

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

A Newsletter for Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers

Upcoming Events

Taos Conference

Mark your calendars for our 2025 RMOWP conference in Taos, New Mexico. The conference begins Sunday, September 14, through Wednesday, September 17. We hope you'll join us!

Looking for a place to stay in Taos?

Check out our March/April newsletter for more info about a place to stay in Taos or click here: [Taos Lodging](#).

Conference Registration

Need a conference registration form? Visit <https://rmowp.org/conference-registration>

Taos, Here We Come!

text and photo by Don Laine

Perhaps you've heard the rumors — RMOWP's annual conference takes place September 14-17 in Taos, New Mexico! Details and a tentative schedule are in this newsletter and at www.rmowp.org, and be sure to look over the schedule as there have been some changes.

Mid-September in Taos may be chilly, especially in early morning, so bring a variety of clothing. We're hoping for sunny skies but you should also be prepared for rain, just in case. And we will be doing some driving.

We have some great workshops lined up, including several with first-time presenters, along with our favorite regular programs.

We'll be making several trips to the Orilla Verde Recreation Area, part of the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, along the Rio Grande Wild and Scenic River. It's operated by the Bureau of Land Management and a BLM ranger will be leading a walk and helping us spot petroglyphs, great views, and possibly bighorn sheep and other wildlife. Our other trip to Orilla Verde is for a float trip in inflatable rafts on the Rio Grande.

See you there!



President's Column



RMOWP Prez, Linda Haehnle

Greetings!
I hope you have all been enjoying the summer.. whatever your activities have been...

My summer has been comprised of several photography trips... both internationally and domestic...and I have been reminded of how beautiful different locations can be. Just seeing something different from what we are used to, and enjoying those differences, can be invigorating and inspiring.

As we head to Taos, New Mexico, for our upcoming conference, Don and his committee have planned a variety of activities and workshops to keep us energized and engaged... in addition to sharing good times, laughter, and our creative ventures with photography and writing!

Looking forward to seeing you all there.
Safe travels! ~Linda

Writers Forum Guidelines

CALLING ALL WRITERS!!! We encourage all aspiring authors to bring a written piece to the Taos conference to share during the **Anne Sullivan Writers Forum.**

Sharing our writing can sometimes be stressful, but we strive to make the Forum experience extremely safe and supportive. Each participant will read their story aloud. Listeners will then offer suggestions or praise for a job well done! If you're interested in joining us, here's what you need to know:

- The subject matter must be the outdoors.
- Unpublished non-fiction, fiction, and poetry are all welcome.
- This should be a piece either you are having difficulty with or have some specific concerns you wish help with — not a published work.
- Maximum word count: 1,200.
- You are welcome to include up to two photos.
- Bring eight copies to share among listeners.

We do hope you will share your wonderful writings with us!

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Conference Photography Workshop Leader Named



Eric Glassco

RMOWP is honored to welcome Eric Glassco as our photography workshop leader. Eric's workshop, *Convey your Ole': Finding Inspiration in Wild Places*, shares his unique approach to capturing beauty in wild places. Informed by his childhood in Papua New Guinea, his years as a U.S. Army Green Beret, and his lifelong passion for exploring remote and austere locations, Eric shares techniques and tools for effectively preparing for wilderness photography expeditions (as well as short outings), that attendees can use to fully immerse themselves in nature and to be ready to capture the photo that is in front of them, regardless of the conditions.

Eric shares the concept of "ole'," the experience of transcendence and inspiration he finds in connection with the land and the integral role it plays in his approach to capturing the story of a place. Eric will present his ongoing projects, including "Ice and Stone: Rock Glaciers of the High Uintas," as well as his collaborations with geologist Jeff Munroe and a New York Times re-photography expedition. This workshop will provide insights and techniques that can be used by photographers of all skill levels as they venture forth to experience ole' in the beautiful places that speak to them.

Eric is a wilderness photographer and former Army Green Beret whose focus is on using photography to connect people to the beauty of wild places. He grew up in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, where he gained a passion for exploring

mountainous wilderness. A decorated combat veteran, during his twenty-year army career, Eric served in the Balkans, Central America, Western Africa, the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and Afghanistan.

Upon retiring from the army and moving to Utah, Eric returned to his first love of exploring the mountains. He applies his navigation, risk management, and survival skills acquired as a Green Beret to accessing the most remote locations, using his camera to capture the beauty of the land.

