

Rocky Mountain Outdoors

the newsletter of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers & Photographers, Inc.

September — October 2016

2017 Conference Update!

By Don Laine

RMOWP is heading to southeast Arizona – and the community of **Sierra Vista** – for the 2017 conference, **Sunday, April 23, through Wednesday, April 26**. Plans are still in the formative stages – and there's way more to see and do in this area than we'll have time for – but because Sierra Vista and the surrounding area is a mecca for birders and bird photographers, especially at that time of year, we know we'll see an abundance of our feathered friends.

There will be both group field trips and on-your-own activities, in addition to our usual workshops, programs, meetings, and meals. We're also tentatively planning a **pre-conference bird photography workshop** with our own Tom Ulrich, plus some small-group jaunts to see the area's famed **elf owls**.

Among activities scheduled are a guided nature walk in the Nature Conservancy's **Ramsey Canyon Preserve**, a 380-acre streamside oasis of Arizona sycamore trees known for its diversity of plants and wildlife, including numerous birds, especially hummingbirds.



Fairbank Cemetery © Don Laine

There will also be a guided field trip to the ghost town of **Fairbank** with a walk up the hill to its cemetery, plus a nature walk along the San Pedro River, one of the last free-flowing rivers in the Southwest, in the **San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area**.

Other area attractions include the museums at **Fort Huachuca**, an active U.S. Army base established in 1877; **Kartchner Caverns State Park**, one of the most beautiful cave systems in America; and the Wild West towns of **Tombstone** ("The Town Too Tough to Die") and **Bisbee**, once "Queen of the Copper Camps."

Sierra Vista is south of I-10, about an hour-and-a-half from Tucson International Airport, and most of the areas we'll be exploring will be below 5,500-foot

elevation (just slightly higher than Denver and Albuquerque), making breathing easier for those whose bodies object to some of the high mountains we often visit.

More information, including lodging, meal, and meeting room details, will follow in future newsletters and emails and at www.rmowp.org.



Fairbank Schoolhouse © Barb Laine



Traditional Tombstone transportation. © Barb Laine

RMOWPers on Mt. Evans

At the instigation of Mary Kline, member from Pennsylvania, several RMOWPers put their heads together and organized a jaunt up Mount Evans (elevation 14,264 feet), west of Denver.

Emails bounced back and forth between Mary, Kenita and George Gibbins, and Jack Olson, the upshot being a jaunt up Mt. Evans with a picnic lunch before snow closes the road. Without telling Jack, Kenita contacted several other members in the Denver area to join them.

Cecilia Travis was the first to arrive, surprising Jack with the "coincidence" of like minds. But after Fred and Linda Lord and Maryann Gaug showed up, he got the picture. Although the road doesn't quite reach the summit, it does get you to an elevation of about 14,130 feet. The day was sunny and clear, but the air was breezy and quite cold – note the fresh snow on the ground and all the layers everyone had bundled on.



*Mary Kline, Cecilia Travis, Linda Lord, Maryann Gaug,
Jack Olson, Kenita Gibbins, Fred Lord
(photo taken by a friendly passer-by)*

Despite the chill, everyone had a great time, finally heading down to the Dos Chappell Nature Center (around 11,500 feet elevation), where they wandered about and found a few stalwart flowers flying their colors. Back on the road again, the group found space at a Denver Mountain Parks' picnic area on Squaw Pass. A trail took them to the perfect spot where they shared a delectable picnic, although the gray jay "camp robbers" seemed to believe the table was spread with a buffet especially for their enjoyment. So Mary distracted them with a bit of bread while Cecilia practiced her bird photography!

It's good to hear about RMOWPers getting together between conferences. Anyone else?



Distracting the "camp robbers"
© Cecilia Travis



*Milky Way Moon © Dan Bernskoetter
(3rd Place, Altered/Composite Images category,
2016 RMOWP Photo Contest)*

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Writer's Corner

The Name Game (Continued)

by Virginia Parker Staat

"I read in a book once that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but I've never been able to believe it. I don't believe a rose WOULD be as nice if it was called a thistle or a skunk cabbage." ~L.M. Montgomery, Anne of Green Gables

The candy-apple red Corvette sped by us, easily exceeding 90 miles per hour. We were just able to read the vanity license plate as it flew past: BYBYCOP. My guess is when this fellow ultimately gets pulled over for a violation, he will not be met with a generous and kind-hearted spirit.

With the 2016 RMOWP conference behind us, I continue to think about our workshop *The Name Game: Writing Effective Photo Titles and Captions*. (You can find the workshop handout online at <http://rmowp.org/2016/08/23/the-name-game/>.) Seeing those BYBYCOP tags reminded me of yet another simple truth about the titles we choose. Like the license plate, when we title a photo or written work, the name says as much about the author as it does about our art.

