



Rocky Mountain Conservancy

QUARTERLY

Summer 2015

THE NATIONAL PARK EXPERIENCE by Ann Schonlau

Camping out under the stars with a bunch of college students may not sound like much fun, but, for me, it was an opportunity to challenge a group of young adults in a unique way. By combining the educational components of outdoor adventure and physical fitness at Southern Illinois University, where I directed the student fitness program, I was banking on the powerful effect of wilderness to motivate students to get fit and then use their heightened level of fitness to have fun in some of the most awe-inspiring country I could imagine.

The students had worked out for 10 weeks as part of the program requirement. It was now spring break and we were on the South Rim of the Chisos Mountains in Big Bend National Park, Texas. Most of these students had never been camping, much less 1,000 miles from home with 45 pounds on their backs. So, we're talking culture shock. In a big way. On this week-long trip, we planned to hike from the Basin to the top of Emory Peak, then to the South Rim of the Chisos Mountains and out through Juniper Canyon. This was about 15 miles with 8,000 feet elevation gain. Problem-solving 101 — here we go!

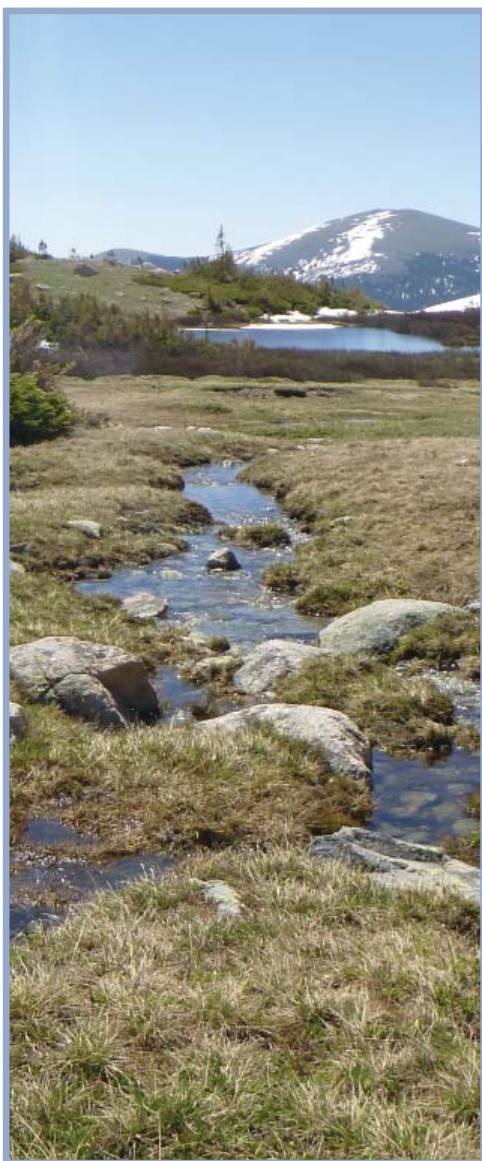
In a desert environment, there's always the challenge of finding water. Lucky for us, on this trip there was water at Boot Springs, about halfway

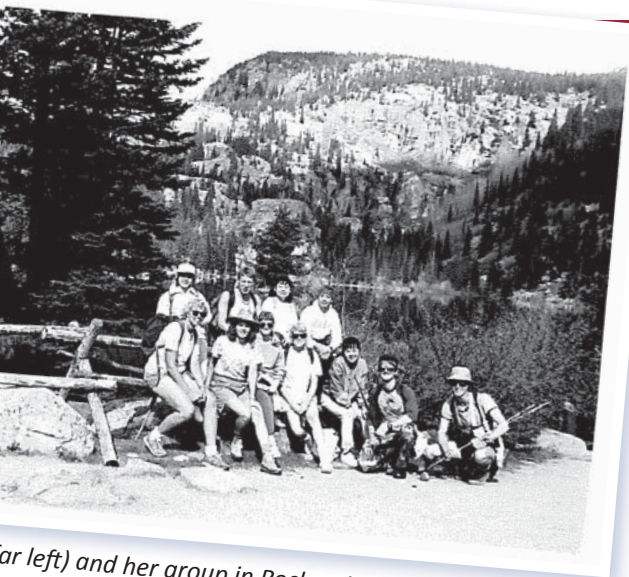
in and again on the way out, the same water source all the wildlife drank, apparently. We were informed by the Backcountry Office that a mountain lion was spotted at the spring the day we started out. For these flatlanders from Illinois, that was an attention-grabber. For me, too.

