

Rocky Mountain Outdoors

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

July - August 2022

Best of Show 2022

Photography

Maryann Gaug "Red Columbine & Twisted Stalk" (Flora category)

The Best of Show image was very difficult to choose this year. There were so many really fine photographs submitted. The final image was chosen for its wonderful composition and its portrayal of the small wonders of the alpine environment. The red Columbine is an iconic species and the image of it entwined with the edible wild vine is a great example of found photography in the field.

– Fred Lord, photo judge



Writing

Ron Belak "Walk Softly and Carry a Small Stick" (Magazine Article category)

Colorado Outdoors Jan/Feb 2022

This piece goes beyond the how to's of recreating in the outdoors with a strong message of stewardship, written in an accessible style targeted perfectly to the audience. I was instantly engaged by the vivid opening scene.

– Mary Taylor Young, writing judge

Where will we head for CONFERENCE 2023?

We are looking at three possible locations for a fall 2023 conference: Cortez, Colorado; Los Alamos, New Mexico; and Kanab, Utah. Each offers numerous field trip opportunities ranging from ancient ruins and early culture to mid-twentieth century history, to magnificent mountain scenery and stunning rock formations.

Contest Winners 2022

See www.rmowp.org for judges' comments, images, and other details.

Photography Winners

01 Image from Last Conference

- 1st Frank Zurey - Sunset at White Sands
- 2nd David Staat - Snow Sand
- 3rd June Wolfe - White Sands at Dusk
- HM Ron Belak - Double Rainbow for Frank
- HM Maryann Gaug - Afternoon Sky White Sands

02 Scenics

- 1st Frank Zurey - White Sands Dunes
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Denali in the Sun
- 3rd Peter Kummerfeldt - White Sands Sunset
- HM Maryann Gaug - Mule's ears, Acorn Creek
- HM June Wolfe - White Sands Under Clouds



Contest winners at conference: L-R Dan Bernskoetter, Virginia Staat, David Staat, Judy Lehmkuhl, Frank Zurey, Maryann Gaug, Ron Belak, Buddy Green, Peter Kummerfeldt, and Deanna Zurey Harrington. Well done everyone! © Don Laine

03 Flora

- 1st Maryann Gaug - Red Columbine & Twisted Stalk
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Hairbells
- 3rd Frank Zurey - Indian Paint Brush
- HM Peter Kummerfeldt - Splash of Red
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Lily
- HM Virginia Staat - Imperial Iris

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04 Fauna

- 1st Frank Zurey - Black Bear in the Rocks
- 2nd Virginia Staat - Eat My Dust
- 3rd Peter Kummerfeldt - If I Told You Once...
- HM Ron Belak - Socking It Away for Winter
- HM Ron Belak - The Dipper Makes an Icy Catch
- HM Deanna Harrington - Young Bobcat
- HM Deanna Harrington - Whale Tail

05 People in Nature

- 1st Frank Zurey - Hiking White Sands
- 2nd Ron Belak - Enjoying Sunset at White Sands
- 3rd Judy Lehmkuhl - Kayak Class
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Ida at Sunset

- HM June Wolfe - A Whale of a Catch
- HM Richard Youngblood - Gooseberry Mesa Sunset

06 Historical

- 1st Ron Belak - El Santuario de Chimayo
- 2nd Deanna Harrington - Wrangell Petroglyphs
- 3rd Dan Bernskoetter - Capitol Building Dome
- HM Richard Youngblood - Chapel of the Holy Cross

07 Cultural

- 1st Ron Belak - Vintage Wedding
- 2nd Deanna Harrington - Blossoms of Light
- 3rd Ron Belak - Dressed for an Outing

08 Natural Phenomena

- 1st Frank Zurey - Clouds Along the Shore
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Storm Over White Sands
- 3rd Ron Belak - Sunset over White Sands
- HM Dan Bernskoetter - Morning Fog Sunrise
- HM Deanna Harrington - Hoonah Clouds

09 Altered/Composite

- 1st Dan Bernskoetter - Sky on Fire at White Sands
- 2nd Dan Bernskoetter - Rainbow Before the Storm
- 3rd Judy Lehmkuhl - Santa

10 Black & White

- 1st Frank Zurey - White Sands
- 2nd Ron Belak - Sure-Footed Descent
- 3rd Virginia Staat - Mane Stallion
- HM Dan Bernskoetter - The Eagle Has Landed
- HM Peter Kummerfeldt - Storm's Coming
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Front Range

11 Novice Images

- 1st Buddy Green - Pom Pom Girl

Cont. on page 3...