Psychologists have recently begun focusing on the titles we use to identify ourselves. As a result, a regular juror *voir dire* is "do you have a bumper sticker on your car and, if so, what does it say?" Why? A Colorado State University research study led by Dr. William Szlemko suggests that people with bumper stickers are more likely to be aggressive and angry people. Additionally, bumper stickers can reflect religious, political, or social dispositions that may play into a juror's decision-making process.

Names have power. The names we give our art are similar to the words we give our characters in fiction to show rather than tell who they are. As an example, can we easily imagine the personality of the BYBYCOP owner to be someone with attitude... defiance... audacity?

In our *Name Game* workshop, we examined several creative and clever photograph titles. Hiroh Kikai's portrait *A Polite Young Man Who Powders His Hands* offered a glimpse into Kikai's personality. Workshop participants concluded that the clever title expanded the photo, causing us to take a second glance, this time focusing on the young man's hands. Many were also curious about the photographer himself and why he chose such an odd name for his art. In an interview with Marc Feustel, Kikai said that he sees his captions and images intrinsically linked and that his goal is to give just enough information to set off questions in a viewer's mind.

Let's look at one of my photos and its title to see if the combination might expand my audience's view. I entered the digitized photo into this year's RMOWP contest. In an attempt to make a clever play of words with the title of the spoof western *Blazing Saddles*, I named the photo *All Blaze, No Saddles*. The photo felt humorous to me, with the horses posed like cowboys in an old western movie. A band of wild horses (led by a stallion named Cloud in Theodore Roosevelt National Park) stood hunkered together, staring out at me from prairie dog town. Each horse had a blaze from nose to forehead. I wanted the title to expand my audience's view from the quartet of horses to the distinct pattern of each horse's blaze.



*"All Blaze, No Saddles" © Virginia Staat
(Honorable Mention Altered/Composite Images Category
2016 RMOWP Photo Contest)*

Did my title evoke the desired effect? Probably not. The movie *Blazing Saddles* was released in 1974. How many in my audience would connect with the obscure reference? How many would know that the name of the facial marking on each of these horses is called a blaze? Would the title expand my audience's view to realize that these were wild horses rather than domestic stock? Did my title, like Hiroh Kikai's portrait, set off questions in viewers' minds? Therein lies the dilemma when naming our art. Unless our audience can connect with our worldview, humor, wit (or lack thereof), the title does nothing to enhance the photo and, instead, may simply cause confusion.

As we contemplate naming our art, we can conclude that titles are an art form in themselves. We can use titles to expand our audience's view, narrow the topic, shake their concept of normal, or leave them wondering. I certainly still wonder whatever happened to that guy with the BYBYCOP tags.

RMOWP Conferences The Early Years, Part V

Article & photos by Jack Olson

Our 17th annual conference in 1990 congregated at **Manitou Springs, Colorado**, in the shadow of Pikes Peak. But we got out of that shadow in a big, big way, chugging in the cog train to the summit of the peak. At 14,110 feet, this was one of the few times our hardy crew has breathed



RMOWPers set out to explore Cripple Creek

such thin air. The Air Force Academy sports teams are nicknamed the Falcons. We got to meet real falcons up close and personal, even timidly stroking their feathers. The Garden of the Gods in Colorado Springs is a geologic wonderland and we craned our necks strolling beneath the red rock features. Millions of years ago sequoia trees towered over a volcanic landscape to the west. Eruptions spewed volcanic ash, burying the trees, and remnant fossilized stumps dot the surface of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument.



"Watch it Russ (Bromby), falcons are partial to editor's fingers!"

In 1991 we headed north to the Cowboy State, **Casper, Wyoming**. We had one major outing---and it was a doozy. We started out at Independence Rock. I say "at.". We soon circled the huge granite dome searching out the many names carved in the rock by pioneers traveling the Oregon Trail. Wagon trains stopped at the nearby Sweetwater River to let their livestock get their fill before crossing the parched landscape to the west. Before long some of us clambered to the top of the 130 foot high monolith. But



Oregon Trail outrider keeps a sharp lookout for attack. managed by the

Morris Clark family. And off we rumbled on the original Oregon Trail. Wagons swayed as outriders kept us on the trail. We had a light picnic in a secluded canyon and listened intently to tales of the mid-nineteenth century emigrants' travails. We slowly wended back and feasted on a full-blown chuck wagon dinner. It was an experience for our book of all-time conference memories.



Deciphering the inscriptions on Independence Rock.