Always, there were the ubiquitous blisters to contend with, and I bought moleskin by the case. Malfunctioning camp stoves and faulty water purification pumps could quickly spell disaster and foil my efforts to meet my goals for the trip. But what better motivation exists than basic survival for a person to learn the importance of having a backup plan?

Another example: On a backpacking trip to the Grand Canyon, the weather turned from sunny and 60 to cold and rainy within minutes. Not unusual, but this was a soaker. Our camping permit that night was for the Bright Angel Campground at the bottom of the canyon and it rained — all the way down and all night. The next morning we hiked out of the canyon. By the time we reached Indian Gardens, about halfway up the canyon (4.7 miles), the snow on the ground was two feet deep. We continued hiking up to the rim but we were postholing for 4.6 miles up the trail. So, maybe it was no surprise that some of the students thought it was time to get a hotel, but, in the end,

(Experience continued on page 2)





(left) and her group in Rocky, circa 1978

in this country and natural and they protect and duty to be found in s fair to say that the the most power-partment. The ces, the majestic e-inspiring canyons, life — national ers of some of the essions of our ents.

most urban- and oan-raised kids, exs like these are the and exactly what's d to make an im- Generally speaking, s everything we've make inroads into -established ideol- and worldview — ger or otherwise.

unger generations dicapped, earlier in d immediate grati- gy. Not their fault, the national parks pping excesses have only shake things -face impact, but veal the nuanced ess readily ac- ge distracted per- a delicate pasque gopher esker invite appreciation.

Stories like this and programs like this one at Southern Illinois University are not uncommon. The national parks themselves offer intensive programs for young people in myriad forms, as do their many associated partners. Here in Rocky, for example, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy's Conservation Corps brings college students from disparate backgrounds into the park and surrounding Forest Service areas to work hard, have fun and learn. So, too, in Grand Teton, Glacier and Acadia national parks, among others, there exist innumerable immersion adventures in which young people can engage and become transformed in a national park setting.

Certainly, connecting our kids with nature through empowering experiences like this is just one way, but I've seen firsthand how effective it can be.

This story is worth repeating. Again and again. It's imperative that we remember that changing the perspective of one kid can have an unknown ripple effect — and it's up to us to do it. The welfare of our public lands will someday be in their hands. We need to teach them well. And where better than in our national parks?

Since retiring and moving to Estes Park four years ago, Ann has been volunteering in Rocky in various capacities, is a member of the Estes Park Bear Education Workforce as well as the League of Women Voters.

Announcing the Annual Rocky Mountain Conservancy Picnic in the Park!



When: August 8, 2015

Time: 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Where: **Hidden Valley in RMNP!**

Members \$15.00; Guests \$20.00
Kids 6 – 12 \$5; Kids 5 and under free!

11:00 – 12:15 Activities & mingling
12:15 – 1:00 BBQ picnic lunch
1:00 – 2:00 Program

Check out this year's lineup of food and frivolity!

- Meet some historic characters — it is rumored that Enos Mills might stop by for a visit!
- Live music with the local bluegrass band *Hills of Home*
- Tasty cold beer from New Belgium Brewery
- Chilly ice cream courtesy of Boulder Ice Cream
- Decadent fudge courtesy of Gateway Stores
- BBQ brats and burgers from Jubilations Catering (*with vegetarian options*)
- A 20% discount at our on-site Nature Store

RSVP by July 27 if you plan to attend

Make your reservation by calling 970-586-0108 or at **RMConservancy.org**

- Advance payment is required — thank you!
- If you need to cancel your reservation, let us know!
- **Parking at the Gateway Store at the Fall River Entrance with shuttle to the site is STRONGLY encouraged** — visit the website for details about parking and the shuttle service to Hidden Valley:

RMConservancy.org

Thanks to George Carle of the Gateway Store!

We hope to see you there!

Cover photo credits

(Upper): **"Bighorn Pow Wow"** by Conservancy Member Jim Ward, Estes Park, CO; (Lower) **"High Country Views"** by Nancy Wilson, Estes Park, CO.

