



Rocky Mountain Outdoors

Our
28th Year
Apr/May 2001

The Newsletter of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc.

<http://www.rmowp.org>

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Alamogordo Conference

May 16 - 20, 2001

Come to Alamogordo, meet old friends and new! We'll see wonders such as the White Sands pupfish, beautiful Oliver Lee Memorial State Park, White Sands National Monument, and the Trinity Site.

Editor Burt Carey will clue us in to successfully selling our articles. Kelly Gatlin will give us an update on digital photography. We'll hone our wildlife photography skills with Joe Roybal.

Of course, there's the slide show of contest submissions and the always hilarious auction.

So what are you waiting for? Sign up today for all those interesting and fun activities and a great time at the RMOWP conference!



White Sands Pupfish
Photo by Craig Springer



What's left of Frenchy's cabin at the mouth of Dog Canyon
Oliver Lee Memorial State Park



Dramatic clouds set off the pristine white of the gypsum dunes
White Sands National Monument

Bottom photos by Don Laine

From The President

Winter Wanderings

by
Lee Carr



It's been a tough winter for a snowbird couple to find short sleeves and short pants weather. Everywhere we have gone this winter we have needed to put on coats or rain slickers and sometimes both. Leaving cool Colorado the first of February, we skirted the snow covered Great Basin Desert hoping to find snowbird conditions at Joshua Tree National Park in the Mojave Desert. After two or three days of 80 degree weather there, the thermometer plummeted to the 30's and 40's during the day and freezing temperatures at night. About a week was all we could take of the Mojave so we headed for the Colorado Desert near Yuma. On the cool side, but not too bad if you stayed in the sun, which is pretty normal for this desert. (The Yuma golf courses boast that golfing is free if the sun doesn't shine.) Thinking our luck was changing, we headed for Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument, but got delayed at Why while the winds howled and the rain pitter-pattered on the roof of our trailer for three straight days. We finally had a couple of nice days in Organ Pipe's Sonoran Desert, but cool weather held back the expected bounty of flower covered mountain sides and bajadas. Maybe Southeast Arizona would be nicer so we headed for the mixing ground of the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts, the Chiricahua Mountains. OOPS! It snowed on us there so we headed into Tucson for the

rest of the trip. It is now the first week in March, and we are still waiting to pull out the short sleeves and short pants.

Visiting all five of the major deserts of the Southwest in a month gave us the opportunity to discover the uniqueness of each one. The topography of all of them is similar since they are in the "basin and range" geologic domain of uplifted block mountains separated by downfaulted basins.

The northernmost of the five American desert regions is the Great Basin, which extends from Utah to Southern Oregon. Contrary to stereotype, the dominant vegetation is not cactus, and the dominant landscape is not sand. Broad plains are dotted unendingly with sagebrush, blackbrush and antelope brush. Winters are long and cold

The Mojave has less severe winters and receives most of its rain in the winter. It has almost no trees except the Joshua tree (it's surprising to see bark on a yucca), with creosote bush the dominant shrub.

From the mouth of the Colorado River north to Death Valley is the Colorado Desert. With some trees along washes and adjacent to rivers, it is typically broad flat expanses dominated by creosote bush and bur sage. This is our driest and hottest desert. Summer temperatures frequently reach 120 degrees. Annual rainfall is 3 inches, often with periods of up to three years without any rain.

The Chihuahuan Desert belongs mostly to Mexico but reaches into Texas, Southern New Mexico, and Southeast Arizona. It is higher and cooler than the deserts farther west and also wetter. There are many shrubs, annuals and small cactus, but few trees.

The Sonoran Desert is the warmest on a yearly basis; most of it experiences little or no frost. It has two rainy seasons, which along with the lack of killing freezes, fosters a great variety of plants and animals. Trees and giant cacti distinguish it from the other American Deserts.

Like deserts, RMOWP also exhibits great diversity. In fact, it is the variety of skills, experiences, and interests of its members that give it its strength. The chance to learn something new from such a wide assortment of talented folks is what draws me back to each annual conference. If you have never been, or it's been a long time since you have been to conference, I hope you will give it a try this May in Alamogordo. See you there.

Rocky Mountain Outdoors

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Get Online or Get Left Behind

Many of you by habit probably expected to hear from Al Marlowe in this column yet once more. I've taken over as executive director and Al, he's probably fly fishing as I write. Serves him right. A couple of supporting members have told me that they liked working with Al, and I hope I can fit into the shoes. Many thanks to Marlowe for his service to RMOWP and for, on occasion, mentoring me as a young freelancer.

A few years ago, shortly after I joined RMOWP, I asked Al about what I could be doing to get more ink. We talked about the usual stuff: queries, studying the market. But another thing came up that I hadn't read before in the "how-to" literature. Marlowe said I needed to get an online presence, email and a web site. I did. Things ain't been the same since.

If you are a serious outdoor communicator, I cannot stress enough how many more sales you'll produce with email and even a web site for self-promotion. Editors have come to expect queries and submissions in digital format sent over the wires -- that's images and text. Your slides might never leave your desk with many publishers. It's a rare event for me these days to print a story and lick a stamp. Email is a real time saver. Got a March 21 deadline? You don't have to get something in the mail a week sooner. In this digital age a story can be produced and never be put to paper. Even in the editing stage, one editor, David Brown of eAngler.com, one of our supporting members, said that frequently he edits on-screen before posting a story online.

eAngler.com is another case in point for getting online. Like other fishing web sites, eAngler buys stories just like any magazine. In fact, Brown encourages our membership to submit queries related to the Rocky Mountain West. To see his writer's guidelines, put down your pencil and SASE, go online to our own web site. It's posted there.

