

ROCKY MOUNTAIN OUTDOORS

A Newsletter for Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers

Best of Show 2023

Best of Show Photography: Randy Watkins “Bald Eagle”



The Best of Show photo this year combined all the right ingredients to easily score the win over some really excellent images this year. It had the right location, composition, timing, processing and subject, and, probably, at least a bit of good luck was involved. It is simply a superb image and a pleasure to view. ~Fred Lord, Photo Judge

Best of Show: Writing

Virginia Staat “In a Flash”

In just a few paragraphs, this piece informs and engages the reader on the flash writing genre, successfully using those techniques to explain this genre. ~Mary Taylor Young, Writing Judge

(Editor’s Note: Read Virginia’s essay on our website: <https://rmowp.org/2023/01/18/in-a-flash/>)

Table of Contents

Judges’ Info	2
Contest Winners	3-4
2024 Conference Info	4
Takin’ Care of Business	6
Conference Wrap-Up	8

About our Judges

- **Photography Judge - Fred Lord:** Fred 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 & Books 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 conference presenter for many years.
- **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.



1st Place Scenics ©Judy Lehmkuhl



1st Place Fauna ©Kent Taylor



1st Place Flora ©Frank Zurey



1st Place B&W ©Beto Gutierrez

Rocky Mountain Outdoors
Published bi-monthly by
Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc.
Editor: Don Laine
Layout: Virginia Staat

Send editorial materials to Don Laine, info@rmowp.org, or snail mail to 76 Eototo Road, El Prado, NM 87529.

Opinions expressed in articles in Rocky Mountain Outdoors are those of the articles’ authors and do not necessarily represent the views of Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, its officers, board of directors, and staff.

©2023 by Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from author and editor.

RMOWP Officers:

President: Linda Haehnle, Aurora, CO
 Vice President: Steve Cochrane, Rangely, CO
 Secretary: Kent Taylor, Richardson, TX
 Treasurer: Maryann Gaug, Silverthorne, CO

Board of Directors:

Ron Belak, Kittredge, CO (2024)
 Debbie Holte, Taos, NM (2024)
 Frank Zurey, Golden, CO (2025)
 Richard Youngblood, Katy, TX (2025)
 Dan Bernskoetter, Lohman, MO (2026)
 Al Perry, Herriman, UT (2026)

Contest Winners 2023

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

Photography Winners

01 Images from Last Conference:

- 1st Ron Belak - Wilson's Delight (right)
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Mountain Goat Family
- 3rd Steve Cochrane - Red Rock Colorado
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Lunch
- HM Ron Belak - A Foxy Stare

02 Scenics:

- 1st Judy Lehmkuhl - Multnomah Falls
- 2nd Michael Salomone - Horseshoe Bend,
Lees Ferry
- 3rd Maryann Gaug - Lake Katherine
- HM Maryann Gaug - High Falls Rainbow
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Heading Home
- HM Deanna Harrington - View from Mt. Evans

03 Flora

- 1st Frank Zurey - Golden Banner
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Purple Fringe
- 3rd Kent Taylor - White Lotus Portrait
- HM Ron Belak - Primrose in a Crack
- HM Frank Zurey - Beardtongue
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Wild flower

04 Fauna

- 1st Kent Taylor - Great Egret Nesting
- 2nd Kent Taylor - Western Ribbon Snake
- 3rd Virginia Staat - Stallions Sparring
- HM Dan Bernskoetter - Ruby Throated
Hummingbird at Common Milkweed
- HM Randy Watkins - Short Ear Owl
- HM Frank Zurey - Caracara and Black Vulture
Dispute

05 People in Nature

- 1st Michael Salomone - Captiva Island path
- 2nd Deanna Harrington - James Peak Wilderness
- 3rd Emily Harrington - Flat Tops Backpacking
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Beauty in the Meadow
- HM Beto Gutierrez - Up close

06 Historical

- 1st Ron Belak - Final Rest with a View
- 2nd Deanna Harrington - Old Greek Windmill
- 3rd Emily Harrington - The Lower Redoubt
- HM Deanna Harrington - Acropolis



©Ron Belak

07 Cultural

- 1st Deanna Harrington - Greek Soldiers
- 2nd Ron Belak - Viking Tradition
- 3rd Ron Belak - Swedish Country Life
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Rock Art
- HM Maryann Gaug - Dia de los Muertos

08 Natural Phenomenon

- 1st Frank Zurey - Storm Moving In
- 2nd Emily Harrington - Mt Holdsworth Sunrise
- 3rd Frank Zurey - Clouds Building
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Icicle
- HM Virginia Staat - Rainbow to Heaven

09 Altered/Composite

- 1st Randy Watkins - Bald Eagle
- 2nd Judy Lehmkuhl - Lunar Eclipse
- 3rd Dan Bernskoetter - HDR Denver Sunrise from
Red Rocks
- HM Judy Lehmkuhl - Street in Spain
- HM Dan Bernskoetter - Monarch Wasp Attack