2nd June Wolfe - Black Bear with Lunch
3rd Buddy Green - Afternoon Scuffle
HM June Wolfe - Jumping the Falls

12 Published Images

1st Virginia Staat - A Simple Shaft of Light
2nd Ron Belak - Autumn Above the Trees
3rd Dan Bernskoetter - Wild Turkey
HM Frank Zurey - Tahquamenon Falls

Writing and Video Winners

24 Newspaper, Magazine - articles/columns/editorials

1st Ron Belak - Walk Softly and Carry a Small Stick
2nd Michael Salomone - Ohio, Rocky Fork Creek
3rd Ron Belak - Marvelous Mayflies

26 Newsletter & Web Writing

1st Virginia Staat - The Doctor Is In
2nd Michael Salomone - Catalina Island and Calico Bass, On the Fly
3rd Virginia Staat - Telling the Bees
HM David Staat - A Look at the Evil Empire

28 Unpublished Written Works

1st Ron Belak - Pushing It at Lost Lake
2nd Maryann Gaug - Am I Sure?
3rd Maryann Gaug - Where Have All the Squirrels Gone?
HM Michael Salomone - He Never Said Anything About a Canvasback

30 Full Length Video

1st Tie Dan Bernskoetter - Life as a Runge Volunteer
1st Tie Dan Bernskoetter - 2021 Trail Camera Videos
2nd Ron Belak - March of the American Dipper

31 Video Clips

1st Tie Deanna Harrington - Anan Black Bear Fishing
1st Tie Frank Zurey - Waiting for a Salmon
2nd Dan Bernskoetter - Channel Catfish Feeding
3rd Dan Bernskoetter - Whitetail Doe Grooming Yearling
HM Dan Bernskoetter - Whitetail Ranch Nature View

Artwork Winner

1st Judy Lehmkuhl - Inuit Boat with Raven



Imperial Iris © Virginia Staat
HM, Flora category, RMOWP 2022 Contest



Red Fox © Steve Cochrane
1st Place Member's Choice 2022

Members' Choice

Winners are selected via secret ballot by those at conference. This year's winners were Steve Cochrane, 1st place for his Red Fox, and 2nd place tie to Dan Bernskoetter for "America's Bald Eagle" and Peter Kummerfeldt for "Mother and Baby."

Taking Care of Business

By Barb Laine

Two things topped the list at the board and general membership meetings this year: zoom meetings and the problem of diminishing membership.

Zoom Meetings – Asked about interest in Zoom meetings between conferences, most said yes. Frank Zurey said it's very easy to attend: the host sends a link via email with pertinent information regarding subject and when it's to commence. When you click the link, Zoom downloads & installs whatever is needed on your computer, and connects you to the host.

RMOWP would be the host, with individual members giving presentations.

Watch your email for a brief list of possible presentations plus a question of whether or not you would be interested in participating.

Falling Membership – How do we increase membership? We'd like younger members but those in their 20s-30s-40s don't seem to be joiners.

We'd like to find a way to draw in the people who are now working from home. Their time may be more flexible since they don't punch a time clock.

Another possible group are the newly or about-to-be retired as they suddenly have more time and often are looking for something to do.

The question is: How?

Different ideas were tossed around and some people are looking into a few things. If you have any suggestions, please get in touch (info@rmowp.org).

There were of course the usual treasurer, website, contest, conference, and executive director reports to the board — none of which held any surprises.

Golden Happenings...

By Barb Laine

Last month Golden, Colorado greeted 29 RMOWPers who gathered to swap yarns and share meals. We enjoyed a fine mix of morning field trips and afternoon workshops, plus the usual presentation of all contest entries the first evening, and culminating in the banquet and awards ceremony three days later.

FIELD TRIPS

Bright and early Monday morning we headed up to Idaho Springs and the **Argo Mill**. Our excellent tour guide, Erin, was chock-full of facts and details about the mill and its history. Dry data? Nope - Erin was tops at engaging our imaginations and drawing us in.

One interesting detail concerned the early miners' caps: similar to a train conductors, they were made of cloth, but with a candle perched atop (!) for light. If your candle suddenly went out you got out of there fast - it meant the oxygen had all but disappeared!