Our web site has been a tremendous tool in getting timely information disseminated. It's also been a successful outreach tool. Web keeper, my twin Phil, reported that more than 1,600 unique visitors viewed www.rmowp.org in February. That's 1,600 more people that know about us than did in January. Think of the logistics and cost of distributing that many brochures. If you want a web page of your own, at least two of our own design web pages, Karen Christopherson and Phil Springer.

Don't scoff at the idea of going digital -- the price of

Outdoors With The ED

by
Craig Springer



starting up is coming down. I'd like to see web and email addresses next to every name in our member directory. Don't go the way of the typewriter; don't get left behind.

Our supporting membership has various writer policies for bona fide assignments, and they are a resource we should be using. Bushnell has optics for the birder or big game hunter. Maptech has an abundance of map products on CD for hunters and backpackers: topos, national park maps, and GPS products. Our supporting membership can help us in nearly any facet of the outdoors, whether we write on hunting, fishing, mountain biking, or conservation. Go online and see our supporting member directory.

Conference is around the corner, and I hope to see you there. This will be my first, and we'll have among many activities a chance to visit White Sands Missile Range. The desert is starkly beautiful and has some stories waiting for you to tell, both on natural and cultural history. We'll get to glimpse at spring water gushing from beneath a lava bed onto a 600-acre marsh, home to the endemic White Sands pupfish. We'll visit famed western writer Gene Rhodes' homestead and see the birthplace of the atomic age. This will be such a unique experience you'll have no problem generating stories from conference. As a primer, read *Tularosa* by C.L. Sonnichsen, UNM Press. There will be a pop quiz.

Directory Update

Note: The web site is your best source for accurate directory listings.

New Address		New Members	
John W. Malo 2005 Pin Oak Dr. Mt. Prospect, IL 60056	Charles "Tom" Bishop 10 N. Granier Ave. Atlantic City, WY 82520-8817	Frank Zurey 31901 Warrens Road Golden, CO 80403 H: 303-642-7566 W: 303-430-8184 frank-sherry-zurey@worldnet.att.net	Bryant J. Kuechle 708 Queen Rd. Moscow, ID 83843 H: 208-822-2641 bkuechle@hotmail.com
Updates			
Al Marlowe al@estreet.com www.hiddenlakespress.com	Kelly Gatlin kdgatlin@gilnet.com		

Farewell and Thanks to Don Domenick, RMOWP Founding Member

Don Domenick died on January 18, 2001 at the age of 85. He was well known over his career as the Colorado Division of Wildlife's photographer. He contributed numerous and stunning images of animals and birds for Colorado Outdoors magazine and other Division publications and activities.
- from Russ Bromby, from CDOW

Founding Memories of Don Domenick

by Georgia Colao

The one thing about change is that it is inevitable — whether we like it or not. Change is for the better, but not always easy — and so it is with the passing of Don Domenick.

I knew Don for over 30 years. He was my late husband's best friend and, along with his wife, Agnes, supported me through my grieving process. I returned the favor when Agnes took her leave from this world. Perhaps it's the letting go of that last link to part of my past that makes this death especially difficult for me. It was Don's encouragement and sponsorship that brought me to RMOWP. I will remain forever grateful to him for this gift.

I remember his dimpled smile, mischievously twinkling blue eyes, his great sense of humor and his incredible knowledge of the ways of wildlife. He knew where to find every kind of critter in the state of Colorado. (Don retired from the Colorado Division of Wildlife and credited his wildlife knowledge to his job.) I recall a particular trip to Mount Evans where the four of us were in Don's car. We were in search of mountain goats, and he knew where the natural salt licks were. Sure enough, we found them right way (that leaves you more time for photos he used to say), and he pulled quickly to the side of the road. Agnes and I were in the back seat, and I began loading my camera. My husband, also named Don, jumped out the front passenger's door with camera in hand and began a slow descent down the slope. Without looking, Domenick opened his car door with his camera secure around his neck and literally fell five feet to a ledge not realizing he had parked right on the edge of the road. Without a moment's hesitation, he was bounding down the slope after the other Don. That became a great joke — to always look before you leaped when Domenick drove. (Having two Don's in the same group was very confusing so we used Do or Domenick to make the differentiation.)

The last outing the four of us were on brought us into a construction zone where the road was being widened. A dozer must have just left for we could smell the fresh dirt that was still falling from uprooted trees. In the middle of the highway lay a scraggly, scraped, small Engelmann spruce, its roots bare against the pavement. Do stopped the car and looked at Don. Without a word, they both got out of the car. One swooped up the dying tree, the other rifled through the trunk to make a place for it. Once that was done, we continued the journey to our house. The tree was placed in a bucket of dirt and stood sentinel on the front porch. The following year it was transplanted to a much larger container and returned to the porch with the intention of planting it "somewhere in the yard." The next spring, Domenick helped



Don Domenick, photographer
Photo courtesy of Colorado Division of Wildlife

me plant it in the backyard in memory of Don. That scrawny, three foot spruce is now 15 feet high and perfectly shaped. It is home to a family of robins every spring and a continual playground for squirrels. It is a living memorial to a beautiful part of my past and a tribute to the future.

One of the things I shall always be grateful to Don Domenick for was his foresight and integrity to be one of the founders of this organization. To contribute ideas and energy, to pen bylaws, set standards, recruit members, plan activities, participate actively, and support new and existing members in their learning efforts are just a few of the things that go into the making of any organization. When one of our founders leaves, part of us goes also. We have dwindled down to a precious few (six, I think). To each of you I say, "thank you, thank you, thank you," for this loving and supportive extended family we know as RMOWP.

