

Rocky Mountain Outdoors

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

November—December 2018

Best of Show 2018



Photography

Laurie Ford —

"Return to Freedom"

Composition, color, lighting, mood, animals. All the factors are beautiful and right. It has everything and imparts a wonderful feeling of peace to the viewer.

— Fred Lord, photo judge

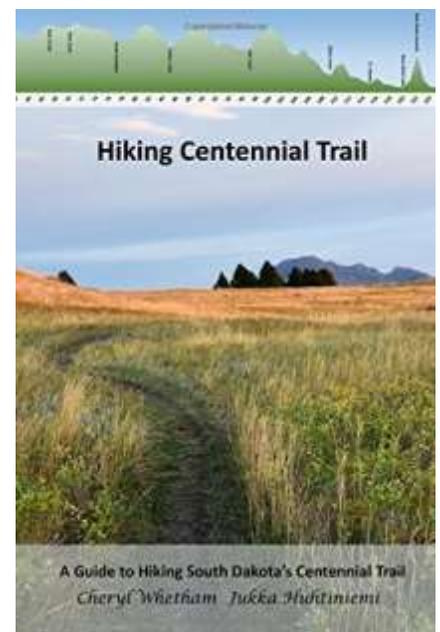
Writing

Cheryl Whetham — "Hiking Centennial Trail"

CreateSpace, 2018

"A well-organized, practical hiking guide loaded with useful information and first-hand insight from the authors. Nicely illustrated with color photos and maps. This guide creates a sense of discovery by profiling a great trail in a state (South Dakota) not usually known for its hiking."

— Mary Taylor Young, writing judge



2019 Conference Dates Announced

See page 12.

Contest Judges

Photography Judge - Fred Lord

Fred Lord is a long-time resident of Colorado. From the age of twelve he developed an early love of photography, mostly of landscapes and nature, packing along a 35mm rangefinder camera during parts of his youth. He received an Associate of Commercial Art degree from Denver Community College and worked in the advertising and promotion arenas for several years. After working for several television stations in the Denver area, he struck out on his own as a commercial photographer, specializing in television promotion and architectural photography. In 2003 he and his wife Linda moved to Summit County to pursue their dream of living high in the Colorado Rockies. Fred's long-time interest in nature and landscape photography reasserted itself and, with a new commitment to photography, he again struck out on his own with the intent of honing his photographic skills to an even finer edge. He shoots with high-end Canon digital-capture cameras, and in recent years he has been photographing large-print panoramic views that have taken his art in new directions. Now living in Fort Collins, Colorado, Fred's main interests are in making archival fine art prints on the most current giclée printers, and he hopes to continue developing his photography and printing skills, especially as



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they might be applied to displaying the extraordinary beauty of nature and her creatures.

Writing & Books Judge - Mary Taylor Young

Award-winning Colorado writer Mary Taylor Young has been writing professionally for over 30 years. She has published seventeen books and hundreds of articles in periodicals such as *Ladies Home Journal*, *Outside*, and *Wildlife Conservation*. Two of Mary's books have been regional bestsellers and three have been finalists for the Colorado Book Award. Her titles include *The Guide to Colorado Mammals*, *Colorado Wildlife Viewing Guide*, and *Land of Grass and Sky: A Naturalist's Prairie Journey*. Her latest book, *Rocky Mountain National Park: The First 100 Years*, is the centennial history of the national park. In 2012, Mary was an Artist in Residence in Rocky Mountain National Park. She writes from her home in Castle Rock, Colorado, where she lives with her family and many wild neighbors.



Video Judge - Ann Lukacs

Ann Lukacs fell in love with photography at an early age. She has been working in the camera department in the motion picture industry for almost 40 years, and her industry experience coupled with her knowledge of living in the mountains has unwittingly realigned some of her work to location scouting. In addition to contributing to major studio feature films, she works as an independent filmmaker. She has produced an award-winning documentary, "Behind The Chutes," telling the story of rodeo bareback riders, and produced "Thunder Over Europe," a documentary about the crew of a B-17 during WWII. Working as a filmmaker has given her the experience of storytelling and how to combine all the various elements of production to create the final film. Ann sits on the Board of Arts For Colorado, a state advocacy organization supporting Colorado Creative Industries. She has also been involved with promoting film production to Colorado.