11 Novice

- 1st Randy Watkins - Bald Eagle
- 2nd Buddy Green - Peekaboo
- 3rd Randy Watkins - Owlet
- HM Buddy Green - Great Horned Owlets
- HM Randy Watkins - Fishing

12 Published Images

- 1st Frank Zurey - Humpback Whales Bubble Net
- 2nd Frank Zurey - Snowy Egret
- 3rd Dan Bernskoetter - Widow Skimmer Dragonfly
- HM Frank Zurey - Lone Tree Sentry Feeding
- HM Ron Belak - A Springtime Sip

Contest Winners 2023 (continued)

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

24 Newspaper, Magazine - articles/columns/ editorials

- 1st Michael Salomone - Freaks on Flies
- 2nd Ron Belak - Timberline Tactics for Trout
- 3rd Ron Belak - Courteous & Responsible Fishing

26 Newsletter and Web Writing

- 1st Virginia Staat - In A Flash
- 2nd Virginia Staat - Trust Me
- 3rd Maryann Gaug - Pines of the High Windy Places

28 Unpublished Written Works

- 1st Judy Lehmkuhl - When Change Feels Like Loss
- 2nd Judy Lehmkuhl - The Dragonfly

30 Video

- 1st Dan Bernskoetter - Red-shouldered Hawk Nesting
- 2nd Dan Bernskoetter - Life on Rosburg Pond
- 3rd Ron Belak - Photographing Sandhill Cranes in Monte Vista

31 Video Clips

- 1st Maryann Gaug - Mountain Goats at Salt Lick
- 2nd Maryann Gaug - Dia de los Muertos Dancers
- 3rd Dan Berenskoetter - Aggressive Wild Turkey Hen Behavior
- HM Virginia Staat - Dueling Water Stomps
- HM Frank Zurey - Baby Goat Trying to Fit In

40 Art Works With an Outdoor Theme

- 1st Michael Salomone - Trout Swimming in Rocks - Copper
- 1st Judy Lehmkuhl - Hat

Member’s Choice

- 1st Beto Gutierrez - Down the Hatch
- 2nd Randy Watkins - Horseshoe Bend

Humorous Photographs

- 1st Frank Zurey
- 2nd Judy Lehmkuhl
- 3rd Buddy Green



Davis Mountains and Milky Way
©Robert Bossard

2024 Conference Set for Fort Davis, Texas

by Virginia Staat

Grab your cowboy hat and boots! RMOWP’s 2024 conference will be held in the historic town of Fort Davis, Texas. With an elevation of 5,050 feet, Fort Davis has been dubbed the highest town in Texas. It is due south of Denver and nestled in the Davis Mountains.

Why Fort Davis? Here are just a few reasons:

- Fort Davis is in the heart of the largest International Dark Sky Reserve in the world. We plan to take advantage of that dark sky by holding our conference during the new moon on October 3, 2024.
- Fort Davis is a magnificent Sky Island. Sky Islands are isolated mountain ranges surrounded by a completely different ecosystem (in this case, the Chihuahuan desert). As the elevation rises, Sky Islands offer lush and diverse flora and fauna. As a result, Fort Davis is home to 8,300-foot Mount Livermore; 277 species of birds; the largest concentration of hummingbirds, black bear, and elk in Texas; and a wide variety of species found nowhere else in the world.
- The historic Fort Davis garrison was established in 1853 as a frontier outpost to protect the El Paso/San Antonio road. It was also home to Buffalo Soldiers and the infamous Texas Camel Corps.

This Deep-in-the-Heart-of-Texas town is sure to set us tossing our hats over the windmill. Mark your calendars and see you there!

Conference Photos: Friends, Field Trips, and Frivolities

photo credits: ©Linda Haehnle, ©Maryann Gaug, and ©Don Laine



Conference Photos: Mixed With a Little Business



Jack Olson said that he would be sitting in the empty chair. We took him seriously! ©Virginia Staat

Takin' Care of Business

by Don Laine

The meetings of RMOWP's board of directors and general membership at the Los Alamos conference were, as usual, dominated by financial issues. RMOWP isn't broke and has enough money to cover expenses. However, like most family and business budgets, we do need to bring in at least as much as we're spending.

As we're all very much aware, inflation has taken its toll on everything, from general operating expenses to conference expenses. To achieve the goal of keeping RMOWP solvent, the board of directors approved several measures that they hope will not be too painful.

Beginning in 2024, dues are being raised from the current \$60 per year for a one-year single person membership to \$70 per year. Multiple year and multiple person memberships will also increase. In addition, because of increasing postage and printing costs, the board decided to charge \$20 per year to those who want a paper newsletter snail-mailed to them. Ouch! Yes, we're very sorry but it's necessary.

RMOWP will continue to mail a printed membership directory to those who want one, but will update it every two years

instead of each year. For the security of RMOWP's members, it was decided that we will not offer an emailed membership directory.