From Don's widow, Margaret Trontel-Domenick:

"Don died Jan. 18, 2001. He was very ill and entered the hospital Dec. 9, 2000, and the doctors could not save him, they tried hard to do so. Don was a very good man and a wonderful husband."

If anyone would like to contact Margaret, her address is:

Margaret Trontel-Domenick
3470 S. Poplar St. #402
Denver, CO 80224

Dues Renewal Reminder

Dues notices were sent out at the end of January. Many thanks to those members who have renewed! For those of you who conveniently filed them in your "To Do" piles, please shuffle through and send them in! If your piles are hopeless, Barb Laine plans to send out reminders by the end of March.



"Please renew your membership! We value you, your smiles, your skills, and your knowledge."

Photo by Don Laine

Mirror Mirror on the Wall... (Three Rivers Petroglyph Site)

RMOWP History Minute

by Kelly Gatlin, Historian

Got a minute? Good! Wanna learn where the Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers & Photographers have held their fun, functional and fascinating annual conferences over the years? Or do you already know? Test your memory and your RMOWP history acumen:

- Colorado, 6 conferences: 1974, 1980, 1986, 1990, 1994, 1998 — Our 25th Anniversary, at the site of our first conference. And where would that be? See below.
- New Mexico, 6 conferences: 1975, 1985, 1989, 1993, 1996, 2001 (What's that, you don't remember the great conference of 2001? Stay tuned...)
- Arizona, 4 conferences: 1976, 1983, 1988, 1999.
- Utah, 5 conferences: 1977, 1982, 1988, 1992, 2000.
- Wyoming, 4 conferences: 1978, 1981, 1984, 1991 (Are we overdue in visiting Wyoming? We're open to suggestions, and especially volunteers.)
- South Dakota, 3 conferences: 1979, 1987, 1995.
- Montana, 1 conference: 1997.

Now, how many states does that make? Keerect. And how many conferences? Right again! Have there been any conferences shared by 2 states, where the conference crossed state lines? Where was the first conference held? Naw, that's too easy — in what town? To learn that, and the names of the intrepid RMOWPers who've chaired these 27, soon to be 28, years of fantastical gatherings of the RMOWP fold, just thumb to page F-1 in your RMOWP History binder.

Newsletter Notes

by Maryann Gaug, Editor

First, thanks to all of you who sent emails, notes, or commented in person that you enjoyed the last newsletter. I really appreciate your support! I'll continue to work to produce interesting newsletters.

Second, thanks to everyone who submitted articles and ideas for this newsletter. If your submission isn't included in this one, I'll be sure to publish it soon.

Third, several people have offered to write columns for each newsletter. We hope that you enjoy them. If you have any ideas for articles or feedback about our new features, please give me a call or drop me an email. We want to be sure that *Rocky Mountain Outdoors* covers items of interest to RMOWP members.

Craig, our new Executive Director, reminds everyone in his column that the world is changing. Email is one very "in" way to communicate. As you've read in President Carr's column, he and Dottie have been flying around the Southwest bringing the snow along with them. Since Lee didn't strap his computer to his wings, he snailmailed me his column. Typing into my computer what Lee had already printed on paper really made me appreciate Craig's thoughts about email. How much more efficient and fast this new communication mechanism is! Most contributors to this newsletter send documents attached to or embedded in email. As editor, I can be semi-lazy while I copy and paste articles from one computer file into another, properly format them, and place them in some hopefully logical pattern. Most photos came via email, too.

If you're still not convinced about this "online" thing, take a minute to read "Web Wanderings" by our Web Master, Phil Springer. It's absolutely amazing what information is out there on the world wide web. A veritable spider's web of advice, data, and knowledge is woven throughout innumerable web sites. You can even become one of the data providers.

At least take a little time to head to your library or closest internet café and give the web a try. You might surprise yourself and be sending us your new email address!

Happy Surfing!

Next newsletter deadline is June 12, 2001.

Quick Tip

Buying a Digital Camera

by Jim Tallon

When you're on the verge of buying a digital camera, consider the placement of the lens. Some of the extremes like Sony have a model where the lens actually protrudes beyond the left side of body of the camera itself. I have an Olympus Camedia D-360 L digital, cost \$299 everywhere. I bought it as a "learner" camera. The lens is only about an inch from the left side of the camera, and this has given me some wonderful blurry pictures of my left forefinger. After 40 years of serious photography, I grab it in haste as I would my film cameras. The camera is like a point & shoot and takes great pictures, if I remember where the lens is when holding it.

Election of Officers and Board Members

The annual conference is here, and it's time to elect new Board members and new officers of RMOWP. The Nominating Committee, normally known as the Past-Presidents' Council, has done its homework, and the following people have volunteered to serve the stated position if elected.

President: Russ Bromby
Vice-President: Jeff Pederson
Treasurer: Sue Baker
Board: Raylene Swanger (to fill Sue Baker's term
expiring 2003. Sue will resign to devote full
time to Treasurer if elected.)
Board: Phil Springer
Board: Jon Sheppard
Board: Ron Hellbusch

All Active, Charter, and Founding members of RMOWP are eligible to cast ballots in the upcoming election. The deadline for voting, according to our bylaws, is May 9, 2001. Return all ballots to John Catsis, 1701 W. 4th Avenue, Stillwater, OK 74074-2918. Ballots are included in eligible members' newsletters.

Meet the candidates:

Russ Bromby, a long-time member of RMOWP, has been nominated for President for a two-year term. If elected, Bromby will begin his duties with the 2001 conference at Alamogordo, New Mexico, May 16-20. Bromby lives in Denver, Colorado, where he serves as Chief of Communications for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. He is a former RMOWP board member and a 1991 winner of the Sparkplug Award, the highest honor that can be bestowed upon an RMOWP member.