Contest Winners Announced at Conference

About 500 entries – still photos, videos, and written works – were submitted for RMOWP’s 2018 contest, according to contest chair Frank Zurey. He said these came from 26 RMOWP members, with an increase in still images and videos but a drop in written works, compared to most recent years.

Judges were Fred Lord for still photos, Mary Taylor Young for the written entries, and Ann Lukacs for video (brief bios of the judges appear on page 2). In addition, Virginia and David Staat of The Woodlands, TX, prepared the presentation of humorous images, Maryann Gaug of Silverthorne, CO, oversaw the Member’s Choice competition and read the script for the awards presentation, and Fred Lord prepared the award certificates.



Contest winners at conference... © Don Laine

*Down in front: Kent Taylor, Dan Bernskoetter, Jack Olson, John Thornton, John Hanou, Maryann Gaug
Standing: Robert Bossard, Scott Meril, Ron Belak, Frank Zurey, Bill Horton, David Staat, Virginia Staat,
Peter Kummerfeldt, Bob Luce, Joanna Gray, Laurie Ford*

(Ed. Note: A point that Bill Horton made in his conference photography workshop is that we should never, and he emphasized never, line up people against a wall—looks too much like the setup for a firing squad—for a group shot. He humored us for this photo as you can see but he doesn’t look too happy about it!)

RMOWP Loses Two Longtime Members

Ann Fitzwater, 97, of Albuquerque, died October 12 after a short illness. She became involved with RMOWP because of her husband Bill’s interest in photography. Bill passed away in February 1999, but Ann continued attending RMOWP conferences and maintained many friendships with the group’s members.

Her family likes to tell this story of when Ann and Bill were living in Davis, California. Ann, who was a nurse, was working for an orthopedic surgeon who happened to be a friend of actor Clint Eastwood. One day Eastwood dropped in at the doctor’s office, bearded and wearing scruffy clothes. She had no idea who Eastwood was and later asked her son, who told her that Eastwood was a big movie star. Ann’s response: “Well, he dresses like a bum.”

Services were held in Albuquerque October 27, and she was interred with Bill at the National Cemetery in Santa Fe. Survivors include her five children, 11 grandchildren,

and 27 great grandchildren (at last count, the family adds).

RMOWP recently learned that member **Margaret “Peg” Mullen**, 91, of Cedaredge, in western Colorado, died March 21. Peg came to RMOWP with her husband Allen “Al,” who was a charter member of RMOWP and served two terms as chairman of the board of directors.

Peg remained active in the organization after her husband’s death in April of 1996, and accompanied Ann Fitzwater on a trip to China. A native of Portland, Oregon, Peg spent much of her childhood in Los Angeles before earning a bachelor’s degree from Oregon State University. She married Al Mullen in 1948. Peg was known for her great sense of humor, work with a local museum, and her love of reading – she was a member of the Happy Bookers Book Club in Cedaredge.

Survivors include three sons, two grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.

Photography Winners

01 Images from Last Conference

- 1st Beto Gutierrez "Woody"
- 2nd Frank Zurey "Lazuli Bunting"
- 3rd Ron Belak "A Long Way Down"

02 Scenics

- 1st Laurie Ford "Return to Freedom"
- 2nd William Horton "Haystack Rock at Cannon Beach"
- 3rd Robert Bossard "Stairway to Heaven, Milky Way, Davis Mountains, Texas"

Honorable Mention

Frank Zurey "Anchor & Ogive Glaciers"

03 Flora

- 1st William Horton "Dried Chinese Lantern"
- 2nd Kent Taylor "Tulip Sunrise"
- 3rd John Hanou "Frost Detail, Merced River, Yosemite National Park"

Honorable Mention

Beto Gutierrez "Bottle Brush"
 William Horton "Anemone Nemorosa"



"Frost Detail, Merced River, Yosemite National Park"
 John Hanou 3rd place, Flora category

04 Fauna

- 1st Beto Gutierrez "Cooling Off"
 - 2nd Laurie Ford "Onaqui Dawn"
 - 3rd Beto Gutierrez "Take Out"
- Honorable Mention**
 William Horton "In Formation"
 Dan Bernskoetter "Egret Grooming"
 David Staat "Texas Gladiators"



