

Rocky Mountain Outdoors

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

March — April 2017

Arizona Here We Come



Mexican Jay © Linda Martin

RMOWP's **2017 conference** takes place in Sierra Vista, Arizona April 23 through 26. A tentative schedule is included with this newsletter, but there are a few things conference attendees should know.

Our friend Tom Ulrich passed away last month (see page 3). We will be dedicating the Sierra Vista conference to his memory, and in particular to a celebration of Tom's life. Time has been set aside for conference attendees to tell short anecdotes and stories about him.

During the conference we'll be spending

quite a bit of time outdoors, so good walking shoes are advised, and although there is usually little rain in southeastern Arizona in late April, it wouldn't hurt to bring along some rain gear just in case.

See the January-February newsletter and www.rmowp.org for complete details about the conference.



*Acorn Woodpeckers
© Linda Martin*



President's Column

Spring's Return

Article & photo by Kent Taylor

The mention of Spring's Return in early March may seem a tad premature for those of you in higher elevations where boots, gloves, and a good snow shovel are still within reach. Here on the plains of central Texas, however—a long ways from the Rockies—March and April's warming breezes lure the poet, painter, and photographer outside to witness this year's unfolding of wildflowers. There are plenty of front row seats available.

Thus, one of the real delights, to me, of being part of this organization is coming together at the annual conference to share and celebrate what we've found through the year that caught our attention. One can learn a great deal by seeing how others see the world and practice their craft of "noticing" whether through camera or pen. We are fortunate indeed!

We are fortunate, as well, to have some time set aside this year in Sierra Vista to remember our friend, Tom Ulrich. As you probably know, Tom died recently after a brief bout with a rare form of Leukemia. We will greatly miss Tom. He has been a good friend, mentor, instructor, and supporter of RMOWP for many years. Spring was his favorite time, of course, to follow the birds. It seems fitting, somehow, that we'll be meeting in a place known, in part, for its birding.

I look forward to seeing you there.



Wildflowers near Granbury, Texas

What to Bring to Conference

Each conference offers field trips and presentations unique to its locale, but there are some things we repeat. And some of those require your participation. Here is a checklist of what you should be bringing to the conference.

Writing for the Anne Sullivan Writers Forum

Your written work will be gently and positively examined with the purpose of finding ways to improve it. Works can include stories, poems, photo essays, or other formats with an outdoor theme. Participants should bring at least 12 copies of the work, and although the length of the works can vary, about 1,200 words or less would be best. It should not be your best work, but something you would like help with. Spectators are welcome.

Photos for the Photo Critique

Entertaining and informative for all, this program looks at photographs with an eye to how they could be improved. Those who want their shots critiqued should bring 3 to 5 digital images on a CD or flash drive.

Photos for Members' Choice Contest

Conference participants are the judges for this one. Members may submit one or two matted prints, either color or black and white, and the photos may have been taken at any time since the beginning of photography. Subject matter should be taken from any of the contest categories 1 through 10 in the contest rules. This includes altered/manipulated images (category 9). Print size is a maximum of 8 x 12 inches that is matted to a final size not to exceed 12 x 16 inches, and entries should not be framed. All entries will be voted on in one big category.

Donations for the Auction

The RMOWP Auction is not only a lot of fun but also raises some necessary funds for the organization. We'll be receiving donations from our corporate friends, but members' donations are also needed. Bring your own matted photos (maybe your Members' Choice Contest entries?), published books, craft and gift items, photo equipment, or

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whatever you find lying around the house, with the exception of spouses.



*"Early Spring Crocus" © Dan Bernskoetter
2016 Honorable Mention, Flora category*

2017 Conference Quick Reference

April 23-26 in Sierra Vista, Arizona

Registration form is online at <http://rmowp.org/conference-registration-form/>

The schedule (subject to change) is also online at <http://rmowp.org/conference-sessions-and-workshops/>

Headquarters is Sierra Suites (www.sierravistasuitesarizona.com; 520-459-4221). When you **call for reservations** be sure to tell them you are with RMOWP to get our rate of \$59 for a standard king and \$69 for an executive double queen room.

See www.rmowp.org for more details.