Jeff Pederson of Santa Fe, New Mexico has been nominated for Vice-President. Pederson is with the New Mexico Game and Fish Commission, where he serves as a wildlife lands specialist. For 13 years he was editor of that state's wildlife magazine. Jeff has served as an RMOWP board member and is a 1999 winner of the Sparkplug Award.

Sue Baker of Stillwater, Oklahoma has been selected to serve as Treasurer. If elected, she will resign her post as a board member, to devote full time to the treasurer's position. Baker has been a bookkeeper for husband Jim's veterinary business for many years.

Three recent members of RMOWP have been tapped to serve three-year terms on the board of directors. They are **Phil Springer** of Rio Rancho, New Mexico; **Jon Sheppard** of Avon, Colorado; and **Ron Hellbusch** of Westminster, Colorado. A fourth candidate, **Raylene Swanger** of Denver, Colorado has been selected to complete the two years remaining on the term of Sue Baker.

A big thank you to all who volunteered to run for office and serve if elected!

Dates Announced For Next Two Photo Workshops

The next two photo workshops in Colorado will be held at the end of June, which means the promise of great weather and spectacular mountain flowers.

The dates are Wednesday, June 27 to Sunday, July 1, 2001 and Wednesday, June 26 to Sunday, June 30, 2002.

Seven RMOWP members have taken past workshops and have recommended them highly. They include Jon Sheppard, Georgette Sotos, Juli Wilcox, Marilyn Hartman, James Baker, Raylene Swanger, and Lynn Witzgen. All but Sheppard joined RMOWP as a result of the workshop. Sheppard already was a member.

Once again, Tom Ulrich, Jack Olson, and John Catsis will be the team of instructors taking no more than 12 students to the woods and valleys of beautiful Rocky Mountain National Park. The workshop, again sponsored by Kodak and Nikon, is a major fundraiser for our scholarship program.

For complete details, contact coordinator Catsis at 405-743-0999 or check the RMOWP web site at www.rmowp.org.

Countertops Needed For Photo Workshop Brochures

Member involvement is again requested to help distribute photo workshop brochures to camera stores and other locations throughout the Rocky Mountain area. John Catsis, workshop coordinator, has a supply of brochures ready to ship. He's waiting for you to call him at 405-743-0999 with your request.

As you know, the photo workshop is a major RMOWP scholarship fundraising project. This year, the photo workshop will be held during the prime time of the year, June 27 to July 1, at Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado. It is open to anyone, including RMOWP members, two of whom have already enrolled.

Jack Olson and Tom Ulrich will serve as lead instructors in this sixth annual scenic and wildlife photo workshop. Headquarters is the popular YMCA of the Rockies, in Estes Park, Colorado. For information on the workshop call Catsis or check our web site at www.rmowp.org.

Book Review and Recommendation

Friends & associates, this little book will give some smiles, but it also tells you something about editors. Remember, they are people, too, and like people, some are not too smart.

from Jim Tallon

ROTTEN REJECTIONS



A LITERARY COMPANION
EDITED BY ANDREW BERHARD
INTRODUCTION BY BILL MCCORMACK

What? Where? Who, me?

by Barb Laine

So what's all the fuss about? Piles of gypsum crystals, cool to the touch on the hottest summer day... odd looking creatures scratched into rock faces by bored (that's an editorial adjective not an archeological fact, by the way) prehistoric persons... a Frenchman's cabin at the mouth of a rocky canyon named Dog??? Oh, yeah, then there's that fish called pup... Whose idea was this, anyway?

As I understand it, RMOWPers are planning to get together sometime in May in a southern New Mexico town named for a tree! At least it's a big tree: a large cottonwood in fact. We do know how to pick 'em, don't we? But you'll be among friends – both familiar and new, and that makes everything simply splendid, don't you agree?

So okay, stop babbling and get to the nitty gritty, you say. Right... Drum roll... Trumpet fanfare... The **28th Annual Conference of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Incorporated** will be held **May 16 through 20, 2001** in **Alamogordo, New Mexico**, with headquarters at the Holiday Inn Express (1401 S. White Sands Blvd., 505-437-7100).

Conference highlights include a trip onto White Sands Missile Range – thanks to RMOWP member Craig Springer – with a military escort and guide Jim Eckles. Field trips to White Sands National Monument, Oliver Lee Memorial State Park, and Three Rivers Petroglyph Site are also planned; plus several workshops: one on writing by Burt Carey, editor of *Rocky Mountain Game & Fish*, one on wildlife photography by RMOWP member Joe Roybal, one on digital photography by member Kelly Gatlin, and what might become a Jack Olson special: sunrise photography (but hopefully not obscured by clouds as it was at Bryce Canyon last year). And of course a writing critique session, writing contest, awards banquet, and John Catsis' famous annual auction.

Be there – you don't want to miss all the fun. Questions? Contact Don or Barb Laine (505-758-8922; lainedb@newmex.com). For more details check out the RMOWP web site: www.rmowp.org.



Hiking Dog Canyon National Recreation Trail
Oliver Lee Memorial State Park

Photo by Don Laine.

Recap – Flying to Alamogordo

If you want to fly in, the closest major airport is in El Paso, TX, 86 miles south of Alamogordo. **El Paso International Airport (915-772-4271)** has some 200 commercial flights in and out daily. Major airlines include **American** (800-433-7300; www.aa.com), **America West** (800-235-9292; www.americawest.com), **Continental** (800-335-2247 or 915-544-6223; www.flycontinental.com), **Delta** (800-221-1212; www.delta-air.com), **Frontier** (800-432-1359; www.flyfrontier.com), and **Southwest** (800-435-9792; www.iflyswa.com).