"Cooling Off" Beto Gutierrez
 1st place, Fauna category

- Peter Kummerfeldt "Escorting a Lady"
- Peter Kummerfeldt "Screech Owl"
- Joanna Gray "Wet Paint"

05 People in Nature

- 1st William Horton "Bicyclists Below the Bluffs"
- 2nd Laurie Ford "People in nature"
- 3rd Beto Gutierrez "Kayaking in Gulf"

Honorable Mention

Beto Gutierrez "Cuban Life"
 William Horton "Fisherman at Duncan's Landing"

06 Historical

- 1st William Horton "Wild Cat Bridge in Oregon"
- 2nd Beto Gutierrez "Jamestown Clock Maker"
- 3rd William Horton "Conestoga Wagon Recreation"

07 Cultural

- 1st Ron Belak "Market Day in Ecuador"
- 2nd John Hanou "July 4th Fireworks on the Severn River, Severna Park, Maryland"
- 3rd Ron Belak "Travel in Ecuador"

Honorable Mention

Beto Gutierrez "Cuban Dance Troupe"

08 Natural Phenomena

- 1st William Horton "Shoshone Falls with Rainbows"
 - 2nd William Horton "Elk Mountain beyond the Virga"
 - 3rd Robert Bossard "Milky Way, Terlingua, Texas"
- Honorable Mention**
 Bob Luce "Trident Lightning"
 Dan Bernskoetter "Frozen Needles"



"Stairway to Heaven, Milky Way, Davis Mountains, Texas" Robert Bossard
 3rd place, Scenics category

09 Altered/Composite

- 1st Laurie Ford "Lost Rider"
- 2nd Laurie Ford "Sante Fe Dreamer"
- 3rd William Horton "My Little Red '57 Vet"

Honorable Mention

Terry Guthrie "Fishing Boat"
Laurie Ford "Lucky A Louy"

10 Black and white images

1st William Horton "Under the Russian River Bridge"

2nd Scott Meril
"Deserted Bush"

3rd Frank Zurey
"Great White
Egret Displaying
Plumage"



*"Playing Chicken" Bob Luce
Honorable Mention, Black & White category*

**Honorable Men-
tion**

Peter Kummer-
feldt "Arches Na-
tional Park"

William Horton "Through the Arches"

Scott Meril "BW Sands"

Bob Luce "Playing Chicken"

11 Novice

1st David Staat "Caracara Landing"

12 Published Images

1st Frank Zurey "Pallid Bat Coming for Water" *Denver Audobon Share the View*, 2018

2nd Laurie Ford "The Watering Hole" *CowboysIndians.com/ Hostiles*, February-March 2018

3rd William Horton "Morning Dunes" *Rocky Mountain Outdoors*, March-April 2018

Honorable Mention

John Thornton "Prothonotary Warbler" *Birds and Blooms Extra*, March 2017

40 Art

1st Virginia Staat (book design & art) and Jack Olson (photographer) "Jack's Flowers"



*"Tulip Sunrise" Kent Taylor
2nd Place, Flora category*

Humorous Contest Results

Judges and "captioneers" David and Virginia Staat awarded the following:

MOSH – Most Obscure Sense of Humor

John Hanou "Could the 'Beyond' in Bed Bath & Beyond be about the cemetery next door?"

TAFE – The Absolute Funniest Horse Expression

Laurie Ford "Wipe that silly grin off your face!"

TBC – The Bird Contortionist

Peter Kummerfeldt "Now I see your point of view..."

TCDPE – The Cutest Dog Photo Ever

Sherry Zurey "Watching all the girls go by..."

TG – Totally Gross

Kenita Gibbins "Why I Missed Last Year's Conference"

TGTBATT – There's Got

to be a Trick to That

Richard Youngblood "Did you know that patting a goat's rump is good luck?"



*TBC – The Bird Contortionist
"Now I see your point of view..."
Peter Kummerfeldt*

Members' Choice Contest

2018 was the year of the butterfly.

First place went to Dan Bernskoetter for "Double Pollination" and John Thornton took second place with his "Butterfly on Flower." No third place was awarded.