Member Obituaries

RMOWP recently lost two current members and a former charter member.

Thomas Ulrich, 68, of West Glacier, Montana, died February 10, just 39 days after being diagnosed with T-cell prolymphocytic leukemia, a rare but extremely aggressive form of leukemia.

A self-taught freelance photographer since 1975, Tom joined RMOWP in 1998, was an instructor at RMOWP's annual photography workshop from 1999 to 2008, photography judge for RMOWP's annual contest for many years, and presented numerous photography workshops at RMOWP's annual conferences.

Tom and his partner, Linda Martin, hosted the opening reception for RMOWP's 2014 conference at their cabin just outside the western boundary of Glacier National Park. Tom led daily photographic field trips into the park during the conference, and amazed conference attendees by getting them to exactly the right spots at the right times to see and photograph the park's wildlife.

Tom was highly acclaimed around the world for his nature photography skills, well known in the bird photography field, and published in *National Geographic*, *Montana Outdoors*, and numerous other magazines. Tom also published seven nature books.

For many years Tom led photographic tours to remote parts of the world, including the Galapagos Islands, Costa Rica, East Africa, and the Pantanal in Brazil. Additionally, he conducted photography seminars and workshops around the country. He won numerous awards for his photography, including the 1987 International Wildlife Photographer of the Year in the Mammal Behavior category.

Tom grew up on the South Side of Chicago, where he set high school swimming records that still remain unbroken, and later attended Southern Illinois University Carbondale on a swimming scholarship. He taught biological sciences for five years in southern Illinois before moving to Montana to fulfill his dream of becoming a wildlife photographer.

He is survived by life partner Linda Martin, two brothers, one sister, and seven nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his parents and a golden retriever named Bud, who he liked to call his "illegitimate son."

Memorial services will be held Saturday, March 11, 11:30 a.m., at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel parish in Darien, Illinois; Sunday, April 2, 2:00 p.m. at Fairfield Christian Church in Fairfield, Illinois; and a service will be planned for this summer in the Glacier National Park area of Montana.



Tom at 2011 Conference in Torrey, Utah © Jack Olson

Dorothy Hyde, 77, of Sterling, in the northeast corner of Colorado, died January 24. A member of RMOWP since 1989, Dorothy was born in Sterling, raised on a farm three miles north of the community, and attended a two-room schoolhouse. She worked for Skelly Oil Company in Sterling and had various positions in state and federal government, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Soil Conservation Service and the Colorado Probation Department.

Dorothy contributed to the newsletters of the Soil Conservation Service and National Probation Association, researched and wrote outdoor articles, and had published her photography. Her articles and photos took top honors in RMOWP's annual contest, and she was also a Photographic Society of America contest winner. One of her most notable works was a book on outhouses.

In addition to RMOWP, Dorothy was a member of the Sterling Camera Club, South Platte Writers Club, Sterling Elks Lodge (where she was named Sweetheart of the Year in 1979), and the Red Raspberry Tarts Red Hat Society. She enjoyed gardening, canning, flowers, cooking, reading, and photography.

Dorothy is survived by her husband Bob, who joined RMOWP in 1975 and is a past president. Survivors also include two daughters and a son. Even though they have been unable to attend recent conferences she and Bob have remained loyal members of RMOWP.

Services were held in late January at St. Anthony's Catholic Church in Sterling. Memorials may be made to the Dorothy Hyde Memorial Fund in care of Tennant Funeral Home, PO Box 1547, Sterling, Colorado 80751.

Former RMOWP member **Richard A. "Bud" Smith**, 78, of Ft. Collins, Colorado, died January 22 at his vacation home in Amado, Arizona. Bud, as he was known to his friends and family, was a charter member of RMOWP – meaning that although not an organizer of the group he joined before the first conference, held in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, in 1974. He remained a member through 2006.

Bud was born and raised in Greeley, Colorado and received a degree in journalism from the University of Colorado in Boulder. An avid photographer since the age of 15, during college he was the official photographer for the first graduating class of the newly formed Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs.

He was information officer with the Colorado Division of Wildlife for 36 years, and his photographs were published in *Life Magazine* plus statewide publications. He was also a wood artist and carver.



