

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

A Newsletter for Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers

Upcoming Events

Be sure to VOTE

May is election time for RMOWP. Please keep an eye out for an email containing your ballot. This year we will elect three new Board members, our president, vice president, and secretary.

Contest Deadline

The photo and writing contest entry **deadline is July 10, 2023**. Check the RMOWP website (rmowp.org) to download entry forms and contest rules.

Conference Registration

The **Conference Registration Form** is in the works and will be emailed as soon as a few more things are nailed down. It will also be posted on the website (rmowp.org). **We hope to see you in Los Alamos, October 3-6!**



Barb Laine

With great sadness, we announce that Barb Laine, 75, died April 16, of pancreatic cancer. Barb was an integral part of RMOWP. A member since 1987, over the years Barb held the offices of president (2003-2005), board member, treasurer, and secretary. In 2000 and

2003, Barb was also the recipient of RMOWP’s rarely bestowed Spark Plug Award, honoring her spunk and dedication to preserving the organization’s integrity. Wife to Don Laine, RMOWP’s executive director, Barb compiled our bi-monthly newsletter, maintained the website, kept track of membership information, and shared in coordinating annual conferences. Barb was known for her warmth, friendship, and passion for life.

Barb enjoyed travel, especially exploring the western United States and Canada, soaking in New Mexico’s hot springs, and camping in their motorhome named Thor. Originally from southern New Jersey, Barb joined best friend Don in Taos, New Mexico, shortly after they married. Barb and Don celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 2021.

A talented musician (voice and flute), Barb was active in the Taos Community Chorus, choirs at First Presbyterian Church of Taos and St. James Episcopal Church, and Taos Flute Choir. She worked as a draftsman

in land surveying. Barb also co-wrote over a dozen travel guidebooks with husband Don. Several guides are available for purchase, including *Frommer's National Parks of the American West*.

In her final days, Barb wrote the following:

"It's been a wonderful life. I've had a good life.

Growing up in rural south Jersey – biking, climbing trees – catching frogs & tadpoles – running through the woods – sledding in winter. Spending summer vacations on a small family farm in Kentucky.

Then college in central Pennsylvania where I met the love of my life and our two best friends ever. Joel is responsible for us spending the next 50-plus years in Taos, and we are eternally grateful – it's a beautiful place to call home.

I was lucky to find work that challenged and entertained me. Then the highlight of our working life – writing travel books together. Getting paid to explore the Southwest, learning the history, seeing and experiencing the grandeur, finding little-known places... it was amazing.

I have no regrets and have been blessed with an ever-expanding circle of truly special friends. You have all been here for me and I appreciate all the love and support that has surrounded me these past months. It has been uplifting. Thank you all. I love you."

Barb was preceded in death by her parents and brothers Sandy and Don Boone. Survivors include husband Don Laine, goddaughters Marty Schantz of Colorado Springs, Colorado, and Gretchen Schantz of Tucson, Arizona (both Taos natives), and Sarah Norman of Lawrence, Kansas, and, of course, top dog Zoe.

A memorial service is planned Tuesday, May 9, at 10 a.m., at Golden Willow Retreat in Arroyo Hondo, New Mexico (www.goldenwillowretreat.org). To share a memory, please visit www.riverafuneralhome.com. In lieu of flowers, please donate to Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, c/o Maryann Gaug, 596 W. Coyote Dr., Silverthorne, Colorado 80498-9212 (<https://rmowp.org>), or a charity of your choice.

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 Frank Zurey, Golden, CO (2025)
 Richard Youngblood, Katy, TX (2025)

Looking for Memories

Do you have a favorite memory or photo of Barb Laine? Please send it to us! We are compiling information to share at the Los Alamos conference. To share your memory or photo, email barbmemory@att.net. Thanks in advance to all who participate.

Conference Update

RMOWP Welcomes Photo Workshop Leader Kristen Honig

Kristen Honig will present a photography workshop at RMOWP’s upcoming conference in Los Alamos, October 3-6. Kristen has a unique niche in photography as a wildfire photo expert.

After her hometown was threatened by a massive wildfire, Kristen became passionate about sharing the stories of firefighters. She worked as a wildland firefighter for the National Park Service, gaining invaluable experience working the fireline. In 2003, Kristen was awarded a federal contract as a wildfire photographer with the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC).

Over the past 20 years, Kristen has captured scenes from the front lines of more than a dozen wildfires throughout the western United States for the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and NIFC. Her wildfire photos have been recognized by *National Geographic* and featured in numerous magazines and publications, including *Scientific American*, *Popular Science*, *Outside Magazine*, *Wildland Firefighter Magazine*, and *Fire Management Today*.

Kristen has been pursuing her passion of photography for more than 25 years. Her other work includes landscape and wildlife images from many U.S. National Parks and Monuments. We welcome Kristen to our conference and look forward to her outstanding presentation.