Please send high-resolution images to: nancy.wilson@RMConservancy.org by September 1 for publication in the 2015 Autumn *Quarterly*.

Photos are always appreciated! Scenery, wildlife and wildflowers greatly enhance this publication, so get out there and take a hike! **Thank You!**

SCIENCE BEHIND THE SCENERY:

WHITE-TAILED PTARMIGAN RESEARCH IN ROCKY

by Shelley L. Spear, Gregory T. Wann and Cameron L. Aldridge



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National Park
study ptarmigan sur-
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warming spring temperatures. It still is unknown if the variables of declining reproduction and the changing timing of breeding were related. Uncertainty has increased regarding how ptarmigan might respond as environmental conditions and habitats change.

This uncertainty about some of the suspected vulnerabilities ptarmigan are having in response to climate change was largely responsible for a petition (still under review) to list the species as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2010. Ptarmigan forage on grasses (sedges), flowering plants (alpine and American bistort, alpine avens) and most importantly, willow (*Salix spp.*), all of which are found in the alpine environment. In fact, ptarmigan are “willow-



Ptarmigan nests typically are quite exposed.

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bitats are
vulnerable
of invasion
growing at
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obligate” species, meaning willow is a staple food source throughout the year, especially in wintertime when most other plants are covered by deep snowpack. With all the different effects of climate change that are being recorded, it is noteworthy that alpine habitats are particularly vulnerable to the risk of invasion from plants growing at lower elevations. Ultimately, this could result in reduced habitat and food for many alpine species, including the white-tailed ptarmigan. Thus, it is important to understand the habitat requirements for the ptarmigan as well as how timing of nesting and reproduction are related.

In 2013, researchers at Colorado State University and the U.S. Geological Survey initiated a three-year radio-telemetry study to investigate reproduction and habitat needs of ptarmigan. The primary goals of the project were to; 1) measure reproductive success during the breeding season and how it relates to timing of nesting; and 2) measure habitat attributes selected by ptarmigan hens to better understand their habitat needs. The first goal of the project is important to the scientific understanding of



Researcher Shelley Spear using radio telemetry to search for tagged ptarmigan.



Ptarmigan a

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ancy 2015 ships & Fellowships

Mountain National Park's environmental education de-
s in 2007. Most recently, in 2013, the Justine and Leslie
ity to include an Education Fellow in addition to the
ram directive. With Next Generation Fund support, the
erosity of donors and the creativity of Fellows who address
ountain National Park and the Field Institute programs.

Maggie Poyant

Bailey Education Fellow

May 27 – October 31, 2015

Hometown: New Bedford, MA

College: Northeastern University

Career Goal: Environmental
Geologist

Internship Goals: To learn about
a new environment, explore the
beautiful landscapes that Colorado

has to offer, and to connect with other scientists and park
visitors about Rocky's mission to preserve and sustain the
natural resources contained within it.

Internship Duties: Teach young visitors and their families
about the many interconnected ecosystems within Rocky
Mountain National Park and how we can continue to protect
and appreciate all its natural resources.



Research Fellow Tyler Williams to Study Disturbances in Rocky

and non-native, invasive disease — white pine blister rust. Wil-
liams' research revolves around limber pine populations in the
park and how they are affected by various ecological disturbanc-
es.

Throughout its distribution, limber pine occurs in regional
metapopulations as small to large stands of trees scattered
throughout the landscape. Limber pine dispersal to patches
results from the tendencies of nutcrackers to fly many kilome-
ters carrying seeds. With disturbance, patches go extinct; but
other patches are colonized, maintaining the metapopulation.
The focus of this research is to determine the dynamics of this
metapopulation within RMNP.

The purpose of studying Clark's nutcrackers and limber pine
is to learn more about their fundamental relationship specific to
Rocky Mountain National Park in anticipation of future ecologi-
cal disturbances. Limber pine in the park has already experi-
enced some mortality from mountain pine beetles, and blister
rust was detected in Rocky several years ago. Tyler's question
principally involves how the limber pine metapopulation within
RMNP is affected by these disturbances.