See "Obits..." on page 4

"Obits..." Cont. from p. 3

Survivors include his wife, Barbara Smith of Ft. Collins, son Brian of Amado, Arizona, and other relatives. A private memorial service is planned at the family farm in Fleming, Colorado later in the spring. To contact the family send cards or letters to the Smith family, PO Box 6355, Amado, Arizona 85645.

"If you haven't already adopted photography as a hobby it is because there must be a screw loose somewhere."

George Alexander Grant, first official National Park Service photographer.

Writer's Corner

Old Friends

by Virginia Parker Staat

"I love everything that's old – old friends, old times, old manners, old books, old wine."
~ Oliver Goldsmith

It's done... finished... *finito*. Last week we completed the library we have been building for over two years. The project was enormous. We knocked out a wall between the study and a poorly used storage closet. David was the carpenter, and I was the finisher. We had no design or plans, only an inspiration photo of a library alcove that I found in a magazine some fifteen years ago.

Now I'm unpacking 47 boxes of books. Each is filled with old and cherished friends. It felt like Christmas when I opened the box with childhood favorites like *Beautiful Joe* and *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. In the middle of my unpacking, I found our Christmas collection with treasures including *A Christmas Carol* and *The Littlest Angel*. I have carefully sorted literally hundreds of children's books, each a tribute to my first writing love. I've also rediscovered more fairy tale and mythology books than I can count... a collection from a once-dreamt-of master's degree. And, of course, five shelves are now chocker-block filled with writing reference books.

Amazingly, my increase from 21 to 32 shelves still cannot hold all the books I have collected over a lifetime. We have donated at least five boxfuls to our local library. I winced as I let each book go... even those that no longer fit with who I have become. In the words of Ernest Hemingway, "There is no friend as loyal as a book."

Obviously I am a true bibliophile. I love to fondle books. I love how pages yellow and spines break with age. I love the way books smell. I love the faint, crinkly sound

of pages turning. I love the taste of their beautiful words. Mostly I love how my books have molded and changed me over a lifetime of reading.

These books have also changed me as a writer. I find that reading is an indispensable part of my craft. As Roy Peter Clark says, writer's read for both form and content to stretch our interest and challenge our standards. In *Writing Tools*, Clark writes, "That's how smart writers continue to learn, by reading work they admire again and again to 'see how it works.'"

Writers read to analyze how other writers deal with structure, point of view, and voice. I go to my fairy tale collection to examine structure. I turn to F. Scott Fitzgerald for point of view and Eudora Welty for voice. If I want to add a spark of lyricism to my writing, I head straight to the shelf with Baylor's *Hawk*, I'm your Brother and Bunting's *The Man Who Could Call Down Owls*. I read stories by Clarissa Pinkola Estes to remind me how to show rather than tell. For down-to-earth wit, I read Erma Bombeck. For beautiful words in outdoor writing, I turn to Matthiessen and Thoreau. For writing inspiration, I always begin with Ann Lamott, Madeline L'Engle, or Katherine Paterson.

The best part about finishing the library is now I know exactly where each book resides. My old friends seem happy in their new home... and so am I.



The new library

2017 RMOWP Photo Workshop

When: June 20-24 in Rocky Mountain National Park

Cost: \$1145 if you register before April 1
\$1295 after April 1 (lodging & meals are extra)

Maximum number participants: 10

Three Instructors: Jared Gricoskie, Fred Lord, Nic Showalter

See www.rmowp.org or
www.rockyphotoworkshop.com for details

Heads up turkey lovers: John Thornton tells us "A large flock of wild turkeys is using our backyard for their mating display. I took some video of them several days ago. Thought you might like to view it... click on [or copy] the following link."

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/pgin1a294t6shet/Tom%20Turkeys.MOV?dl=0>

Book Review by Barbara Laine

Immigrants' Son — Their Stories & Mine

A great story-teller with a crisp, journalistic style, RMOWP member and past president **John Catsis** has written the story of his life, in which he looks back at his Greek heritage, the numerous places he's lived and left, and his varied career in broadcast journalism, primarily television news.