The Argo Mill processed over \$100 million of gold ore (that's 2.6 trillion in 2020 dollars) between 1893 and 1943. Much of the original equipment remains in place, giving visitors a good idea of the process and the noise it all generated.



Peter Kummerfeldt in front of the Argo Mill building amidst the collection of mining machinery scattered about the yard. © Cecilia Travis



Erin holds up her gold pan after demonstrating the process. © Kent Taylor



Panning for gold at the Argo. © Dan Bernskoetter



Inside the Argo tunnel © Kent Taylor



Sign at the Argo Mill... bet they didn't get a lot of complaints! © Barb Laine

Cont. on page 5...

Roxborough State Park was first up on Tuesday morning. It's a beautiful birding park, and about half us - divided into two groups - Group A and Group 2 each enjoyed a guided walk on the Fountain Valley Trail.



Group 2 on the Fountain Valley Trail in Roxborough State Park. Peg Linn & guide in front, followed by Megan & Steve Cochrane, with Ron Belak & Dan Bernskoetter bringing up the rear.
© Kent Taylor

Many thanks to those who sent conference photos.
See our website for more.

www.rmowp.org



Group A on the Fountain Valley Trail in Roxborough State Park. Mary Kummerfeldt, Sheryl Smith, guide, Linda & Fred Lord. © Jimmy Smith



Colorado Railroad Museum - Judy Lehmkuhl opens up for Mary & Peter. © Peter Kummerfeldt

Wednesday offered a choice: a visit to **Dinosaur Ridge**, for the guided tour of Dinosaur Freeways & Crustaceous Seaways; or a tour of the **Colorado Railroad Museum** with member Judy Lehmkuhl, who volunteers there.



The iguanodon appears to be about to chomp Ron's head, having already snatched his cap! L-R are Peg Linn, Megan & Steve Cochrane, Ron Belak, Sarah (guide).
© Maryann Gaug



Grouped in front of a dinosaur track-site: Maryann Gaug, Ron Belak, Peg Linn, Steve & Megan Cochrane (photo taken by guide)

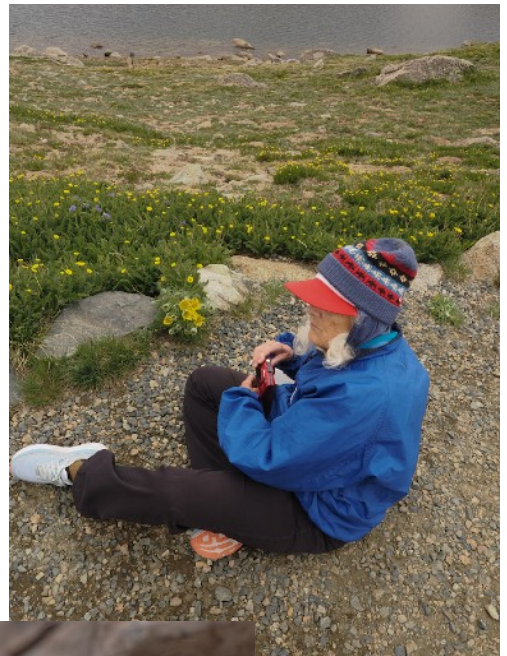
Cont. on page 6...

Finally - drum roll please - the post conference jaunt up one of Colorado's famed fourteeners: **Mount Evans**. Nine intrepid RMOWPers made the journey, enjoying mountain scenery punctuated by goats and big horn sheep, starting out in sunshine and winding up and up into chilly mist on top.



At Summit Lake - front: Judy Lehmkuhl, Ron Belak holding his displays, Peter & Mary Kummerfeldt; back: Peg Linn & Dan Bernskoetter. Sally Bernskoetter & Frank Zurey stayed back at the vehicles. © Maryann Gaug

Maryann takes time out to absorb the serenity of Mt. Evans. © Peter Kummerfeldt



"Hey there, big boy..." she said with a wink. © Peter Kummerfeldt



Crest House shrouded in mist. © Dan Bernskoetter

Cont. on page 7...

WORKSHOPS

North American Nature Photography Association president **Dawn Wilson** explained her belief that we are more than simply photographers and writers, we are storytellers and content creators. She talked about how she uses her photography to inspire a story, and made suggestions for pitching a story.