Because the contest entry fee has been \$10 per person almost since the beginning of time it was decided to raise the entry fee to \$20 for all of that member's entries.

Everyone at the board meeting agreed that RMOWP's website, now about ten years old, needs a major upgrade. There are several options available, but the first one we're going to explore is setting up a new website through the website development company GoDaddy.

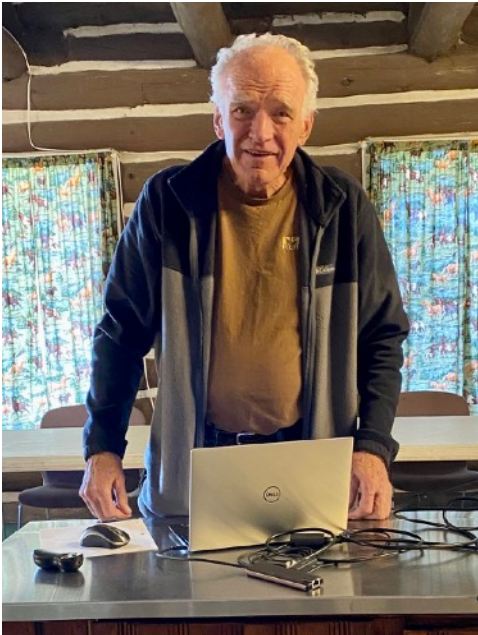
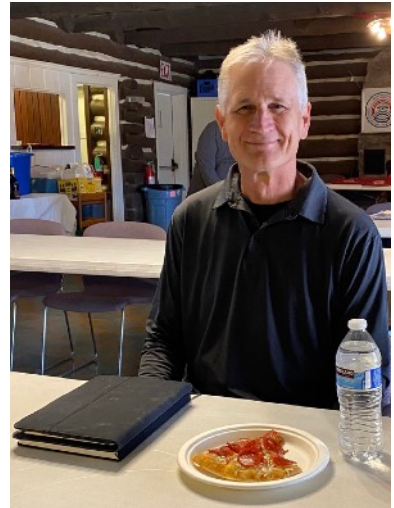
So, RMOWP is heading into 2024 with a bit more income expected and a pledge to, in the words of secretary Kent Taylor, "watch the finances diligently."



©Maryann Gaug

Conference Photos: Workshop Leaders, Winners, and Wonders

photo credits: ©Linda Haehnle, ©Maryann Gaug, and ©Don Laine



2023 Conference Wrap-Up

Fun, Photos, and Food in the Hills around Los Alamos, New Mexico

Close to 30 RMOWPers found their way to Los Alamos, New Mexico, for RMOWP's Golden Jubilee - our 50th anniversary - with numerous photos from activities in years past and a look back at longtime members, trying to remember who those young people up on the screen are. There were also shows of past contest-winning photos and brief presentations on days gone by.

There were three exciting workshops that offered something for everyone. Filmmaker and University of New Mexico professor Ilana Lapid of Santa Fe presented "A Filmmaker' Journey: Visual Storytelling for Social and Environmental Impact." Her lecture centered on six newly-released Gila Wilderness documentaries, how they were developed, and methods she used to encourage her students to use storytelling to positively impact others in conservation efforts.

Photographer Kristen Honig, from the Los Alamos area, discussed her love of fire and ice, particularly how her desire to share firefighter stories led her to become a wildfire photographer. A third workshop, by editor/writing coach Adrienne Pond of Taos, began by taking us outdoors where we looked for inspiration, turning that experience into descriptive language to connect our readers to nature and our words.

Our guided walking tour of Los Alamos and Manhattan Project sites by the director of the local historical society included entry to historic buildings that were key to the development of the atomic bombs, as well as the home of J. Robert Oppenheimer, known as the father of the atomic bomb. Not usually included in the public tour, this entry into Oppenheimer's home showed us where he and his wife Kitty lived, entertained, and consumed Oppenheimer's famous and very potent martinis.

We also toured the ancient Puye Cliff Dwellings, home to the ancestors of today's Santa Clara Pueblo. About 1,500 pueblo Indians lived, farmed, and hunted there from the 900s to about 1580 A.D. There are two levels of cliff and cave dwellings dug into the cliff face plus additional

structures on top of the mesa. About half our group accepted the challenge to descend from the mesa top via a wooden ladder.



A ranger met us at Valles Caldera National Preserve, a mostly undeveloped area with scenic wide-open spaces and historic cabins. Some conference attendees also set off on their own to explore Bandelier National Monument.



RMOWP also gained a new member — Los Alamos resident Jan Barnes — a photographer who heard about the conference and decided she had to join us. She fit right in, and it was great having a local help us with the logistics of avoiding road construction and security check points at the top-secret Los Alamos National Laboratory.

As we wrap up our 50th anniversary conference and say so long to Los Alamos, we now look forward to next year's conference at Fort Davis, Texas. Hope to see you all there!

