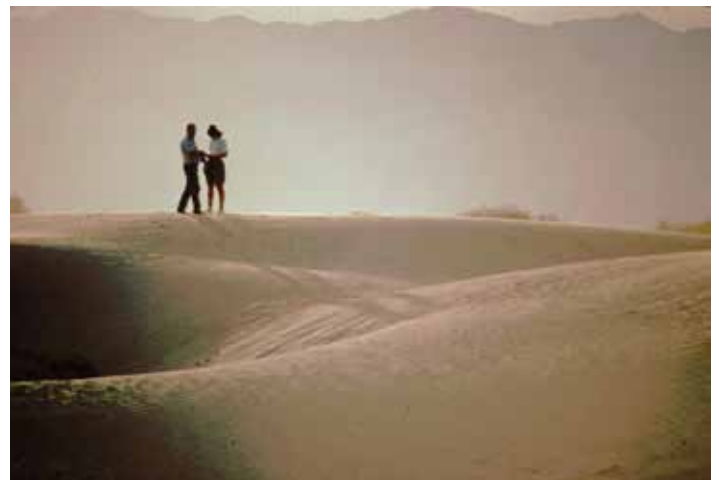
Two other recommended short excursions near Furnace Creek are the one-way Artists Drive and Golden Canyon Interpretive Trail. Photographers will find both excursions especially attractive later in the day when the western sun enriches multi-colored features of rock. Soil, rock and mineral deposits make up the visual aspect of the lower valley. Only

after one of the infrequent rains do wildflowers miraculously appear.

So, the question is, why make a special effort to visit a place named after a guy who couldn't make it out? First, the natural environment will stretch your comprehension of reality. Add adventure, in ways you never before attempted; plus history, including a couple of ghost towns, and quirky Scotty. Like the Grand Canyon, like Yellowstone, one can say with confidence that there's no place in the United States like Death Valley.



Death Valley at sunrise as seen from Zabriskie Point



Romance blooms in Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes

CONTEST RULES HIGHLIGHTS

Quick reference ~
(see page 8 for details)

- eBooks & eMagazines same as paper copy.
- no publication date limitations on written entries
- new category for unpublished written work
- All images to be submitted digitally

DEADLINE: 11 FEBRUARY 2013

The Ancient World near Colorado National Monument

Article & photos by Maryann Gaug

This coming May we're in for a real treat meeting for conference in Fruita and Colorado National Monument. You've all seen the beautiful photos of the red to pinkish cliffs and monoliths in the Monument itself. Numerous wildflowers should be blooming while we're there. On a recent trip in early October during rutting season, I finally saw desert bighorn sheep along Rim Rock Drive, not far from the west entrance.



Looking toward quarries from Allosaurus vertebra site in Fruita Paleontological Area

Below the rim of the Monument, at the Fruita elevation, another wonderful world awaits us, at least those of us interested in

dinosaurs and geology. You may want to start with a visit to Dinosaur Journey, right across the street from Fruita La Quinta Inn (conference headquarters). In addition to the animated and spitting dinosaur models, huge dinosaur bones from Apatosaurus and others are on display along with models of some chicken-sized dinosaurs, several found in the Fruita area. Fruitadens at 28 inches long and weighing less than two pounds is the smallest dinosaur. A visit to Dinosaur Journey is definitely worth your time and entrance fee (<http://dinosaurjourney.org/>).

Four trails, two within 3.1 miles of our conference site, take you past real dinosaur bones still embedded in rock or to sites where dinosaur bones were discovered. Stop at Dinosaur Journey to pick up trail maps to Dinosaur Hill and Riggs Hill.

The easiest hike is in the Fruita Paleontological Area, a short drive north on Kingsview Road. Twenty interpretive signs along the 0.75-mile loop trail take you back 151 million years to the Jurassic Period. This special area has yielded a large variety of fossils. The terrain may seem unspectacular, but the story is fascinating. Several rivers flowed here over millennia, burying critters from tiny mammals to big meat eaters like Allosaurus and Ceratosaurus. Plant eaters like Apatosaurus and Stegosaurus lived here, too. Besides learning about the river channels, the remains of which are now flat-topped hills, you can see part of an Allosaurus vertebra in a rock, and a bone mold from a Camarasaurus. We may hike this trail as part of the conference, but if not, make sure to check it out!

Dinosaur Hill is on the left side of CO 340 on the way to Colorado National Monument, about 1 mile from La Quinta. The trail guide is essential because not all stops have interpretive signs. While the trail makes a 1-mile loop with a short spur, I'd suggest avoiding the steep east side unless the trail is very dry. When it is wet, you can understand how an Apatosaurus became mired. At Stop 1 a femur (bone) mold from a Diplodocus-like dinosaur remains in a big boulder. Stop 4 provides a great view of the surrounding area, including the cliffs of Colorado National Monument. Stop 6 is the commemorative plaque and old tunnel from which most of an Apatosaurus was removed in 1901.



My "fellas" next to mold of a lower leg bone of a Camarasaurus, to give you an idea of scale.

About 18 miles from La Quinta on I-70 heading west, the Trail through Time is way cool. Take exit 2, Rabbit Valley, and drive north to the parking lot. The Mygatt-Moore Quarry, where scientists and volunteers still actively excavate and discover new bones, is just off the trail (<http://dinodigs.org>). The entire loop trail is 1.5 miles, including an ADA-accessible lower trail. Along the way, twenty-one interpretive signs describe the area. At the far end of the loop is part of a Diplodocus backbone in a rock. Wow! Along the lower loop, part of a pelvis lies embedded in another rock. Unfortunately I don't recall the owner. The trail is definitely worth the drive!