Once there, you can either rent a car or take the **Alamo-El Paso Shuttle** to the conference headquarters, Holiday Inn Express. The shuttle has five scheduled trips daily to and from Alamogordo, cost is \$44 round-trip or \$31 one-way, and you should make reservations at least 24 hours ahead, 800-872-2701 or 505-437-1472.

An alternative is to fly to Albuquerque and either rent a car there for the 207-mile drive to Alamogordo or fly to Alamogordo on **Mesa Airlines** (800-637-2247), which has one flight daily.

See you in Alamogordo!

Conference Checklist: Bring Auction Items

When you leave home to attend our conference in Alamogordo, remember to bring along one or more items to donate to the auction. Proceeds from the auction, which have topped the \$1,000 mark in recent years, go toward our scholarship fund.

Donated items can be new or used, and of any value. Some items, like a collection of books, often are grouped together, and sold as a single auction item, so don't worry about value or condition. Auctioneer John Catsis has a way of getting top dollar by threatening to take his clothes off if he's unhappy with the bidding. It's never happened, at least not past his underwear. That's because no one wants to see a topless John!

Items do not have to be outdoorsy in nature, as long as you believe they will appeal to our members. And even if you should forget to bring an item from home, there are plenty of stores in Alamogordo where you can purchase something to donate to the cause.

Auctioneer Catsis says this year, any person who does not donate an item, will be forced to participate as a guest auctioneer for at least one auction.

Who Can Come?

In the last newsletter, an overzealous editor (who, me?) mentioned that membership in RMOWP is required to attend the conference. True, members should be current in dues payments to attend.

However, RMOWP encourages prospective members to attend one conference to see if they would like to join the group. Please invite any interested writers, photographers, or artists to the conference!

Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers & Photographers

CONFERENCE 2001

Alamogordo, New Mexico

May 16 - 20, 2001

Wednesday 5/16

2:00 - 5:00 PM: Registration (Holiday Inn Express)
2:00 PM: Board Meeting (Location to be announced)
5:00 - 7:00 PM: Open House in Laine Room
7:00 PM: Slide show of all contest submissions

Thursday 5/17

8:30 AM: Workshop: Digital Camera Update by Kelly Gallin
10:00 AM: Workshop: The How of Wildlife Photography by Joe Roybal
Noon: Lunch on your own
1:30 - 8:00 PM: Field Trip: Caravan to Oliver Lee Memorial State Park (historic buildings, great scenery, and a nature trail) and then continue on to White Sands National Monument for a talk from a park ranger and a box supper (admission fees and box supper are included in the registration fee)

Friday 5/18

6:00 AM: Field Trip: Sunrise photo workshop at White Sands National Monument by Jack Olson
8:30 AM: General Membership Meeting
10:00 AM: Workshop: How to Write for Game & Fish Publications & Just About Anything Else by Burt Carey, editor of Rocky Mountain Game and Fish magazine
Noon: Lunch on your own

Friday 5/18 (cont'd.)

1:30 PM: Free Time or caravan on your own to the International Space Hall of Fame, Alameda Park Zoo, and the Toy Train Depot (all in Alamogordo; all have nominal admission fees)
4:30 PM: Auction (bring money)
6:30 PM: Dinner on your own
8:00 PM: Writing Critique session

Saturday 5/19

8:00 AM - 4:00 PM: Field Trip: Caravan to White Sands Missile Range (to see the rare White Sands pupfish, Trinity Site, etc.), with a box lunch (included in the registration fee)
6:00 PM: Banquet (at one of two restaurants next to the Holiday Inn)
8:00 PM: Awards Ceremony

Sunday 5/20

8:30 AM: Board Meeting (location to be announced)
9:30 AM: Field Trip: Three Rivers Petroglyph Site (meet at the site, 32 miles north of Alamogordo)

Note: The slide show, all workshops, the general membership meeting, the auction, the writing critique session, and the awards ceremony will take place in the Holiday Inn Express meeting room.

(schedule subject to change)

Check RMOWP's web site for the latest conference information at www.rmowp.org.

Holiday Inn Chosen for Conference Headquarters

The Alamogordo, New Mexico, Holiday Inn Express will be headquarters for the RMOWP Conference May 16 - 20, 2001. Most of the workshops and other indoor activities will take place at the Holiday Inn's meeting room. There's a special rate of \$50 per night plus tax for two people for members of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers who reserve their rooms by May 1 (make sure you tell them you're attending the RMOWP conference), and that rate includes a continental breakfast. There are also several restaurants within easy walking distance. The Holiday Inn Express is at 1401 S. White Sands Blvd., Alamogordo, NM 88310, and the telephone number is 505-437-7100.

Camping Opportunities for the Alamogordo Conference

In town there's a KOA, 412 24th St., 1 1/2 blocks east of White Sands Blvd. (505-437-3003; 800-562-3992 for reservations). Cost is \$18 to \$20 for a tent site; \$24 to \$26 for hookups.

Oliver Lee Memorial State Park is about a half-hour south of town on U.S. 54 (505-437-8284; 877-664-7787 for reservations, for which there's a \$10 fee). Cost: \$10 for no hookups, \$14 for water & electric. They do have showers. They say they probably will not be filling up in mid-May.

Magazine Editor to Reveal All in Alamogordo!

One of the big questions for practically all outdoor writers is how to get that great article published, and at the upcoming RMOWP conference in Alamogordo, New Mexico, we're going to find out. Burt Carey, editor of *Rocky Mountain Game & Fish*, will give us the inside scoop in a workshop that Carey promises will not only help us sell our articles to hunting and fishing magazines such as his, but will also provide tips on how to write for, and get published in, practically any publication.