2015 Bus Tour Adventure Make your reservation today!

Grand Lake Safari:

An Educational Adventure by Bus

Tuesdays through August

Journey to the Top:

A Trail Ridge Road Bus Adventure

Wednesdays, Thursdays through early September

Sunset Safari:

An Educational Adventure by Bus

Fridays through early September

Elk Expeditions

Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays September through
mid-October

Park Puzzler

by RM Conservancy Member Joel Kaplow

Across

3. The source of the Cache la Poudre River is the park's Poudre Lake, just a stone's throw east of ___ Pass.
5. The Ute and Arapaho Indians built temporary wooden shelters, mainly for sleeping, called ___. They were smaller than tepees, but had the same conical shape. Some can still be found within RMNP.
6. To help drum up support in the 1910s for establishing Rocky Mountain National Park, promoters touted it as "America's ___."
9. Located inside RMNP, the ___ Valley ski area was in use from 1931 to 1991. In its heyday, it boasted a lodge, cafeteria, ice rink and a 400-car parking lot.
11. Black bears don't go into "true" hibernation as marmots do. It's more a state of light hibernation, or deep sleep, known as ___.
12. In the Mummy Range you'll find a mountain named for the third woman known to have climbed Longs Peak. Anna E. ___ tackled the park's monarch in 1873.
14. Surprisingly, snow can make a good insulator for animals. Once dug in below ___ inches, they're in the subnivean zone where the temperature does not dip below 32 °F.
16. Rocky Mountain National Park straddles three counties: Boulder, Grand and ___.
17. Frozen Lake, not to be confused with Frigid Lake, is found at the southern end of ___ Glacier ___.
19. The ___ Meadows Patrol Cabin was built in 1931 below Longs Peak's east face. Despite its stone walls, it was completely swept away by an avalanche in 2003. A new one was built in 2008 with some salvaged material from the original, and hopefully out of the avalanche zone.
20. The ptarmigan, a year-round high-country dweller, will grow extra ___ on its feet that act as insulating snowshoes in the winter.

Down

1. RMNP's centennial anniversary was on ___ 25, 2015, exactly 100 years after Woodrow Wilson signed the park into existence.
2. Legend has it that in the 1820s, French fur trappers needed to lighten their load, so they hid a stash of a certain supply of ___ near what became known as the Cache la Poudre River.
3. The three life zones found in RMNP are alpine, subalpine and ___.
4. Frigid Lake, not to be confused with Frozen Lake, is found at the west end of ___ Basin.
7. During a chance encounter with a man on a San Francisco beach in 1889, a young Enos Mills got an earful of advice and encouragement for his efforts to create Rocky. The man he spoke with became his role model. It was naturalist/conservationist John ___.
8. There are many "parks" found within RMNP, such as Moraine, Hollowell, Tuxedo and Horseshoe. The original meaning is derived from the French "parc," which is a valley or basin surrounded by ___.
9. There are over 100 IHCs scattered across the U.S., but only two are stationed



Honor Guard waiting for introduction

been bringing and tribal elders connect to their rich things the moun- still small, these toward a deeper each other's diverse story.

se educational many stories being vate and some in on the wishes of an Indian group. ent occurred in n the Northern d the 100th An- storic 1914 Pack cant features in ea. The anniver- ace in downtown ded speakers Arapaho Business s and teachers



for an afternoon filled with dancing demonstrations. Thousands of visitors experienced the Arapaho's history and culture throughout the day.



Home is a constant theme when Native American Indians come to Rocky and this event provided unexpected opportunities to form new bonds between longtime Estes Park residents and the Arapaho. The celebration brought together local resident Pieter Hondius, Jr. with Alonzo Moss, Arapaho Tribal Elder. Prior to the park being established, Pieter's father had a homestead in Upper Beaver Meadows and his father's ranch was one of several places the Arapaho visited during the 1914 pack trip. These two men, with different life experiences and backgrounds, were able to share stories throughout the day, each with their unique feelings and memories for the place they both call "home."

The 1914 Pack Trip: Remembering a Significant Event

by Sue Langdon

In August of 2014, the Arapaho from the Wind River Reservation celebrated the 100th Anniversary of a historical 1914 pack trip. This trip reminds us that while the park was preserved for its scenery and wildlife, it also contains a wealth of cultural history. Ute, Arapaho, Shoshone, Cheyenne, Apache, Navajo and many other Native American groups consider the park their former homeland, or a place where ancestors once walked. Many of their direct stories have been lost in time, but if it were not for two women in 1914, the park would not know as much of its history as it does, nor learned as many lessons for the future.