Steve Cochrane, who joined RMOWP last year, is a wildlife, nature, and action sports photographer. He gave us pointers on capturing images of animals - know the critter well, his habitat and habits, and when's the best time of year and best time of day to find him. And although visiting national parks, wildlife refuges, and the like offer tremendous opportunities for seeing wildlife and beautiful scenery, Steve suggests you can find great possibilities in your own back yard and city or town parks if you just get out there and look, keeping your eyes peeled for the unexpected.

Tuesday afternoon kicked off with a fascinating workshop about drones by **David Nelson** from the Evergreen (Colorado) Camera Club. He suggested thinking of a drone as a camera on a really long tripod. He is a recreational pilot - one who cannot make or have any intent to make any money from it, rather than a commercial pilot, which requires certification from the FAA. He explained the limitations imposed on recreational pilots, but added his own guidelines: Use common sense, do not disturb wildlife, ask permission, be polite and considerate at all times. Excellent guidelines for life generally I'd say.



Panorama by drone © David Nelson

Free-lance writer **Dan England** gave us his version of Writing with Voice. Specifically, your own voice. Telling a story with personalization and character gives it life. First you need to block out any negative thoughts, and write like you talk - don't try to be someone else. Write like a Jedi - use the force and believe in yourself - and edit like a librarian.

RMOWP Election Results

The election of two new board members, and secretary and treasurer positions took place in May and were announced at the conference. More than half of our members voted, and new members took office June 1.

Frank Zurey - board member

Richard Youngblood - board member

Barb Laine - secretary

Maryann Gaug - treasurer since 2014

Continuing on the board are president Virginia Staat, vice-president Linda Haehnle, past president Kent Taylor, and board members Peter Kummerfeldt, David Staat, Ron Belak, and Joanna Gray.

We thank Kit Horton and Barb Laine for serving on the board the last three years.

Member News

JOHN THORNTON DIES

Member **John Thornton** of Stillwater, Oklahoma, died July 2 at the age of 86. In an email to RMOWP, John's daughter Cindy Thornton said, "I just wanted to let you know that long-time member John Thornton died today. He loved being a part of this organization. He valued the friendships he created, the travel to truly amazing and beautiful national parks, and the incredible knowledge about photography he gained from the other members."



John received a Bachelor of Science degree from Oklahoma A&M and a PhD from the University of Washington, and taught zoology and biology at Oklahoma State University for 38 years. He loved the outdoors and enjoyed hunting, especially coon hunting, as well as fishing, birding, and wildlife photography. John and his wife Beth also loved to travel with a group of close friends.

In addition to Cindy and her husband Ian King, survivors include Beth, his wife of 66 years, and a son and brother.

A member of RMOWP since 2006, John was a board member and a frequent RMOWP photography contest winner. We were impressed with all of his photography, and especially his images of butterflies. At one conference he spilled the beans: Beth is an avid gardener who created a flower garden especially attractive to butterflies. All John had to do was sit on his deck with camera in hand and wait for the butterflies to arrive.

NEW MEMBER

RMOWP welcomes new member **Dan England**, from Evans, Colorado. Dan's a writer, photographer, teacher, and

editor, and is frequently published in Colorado Outdoors, the official magazine of Colorado Parks and Wildlife. He gave an entertaining and informative workshop at the recent conference in Golden, Colorado, titled *"How To Write with Voice"* (see page 7). In addition to outdoor communications, his interests, include mountain climbing, ultra-running, and hiking.

Angelo Sciulli Humorous Photo Challenge

Virginia and David Staat again judged the funny fotos, and put together a presentation to tickle the funny bone. The winners were:

1st Frank Zurey - Dive Bomber -- Incoming!!!

2nd Deanna Harrington - Fluffy Bather -- Is it rain or just fowl weather?

3rd David Staat - Sam's Impression of Roadkill

HM Maryann Gaug - What happened to my legs? -- When Half the Diet Works



*Dive Bomber — Incoming!!! © Frank Zurey
1st Place Angelo Sciulli Humorous Photo Challenge*

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RMOWP Officers

President, Virginia Parker Staat, The Woodlands, TX

Vice President, Linda Haehnle, Aurora, CO

Secretary, Barb Laine, El Prado, NM

Treasurer, Maryann Gaug, Silverthorne, CO

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Peter Kummerfeldt, Colorado Springs, CO (2023)

David Staat, The Woodlands, TX (2023)

Ron Belak, Kittredge, CO (2024)

Joanna Gray, West Frankfort, IL (2024)

Frank Zurey, Golden, CO (2025)

Richard Youngblood, Katy, TX (2025)