In 1992, **Park City, Utah**, was our conference site for the second time in ten years. We experienced an eclectic variety of activities. We trundled off to Browning Arms and tried our hand, and eyes, at trap shooting. I'd never attempted this event before and I think my first two shots ended somewhere in Idaho. But steadying my stance, I took careful aim and blew that little clay sucker away. My pride quickly faded as they gave us a chance at archery. I hoped the people in Idaho were still ducking. We spent some time on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, touring the Beehive House and attending a rehearsal of the Mormon Tabernacle Choir. Most exciting to me was a



Georgia Colao takes a long shot at the top of the gondola.



free hour to begin a family search in the Genealogical Library. In that hour I connected with a preacher descendant of my mother in the 1860s. We looked up at Bridal Veil Falls and then whipped high above in a gondola. All this, and then we

At Browning Arms, Kelly Gatlin (left) tries his hand at archery, while Becky Minor (below) takes a bead on her target in the trap shoot.

toured Robert Redford's Sundance conference center.

Farmington, New Mexico, was the site of our 20th annual conference in 1993. Culture was primarily the theme of the conference. We spent hours exploring, poking around and learning about the ancestral Pueblo community that flourished at Chaco Culture National Historic Park. Perhaps



Beto Gutierrez bellies down to get the perfect shot of Pueblo Bonito.

most dramatic is the sprawling Pueblo Bonito. We weaved in and out of doorways into concentric rooms. And, most thrilling, a few of us hardy, or foolhardy, souls scrambled up cliffs to peer down upon the vast pueblo. A second ancestral site we explored is Aztec Ruins National Monument. "Aztec" was a misnomer applied by later settlers in the area. We rode through the Navajo Reservation, past dramatic Shiprock, to an historic trading post in Arizona where we observed an exhibition of sand painting and purchased some Navajo artistry. A tour of the Bolack Wildlife Preserve and Museum capped off the conference.



Intrepid scramblers above Pueblo Bonito. Standing: Beto Gutierrez & an unknown. Front: Anne Sullivan, Dottie & Lee Carr.

New Knives Announced by Buck

Longtime RMOWP supporter **Buck Knives** has announced the mid-year release of several new products.

Unveiled at the Outdoor Retailer Show in Salt Lake City in August, the new knives include the **853 Small Selkirk**, a lightweight fixed blade knife that the company says will make a handy companion to its larger Selkirk knives as a quick access trail knife. Named for the Selkirk Mountain Range starting in Idaho, the 853 Selkirk features a contoured Micarta handle, 420HC steel blade, and a polypropylene sheath. Suggested retail price is \$70.

Also new in August is Buck's second automatic knife, the **896 RapidFire**, designed for everyday use. Constructed of premium S30V steel, the Rapidfire features a dual-action, removable thumb surface offering a choice between rapid-fire automatic opening or slow-opening with liner lock engagement. Suggested retail price is \$250. Buck also announced



Buck 853 small Selkirk knife

new handle coating options for its first automatic – the **898 Impact**, with suggested retail prices of \$225 to \$245.

The new lightweight **710 Volt** has a black oxide-coated 420HC steel upswept skinner blade, one-hand opening, and a red anodized aluminum handle with a stainless steel clip. Suggested retail price is \$55.

See www.buckknives.com for additional information.

Texas Wildlife Student Wins RMOWP Scholarship

Photos by Carlen Smith

Carlen Smith of Boyd, Texas (northwest of Fort Worth) has been awarded RMOWP's annual \$2,000 scholarship of to help her continue her education at Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas.



Ms. Smith is majoring in Wildlife, Sustainability, and Ecosystem Sciences, and after receiving

her B.S. degree plans to attend graduate school with the goal of becoming a wildlife researcher to explore ways to protect and improve the lives of the species that inhabit the world.

She tells us "It always seemed like being outside was the place for me. It didn't matter what I was doing, if I was outside, I

was happy. My family often took weekend trips out of town to have a picnic, to go hunting and fishing, to hike, or even just see what's new in a different neck of the woods... I have discovered my interests and developed my goals that will help me be a successful wildlife manager."



Ms. Smith is a member of the college's Wildlife Society and Future Farmers of America, and an accomplished pole vaulter.



2017 RMOWP Calendar

January 23 ~ Contest 2017 Deadline

April 23-26 ~ Conference in Sierra Vista, Arizona

May 30 ~ Scholarship deadline

June 20-24 ~ Photo Workshop in Rocky Mountain National Park

See www.rmowp.org for details

Current Lifetime Members

As reported in last month's *Rocky Mountain Outdoors*, RMOWP's board passed a measure granting free Lifetime Memberships to those who have been paid members for at least 25 years. Someone suggested it would be a nice idea to list those members so honored.

Therefore, following is a list of members currently qualifying for Lifetime Membership, in the order in which each joined the organization.