The memoir, just now arriving on bookshelves, opens with John falling down a flight of stairs when he was just a year old (an occurrence on which he blames his attention deficit disorder), and tells of his high school dream of becoming a play-by-play sports announcer. At age 17, he landed a job at a local Chicago radio station — as a custodian! That, however, led to engineering remote broadcasts, and then he convinced the station's owner to let him do his own 15-minute program on high school basketball.

Throughout *Immigrants' Son — Their Stories and Mine*, Catsis cleverly mixes personal details with major national events — race riots, Vietnam War resistance, political assassinations, Watergate — all of which he was reporting. His career took him all over the country, from Chicago to Mason City, Iowa; Mankato, Minnesota; Portland, Maine; Philadelphia; and Farmington, New Mexico. During a stint at a TV station in Houston, Texas in the early 1960s Catsis covered President John F. Kennedy's visit to that city. That was the day before Kennedy's assassination in Dallas.

We also learn about John's father, a sailor in the Greek navy who jumped ship in New York harbor, beginning his life in America as an illegal immigrant; and John's mother, who had a habit of — shall we say, not always paying for the items she acquired at local stores. John met his wife Connie during his time in Houston, marrying her just two weeks after they met.

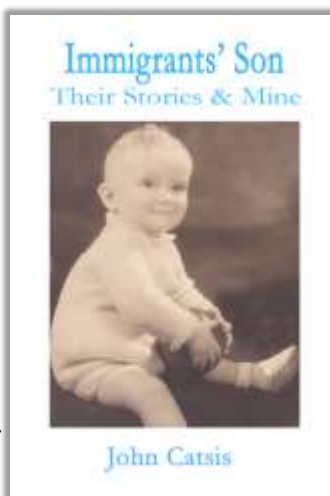
In the summer of 1990 he turned to academia, settling in Stillwater, Oklahoma as a journalism professor at Oklahoma State University. By mid-2001, John was contemplating retirement and Connie was completing her Ph.D in interior design and creativity. Then Connie got a job teaching at Arizona State University, John left teaching, and they moved to the Phoenix area.

There John took up knitting — wait, no, that's not right —

he started writing his novel *Fulltimers*, played golf, and taught a night class. Then, in a return to his first love he worked as sports announcer for a local high school and community college. Today John and Connie live in Silver City, New Mexico, happily ensconced in their creatively eclectic home, amid trees and shrubs, where deer wander the grounds in search of tasty tender greenery.

This book — what we might call the life and times of John Catsis — is especially intriguing because of its universality. Here's a working class kid — the son of immigrants — who works his way up the ladder of life. John gives us the bad as well as the good, written as a true journalist would. His inclusion of historical events such as the JFK assassination are of special interest to those of us who are old enough to remember exactly where we were when we heard that shocking news.

John's book is an enjoyable and easy read. I highly recommend it.



Buck Announces New Knives

Buck Knives, a longtime supporter of RMOWP, has announced several new products, including a 75th anniversary edition of the **119 Special**, Buck's most popular sheath knife. Gaining fame during WWII, the original 119 Specials were designed for U.S. soldiers, made from surplus files and recycled airplane canopies. The anniversary edition knife has a six-inch clip, 420HC steel blade with an anniversary stamp. In addition, the knife handles feature a 75th anniversary medallion, and the knife comes with a leather sheath. MSRP ranges from \$96 to \$136.

In addition to the anniversary edition 119, Buck is releasing a limited edition historical collectors' set featuring five 119 Specials, each knife representing a specific time period in the knife's evolution, from 1942 to the present.

Buck has also announced that a new version of its **110 Folding Hunter** is being released as an automatic knife. The blade is powerfully deployed by pushing a button, but otherwise the knife resembles the original 110 Folding Hunter and locks the blade open. It is packed in a leather sheath and the MSRP is \$200.

The new **328 Graduate** is a sleek, lightweight gentleman's folding knife with a burlwood handle, one-hand opening, and locking blade. MSRP is \$40.

For information on all of Buck's knives and other products, see www.buckknives.com.