“Unsung Heroes” by Kristen Honig



Peter Kummerfeldt

My Favorite Survival Books

Survival Tips by Peter Kummerfeldt

I'm a "bookaholic" and make no apologies for it. I own hundreds of survival, bush-craft, outdoor safety skills, and wilderness medicine books. But of those that I own, there are only a few that I go back to time and time again. These are my "survival bibles." These are books that provide "practical" not "aboriginal" guidance on what to do when you find yourself in trouble.

Survival books generally fall into two categories — "how to survive" books and the "been-there-done-that" variety. Both are useful. Dozens of books have been written about the techniques and methods of survival and equally as many about bush craft — but don't confuse the two — they are not the same thing! With one you have made a deliberate lifestyle choice. With the other you have been thrust into a crisis situation unexpectedly and now have to protect and maintain your life, often under very austere conditions, until you are found and rescued.

Yes, there are many bush craft skills that could be employed if you found yourself in a survival situation, but there are profound differences between the two situations. You can open any Books-in-Print catalog and find dozens of "how to survive" books, but good ones are hard to come by. Be careful — most of these books are simply rewrites of earlier books where the author has made little or no effort to validate the procedures and techniques described.

The assumption is that, somewhere along the way, someone must have tested the procedures, therefore they must work. Not so! These are books that, for the most part, offer little practical advice to the reader. Most are based on military survival manuals, where a soldier or airman is cut off behind enemy lines and has to survive as he or she makes their way back to friendly hands. The information contained in these manuals and books has little relevance to the kinds of situations that people get themselves into.

Many other how-to-survive books are based on the skills used by aboriginal people within the context of their daily lives. The authors of these books expect the reader, based on the text and a few photographs or diagrams, to be able to "*rub sticks together to get a fire going*," for example, forgetting that the bushman in Kalahari Desert or the aboriginal women in northern Australia or the tribesman living in an Amazonian jungle have spent their entire lives learning the skills that enable them to live year round in their particular environments. These authors also forget that the tools aboriginal people use are not crude implements made on the spot when a need arises. The tools are crafted by artisans and carried and used by people much as we would, or should, when we venture into the outdoors.

The same Books-in-Print catalog can also help you locate the "been-there-done-that" variety of survival books. Here again, a trap is being set. To use these books as a model for how to survive a crisis could be a mistake. Many of these books relate the stories of totally unprepared people who survived *in spite* of what they did. They survived because they got lucky — someone found them quite by accident, just in the nick of time. This genre of books should be read to understand, vicariously perhaps, the hardships that past survivors have experienced and to learn from their mistakes. They should not be used necessarily as a blueprint for what you should do in your crisis.

It has only been in the past twenty years or so that science-based survival books, often written by people with advanced academic degrees, have become available. These authors looked at survival from a human physiology perspective and not just from "*a set of skills you need to be proficient in or you're going to die*" point of view. Thanks to their scientific research, we now understand the relationship between building a fire and the prevention of hypothermia, for example. Or the reason for the need to be able to locate, process, and consume disinfected water.

Prior to this time, the latest survivor became the *de facto* authority on how to survive. "*They lived, therefore they must have done something right. So mimic what they did, and we, too, will survive!*" It doesn't necessarily work that way — maybe they just got lucky! (Continued Page 5)

Writer's Column

Unbridled Passion

photo and text by Virginia Parker Staat

Discipline is the refining fire by which talent becomes ability. ~Roy L. Smith

We've been taking our 19-month-old Golden Retriever, Sam, to agility training in an attempt to help her focus. Our ultimate goal is to train her to become a therapy dog. In the past eight weeks of agility classes, two things have become clear. First, Sam is fearless. She has a passion for the more dangerous obstacles, like the teeter-totter or A-frame or bridge.

Second, Sam greatly dislikes sequencing. On an agility course, a dog must learn to follow their owner's commands, taking the various obstacles in a specific, albeit ever-changing, sequence. Tunnels and weave poles are boring to Sam. She would rather dash up the A-frame or fly across the teeter-totter. Sam wants to do it her way. She wants to greet the other dogs and every human. She definitely has earned her nickname, Sam-I-Am.

Sam has the talent to be excellent at agility if she could focus. An agility dog breeder told us that it is rare for a dog so large to be so fearless. But Sam is too distracted by the more fun things in life. She has a consistency problem. A focus problem. A discipline problem. It's hard for her to hold it all together when fun is her main objective.

In many respects, Sam is an analogy for writing. Many writers begin with the fun of writing, not realizing the discipline that is needed behind it. (I'm not talking about planning boring outlines and bullet points... that would zap the fun out of writing for almost anybody.) In her book *If You Want to Write*, Brenda Ueland concludes, "Duty should be a bi-product. Writing, the creative effort, the use of the imagination should come first."