Carey, who edits *California Game & Fish* and *Washington-Oregon Game & Fish*, in addition to *Rocky Mountain Game & Fish*, assigns and edits the magazines' feature stories and has recently begun assigning stories for the new *Game & Fish* Web site (<http://gameandfish.about.com>). He is the former editor of *Fishing & Boating Illustrated* and is also a seven-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. Burt and his wife Sylvie have two boys, Luke, 6, and Christian, 5.

Rocky Mountain Game & Fish, now in its 13th year, is part of a family of 30 state- and region-specific hunting and fishing magazines published by Game & Fish, a Primedia Company. The monthly magazine offers where-to and how-to articles for hard-core hunters and anglers in the Rocky Mountains and desert Southwest. In all, its coverage area covers eight states, with subject matter that ranges from trout, catfish, and bass fishing, to all disciplines of big-game and bird hunting.

To the right: Photo by Craig Springer
Mound Spring at White Sands

Writers' Activities at Conference

Once again the annual conference will feature a writing critique session. It's scheduled for 8 p.m. on Friday, May 18th. Don't bring your very best work; instead, bring something you are having trouble with or something you have a question about. The other writers are there to help you with good ideas or to reinforce your own good ideas.

Please bring five copies of your work. Try to keep it five pages or under, double-spaced.

And, of course, there will be a writing contest about the conference itself. Something you saw, something you learned, something that inspired you. Maybe even something you ate. Something. The rules will be announced at our first meeting. The entries will be due at noon on Saturday, and the winners will be announced and awarded something at the Awards Ceremony.

If you have any questions, please call Anne Sullivan at 505-772-5509.



The Fish Cleaning Shack

by Hal Shymkus

For some reason I have a fascination for fish cleaning shacks, or as they are sometimes called, "fish houses." I do not recall when this infatuation started, but on all my fishing trips, and there were many, you could be sure a lot of my time was spent in the fish cleaning shack. I would like to say it was because of my angling proficiency, but my reputation in that regard was less than good.

The fish cleaning shack most often was the social center of a fishing camp. Fishermen entered as complete strangers and left as lasting friends, sharing a common bond that only those wetting a line can appreciate.

You heard braggadocio from the best.

There were colorful, detailed stories about the size of the one that got away. How long it took to bring in the fish. And how good the fishing was last week. Those cleaning fish demonstrated an evasiveness comparable to a politician. They lost all sense of direction when asked what part of the lake they caught fish.

"Where did you catch that lunker?"

"In the upper lip!"

You could count on the unusual occurring in the fish shack, such as diamond rings uncovered in the stomach of fish. There were also keys, coins, marbles, paper clips. I recall two fishermen cleaning walleyes and in the process one of them came across a long shank weedless hook still attached to nylon line.

"Heh, that's my fish! It's the one that broke my line," the other man said.

"Nonsense. I caught this fish. Besides how can you tell it's yours?"

"Because that's the special improved double half-hitch, rolling loop knot I always tie."

In addition to the good-natured ribbing, there was a certain competitiveness that prevailed. "How much that walleye weigh?"

"It went about six pounds."

"Oh, that all? I got a six and a quarter pounder yesterday."

Some self-conscious fishermen waited until the fish cleaning shack was empty before bringing in their catch so they wouldn't be outdone by others.

In all the years of fishing, I have cleaned fish in "shacks" of all descriptions. At a remote Ontario camp, Ojibwa guides rigged up some pine planks attached to aspen trees. That was where we cleaned fish. I've used the blade end of a paddle and a flat rock.

Usually the fish cleaning shack was a crudely built shanty featuring screens that were an open invitation to mosquitoes and black flies, a dirty 40-watt light bulb with a pull chain, and a drainage system that was continually clogged. Skunks often settled in under the floor.

At the other end of the spectrum, the ultimate in fish cleaning shacks was at a posh resort in northern Saskatchewan. You didn't clean your catch. A production line of Cree women did on stainless steel tables. When the fish were cleaned, they were packaged, numbered, and stored in walk-in freezers. It put the Fulton Fish Market to shame.

Today, the fish cleaning shack is a dying segment of a fishing camp. The catch-and-release philosophy is ever-increasing and is obsoleting the fishing shack. My visits to this facility were a most enjoyable time and an integral part of my fishing experience.

Always having a camera ready to hand is one of the first tricks that we learned as we began our career in the outdoor media, because who knows when that "perfect" photo opportunity is going to present itself. We have to be ready to capture the essence of the moment, don't we?

What about when we travel? Now my wife has been known to accuse me of trying to buy stock in Kodak or Fuji because of the amount of film that I carry around with me. She could be right because through experience I have found that one out of ten pictures will be of the quality that I can use for my articles or photo assignments. So yes, I take a lot of photos on my trips, whether they be for an assignment or just on vacation. In this series of three articles we are going to discuss such topics as what equipment you should take, how to transport it safely, protect it from theft, and how to limit potential x-ray damage to your film.

In order to guarantee the success of our photographic adventures we must insure that we are taking along the right equipment. For instance, what camera body and lenses will you need? Is this to be a black and white or color photo shoot? Should you shoot photographs or slides? What filters will you need and how many rolls of film should you lug along? You must be careful not to overburden yourself with inadequate equipment while insuring that you are capable of meeting the assignment's objectives.

A friend of mine is a staff photographer for one of the news services. A few years ago we covered an assignment in the Balkans together. Because of the need to travel light, all I took along was my Pentax PZ1P and my Nikon F5 camera bodies, three lenses each, 6 filters, sixty rolls of film and a camera/lens cleaning kit. This all fit nicely into my camera bag, which in turn fit nicely over my shoulder.