Sites to See Around Sierra Vista

Article & photos by Maryann Gaug

During our Sierra Vista conference, activities will take us to many remarkable places around Sierra Vista: Ramsey Canyon, San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area (RNCA), Fairbank ghost town, and Tombstone. If possible, spend two to three extra days before or after the conference exploring some of the other beautiful areas in southeastern Arizona.

I highly recommend visiting **Kartchner Caverns State Park**. Located about 20 miles north of Sierra Vista, the decorated upper cavern opened to the public in 1999 followed by the beautiful lower cavern in 2003. Word of caution: Photography, including cell phones, is NOT allowed in the caverns. While we are in Sierra Vista at the end of April, only the Rotunda/Throne Tour will be open. This guided tour is 0.5 mile long on paved trails and takes about 1.5 hours. Wheelchairs are available for anyone who may need one.

Cavern features include cave teeth, cave bacon, a big muddy room with the discoverers' original trail, 45,000-year old bat guano, and Kubla Khan (the largest column in Arizona). I've been in many caverns and these formations are truly wonderful. A tram takes you from the visitor center to the cavern entrance. I was very impressed at how well the caverns are cared for and protected.

The pleasant campground offers electric hookups and restrooms with showers. Enjoy lunch in the picnic area and hike the loop trail through the desert landscape. The ocotillo and other desert plants should be in full bloom about the time we're there. The Visitor Center includes a video about the discovery and development of the caverns, fossils from the area, and displays about cave geology. A little café provides food and drink. Signs in the hummingbird garden identify common area plants. Over 60 species of birds can be found in the park. (See www.azstateparks.com/kartchner/.)

For a glimpse of Mexico and more birding opportunities, head about 20 miles south of town to **Coronado National Memorial**, which interprets the Coronado expedition of 1540 – 1542 and the interactions with Native

Americans. After stopping in the Visitor Center for a map and information, drive the narrow, twisty, and possibly washboard road up Montezuma Canyon to Montezuma Pass in the Huachuca Mountains. The scenery makes the drive worthwhile! The pass parking lot is just north of the Mexican border and offers far-reaching views. You may also find the Border Patrol there. A gentle one-mile round trip interpretive trail leads 300 feet to the top of Coronado Peak, 6,864 feet elevation. Views include the San Rafael Valley to the west, and Sonora, Mexico and the Sierra Madre to the south. To the east the green ribbon of the San Pedro River cuts through the desert as does part of the existing border fence. (See www.nps.gov/coro.)

Two places on my list for conference include the **Murray Springs Clovis Site**, not far from San Pedro House which we will be visiting. Ancient peoples camped here between 12,000 and 13,000 years ago. A 1/3-mile-long interpretive trail leads you through the area where remains of several bison, a mammoth, camel-like and horse-like animals were discovered along with stone tools and artifacts. Farther south in the San Pedro RNCA is the **Lehner Mammoth-Kill Site** featuring more mammoth bones and Clovis culture artifacts.

For birders in particular, two places to visit include **Patagonia-Sonoita Creek Preserve** and **Patagonia Lake State Park**. The Nature Conservancy Preserve is about 50 miles north and west of Sierra Vista near the quirky little town of Patagonia.

More than 300 bird species migrate through and live in the Sonoita Creek riparian area. For those who aren't



*Riparian area in Patagonia-Sonoita Preserve
(Nature Conservancy)*

into birding, a loop trail through the Preserve meanders among various types of vegetation which seem out of place in this dry country, past 130-year-old, 100-foot-tall cottonwood trees. Adjacent to the Preserve is the Paton Center for Hummingbirds. Another 12 miles west is Patagonia Lake State Park, which has a nice campground, swim area, beach, picnic area, and birding trail along Sonoita Creek. The path winds along the lake then next to little Sonoita Creek with opportunities to watch birds and waterfowl. For wine lovers, a number of vineyards and wineries are located south of Patagonia in Elgin. (See www.patagoniaaz.com.)

The area surrounding Sierra Vista is beautiful and a mecca for migrating birds. Make some time to explore it!