Those first drafts we write should be fun. After all, writing is our passion. Using our imagination should be exhilarating. In the end, however, we must take our passion and bridle it just enough to test its grammar, punctuation, cohesiveness, and readability. Only then will our passion shine and our words come alive.

We've decided Sam doesn't have the personality to be competitive in agility. (It's not all her fault... David and I don't have that competitive edge either.) I'd rather Sam have fun than to see her enthusiasm squelched by the constraints of sequencing. She's young and needs to mature more. I still believe that one day Sam will be an excellent therapy dog. In these agility classes, she's learning to bridle her passion just enough to balance her enthusiasm with the need for discipline. It's a lesson for us writers as well.



Sam tops the A-frame while David guides her to the next agility obstacle.

(Peter's Survival Tips Continued)

So here are some of my favorite books:

- **The Essentials of Sea Survival**, by Mike Tipton and Frank Golden. Don't be put off by the title if you're a landlubber. Tipton and Golden have done an excellent job of looking at the impact of a wide variety of environmental conditions on the physiology of the human body. Their emphasis is on "*man in cold water*," not just the sea, and in this arena they are the go-to authorities on the subject. *(Continued on Page 6)*

(Peter's Survival Tips Continued)

- **Survival Psychology** by John Leach. John Leach has made a lifetime study of people under stress and how they react — or don't react in a crisis. His book revolutionized my thinking on the issue of survival and helped to organize how I taught the subject. After reading, and then rereading, *Survival Psychology*, I more clearly understood the relationship between the psychological and the physiological needs of a survivor and how one affects the other.
- **The Unthinkable: Who Survives When Disaster Strikes — and Why**, by Amanda Ripley. This clearly written book looks at people in crisis and how they behave in life and death situations. Ripley's investigation into this behavior reveals surprising new facts — facts that run counter to what we have been led to believe in the past.
- **Undaunted Courage**, by Stephen Ambrose. We can learn a lot from Lewis and Clark about the role of effective leadership and the recognition that, unless the planning is thorough, not only will the success of the journey be jeopardized but so might the lives of the party. Their two-year odyssey is a classic survival story and, unlike so many modern-day survival experiences, the outcome was successful. Successful because they were as prepared as they could be for any eventuality.
- **Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage**, by Alfred Lansing. This is a "must-read" book. Marooned on the sea ice off the coast of the Antarctic continent, Shackleton's leadership, personality, and ability to inspire his men to continue to live on and be rescued, despite the hardships of life first on the sea ice and then on a remote island, is a truly amazing survival saga.
- **Touching the Void**, by Joe Simpson. For sheer guts and an incredible determination to make it back, few stories rival *Touching the Void*. Injured and left on a mountain for dead after a climbing accident, Joe Simpson would not capitulate. Despite being severely injured he made his way off the mountain and lived to tell his story in this very good book.
- **Out of Captivity: Surviving 1,967 Days in the Columbian Jungle** by Mac Gonsalves, et al. As survival stories go this one is hard to beat. Three American contractors, flying drug interdiction missions over Columbia, find themselves on the ground after an aircraft engine malfunction. They are quickly captured by the FARC and spend the next five years moving from place-to-place as political prisoners. Not only does this book describe the hellish living conditions these men lived under and what they did to physiologically survive, but it also describes the psychological battles they each fought, often daily, to live one day at a time until they were finally rescued.
- **Survive: My Fight for Life in the High Sierras**, by Peter DeLeo. "In late November 1994, my single-engine plane crashed in the Sierra Nevadas with two passengers on board. For the next thirteen days, in subfreezing weather, with sixteen broken bones, I trekked across the frozen wilderness, with no emergency supplies, hoping to bring back help." Few books rival *Survive* for its portrayal of a survivor's dogged determination, in the face of injury, inclement weather, and rough terrain, to get help for the other people on board the aircraft.
- **102 Minutes: the Unforgettable Story of the Fight to Survive Inside the Twin Towers**, by Jim Dwyer and Kevin Flynn. Nothing shocked the nation more in recent years than the sight of two giant airplanes being deliberately flown into the World Trade Towers. While the visual images are clear, what is not so clear to us is what went on inside those buildings after the impact. *102 Minutes* reveals this story based on interviews of the occupants who escaped before the Towers collapsed, and the interviews of the rescuers who went into the buildings to bring people out. This book is incredibly insightful and illustrates the amazing capacity people have to cope under very adverse conditions.

Once again I say, choose your experts carefully and then go out and practice. Find out if the techniques they recommend will work for you when you're in trouble!

Mark your calendar for Conference 2023!

**Tuesday-Friday, October 3-6, in Los Alamos,
New Mexico**

Most workshops and meals will take place at the historic Sheriff's Posse Lodge.