In 1914, Harriet Vaille and Edna Hendrie, supported by the Colorado Mountain Club (CMC), traveled to the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming. The CMC wanted Native American Indians to identify place names in Estes Park to help support the establishment of Rocky Mountain National Park. After contacting several anthropologists who declined the

project, Harriet and

How the Arapaho unknown. It may have group to contact or group would be able Native Americans. Edna and Edna had a successful reservation and were for two Arapaho Elders



Gun Griswold (left) and Sherman Sa... with members of the Pieter Hondius... Hondius Ranch. Photo: Estes Park Area

tor to travel to Estes that male elders would information with who persuaded Harriet's to record events during

For two weeks... versed the Estes Valley



Party leaving Hondius Ranch

Photo: Estes Park Area Historical Museum



An Ordinary Family with an Extraordinary Life:

Tales From the Harbison Ranch

by Dave Lively

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new Leadville fish
earning that res-
offer trout on their
determined to open
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and Lake, Colorado
om Grand Lake to

point that Harry
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“Annie and Kittie Harbison were typical of the pioneer stock which has furnished the sinews and courage necessary in opening this new frontier which this mountain country has been.”
– Pastor Charles Hulac

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y business, An-
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c of 1893 hit,
. And by late 1894,

the family was facing the prospect of losing their land. Although they had made some improvements to the land, they had not held the filing the required five years to “prove up” for ownership, and all was lost. Instead, they decided to try the Grand Lake area to be near Harry and his family.

In 1895, the two daughters, Annie, 28, and Kittie, 24, each filed for a 160-acre homestead about one mile north of Grand Lake. The 320-acre home-

stead was approved in 1896; the family of five decided to begin a dairy ranch with their two remaining cows. One of the greatest homesteading challenges — fresh water — had been solved by choosing land bisected by the ditch Harry had dug. They had not run

a dairy operation before; however, the opportunity could not be passed up. And so, in the summer and fall of 1896, they walked over Berthoud Pass to begin life again. They built their first cabin during the winter of 1896-97.

Jan 8 1897 – We moved in our first little cabin. It was Home Sweet Home and we were so happy. – Annie Harbison

A contemporary writer says the Harbison sisters the hay, roped the horses, fed and milked their brother Rob out of bed to deliver milk and butter. Later, the sisters started taking in summer guests. Their Sunday dinners were legendary, the table die. Their double funeral was held at the Grand on November 14, 1938: Annie was 70, Kitty was

Dec 30 1899 – the month of December has ended and with it has ended the year 1899 also the nineteenth century. The month has been very favorable for outdoor work, cold at night but mostly moderate in daytime. We have progressed some considerable in the year just ended – we have 4 horses 5 cows. We have bought in the year one set of harness, one sled, one pair of 4 year old mares, a sewing machine, a riding saddle and some other affairs too numerous to mention amounting in all about three hundred ninety five dollars. – Andrew Harbison

Through many years of trials and tribulations, including raising Mamie Schnoor, a neighbor’s daughter as their own, the loss of both parents, and their brother Rob’s partial blindness, the “Harbison Girls” operated the dairy ranch successfully until their deaths in 1938.

Upon their deaths went to Mamie who ranch with her family property to the National in 1954. The west e Rocky Mountain Na the Harbison ranch enjoy the grass the after plowing their horse-drawn plow.

The complete st family is presented a to the homestead si p.m. during the sum



The Harbison family at the lake

Financial Health – 2014

n
y

2014 was a banner year.

Following the devastating flood of 2013, we launched a new name and fresh organizational structure, including a completely updated website and functionality. These improvements have allowed us to increase membership, building an enthusiastic constituency for the benefit of Rocky Mountain National Park and other public

Rocky Mountain National Park exceeded expectations on visitor satisfaction. The Institute served more children, families and lifelong members. The Conservancy's Conservation Corps expanded to six youth to be involved in the stewardship of their public lands. The Generation Fund, the park swore in an all-time high of 100 Rangers; presented environmental education programs and offered internship opportunities to more young people. The Conservancy also stepped up to reopen the old Discovery Center as a youth and family oriented Discovery Center, which includes a Junior Ranger program and Discovery Days.

These successes, which we could not have accomplished without the support of 2014 more than 900 individuals, foundations and corporations, totaling more than a million dollars toward the support of Rocky Mountain National Park, combined with funds generated through our Nature Conservancy programs, fuels all we do for the park and its visitors. As you can see on the following pages elaborating on the impact of our organization in 2014, we make all of this happen. YOU make a difference.