Mr. Staff Photographer meets me at the airport in New York with three suitcases stuffed to the gills with six camera bodies, fourteen lenses, twenty filters, two tripods, two hundred rolls of film, and who knows what else. He wasn't even able to carry all of his equipment by himself and required the help of a porter to get checked in. Then to make matters worse, the airline only allowed him one carry-on bag. Later, we found out that 2/3 of his film had been fogged by exposure to x-rays. Is this how you should travel? I think not.

Probably your first equipment decision will involve what camera/camera body to take along. I have found that as a good rule of thumb, unless you are going to a part of the world where equipment security is an issue, you should take your best camera along for an assignment. But don't rely on just one camera! What will you do if you are out in the bush, fifty miles from the nearest town, and your number one camera quits functioning? Fall back on your backup camera of course! Your backup camera doesn't have to be a top of the line model but should be adequate for the assignment. You might even consider a cheaper point and shoot SLR as a backup camera if it will suffice.

Your second equipment consideration should probably be the lenses you intend to take. In today's world of super lenses you can give yourself the versatility of a dozen lenses by packing one or two. For example, by packing 18-35mm, 28-70mm, and macro/zoom 80-400mm lenses, you now have the capability of shooting film in all of the ranges covered by these lenses. In this case that would be from 18mm to 400mm. This should be more than adequate for most assignments. The 18-35mm will cover the wide-angle shots while the 28-70mm will work for scenic shots and the macro/zoom 80-400mm will cover most "people" and long distance work. The latter will also serve for the "detail" work such as when filming flowers, insects, or coins.

Now I know there are those of you who are going to say that I have left out the fixed-focal-length lenses. If you want to lug one around be my guest. I have found that today's zoom lenses will produce pictures almost as sharp as a fixed-focal-length lens, at least close enough for most of my work. So my advice is to stick with the zoom lenses because they are more versatile, usually weigh less, and most of us cannot distinguish between the sharpness in the photographic results.

Regardless of whether you are traveling by vehicle or plane, you may be able to take along extra equipment because weight will not be as big a factor. Just remember to take into consideration how you will be traveling once you reach your destination. If your method of locomotion is going to be by foot or animal, then the extra weight may become an additional burden. In the case of Mr. Staff Photographer, the extra weight almost got him shot on our trip to the Balkans. I thought he was never going to quit crying over his camera case that got smashed by that Serbian Army personnel carrier.

What about a strobe? Now, before you answer this one let's think about it a minute. Will you need a strobe? I would emphatically say yes. The proper use of a strobe can often make or break a picture. For example, I often use a strobe to highlight the shadows in outdoor portrait shots, such as those taken with a hunting trophy, or when the distant recesses of a building's interior need enhancing.

With both my Pentax PZ1P and my Nikon F5 camera bodies I prefer to use a slave unit to enhance my shots. A slave unit is an external battery powered strobe that is triggered when another bright light source goes off, such as the internal strobe on your camera body. The extra light that a slave unit adds to my filming capability can be used to highlight those areas of the shot that require it. Bear in mind that almost any external strobe can be used as a slave unit. All you need to do is attach the proper slave circuitry, also known as a light sensitive photoelectric eye, to the strobe. It is this electric eye that sees the flash from the main strobe and activates the slave unit. But the best aspect of a slave unit is that it does not have to be attached to your camera. Therefore, it can be placed remotely so that you can take advantage of the added lighting capabilities.

If you prefer to use a point-and-shoot SLR as your main camera then the internal pop-up flash will have to suffice. Not only are most point-and-shoot cameras unable to accommodate an external flash because they do not have a shoe or plug, but there is also the weight factor to consider. After all, why would you want to lug around a strobe unit that probably weighs more than your point-and-shoot camera?

Next Issue: Film decisions and film protection.

Web Wanderings

by Phil Springer

I review web sites related to our fields of endeavor and interests. The links to these web sites and other resources are located on our web site, www.rmowp.org, under "Links and Resources". Please inform me of any other sites that you believe could be helpful to the membership of RMOWP. I will review them, and as Webmaster, I will post them on our web site. Please send the links to phil@rmowp.org.

WRITE FOR FALCON PUBLISHING

www.falcon.com

If you are an enthusiastic outdoors person with extensive knowledge of a particular outdoor pursuit (hiking, walking, rock climbing, mountain biking, fishing, or paddling) in your region and you have the ability to write with clarity and accuracy, you may be qualified to be a Falcon Guide author.

EDITING POSITIONS

Outdoorsite.com

www.deerhunters.com/p_index.html

OutdoorSite is looking for men and women who are interested in writing and researching for Outdoor Related information on the web.

OutdoorSite is looking for hardworking, dedicated individuals who are interested in becoming part of our fast-paced online outdoor group. We have full-time positions as well as part-time positions available.

OutdoorSite has been online since 1995 as a portal for other industry specific companies' web sites. Over the years, our format changed and developed into one of the strongest online outdoor communities. We have some of the most dedicated outdoor enthusiasts who participate within the pages of OutdoorSite on a day-to-day basis. We are made up of hunters, fishermen and outdoorsmen. Our reaches cover all aspects of the outdoor world and is ever expanding.

FORUMS

Nature.net

www.nature.net/forums/photo/#instruct

This basically a discussion group but has valuable information. This is not a very visually pleasing site, but the information looks good.

Nature Photography & Optics

www.nature.net/forums/photo/

This forum is for the discussion of techniques, equipment, locations and other aspects of nature photography and optics.