*"Double Pollination" Dan Bernskoetter
1st Place Members' Choice*

RMOWP 2018 Conference Joins the History Books

The weather was fine and the fall colors even better for RMOWP's 45th annual conference, with 50 members and guests gathering at conference headquarters in the southern Colorado community of Alamosa. A number of conference attendees arrived early for a pre-conference opportunity to see and photograph wild horses on a dusty mesa just north of the New Mexico-Colorado state line, and then stayed late for a post-conference ride up into the mountains on an historic narrow-gauge steam train.

There were several excellent workshops, writing and photo critiques, other programs, and as usual we concluded the formal part of the conference with the always popular banquet and awards ceremony.



Out in the dunes... © Virginia Staat



Monday was the day for Great Sand Dunes National Park & Preserve, beginning with a talk by Park Ranger and chief photographer Patrick Myers. He took us out into the dunes and then turned us loose. We had both lunch and dinner at the park's group picnic area. © Kent Taylor



Tuesday, we spent the better part of the morning at the Alamosa National Wildlife Refuge, which was suffering a bit from a lack of rain. Docent Brian Underwood gave us a brief history and took us on a walk into the refuge, then turned us loose.

© Dan Bernskoetter



David Staat works the group during the fun—and often funny—auction, which raised \$1,561 for the scholarship fund. (See page 5 for some information on the scholarship and how to donate directly to the fund.) © Don Laine



Along the trail in the wildlife refuge. © Kent Taylor

Outdoor Survival for Photographers & Writers Workshop by Peter Kummerfeldt

By Barb Laine

“Survival is the ability and the desire to keep yourself alive, all alone, under adverse conditions, until you are rescued.” This was Peter Kummerfeldt’s opening salvo at the workshop he presented in Alamosa.

During the one-hour program, Peter, an outdoor survival expert who taught at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, gave recommendations of specific items we should always carry in our survival kit, plus suggestions of what to do and what not to do. He also related some amusing – and not so amusing – stories about his experiences in the outdoors.



Peter Kummerfeldt talks survival.
© Don Laine

He discussed how to prepare for becoming lost, darkness descending like a thunder clap before we get back to our car or civilization, finding oneself stranded somewhere, onset of illness or injury, or onslaught of unexpected weather.

Did you realize that hypo- and hyper-thermia begin with a 3-degree change from our normal body temperature of 98.6? After that difficulties can quickly become serious, and not always immediately recognizable by oneself.

Another tidbit: Clothing must: a) keep you dry, b) keep wind out, c) insulate, d) protect you from solar radiation, and e) protect you from insects. Peter told us that one of the best emergency shelters is the large blue plastic garbage bags used by the Colorado Department of Transportation!

Before heading out, Peter recommends taking a wilderness first aid course, or even better: a first responder course.

Peter has given many workshops, seminars, and courses telling people how to survive a wilderness emergency, covering both the physiological and psychological aspects of survival, the psychological aspects sometimes the more difficult to conquer.

Peter Kummerfeldt’s book “Surviving a Wilderness Emergency” is available from Amazon for \$29.89 plus \$3.99 shipping (though they had only a few left when I

checked).

(Note: Peter will be writing a regular column for RMO beginning in January 2019.)

A Certain Slant of Light: The Poetry of Postcards

By Virginia Parker Staat

RMOWP extends a warm thank-you to Peter Anderson for leading the conference’s writing workshop, *A Certain Slant of Light: The Poetry of Postcards*. The workshop focused on the postcard’s finite, rectangular space and how writers can use this small space to express themselves.

During the workshop, Mr. Anderson introduced participants to several poets who utilized their postcards as a literary form. He suggested various topics to include in these small spaces and ways to bring sensory details and feelings to our words. He concluded the workshop with an exercise: Participants were asked to write about an experience they have had in a favorite place. Contained below are two of those postcards. Over the next several newsletters, we will include other postcards written during the workshop.

Mr. Anderson recently retired as a professor from Adams State University in Alamosa, Colorado. He was the 2015-16 Bennett Fellow Writer-in-Residence at Phillips Exeter Academy. In addition, he is the author of several books, including his most recent, *Heading Home: Field Notes* (Conundrum Press, 2017), a collection of flash prose and prose poems.