Through his company, Max Exodus Wilderness Photography, Eric has undertaken dozens of photography expeditions across the West and Southwest, both for private art commissions and in collaboration with scientists and researchers from around the world. His prints hang in homes and offices across the country and his images have appeared in the *New York Times*.

Now living in New Mexico, Eric continues to seek out opportunities to collaborate with scientists, artists, and other experts on critical issues facing alpine ecosystems and to share the compelling stories of the land with wide audiences.



Photo by Eric Glassco

Every sunset brings the promise of a new dawn.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Conference and Member News

What to Bring to the Conference

Where does the time go? In just a few weeks we'll be gathering at RMOWP's annual conference in Taos, New Mexico, and it's time to start organizing the things you'll want to bring. So here's a checklist:

- **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 eight 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 — and commentators — are welcome. *(For more information about the Forum, please see Page 2 of this newsletter.)*
- **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 photos critiqued should bring three to five digital images on CDs or flash drives.
- **PHOTOS FOR THE MEMBERS' CHOICE CONTEST** — Conference participants are the judges for this contest. Members may submit one or two matted prints, either color or black and white, and the photos may have been taken at any time. Altered/manipulated images are eligible. Each entry is to be designated as Scenic, Flora, or Fauna. 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. On the back of each submission write "Members Choice" but not your name — we'll keep track of which belongs to whom.
- **DONATIONS FOR THE AUCTION** — The RMOWP Auction is not only a lot of fun but also raises some necessary funds to help pay for the conference. Bring your own matted photos (maybe your Members' Choice Contest entries?) or note cards, published books, craft and gift items, photo equipment, or whatever you find lying around the house — NO spouses allowed!!

THANKS!

Member News

RMOWP has another new member, **David Zurey** of Fort Collins, Colorado. David is the partner of Frank Zurey IV, whom many of you met at the Fort Davis Conference last year. David tells us that he's a photographer who specializes in wildlife, scenics, architecture, flora, and pets (he loves dogs!). He is also a lecturer and teacher, with interests in public relations and audio/video, and enjoys hiking, glamping in his new camper, fishing, paddleboarding, and bird and wildlife watching. He also likes to cook and barbecue and spend time with his husband, two dogs, and two cats. Welcome David!

Rangely, Colorado member **Steve Cochrane**, RMOWP's vice-president, has been busy, producing more wildlife and nature prints and writing his very first children's book, "Baily Bearson and the Prickly Picture." Steve writes that "Baily is a curious young bear (and photographer) who meets Marty the Porcupine. Together, they teach kids about nature, friendship, and the joy of exploring the outdoors." Steve, who had a booth at Septemberfest in Rangely Labor Day weekend, adds that the book will be available online very soon.



Taos Mountains in Snow, by Don Laine

RMOWP 2025 Conference

Sunday-Wednesday, September 14-17, 2025, Taos, New Mexico

Meals, meetings, and workshops at Taos Tennis unless noted otherwise

Sunday, September 14

2:00pm	Board of Directors Meeting (open to all members)
5:00-7:00pm	Registration & Opening Reception, Happy Hour and Light Buffet (included in registration fee)
7:30-9:00pm	Presentation of Contest Submissions
9:00pm	Wrap Up and Announcements

Monday, September 15

8:30am	Welcome, Handouts & Announcements - President Linda Haehnle
9:00am	Scotland to Svalbard with Peter Kummerfeldt
10:00am	Break
10:15am	Photography Workshop - Three RMOWP Members on Safari in South Africa: Tips & Techniques for Photographing Wildlife, with Peter Kummerfeldt, Steve Cochrane, and Ron Belak
12:00pm	Lunch on your own
1:00pm	Tour Top Museums - Meet at Carson House and Museum, 113 Kit Carson Rd., then walk to the Couse-Sharp Historic Site, 146 Kit Carson Rd. (\$25)
3:00pm	Guided tour of Taos Pueblo on your own (Self-Pay \$25 adults/\$22 seniors)
6:00pm	Happy Hour
6:30pm	Dinner - Choice of lasagna or chicken with blue cheese (\$30)
7:30pm	Members' Showcase with a Twist - Favorite Photos from All Attendees - Bring one really great image and be prepared to talk about it
9:00pm	Wrap Up and Announcements