RMOWP Zoom Presentations

Our next Zoom presentation will be in June. Member Steve Cochran will be our zoom host and will send out the invitational email with a link and necessary log-in information.

If you missed RMOWP's Zoom presentations, you can view them on our YouTube page. Just click here:

[https://www.youtube.com/
@rockymountainoutdoorwriter6692](https://www.youtube.com/@rockymountainoutdoorwriter6692)

Nonfiction Writers Conference

The 13th annual Nonfiction Writers Conference returns May 10-12, 2023. This one-of-a-kind event has been held entirely online since 2010. The opening speaker is Cheryl Strayed, author of *Wild: Lost and Found on the Pacific Crest Trail* and *Tiny Beautiful Things*.

Depending on your registration level, attendees can access the following benefits:

- Educational sessions delivered by Zoom webinar, including Q&A with most speakers.
- Pitch the Agents LIVE!, an interactive double session where literary agents listen to author pitches and give constructive feedback. If agents like what they hear, they will request proposals from participants.
- Attendee Networking and Mastermind Event, featuring small group discussions held with Zoom breakout rooms. Participants can share a two-minute introduction, then eight minutes to share a question or challenge and get feedback from other group members.
- Ask-a-Pro sessions, delivered as one-on-one phone or video consultations with industry pros.
- Recordings and transcripts available.

The Nonfiction Writers Conference has a long history of delivering content-rich learning sessions and helping accelerate the careers of attendees. To register, link to <https://NonfictionWritersConference.com>. Save 30% off with code: PARTNER30

Attractions Near Los Alamos

photos and text by Kent Owings



El Santuario de Chimayo

El Santuario de Chimayo is an old Catholic church in Chimayo, New Mexico, approximately 27 miles from Los Alamos. The grounds date back to the early 1800's. The Santuario is entered thru a walled courtyard and has a bell tower on each side. In addition to the Santuario, the grounds include several buildings, shrines, and other religious symbols, along with a gift shop. It was in private ownership until 1929 when it was bought by the Spanish Colonial Arts Society and donated to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

Every year some 300,000 people make pilgrimages to the Santuario. It is regarded as the most important Catholic pilgrimage in the US. Some pilgrims take a small amount of the "holy dirt" to keep, and some rub themselves with it in an effort to heal.

The Santuario is located in Chimayo via Hwy. 76 and is located at 15 Santuario Drive, 11 miles east of Espanola (which many of you will pass on the way to Los Alamos from the north and a short drive from the south).

If you would like more information and more photos, please email Kent Owings at skosro@aol.com, and he will email the MS Word document.



Call for Submissions

RMOWP has received a request from Jennifer Bové, network editor for SkyAboveUs (<https://skyaboveus.com>), a website crafted by outdoor enthusiasts. She is looking for quality writers who know and love outdoor recreation — from backpacking and climbing to skiing and watersports — and just about everything in between.

SkyAboveUs is seeking original, in-depth articles including how-to tips, off-the-beaten-path travel guides and trail recommendations, gear and book reviews, safety prep and survival, wild edibles and campfire cooking, bird and other wildlife watching (including photography), getting outdoors with kids and pets, fishing and hunting resources, and personal stories (if they offer readers helpful information or insights). They want articles between 800 to 2,500 words that focus on hyper-specific content rather than broad topics.

Writers receive a percentage of ad-revenue shares in payment and will retain 100% ownership of copyrighted material. Writers begin earning as soon as shares hit the \$50 mark. High-quality original images to accompany articles are also encouraged.

SkyAboveUs assures writers that there are no fees, subscriptions, or minimum article requirements. To create an account and use their in-house tool to start writing, visit <https://skyaboveus.com/>.

President’s Column

Missing Barb

by Virginia Parker Staat

The tragedy of Barb Laine’s death has come as a shock to many of us, even those who knew that she had been ill since September. We will long remember her beautiful smile, friendship, tenacity, and charm. Barb’s passion and dedication to RMOWP were evident in so many ways, from conference planning to the daily tasks she performed to keep us connected. We offer our greatest sympathy to all who are impacted by Barb’s death, particularly husband Don.

Linda Haehnle, Kent Taylor, and I are working together to honor Barb at our upcoming conference in Los Alamos. In addition to regular conference activities, we will take time to share stories and remember. And there are so many good memories of Barb. As a small example, Barb was the first person to introduce herself to me at the Taos conference when I joined RMOWP in 2012. Barb had such an easy way about her. By the end of the conference, I felt as if I had found a long-lost friend.

We would like to thank each of you who have volunteered to step in and take over some of Barb’s tasks. As we enter this season of grief and missing Barb, we take a deep breath and look with fresh eyes at the things we find important and beautiful, like friends, family, and nature. I wish peace, comfort, and blessings to each of you.

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