
ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

A Newsletter for Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers

Best of Show 2024

Best of Show Photography: Katee Harrington, “Brown Bear Fishing”



The moment caught in the photograph has all of the factors and more which make for an outstanding image. The action is caught beautifully with the outthrust and flexed right forepaw and the head turned just so. The splashes and water dripping from the animal's muzzle are not only timely but expressive of the movement of the animal. The composition is centered but not static and the focus on the eyes is outstanding. Nicely done! — Fred Lord, Photography Judge

Best of Show Writing: Judy Lehmkuhl, “Aliy Zirkle 2016 Iditarod Race”

The energy, vivid scenes and descriptive word choice strongly engage the reader. Great use of verbs propels the story strongly along. — Mary Taylor Young, Writing Judge

About our 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. Now retired, Fred is still looking for that perfect, scenic, wildlife, and/or nature photograph.

Writing Judge - Mary Taylor Young

Author and naturalist Mary Taylor Young has been writing about the landscape and heritage of Colorado and the American West for 35 years. Her 22nd book—Bluebird Seasons: Witnessing Climate Change In My Piece of the Wild—was published in May 2023 by Chicago Review Press. Mary's honors include the 2018 Frank Waters Award for exemplary literary achievement and a canon of writing that communicates a deep understanding, celebration and love of the West; 2019 induction into the Colorado Authors Hall of Fame; 2020 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Colorado Authors' League. She has been a RMOWP contest judge and convention presenter for many years. Mary contributed to and was managing editor of her latest project, At Home In Nature: The History of Colorado's State Parks.

Video Judge - Ann Lukacs

Ann fell in love with photography at an early age. She has been working in the camera department in the motion picture industry for over 40 years. 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 working on major studio feature films and national commercials, she works as an independent filmmaker. 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 is the President/CEO of the "Park County Creative Alliance", a newly formed nonprofit with the vision to "Unite Park County Through the Arts." In addition, Ann has been involved with promoting film production to Colorado.

I would rather sit on a pumpkin, and have it all to myself, than be crowded on a velvet cushion." ~ Henry David Thoreau (1902-1984)

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 Richard Youngblood, Katy, TX (2025)
 Dan Bernskoetter, Lohman, MO (2026)
 Al Perry, Herriman, UT (2026)
 June Wolfe, Mesa, AZ (2027)
 David Staat, The Woodlands, TX (2027)

President's Column



RMOWP President, Linda Haehnle

As we say "So Long" to Fort Davis, Texas, it's safe to say we had another action-packed successful conference!! Many thanks to Virginia and David for planning wonderful outdoor tours, impressive

workshops, and Texas activities.

It was also four days of camaraderie and catching up with old friends, sharing thoughts and ideas.

As we look toward next year and the 2025 Conference in Taos, NM, I look forward to seeing y'all! (Texas talk!)

My wish is that you all have a safe, happy, healthy, and abundant holiday season with your families and loved ones! ~Linda



1st Historical, Dan Bernskoetter, Spiritual Imprint Imprint



1st Published, Frank Zurey, Grizzly Mom with Her Cubs



1st Flora, Beto Gutierrez, Red Water Lily



1st Images from Last Conference, Buddy Green, Coyote at Valles Calderas National Preserve

What's Next in 2025?



Text & photo by Don Laine

R MOWP Heads Back to Taos!

Members at the Fort Davis conference decided to return to Taos, New Mexico, for RMOWP's 2025 conference. We were in Taos in 2012, and everyone seemed to enjoy it, with lots of opportunities for hiking, fishing, and other outdoor activities, photography, and gathering information for our writing projects.

We're aiming for September 14 to 17 (Sunday afternoon through Wednesday evening), with headquarters north of Taos, probably at Taos Tennis Ranch (next door to Quail Ridge Inn). There are a number of Air B&B's in that area, various hotels, and plenty of other lodging possibilities close by, and all near the town of Taos.

We'll let you know when we get a signed contract, but it looks like Taos will work next September, so mark your calendars!