The fourth trail is Riggs Hill, along South Broadway, east and south of Fruita. We didn't hike the trail because of the goo, but Elmer Riggs discovered the first Brachiosaurus altithorax in 1900. Stegosaurus and Allosaurus bones have also been found here.

I'm fascinated by the geology and the paleontology of the area and try to imagine life 151 million years ago when Colorado sat closer to the equator. We're just specks in time on an ever-evolving planet.



Diplodocus backbone on Trail through Time

The beauty of the San Juan Mountains around Ridgway, Colorado

~ A Photo Essay by Jon Sheppard ~



Jon loves to be out and about in the astonishing beauty of the San Juan Mountains around Ridgway. This fall, after trekking around absorbing some of this beauty and serenity, he sent some photos, to whet our appetite. Jon has been campaigning hard for several years for RMOWP to host a conference in the Ridgway area. Now we know why.

Jon tells us that heading north to south off Highway 50 on Silver Jack Road, which takes you over Owl Creek Pass into Ridgway, provides the best lighting to capture this scenic beauty.



Autumn in the majestic San Juans of southwestern Colorado

Member News

The Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) has chosen RMOWP member **Tom Ulrich** of West Glacier, Montana as its “Best of the Best” in photography in the organization’s annual Excellence in Craft contest. Ulrich, long-time judge of the photography section of RMOWP’s annual contest, had earlier won first place in both the scenic and fauna photography categories, as well as third place in those same two categories. A committee of OWAA past presidents judged all the first-place winning entries to select one Presidents’ Choice Award winner in each category, and chose Ulrich’s “St. Mary’s Lake” as the very best. Organized in 1927, OWAA is the oldest and

largest associations of professional outdoor communicators in the United States. For information, see www.owaa.org.

Duck Hunters Wanted – Duane Dungannon, editor of *Oregon Hunter* and the Northwest Outdoor Writers Association newsletter, began writing a new Pacific Flyway duck hunting blog for *Field & Stream* this fall and seeks hunters, guides and outfitters in Arizona, Utah, Nevada and Idaho who are willing to be contacted for the latest duck hunting news from the field. If you would like to be featured in the blog, please contact him at mvp@ccountry.net.

Annual Contest Just Around the Corner

by Frank Zurey

RMOWP's annual contest is approaching! It usually sneaks up on us and the entry becomes a scramble at the last minute. It's time to start planning your entry. The **deadline is February 11, 2013**: that's less than three months off. Don't forget the entry fee of ten dollars. Someone always does. The entry form has a place to enter your local newspaper. This is for a press release for your awards. If you do not want a press release, decline and don't provide the local paper. There have been a few changes and clarifications in the rules. Not everyone notices them due to the fine print. I'll summarize some of the notable ones.

A best of show will be awarded for photography categories 1 through 12 and for written works categories 23 to 28. The Member's Choice Photography, Video, Book and Art categories are stand alone categories and will not be included in the best of show awards. The first place award for these four categories is the best of show for each one.

Publication of both written material and photography is being impacted by the proliferation of electronic publishing. These publications are not printed, but instead are sold over the Internet to be viewed on the Nook, Kindle, iPad, etc. readers. These **e-Books and eMagazines** are considered the same as a paper copy magazine or book for the purpose of this contest. But you can't loan the publication to the judges without sending your reader. This of course is not practical. Therefore, entry of published articles and images in electronic publications can be submitted without the publication, just provide a reference so that the publication can be found on the Internet.

For written works, there have been two significant changes. The first is the **elimination of publication date requirements**. You might not have entered a published article because you missed the contest deadline or because it was published before you joined RMOWP. Dust them off and enter them now. The second change for written works is the **addition of a category for unpublished written works**. RMOWP has a number of talented authors that either don't publish their work or publish very little of it. Some authors have works in progress that have not been submitted for publication. This category is for you! You can produce new work for the contest or enter something that already exists from your ar-

chives. The limitation is that you can't have entered the written work in a previous contest.

There has been some mixing and matching of writing categories. The Newspaper and Magazine categories (Articles/Columns/Editorials) have been combined and the Newsletter and Web Writing categories have been combined. These combinations are due to having only a few entries in each category in recent years.



Way of Life © Kenita Gibbins
3rd place, Cultural 2012

Novice photographers have tended to enter the novice category only once. A point of emphasis for novice photographers is that you are encouraged to keep entering the novice category until you become competitive in the other categories. We consider that you have become competitive when you have won a first place in one of the other categories. However, if you are getting second or third place awards and/or have honorable men-

tion images, you should consider yourself no longer a novice.

The major change in photography is that **all entered images must be submitted as digital files**. They should be a high resolution jpg, six inches on the long side at 300 ppi. The file name should be



Let's go Fishing © Frank Zurey
Honorable Mention,
Black and White Prints 2012

the two-digit category number underscore photographer's first name underscore last name underscore image title. (Example: 04_Ron_Smith_Elk Bugling at the Moon.jpg)

A clarification for photography is that a stitched panorama or an HDR processed image is not considered manipulated. These techniques result in an unaltered image of the scene. Both were produced with film cameras: the panoramas by cropping or by use of special camera setups and the HDR with gradient filters.

There you have it! The changes to the fine print. It is time to start getting your entry together. Don't wait until the last minute and chance missing the **deadline of February 11, 2013**.