*View from atop Coronado Peak in Coronado National Memorial
looking south into Sonora, Mexico*



Taken at Kartchner Caverns State Park — distant view of
Sierra Vista and the Huachuca Mountains

New Members

RMOWP has gained four new members since the beginning of the year. Additional personal information, including email addresses and phone numbers, on these and all current members can be found in the password-protected membership directory at www.rmowp.org. (If you've misplaced the log-in info, email info@rmowp.org.)

A retired wildlife biologist, **Robert Luce** of Sierra Vista, Arizona is a writer & photographer. Bob combines his love and knowledge of the outdoors with his mystery writing skills in several novels, including *Outlaw Creek* and *Disappearance Creek*. He has also published a photo/essay book, *River of Life*. Other interests include backpacking and hiking, hunting and wildlife, and travel. Bob plans to attend the 2017 conference in April, so we'll be able to welcome him personally to the group. In the meantime, check out his website, www.rjluce.com.

Ann Lukacs of Breckenridge, Colorado joins our ranks as our 2017 video judge for the annual contest. Ann has been working in the motion picture industry for over 30 years on major feature films – check out her credits at www.imdb.com. Her documentary experience includes the award-winning feature-length film "Behind the Chutes... a story of professional rodeo bareback riders" (see www.behindthechutes.com). It received national press and won several awards, but most impressive, cowboys acknowledge it as the best representation of their lifestyle. Visit www.thunderovereurope.com to see more of Ann's work.

Ian King of Conway, Arkansas has attended several recent conferences with his wife Cindy Thornton as guests of Cindy's father, RMOWP member John Thornton, of Stillwater, Oklahoma. Ian is the author of a number of academic publications, the most recent being *The Political Theory of Darwinism: Zoon Politikon and the Evolutionary Case for Social Democracy*, plus several novels, including *Leaves in the Wind: A Novel of the Dirty Wars*.

He is also a photographer, artist, and lecturer.

Michael Salomone of Vail, Colorado, is a photographer, writer, lecturer, artist, graphic designer, web designer, and an Orvis-endorsed professional fly fishing guide with Vail Valley Anglers. Michael is also a professional blog writer and art teacher. His articles and photos have appeared in *Southwest Fly Fishing*, *Eastern Fly Fishing*, *Fly Rod and Reel*, and *The Pointing Dog Journal*. He is married to Lori Salomone, and says that in addition to fishing with his daughters he likes big game, bird, and waterfowl hunting. See www.michaelsalomone.com.

2017 RMOWP Calendar

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

Waging Peace

By Kenita Gibbins

Every other year I go to teach English to village children in Poland who otherwise have little or no chance of hearing native English speakers. We actually teach the Queen's English, since their curriculum comes from England. What is strange to me is that the students are taught to use only can – not "may I" and "yes you can." In May 2015, I went for the seventh time to serve as a Global Volunteer (GV). The organization headquarters is in St. Paul, Minnesota and has stations in many places around the world including the United States. Not all locations teach English. Some volunteers do manual labor. We always work side by side with the natives.

Our expenses can be deducted from our income taxes. It is my way of waging peace by showing my students Americans do care about them

This visit six Global Volunteers were given permission to miss a day of classes, go to a lecture and have three meals with other groups staying at the Manor House called Reymontowka. Since we are adventurers, we turned over our passports for inspection with little questioning. We were told that a background check was necessary for joining this conference. We weren't told how the conference called The Communication & Education Conference came to be, except that the professors gather every year in different countries to discuss how best to educate their university students. The conference people, who have nothing to do with GV, wanted to know what we do in the United States. The participants were from Russia, Belarus,

See "Waging..." on p. 10

Jacks Jaunts

“You Know, Jack...”

By Jack Olson

My friend, Joanne, can be so sweetly devious. When she softly utters the gentle words, “You know, Jack...”, I’m on high alert for what’s coming next. Those will be my marching orders. It may have to do with an idea for how I can make a change in my lifestyle or do something better. The thing is, she’s always right.

So, about twenty years ago, I’m just happily enjoying my life one day, talking with Joanne on the phone when she abruptly changes the subject and interjects, “You know, Jack...”

Here it comes.