1974 – Dusty Fullinwider of South Fork, Colorado and Apache Junction, Arizona

1975 – Bob Hyde of Sterling, Colorado

1976 – Russell C. Bromby of Lakewood, Colorado

1977 – Jack Olson of Englewood, Colorado

1980 – Tom Bishop of Atlantic City, Wyoming and Warsaw, Missouri

1982 – Lee Carr of Cedaredge, Colorado and Tucson, Arizona

1983 – John R. Catsis of Silver City, New Mexico; Don Laine of El Prado, New Mexico

1985 – Dr. A.H. "Beto" Gutierrez of Edinburg, Texas

1987 – Buellah Bishop of Atlantic City, Wyoming and Warsaw, Missouri; Barbara Laine of El Prado, New Mexico

1989 – Dorothy Angela Hyde of Sterling, Colorado

1990 – Cecilia Travis of Golden, Colorado; R. Douglas Yajko M.D. of Glenwood Springs, Colorado

RMOWP also has two honorary members, as approved by the board many years ago: Ann Fitzwater of Albuquerque, New Mexico and Peg Mullen of Cedaredge, Colorado. Both of these women attended numerous conferences with their husbands (who were very active members) over the years and have been active supporters of the group as volunteers and in spirit. Many of us know them well and have missed them at more recent conferences.

Humorous Awards 2016

Judged by Virginia & David Staat

The MOSH (Most Obscure Sense of Humor) Award
to **Jack Olson** for "The challenges of photographing fast-moving signs."

The HS (Hercules Strength) Award
to **Linda Martin** for "Lighter cars get better gas mileage."

The AGNF (Ain't Going Nowhere Fast) Award
to **Frank Zurey** for "Clean and Jerk"

The SPT (State of Politics Today) Award
to **Dan Bernskoetter** for "When confusion reigns..."

The CHF (Chipmunk High Five) Award
to **Al Perry** for "Crouching Tiger Pose"

The FA (Frozen Assets) Award
to **Kenita Gibbins** for "New form of ice fishing"

The TAP (Taking a Peek) Award
to **Ken Papaleo** for "He certainly should consider shorts rather than a sweater."



"Lighter cars get better gas mileage."
© Linda Martin



"When confusion reigns..." © Dan Bernskoetter



"He certainly should consider shorts rather than a sweater." © Ken Papaleo

Minox Rifle Scope An Excellent Value

Article and photo by Mike Hammond

(Editor's note: Member Mike Hammond, through a proxy, bought the rifle scope donated to RMOWP by Minox for the auction at the Bryce Canyon conference, and wrote the following review.)

Not much can be added to the description or specifications that Minox's ZX5i 2-10x50 BDC rifle scope development team included in the user guide for this scope.



Mike's new scope mounted on his rifle.

The ZX5i, fitted with the Leupold Mark 4 base and rings made attaching this rifle scope to the Heckler-Koch 308 AR-15 style platform about as easy as you can get, making your friendly gunsmith's skills unnecessary to install the ZX5i scope to the rifle. After laser bore sighting the scope to the gun, it was time to head out the door, fire up the truck, make a stop for some ammunition and get to the gun range to finish the sighting-in process.

Shooting at the 25 yard target, making adjustments to the windage/elevation as necessary by turning the adjustment knobs, it took surprisingly few rounds of ammunition to have the rifle shooting 2 inches high and dead on the

center of the target. Several follow-up rounds showed how reliable and stable the internal parts were making some of the shot placements hard to find because of near identical entry points. Aligning the rifle scope to the one hundred yard target confirmed the workmanship and engineering that went into the Minox ZX5i, which was as stated in the users information booklet. Slowly firing five rounds, a 3/4 inch group top to bottom, left to right, was what was left on the target. Moving out to the two hundred yard target and firing five rounds, a 1 1/2 inch group was the end result. The ZX5i is capable of acquiring accurate point of impact placement at much greater yardage; that will have to be tested later at a rifle range set up for long range shooting.

I have not considered a Minox rifle scope in the past, mainly because I was satisfied with the performance of the other leading rifle scope manufacturer's products. When something has proven its reliability and performance in field conditions, especially when used to take the life of an animal or to win a shooting contest, change doesn't come easy. However, we don't depend on open sights as much as we used to, because something better, more reliable came along for us to use. That being said, I will take a chance from time to time and try other products and manufacturers like Minox.

After acquiring the ZX5i and testing the scope I am definitely looking at the Minox mid- and higher range of optics such as the ZE 5i 5-25x56 and the 5i TAC to replace some of my aging, well-used and trusted rifle optics. Give Minox a try for yourself. Dollar for dollar you will be hard pressed to find a better rifle scope.

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Thanks!

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