Postcard by Jim Baker:

A parking lot close to the water... I back in so I can see the sunrise. The window is down; the air is fresh. The quail call; the fish flop in the dark water. The deer were here yesterday – maybe they will be here today. Yesterday was great – good pictures of a pileated woodpecker. Hold on – the sky is getting pink.

Postcard by Maryann Gaug:

The sun is playing hide and seek with the fluffy clouds. I’m watching a bison herd. Mommas with little ones saunter across the highway, stopping traffic. Tourists poke their heads out of windows, snapping pictures of the big brown beasts with phones and cameras. I start the video on my phone, focusing on two nearby bulls. The one grunts then bows to grab some grass to munch. A puff of dust rises as it paws the ground. My lens fills with an enormous head, followed by a brown body and skinny tail, as one walks right in front of me, intent on its destination.

Look for an article in the next newsletter about **Postcardly** — an easy way to send your photos to friends and family as an old-fashioned postcard through the US Mail.

Photographing Southern Colorado's Wild Horses



Bill Horton snags a great backdrop. © Don Laine



The horses loved Linda Haehnle. © Don Laine



Russ Bromby and friend. © Jack Olson



*Richard Youngblood zeroes in.
© Russ Bromby*



Richard Holmes gets down and dirty. © Russ Bromby

Writing and Video Winners

(Note: Judge's comments appear in *italics*.)

The video judge asked us to let everyone know that the videographers did a great job.)

24 Newspaper, Magazine, or other publication - articles/columns/editorials/short stories

1st Ron Belak "Autumn Splendor," *Colorado Outdoors*, Sep-Oct 2017. *Nice discussion of autumn, interweaving the science of autumn foliage colors with the many recreational activities to be enjoyed in the fall. Clever lead — "Call me Mr. October."*

2nd Laurie Ford "The Continuing Fight for Freedom," *Desert Exposure*, July 2018. *Effectively-written editorial advocating for continued protection for wild horses and burros. Good use of data, references and quotes balanced with personal opinion.*

3rd Ron Belak "The Simplicity and Elegance of Tenkara," *Colorado Outdoors - Fishing Guide*, 2016. *A Highly informative article on Tenkara flyfishing technique and equipment, interesting enough to keep even this non-angler engaged!*

26 Newsletter and Web Writing

1st Virginia Staat "The Making of a Grammar Ninja," *Rocky Mountain Outdoors*, Nov-Dec 2017. *The writer makes grammar and good writing - topics generally considered dull - interesting by use of story and humor, weaving in tips for better writing.*

2nd Jack Olson "Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust," *Rocky Mountain Outdoors*, May-Jun 2018. *An engaging story of discovering the hidden richness of the Colorado prairie through its people and fading places.*

3rd Virginia Staat "Earworms and Other Things," *Rocky Mountain Outdoors*, Jul-Aug 2017. *Good technique using a common annoyance - a song playing over and over in your head - to show how music can be a useful tool for creativity and for people suffering dementia.*

28 Unpublished Written Works

1st Maryann Gaug "Maasai Mara Journey" *Vivid first-person account of a safari in Kenya. Well-done imagery creating the sights, sounds and smells of each scene.*

2nd Bob Good "The Trip to Big Two-fisted Lake" *A playful piece using the style of Hemingway to describe a fishing trip. Fun and creative.*

3rd Virginia Staat "Lovely," *Good imagery using the voice of an elderly farm woman to tell a story of a violent home invasion contrasting with a tranquil rural setting.*

35 Books

1st John Hanou "Modern Visions of the Crucifix," 2018. *Though primarily a photographic book, it has strong thematic structure and the thoughtfully-chosen Bible passages as captions provide interesting interpretation for each image.*

30 Video

1st Virginia Staat "Ruffing It" *This video did the best job at telling a story through the editing process. It is a cute story and does a good job at introducing the characters at the beginning of the film. They definitely carry the "ruffing it" theme throughout the video, maybe a little too many times. However, they did deliver the assignment of incorporating interviews, narration and images pertinent to the story line. In addition, they creatively incorporated on-screen text and motion effects. One of the challenges to a family documentary is being able to edit it shorter.*