Tuesday, September 16

8:30am	General Membership Meeting
9:00am	Anne Sullivan Writers' Forum with moderator Clare Gutierrez (spectators encouraged to attend & comment)
10:15am	Break
10:30am	Photo Critique with Fred Lord and Dan Bernskoetter (spectators welcome)
11:30am	Lunch on your own
12:30pm	Photography Workshop - Remote Landscape Photography with Eric Glassco
2:00pm	Carpool to Orilla Verde Recreation Area (BLM site along the Rio Grande, about 22 miles SW of Taos via NM 68 & NM 570), meet at the group site with green roof at the Rio Bravo Campground, for guided walk & talk, photography, fishing
6:00pm	Barbecue Supper (burgers & chicken sausage) along the Rio Grande (\$25)
6:45pm	Wrap Up and Announcements
7:00pm	Head back to Taos

Wednesday, September 17

9:00am-noon	Float Trip on the Rio Grande (\$75) - Meet at Far Flung Adventures in Pilar, at the Orilla Verde Recreation Area along the Rio Grande via NM 570
12:00pm	Return to your vehicles and head back to the meeting room
12:30pm	Lunch on your own
1:30pm	Writing Workshop - Words from Wild Places with Rick Kempa
2:30pm	Break to get your checkbook!
2:45-5:30pm	Auction with Ron Belak
6:45-7:00pm	Happy Hour
7:00-10:00pm	Banquet - choice of Beef Bourguignon (made with non-alcoholic wine) or baked salmon - and Awards Ceremony (\$35)
10:00pm	Wrap Up and Farewell Until Next Year

Writer's Corner

text and photo by Virginia Parker Staat



Grizzly on the Dempster Highway, Yukon Territory

Sharing Stories

“Good stories are good stories, no matter how they’re categorized.” ~Octavia E. Butler

I admit it... I am obsessed with bears. Few things thrill me more than photographing these creatures in the wild. I photographed my first bear in 2010, the year that David retired. We had decided to start retirement life with a bang by driving from Texas to Alaska. We were on the road over three months.

I never imagined that I would one day spend hours just watching bears forage and interact. As an example, we were on the Dempster Highway up in the Yukon Territory several years ago, watching a pair of bears grazing the valley. A couple drove by, stopping to enjoy the scene with us. They left and returned two hours later. We hadn't moved. They rolled down their window to kindly check to see if we were okay or were having car trouble. They just shook their heads when we told them we were still just watching the bears.

Table of Contents

Calling All Writers	2
Conference Photo Workshop	3
Conference Schedule	5
Member News	4
President's Column	2
Writer's Corner	6

Since my first bear encounter, I began collecting dozens of books about bears, watched many documentaries, and I've even written a children's book about bears (*The Legend of El Patron: A True Story*). It is an insatiable topic for me. And isn't that just what writers do when we immerse ourselves in a topic?

In *Wilderness Tapestry*, an anthology edited by Zeveloff, et al., I read an interesting chapter by Terrell Dixon, titled *Ways of Knowing Nature*. Dixon quotes from William Wright's 1909 book, *The Grizzly Bear*, and how Wright changed from being a hunter to a naturalist:

“In the beginning, I studied the grizzly in order to hunt him. I marked his haunts and his habits, I took notice of his likes and dislikes; I learned his indifferences and his fears; I spied upon the perfection of his senses and the limitations of his instincts simply that I might better slay him. For many a year, and in many a fastness of the hills, I pitted my shrewdness against his ... And then at last my interest in my opponent grew to overshadow my interest in the game. I had studied the grizzly to hunt him. I came to hunt him in order to study him.”

Terrell Dixon's chapter focuses on how authors express themselves when writing about the wilderness. “Our writing about nature cuts across disciplinary lines to include work by explorers and early students of natural history, by scientists, by poets and fiction writers, and by contemporary nature essayists. This diverse literature of the bear offers us a useful way to understand how we know, to look at key points of contrast and congruency in ways that scientists, poets, and nature writers go about the work of knowing the natural world.”

It is up to us to determine which approach is best to write about our love for a certain place or thing. Sometimes only poetry makes sense. Other times, we must delve deeply into a certain aspect or review of our subject. Other times, we take on the task of explaining something so rare that others fall in love with it also. The genre we choose — whether poetry, essay, or natural history — is meant to enhance the telling of our story in the most profound way.

How we share our stories should naturally fit our voice and audience. Lean into your strengths. Trust your story. Go with a topic you love.