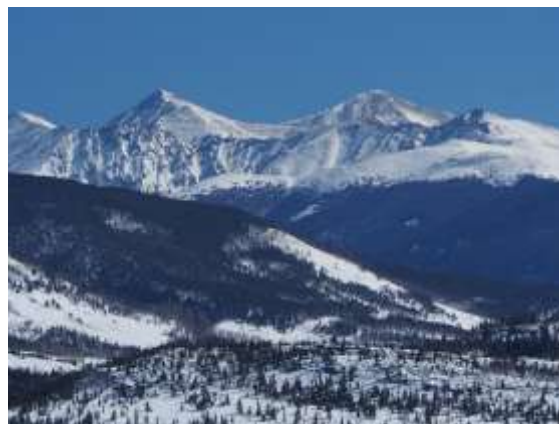
“I think Allison might like to climb a fourteener with you,” she said. Hmm, I hadn’t thought of that. When Joanne’s daughter was a little girl she and I would scramble in the cliffs at sunrise out at the Pawnee Buttes while the others were still in their tents. But I really hadn’t initiated much with her in recent years.

Allison was now in her late teens, starting college. She was really grown up. We used to be so close but the high school years had separated us somewhat. I wondered if she’d really want to do this. I wondered if she could climb to 14,000 feet. But Joanne had always been right. I wondered what was holding me up. So I called Allison.

I guess I should have realized that Allison wouldn’t sound too surprised. She was very excited and asked where we would go, and when. I suggested Grays Peak, close to Denver. At 14,270 feet it is the ninth highest in Colorado and highest on the Continental Divide in North America. It would be eight miles round trip and an elevation gain of a little over 3,000 feet. I wasn’t going to start her on a piddly peak.

We left early and were at the trailhead in not much over an hour. We began our trek alone. The first three miles of the trail climbed gradually but steadily through a landscape of rocks and tundra, carpeted with thousands of wildflowers in July. We were overjoyed by alpine sunflowers, Indian paintbrush, chiming bells, sky pilots, marsh marigolds, rose crowns and a hundred other species. It was a glorious alpine garden.

Then the garden met a jumble of rock and a steeper climb ensued. Rocks took over much of the tundra and the



Grays Peak in winter from the I-70 overlook near Frisco. Grays is the slightly rounded peak on the right, with Torrey Peak on the left.

© Maryann Gaug

climb turned from gradual to relentless. Switchbacks kept the pace tolerable and we could continue our chatter. It looked like it would be rock to the top, with us alone to marvel at the sweeping views as we climbed higher and higher. Us alone.

Not quite. We trudged over a slight rise and stopped in our tracks. Right before us slowly ambled four large mountain goats. We weren’t expecting that and were stunned and amazed. I had always loved the mountain goats I occasionally met in the high country but Allison had never encountered any in the wild. We stood as still as we could and just watched them graze in the tundra.

We finally left the goats and strode on upward. When you are climbing the highest mountain eventually you can see everything in all directions. With every step the top of the peak got closer and closer. Soon, there was no other step to take. We had summited. I gave Allison a big hug for her first fourteener. Another climber reached us and took our picture for posterity.

Allison would go on to climb many more peaks. She would become my climbing partner for several years. We have maintained this close friendship which was strengthened up high. It’s one beautiful memory I hold in my life, and it all began with, “You know, Jack...”



Allison meets the goats

© Jack Olson



Arrival—Jack and Allison relax atop Grays Peak

Photo courtesy Jack Olson

RMOWP Conference 2017 – Sierra Vista, Arizona – Tentative Schedule Meetings & Group Meals at Sierra Suites except as noted.

Sunday, April 23

- 7:00am *Half-Day Bird Photography Field Trip* with Linda Martin (full)
- 1:00pm Board of Directors Meeting (open to all members)
- 4:30pm Welcome, Handouts & Last Minute Info - President Kent Taylor & Friends
- 5:00pm Registration, Opening Reception, Happy Hour and Light Buffet
- 7:00pm *Presentation of Contest Submissions*

Monday, April 24

- 8:15am Carpool to Fairbank ghost town & cemetery
- 9:00am Guided Fairbank Tour with San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Area Docent
- 11:00am Depart for Tombstone for lunch on your own.
- 1:00pm Meet at Tombstone Courthouse State Historic Park for *Guided Walking Tour*
- 6:00pm Dinner Buffet (meatloaf & baked chicken)
- 7:00pm *"Fred's Photography is for the Birds"* with Fred Lord
- 8:00pm *Showcase of Selected Members Photography* with Jack Olson & Friends