2nd Ron Belak "Galapagos Wildlife" *This contestant submitted a short video. It incorporates the beauty of the Galapagos with good music. They chose to use on-screen titles instead of narration. However, the result was similar to reading subtitles. It was a bit of a distraction from the beautiful footage. They did a good job at editing and the various clip lengths are a good length.*

31 Video Clips

1st Frank Zurey "Great Blue Heron Feeding Youngsters" *This clip of "dancing birds" could be used in a variety of videos, especially when paired with the right music.*

2nd - tie Maryann Gaug "Mary Anne Bedrock rapid" and "Jim dory leaving Bedrock" *Probably the same contestant. These clips worked well for composition and steady camera work. One clip panned with the boat; one clip let the frame stay static and let the boat fill the frame as it moved across the water.*

3rd Frank Zurey "Barred Owl," *This was an interesting study of the owl. Good clip.*

Honorable Mention

Bob Luce "Beaver Movie," *This was a patient study of the beaver. Camera was steady as they watched the beaver in his environment.*

2019 RMOWP Calendar

May 30 ~ Scholarship application deadline

June 16-19 ~ Photo Workshop in Rocky Mountain National Park

September 9-12 ~ Conference in Estes Park, Colorado & Rocky Mountain National Park

Visual Fluency Workshop by Bill Horton

By Barb Laine

As usual Bill Horton gave us a workshop packed with golden nuggets. He told us how to grab our viewer's attention, why everyone takes something different away from viewing an image, and how to try to better convey just what we intend our image to impart to the viewer.

That's a lot for one workshop.

Bill discussed how to shift our photographic perspective slightly to change the emphasis of an image, sometimes stepping back to provide context for your subject.

He explored how the viewer's interests, knowledge, memories, etc. affect how he/she sees and understands an image. All of this combines to make up the impact of any given image to any one viewer. You want to try to anticipate what's important to your proposed or expected viewer.

Although we can't positively know what our image conveys to someone, Bill helped us understand how to best achieve what we set out to do. He described how the positioning of an object in a photo can sometimes convey meaning. Something near the top is generally more powerful and important than placing it at the bottom. Pulling it closer makes it more immediate and familiar, farther away it becomes unknown or intriguing. Placement to left or right generally means cause and effect, or before and after. (This last reverses for those whose language reads from right to left.) And contrast, which eyes see easily, helps make your subject stand out from its background or other objects.

It was a very full hour-and-a-half. You can find the handout from this workshop on our website under Conference Handouts.

2018 Election Results

By Barb Laine

The election results were announced at the general membership meeting in Alamosa, Colorado. Both Diane McKinley as secretary and Maryann Gaug as treasurer were re-elected for another two-year term. Two new board members are Dan Bernskoetter and Tom Rabideau, who will each serve for three years.

RMOWP thanks Linda Bundren and Jack Olson for giving their time to serve as board members. President Kent Taylor and Vice-president Virginia Staat will serve another year, and continuing board members are Linda Haehnle, Richard Youngblood, Russ Bromby, and Jo Dodd.



2018 Conference Sunrise photo shoot at Blanca Vista Park just north of downtown Alamosa. © Dan Bernskoetter

Donate to RMOWP Scholarship Fund?

By Maryann Gaug

Every year RMOWP awards a \$2,000 scholarship, named in memory of J.B. Scott and Joe McKenna, founders of RMOWP, to a student with a career interest in the outdoors. The scholarship fund receives its money from the annual raucous, crazy, and fun auction at conference each year and generous donations from members.

I realized during this year's auction that members not at conference can't participate in the auction. Perhaps those members would appreciate an opportunity to donate directly to the scholarship fund.

For anyone who would like to donate to our scholarship fund, please write a check payable to RMOWP and mail it to:

Maryann Gaug
RMOWP Treasurer
596 W. Coyote Dr.
Silverthorne, CO 80498-9212

I plan to add a donation (optional) line to the annual membership renewal form that I email to everyone in January to give people an opportunity to donate.

A little background:

Clare Gutierrez is the scholarship committee, receives the applications by early June, and picks the recipient by mid-June. I then send the \$2,000 check to the recipient's college to place in her/his college account.