Support is available online via a link on our website at [www.rmconservancy.org](#). On behalf of all of us here at the Conservancy, thank you for being

Director

license plate, but will be a voluntary fundraising option through the Group Special Plate program. The program coincides with the ongoing celebration of Rocky Mountain National Park's Centennial.

In addition to the usual fees involved in the state for a special plate, the donation to the Rocky Mountain Conservancy (the park's official fundraising partner organization) will be a minimum of \$25 to a maximum of \$75 (donor choice). The funds generated, estimated at thousands of dollars annually, will directly support Rocky Mountain National Park. To learn more, visit the Rocky Mountain Conservancy's website:

[www.rmconservancy.org](#).



Statement of Financial Position As of December 31, 2014

(With Summarized Financial Information as of December 31, 2013)

	2014	2013
Assets		
Cash and Equivalents	\$ 999,477	\$ 961,618
Investments	9,818,029	9,096,990
Accounts Receivable	4,426	40,934
Contributions Receivable	182,000	
Notes Receivable		160,000
Prepaid Expenses	8,853	18,792
Inventory	590,623	548,312
Land Held for Sale	1,257,500	1,257,500
Property and Equipment	710,393	707,403
Total Assets	13,571,301	12,791,549
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	44,392	24,322
Accrued Aid Payable	219,587	191,789
Accrued Expenses Payable	76,951	85,073
Deferred Revenue	5,561	84,845
Note Payable		160,000
Custodial Funds	127,626	150,272
Total Liabilities	474,117	696,301
Net Assets		
Unrestricted:		
Undesignated	1,505,023	1,258,009
Designated:		
Operating Reserves	518,648	518,648
Quasi Endowments	7,340,751	6,959,960
RMNP Funds	655,312	492,005
Temporarily Restricted	2,800,468	2,589,644
Permanently Restricted	276,982	276,982
Total Net Assets	13,097,184	12,095,248
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	13,571,301	12,791,549

Estes Valley Legacy: A Planned Giving Collaborative Calendar 2015

In early 2015, the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center launched the Estes Valley Planned Giving Collaborative to provide information and assistance to individuals who donate to Estes Valley nonprofits to help them maximize the tax benefits of their current and future gifts, including estate gifts. The Rocky Mountain Conservancy is proud to be a Founding Member of the Collaborative!

If you have questions about this new resource, or about estate planning in general, please contact: Julie.Klett@RMConservancy.org.

Thursday, July 16, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Estes Valley Library
Giving Feels Good – Timing, Size and Method – Marsha Yelick

Thursday, August 27, 4:30 – 6:00 p.m., First Western Trust
Inheritance Strategy – How to not outlive your money

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Estes Valley Library
Giving Feels Good – Timing, Size and Method – Marsha Yelick



*The Rocky Mountain Conservancy
 es special thanks to the following people
 for their donations toward projects
 n Rocky Mountain National Park:*

March 1, 2015 – June 17, 2015
 126 gifts ~ total gift amount \$170,104

Gerarda Jensen, Denver, CO
 Chris & George Judson,
 Durango, CO
 Lydia and David Karney, Dallas, TX
 Terry and Paula Malleck,
 Longmont, CO:

**In Honor of Rocky Mountain Na-
 tional Park's Birthday**
 Dianne and James Moss, Dekalb, IL
 Sharon Shinn, Brentwood, MO:
In Honor of
Kay Krewson and Sue Schaffler

TRAIL RIVER RANCH

Judy Burke, Grand Lake, CO

BEST USE/UNDESIGNATED

Accenture Foundation, Inc.,
 Employee Giving Campaign,
 Chicago, IL
 Richard Acheson, Milliken, CO
 James Alfred, Lagrange Park, IL
 Mary and James Alfred,
 La Grange Park, IL
 Helen Anderson, Lakewood, CO:
In Memory of Marianne Lynch
 Anonymous
 Martha and Don Baker,
 Castle Rock, CO
 Edward and Carol Balint,
 Kitty Hawk, NC

George & Ida Bathey, Houston, TX
 Lynda Price Bohager, Hanover, PA
 Arnold Braasch, Rensselaer, IN
 Cindy Buggs, Houston, TX
 Guy Bush, Kimball, NE:

In Memory of Judy Waterson
 Peggy Carr, Denton, TX
 Chevron Corporation, Princeton, NJ
 CNA Foundation, Chicago, IL
 Janis L. Emanuel, Englewood, CO
 ExxonMobil Foundation,
 Princeton, NJ

Fall River Productions, Inc,
 Estes Park, CO
 Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund,
 Boston, MA

Steven M. Fishburn, Austin, TX
 Alan Folz, Dallas, TX
 Harvey Gardiner, Niwot, CO
 Gordon & Linda Goff, Estes Park, CO:

In Memory of Derek Jagers
 Judy and Don Gordon, Aurora, CO

Anne Gosch and Joseph Braun,
 Carmel, CA
 Marcia Hayes, Madison, WI
 Kathlene Henry-Gorman,
 Cambria, CA

Marilyn Herrmann, Estes Park, CO:
In Honor of
Ranger Bradley Fitch Smith
 James and Marcia Hoffmeister,
 Boulder, CO

Richard K. Johnson, Kenosha, WI
 Inez Kelley, Houston, TX:
In Honor of Ruth Hess
 Kind Coffee, Estes Park, CO
 Laura Martin, Wichita Falls, TX
 Donna McMillan and Steve Bayne,
 Northfield, MN
 Microsoft Matching Gifts Program,
 Princeton, NJ

Pat and Larry Minthorn, Naples, FL
 Pete and Christine Naktanis,
 Niantic, CT

Michael and Maureen Parks (Parks
 Family Foundation), Dallas, TX
 Leanna Reitz, Boerne, TX
 J. Paul and Marjorie Roberts,
 Jersey Village, TX
 Guests of the Rocky Mountain
 Park Inn, LLC, Estes Park, CO
 Rotary Club of Estes Park,
 Estes Park, CO
 Shell Oil Company Foundation
 Matching Gifts, Princeton, NJ
 Teradata, Stuart, FL

Christine Sweetland, Littleton, CO:
In Memory of Carl Thornburg
 The Giving Campaign, Norfolk, VA
 Up Top Towing, Estes Park, CO
 Gayle & David Vancil, Ft. Collins, CO
 Michael Vanhorn, Miamisburg, OH
 James Ward, Denver, CO:

In Honor of the RMNP staff
 Joe & Lori Wisniewski, Lansing, MI

All in Memory of Peter Bachhuber
 Carol Bachhuber, Kansas City, MO
 Bart and Judy Eisfelder, Fairway, KS
 Kathryn Worley, Kansas City, MO

(Ask Nancy continued from p. 3)

32 degrees F. Plants growing in cold environments will maintain higher levels of sugars and proteins throughout the growing season — but at a significant cost to the plant since they don't grow as fast or as tall and have smaller leaves, smaller flowers, etc. Cellular membranes also remain pliable and become even more pliable during cold temperatures. This allows water to migrate out of cells into the spaces between cells. And while the plant may sustain damage from the freeze (you may observe brown leaf edges, for example), relocating moisture within prevents living cells from freezing and bursting. And finally, as a total backup plan, forming adventitious leaves ("secondary growth") is a mechanism that plants use to cope with the loss of the primary stem, the apical meristem. Adventitious buds don't help leaves survive a freeze; rather, new buds are a "recovery" process which helps the whole plant survive after damage. — *RMNP Forest Ecologist Brian Verhulst*



Photo: Julie Klett

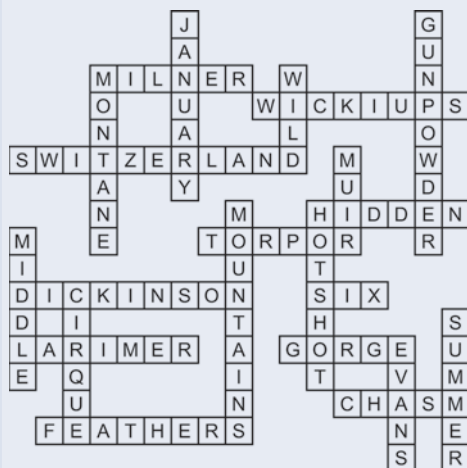


**Heart of the
 Summer P**

This summer the Rockies Education Center will introduce two new programs for disadvantaged students. Both programs are in partnership with the Rocky Mountain National Park School District and the Girls Club of Fort Collins. Both programs will be implemented through the Next Generation program, which enables the program to sponsor students to work directly with