Contest Winners 2024

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

Photography Winners:

01 Images from Last Conference

- 1st Buddy Green - Coyote at Valles Caldera National Preserve
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Santa Clara Pueblo
- 3rd Maryann Gaug - Ron on Puye Ladder
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Chipmunk with Munchies

02 Scenics

- 1st Frank Zurey - Johns Hopkins Glacier
- 2nd David Staat - Dempster in Fall
- 3rd Ron Belak - Fields Ablaze
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Anchored for Life
- HM Ron Belak - Norwegian Waterfall

03 Flora

- 1st Beto Gutierrez - Red Water Lily
- 2nd Maryann Gaug - Mules Ear in Aspen
- 3rd Steve Cochrane - Field of Flowers
- HM Deanna Zurey - Cactus Bloom
- HM Deanna Zurey - Spotted Trio
- HM Frank Zurey - Ivy

04 Fauna

- 1st Frank Zurey - Black Bear Got a Salmon
- 2nd Randy Watkins - Raccoon Morning
- 3rd Buddy Green - Great Kiskadees Adult Feeding Dragonfly to a Youngster
- HM Deanna Zurey - Brown Bear Stare Down
- HM Steve Cochrane - Impala
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Drink on the Fly
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Fresh Crab for Lunch

05 People in Nature

- 1st Steve Cochrane - Guide
- 2nd Virginia Staat - Reflection
- 3rd Virginia Staat - Lonely Fisherman
- HM Beto Gutierrez - From Landscape to Canvas
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Blessed Sunrise

06 Historical

- 1st Dan Bernskoetter - Spiritual Imprint
- 2nd Maryann Gaug - Sun Dagger Pictograph
- 3rd Ron Belak - Old English Mill
- HM David Staat - Historic Church
- HM June Wolfe - Santa Clara Pueblo Ruins

07 Cultural

- 1st Ron Belak - Viking Blacksmith
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Scouts Presenting Colors
- 3rd Beto Gutierrez - Market Bound
- HM Ron Belak - Piping Away
- HM Frank Zurey - The Old Fire Engine

08 Natural Phenomena

- 1st Deanna Zurey - Trees Blanketed in Hoarfrost
- 2nd Ron Belak - Spring Migration
- 3rd Judy Lehmkuhl - Aurora
- HM Virginia Staat - Burning the Fields

09 Altered Composite

- 1st Judy Lehmkuhl - Moose in the Fog
- 2nd Judy Lehmkuhl - Wide Open Loneliness
- Dan Bernskoetter - Eagle Soaring

10 Black & White

- 1st Dan Bernskoetter - Oxbow Bend Daybreak
- 2nd Ron Belak - Leopard in Tree
- 3rd Cody Mazur - Here Kitty, Kitty
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Cranes in Flight

11 Novice

- 1st Katee Harrington - Brown Bear Fishing
- 2nd Katee Harrington - Rabbit and Cardinal
- 3rd June Wolfe - Northern Cardinal
- HM Deanna Zurey - Hungry Brown Bear

12 Published Images

- 1st Frank Zurey - Grizzly Mom with Her Cubs
- 2nd Ron Belak - Nursing the Twins
- 3rd Frank Zurey - Fall Colors on Kebler

Contest Winners 2024 (continued)

Writing, Video, Art, Member's Choice and Humorous Photo Winners

24 Newspaper, Magazine - articles/columns/editorials

- 1st Ron Belak - Colorado's Crusty Crustaceans
- 2nd Michael Salomone - Peacock Bass and More, Leave the Passport at Home
- Michael Salomone - Soft Hackles Sell It for You

26 Newsletter Writing and Web Writing

- 1st Virginia Staat - All Things Dead
- 2nd Virginia Staat - A Popeye Moment
- 3rd Maryann Gaug - A Walk Among Castles

28 Unpublished Written Works

- 1st Judy Lehmkuhl - Aliy Zirkle 2016 Iditarod Race
- 2nd Judy Lehmkuhl - Thanatos
- 3rd Maryann Gaug - Reflections

30 Video

- 1st Ron Belak - Safari to South Africa
- 2nd Dan Bernskoetter - 2024 Bluebird Nest Box

31 Video Clips

- 1st Ron Belak - Stalking Odonata
- 2nd Maryann Gaug - Medano Creek Surge Flow
- 3rd Tie Ron Belak - Tender Loving Care
- 3rd Tie Virginia Staat - Power of the Bear

40 Art Works with an Outdoor Theme

- 1st Michael Salomone - flats boat - Embossed copper
- 2nd Michael Salomone - Vail Valley Anglers fly shop - watercolor painting
- 3rd Michael Salomone - Wood duck drake - embossed copper

Member's Choice

- Ron Belak - Enjoying a Soft Perch

Humorous Photographs

- Deanna Zurey - Splash Landing
- Buddy Greene - Wet Paint
- Frank Zurey - Praying for Salmon



1st Place Fauna, Frank Zurey, Black Bear Got a Salmon

Board/Membership Meeting Update

This year was a bit different for handling our business meetings, in that all the conference attendees attended the Board Meetingand were also present for the General Membership meeting on the final day.