Tuesday, April 25

- 5:00am *Sunrise Photo Shoot* with Jack Olson
- 8:15am Carpool to Ramsey Canyon Preserve
- 9:00am Guided Walk in Ramsey Canyon with Nature Conservancy Docent
- 12:00pm Lunch Buffet (soup with chicken & pasta salads)
- 1:00pm General Membership Meeting
- 1:30pm *Anne Sullivan Writers Forum* with Kenita Gibbins
- 3:30pm *"Bringing Stories of the Natural World to Life"* with Beth Orozco
- 4:30pm Break
- 4:45pm *"Creating a Photo Essay"* with Virginia Staat
- 5:45pm Break
- 6:00pm Dinner Buffet (Italian specialties – Florentine-stuffed shells with marinara sauce & chicken fettuccini Alfredo)
- 7:00pm *Photo Critique* with Fred Lord and Jack Olson
- 8:00pm *Tom Ulrich – A Celebration of His Life* with Kent Taylor and Al Perry



Tom Ulrich and Linda Martin
(2007 conference in Colorado Springs)
© Al Perry

Wednesday, April 26

- 6:30am Carpool to San Pedro House for 7am guided Birding Walk
OR
- 7:30am Carpool to San Pedro House for 8am guided River Walk
- 10:30am Brunch at San Pedro House (breakfast sandwiches, potatoes, fruit, yogurt)
- 12:00pm *"The Birds and Beasts of Tanzania"* with Ron Belak
- 1:00pm *"Introduction to Video"* with Al Perry
- 2:00pm Afternoon Snacks
- 2:15pm Auction
- 6:30pm Happy Half Hour
- 7:00pm Banquet Buffet (chicken cordon bleu & roasted pork loin) and Awards Ceremony

Thursday, April 27

- 7:00am *Half-Day Bird Photography Field Trip* with Linda Martin (full)

"Waging..." from p. 7

Ukraine, Bulgaria, Hungary, Lithuania and Poland. In the brochure, I was described as "M.Sc Kenita Gibbins (Museum in Denver, Colorado USA) The art as a medium of communication." I figured that sounded pretty good.



On the road to Debin.

The Poles jumped off the bus to shift the tree out of the way.

Reymontowka's manager frequently hosts diplomats from many countries. My GV team had been invited to participate in the exchange of ideas about education and observe. I've always felt the county-owned manor house is a safe, isolated place. Many ideas regarding important issues like education and agricultural endeavors find solutions there. The conference afforded my first diplomatic trip outside of Reymontowka. Global Volunteers in Poland are frequently invited to learn from people in government work.

I have about 20 Polish words. I know no words in the languages of the other countries. Fortunately, most of them know some English. Smiles, music, dance, and vodka are barrier breakers.

The Communication & Education Conference field trip participants boarded two buses to go to the Polish Air Force and Aviation Academy in Deblin two hours away. This was a first for Global Volunteer teachers; not many Americans have ever been invited to view the Academy.

The Polish Air Force is trained here, hence the NATO connection. We saw why our passport inspections were necessary. I did know the Polish military people are strong allies of the United States. The program also includes training for commercial pilots.

Bartek, a former Global Volunteer student, greeted us. Bartek wishes to be a commercial pilot. He acted as our interpreter as his English was excellent. The day consisted of a tour of the facilities, including a lecture about the program. We saw a mock traffic control room, multiple simulators for different types of aircraft including helicopters, training apparatus for extreme conditions of speed flight, a swimming pool and a video overview of the academy. After lunch we were invited to see an outdoor museum of retired airplanes.

I felt excited and oh so lucky about this incredible opportunity. It did run through my mind that I was with people from countries that had been enemies of my country. Maybe our governments are still enemies, but this I know: *as people we are friends with one common goal—to be the best educators possible.*

As long as I continue to draw breath I will wage peace.



"Over the Edge" © Terry Guthrie

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