Bird Watching Forum

www.nature.net/forums/bird/

This forum is meant as a place for bird watchers to share their knowledge, their sightings and their favorite spots.

Hiking & Backpacking

www.nature.net/forums/hike/

This forum covers all aspects of hiking and backpacking, from favorite trails to advice on shoes, packs, and the all important snacks!

Rhetoric (ret'-or-ik)

by Craig Springer

I bet when you hear the word "rhetoric," you conjure up an image of a blue-suited politico, charging his opponent with saying something without meaning: "He says he'll support a concealed gun law, but I'm hear to tell you, it's all empty rhetoric."

That's most unfortunate. By today's standards, "empty rhetoric" is redundant. Rhetoric has come to symbolize a pejorative sense of inflated language, language with little meaning. I'm here to tell it is not.

Rhetoric as a study dates to before Christ. Aristotle taught Greeks in antiquity to be better communicators. Alexander The Great used his *On Rhetoric* to make persuasive appeals. While I don't expect any of us to rule over the masses, we often communicate to the masses, and we can and should be putting rhetoric to work in our writing.

It would take a tome to explain the all the branches and canons of rhetoric. But for pragmatic purposes, for *RMO*, I plan to focus on the figures of speech that rhetors have discovered over the last 2,300 years that delight the ear, and thus, serve to make communication more effective. In each issue of *RMO*, I'll write about different rhetorical fashions.

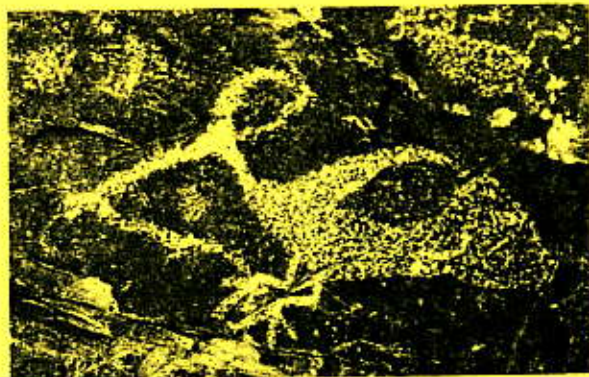
Repetition of words can be a particularly effective figure. Jefferson masterfully employed repetition in the Declaration of Independence in what amounted to a stinging indictment of King George's treatment of the colonies: "He has abdicated; He has plundered; He has obstructed."

Repeated words can be employed in clauses with intervening text. I wrote once on sage grouse, emphasizing their reliance on sagebrush: "To say that the shrub is important is grossly understated. The grouse eat it, they hide in it, they nest in it, and they perform their annual age-old courtship displays near it. Without sagebrush they cannot exist."

Another strategy of repetition that adds emphasis to your message, called anadiplosis, uses the same word at the end and beginning of adjacent clauses. From the first paragraph above: "Rhetoric has come to symbolize a pejorative sense of inflated language, language with little meaning."

Try to put these to work for you. You may not rule over Macedonia, but you'll be a better writer using rhetoric.

—Craig is an M.A. candidate in rhetoric and writing at the University of New Mexico.



Is it a bird? a rat? or maybe dinner?

Three Rivers Petroglyph Site

Photo by Don Laine

Supporting Member News

From John Kirk, Director of Communications, ISE

International Sportsmen's Expositions (ISE) announces the following acquisition, effective March 1, 2001: ISE has acquired the Denver Sportsmen's Show from O'Loughlin Trade Shows (OTS). The 2002 Galt Sports International Sportsmen's Exposition will be held January 24-27 at the Colorado Convention Center. ISE also announces that OTS has acquired ISE's shows in Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington.

With the recently approved expansion of the Colorado Convention Center to more than 600,000 square feet, ISE will, along with our sponsors and loyal exhibitors, create a regional event capable of drawing an unprecedented number of qualified customers to Denver for a world-class sportsmen's show. The Denver-show acquisition, along with ISE's successful expansion to Salt Lake City, Utah and Phoenix, Arizona, will allow us to continue providing upscale consumers with convenient access to the finest lodges, outfitters and manufacturers of outdoor equipment throughout key markets in the Rocky Mountains, the Southwest, and California.

Fly of the Bi-Month

by Phil Springer

This will be my first installment of a new column. I will provide the ingredients of a trout fly pattern for the RMOWP Newsletter. This bi-month it will be the "Poundmeister". Taylor Streit, a New Mexico fishing guide, developed this fly pattern. The pattern was originally tied to imitate Crane Fly Larvae. Taylor says, "they only catch big trout," and he is correct. The best water to use this fly pattern is the Rio Grande and Red River box canyon in the northern New Mexico Taos area; however, they have been used successfully on the San Juan River.



Hook: Tiemco (Umpqua) #200R, size 6-10
Thread: Black

Tie on a blue dun hackle at bend of hook past the barb.

Tie on 2 strands of pearl crystal flash at the same location.

Tie on 6 strands of peacock herl at the same location.

Palmer wrap gray chenille from the bend of the hook to near the hook eye then tie on a beaver fur overwrap to near the hook eye and tie-off with a half-hitch.

Pull the peacock over the top of the fly tight and tie-off (do not cut off the excess herl yet).

Palmer wrap the dun hackle to the eye of the hook. Tie-off and trim off hackle only.

Palmer wrap the crystal flash right behind the hackle to the eye of the hook. Tie-off and trim off.

Take the remainder of the peacock herl to form the head...tie off...trim...whip finish the head and you are ready to fish with your new fly.

To quote Taylor "...a pain to tie, but effective."

You should fish this pattern in deep runs and deep pocket water. Fish the fly on the bottom and be prepared to catch a large fish.