The Board decided several years ago that we would maintain \$4,000 in the scholarship fund. If the auction/donations bring in more than \$2,000, the funds would go to the general fund, but if the auction/donations bring in less than \$2,000, the general fund would provide the difference.

Puffing through Time

Text & photos by Richard Holmes

What a ride. Huffing and puffing and belching black smoke, the little engine that could—did. It pulled us from Chama, New Mexico, up over 10,015 foot Cumbres Pass eastward to Antonito, Colorado. The rails nearly doubled back on themselves as the track bent around sharp curves. This historic railroad, built in the late 1800s, is the longest and highest narrow gauge railroad in America.

Some three dozen of us conference attendees were fortunate to have our own car, one far enough back to get views of the front of the train as we entered curves. An open flat car, like a cattle car, was back still farther and offered unobstructed views of the landscape and nearly the entire train.

The weather was perfect as we ascended into fall color. The air was bracing. Small patches of yellow aspens soon blended, becoming hillsides washed in color. Pure mountain air filled our lungs. But not so pure when the train passed through its own acrid smoke.

Walking the aisle between rows of seats became unsteady when we lurched into a curve. Actually, it seemed as we were nearly always in a curve, first in one direction then the other. The thrill was walking between the swaying cars—it became a balancing act.

After crossing Cumbres Pass we continued through high country to Osier, the mid point, where we met the train coming from the opposite direction. Here, both trains stopped for an hour so we could all get off and go into the dining hall for lunch. Feeding that many people in a short

time required an efficient food operation. Not unlike an army mess hall, food was slopped onto a tray as we moved down the line and into a large room seating hundreds of people.

Afterwards, we had time to mill around the train, examine the engine, the pistons, the couplings, the tracks. People were poking their heads into openings, peering underneath, posing for pictures and taking an occasional selfie.

Being careful to return to the same train, we re-boarded for the second half of the trip. As we descended back into the aspen forests we burst into an explosion of color, entire mountainsides of it. This continued for miles—over a hundred cameras flailing away, millions of pixels recording the scene. We passed through a tunnel and crossed a gaping gorge. Some people stuck their arms out and swatted at tree branches as we passed near.

Eventually the mountains yielded to sage and the terrain began to flatten as

we rolled the final miles through open country to Antonito. In 64 miles we had crossed the NM-CO state line eleven times. In 64 miles we encountered another lifetime experience.



The train awaits the return of passengers after lunch at Osier.



She'll be comin' 'round the mountain...

Snowy peaks in Rocky Mountain National Park viewed from near our cabin at Trout Haven Resorts (while walking Zoe). © Barb Laine



2019 Conference Set

Next year’s RMOWP conference is planned in **Estes Park, Colorado in September 2019**, with an eye on exploring nearby **Rocky Mountain National Park**. Dates are Monday afternoon through Thursday evening, September 9 to 12. Headquarters will be the 800 Moraine Avenue Event Center at Trout Haven Resorts, just outside the Beaver Meadows entrance to Rocky Mountain National Park.



This handsome fellow was just outside the back door of our cabin at Trout Haven Resorts last week. He wants you to come to Estes Park next year! © Barb Laine

There will be lodging cabins available at Trout Haven Resorts, and there are also other possibilities nearby, including camping. However, lodging rates will definitely be higher than we would like, probably between \$125 and \$175 nightly for a room and \$50 to \$90 nightly for a campsite.

And speaking of higher than some of us might like, be aware that Estes Park sits at an elevation of 7,500 feet, the same as this year’s conference headquarters in Alamosa, CO, but that Trail Ridge Road, the main highway through Rocky Mountain National Park, goes up above tree line to 12,183 feet. There’s plenty to see and do in the park without going that high, but those with heart or respiratory problems should check with their doctors before coming. There are a variety of prescription drugs and herbal supplements available to counter high-altitude sickness. Lowlanders might also consider coming early enough to spend a few days in Denver — the “Mile High City” — to acclimate before heading to Estes Park.

More details coming soon!

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Jo Dodd, Marion, IL (2020)

Dan Bernskoetter, Lohman, MO (2021)

Tom Rabideau, Pittsburg, IL (2021)