It was wonderful to have the interest and participation of everyone!!

The General Membership meeting recapped our main action items:

- Transition of the organization fundamentals continues
- Succession planning of critical positions becomes necessary for the future
- The need for continued assistance from the membership is necessary to distribute the work
- The financial health of the organization continues to be a priority
- The new website is awesome and will continue to evolve and expand as another priority

A very positive outcome ... drum roll please..... is that Don led the discussion and finalization of the conference location for 2025 along with dates!! We are ahead of the game!!!!

Don and his committee will continue to finalize the venue, and work on the agenda.... And, of course, keep us updated!

Thanks to all of the attendees and their participation for a successful wrap up! ~Linda

More Winning Contest Photos



1st People in Nature, Steve Cochrane, Guide



1st Composite, Judy Lehmkuhl, Moose in Fog



3rd B&W, Cody Mazur, Here Kitty, Kitty



1st B&W, Dan Bernskoetter, Oxbow Bend at Daybreak



1st Scenics, Frank Zurey, Johns Hopkins Glacier



1st Cultural, Ron Belak, Viking Blacksmith



2nd Flora, Maryann Gaug, Mules Ears in Aspen



1st Natural Phenomenon, Deanna Zurey, Trees Blanked in Hoarfrost

Conference Wrap-up 2024 *(photos by Linda Haehnle, June Wolfe, David Staat, and Virginia Staat)*

We said goodbye to over 25 friends and Fort Davis, Texas, a mere three weeks ago. What a time we had!

With a chocker-block full lineup, we began our first full day with a field trip to the Davis Mountain State Park. We took a walk and talk tour with Park Ranger Charlie Ewing. The hike followed the rocky Sky Line trail, offering views of the Sky Island ecosystem.



That evening, we visited the historic Prude Ranch for a delectable barbecue dinner, followed by a hayride to the Flats, complete with a campfire and s'mores. The rest of the evening, we gazed at the stars as astronomer, Charlie Ewing, told tales of constellations, while we viewed Jupiter through a telescope and photographed the incredible Milky Way.



Our workshop leaders included three amazing guests and our own RMOWP president, Linda Haehnle. Renowned photographer and tour guide, Lee Hoy, offered an information-packed presentation on night sky photography. *Hiking Texas* ambassador Marcus Connolly presented a workshop on the intricacies of time lapse photography. Linda Hahenle offered an intriguing workshop, detailing what she looked for in a tour guide and photo workshop leader.

Author, historian, museum director, and commissioner Larry Francell did double-duty for the conference. Larry presented a lecture full of personal stories and how he used those stories,

his historical knowledge, and curiosity to write several local historical books. Larry also led a personalized walking tour of the Fort Davis National Historic Site.



Our tour of the Davis Mountain Nature Conservancy gave us insights on their conservation efforts to bring once endangered wildlife back to the area. We also enjoyed an auto tour of Madera Canyon, with views of 8,300-foot Mt. Livermore, the second highest peak in Texas.



On our final field trip, we visited the Chihuahua Desert Research Institute and their botanical and cactus gardens. We learned about pollinators, birds, and various flora and how many of them were edible or used for medicinal purposes.



Now we look forward to our next conference in Taos, New Mexico, during September 2025. We hope to see you all there!

More Conference Photos



Good friends!
Good food!
Good time!



Photos include the Gang (including Jack Olson), Spark Plug Award Winner Frank Zurey with Prez Linda, Night Sky photo (Cody Mazur), BBQ dinner at the Prude dining hall, a walk with Ranger Charlie, banquet Chef Jeremy and Jane, Contest Winners, and Jimmy and Sheryl Smith with Juan at the Prude. Photos courtesy Linda Haehnle, Don Laine, Cody Mazur, and Virginia Staat.

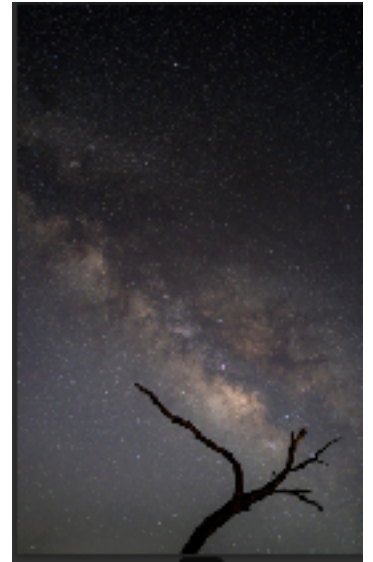


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