The first initiative is the Friday Summer Camp for students who are in the third to fourth grade. This program provides a boost in science education for students who are also enrolled in the Girls Club, and by their third grade week will feature a natural science activity that will reinforce the curriculum they receive and introduce the concepts they will receive next year. Our goal is to help students get to the world of science by introducing the wonders of the Rocky Mountain National Park to the kids who will visit the park, even if only in the Estes Valley

PARK PUZZLER SOLUTION





Rocky Mountain Conservancy

Charles Money, Executive Director
Nancy Wilson, *Quarterly* Editor
P.O. Box 3100
Estes Park, CO 80517
(970) 586-0108

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Permit #184
Estes Park, CO



As it turns out, Lower Twin Lake in Wild Basin is quite the surprise. Photo: Madeline Wilson

Nature Notes

Once summer decided to show up, it came in with a bang, no beating around the bush. Maybe it was making up for lost time after the seemingly endless winter and the cold spring conditions. Temperatures on the east side of the park soared into the 90s and rivers ran high from snowmelt at upper elevations. Above-average snowpack in the high country has kept the waterways flowing in abundance and left some trails in the park flooded and many others still hidden beneath deep drifts even into late June and early July..... As he was replacing the lights of the Field Institute sign in late March, Conservation Corps Manager **Geoff Elliot** became aware of a persistent pecking noise coming from a nearby ponderosa pine. After scanning and circling the tree, he could not find the suspected woodpecker; however, as he began to walk away he noticed some wood shavings falling from the tree. When he looked up, he caught a glimpse of a pygmy nuthatch poking its head out of a cavity nest it had created in a branch of the tree.....Other news from the Field Institute: Staff had to chase a house wren and a red fox out of the building in May, although not at the same time.....Also in May, during the season kickoff picnic for the Conservation Corps at the Field Institute Center, a fox was observed that was being chased by an elk in an effort to protect its calf.....Park Ranger **Marilyn Irwin**, and her husband **Steve Fry**, came upon a wild turkey on the road in Horseshoe Park. The bird was strutting proudly down the center line with his tail fanned out. In the spirit of preservation, Steve tried to convince him to get out of the road. The turkey took offense and gobbled at him, whereupon Steve gave him a stern lecture before the turkey reluctantly moved to the side of the road.....Estes Park residents **Kelly** and **Gary Brown** spotted a mountain lion cub near the Stanley mansion on the outskirts of town. They'd seen the mom at different times, but this time the cub was alone. While it's most common for mountain lions to have two to four cubs, birthing a single cub is not uncommon, nor is the possibility of infant mortality.....Estes Park resident **Michael Farrell** was outside one morning in early June when he saw a really large bobcat on his deck. The cat was stretched up to peek into a birdhouse that was perched on the railing, with its paw raised to the hole. When the cat spotted Michael, it wheeled around and streaked across the deck, jumping effortlessly over the railing to slouch into a nearby copse of trees.....Conservancy Member **Dick Coe** witnessed a mama elk leaning down to groom her newborn calf as it nursed a mere 40 feet away from his home in Estes Park.....**Conservancy Staff** had the delightful experience of seeing two newborn mule deer calves in the shade of a large ponderosa tree in the park's east side housing area. One of the calves was just attempting to stand, and both were still visibly wet.....the Conservancy Staff also watched a

hummingbird that had built its nest in a huge ponderosa tree outside an upper floor window of the Conservancy office. From this unique vantage point, the Staff could see the mama hummingbird add extra fluff to the nest, sit patiently on the eggs, and then, when they hatched, flit around in search of food. She has been faithfully returning to the nest to feed babies not yet visible over the rim of the nest, her long beak jackhammering sustenance into eager mouths.....Conservancy Publications Director **Nancy Wilson** was in the park, standing in a meadow, when a daring mountain chickadee flew and hovered right in front of her face to grab an unsuspecting gnat. <Whew!>.....a park visitor reported having shot a female elk near Mills Lake in late May. Apparently, the 19-year-old male was charged by the elk, so he pulled out the weapon he was carrying in self-defense. Further investigation is underway.....Conservancy Development Assistant **Victoria Alexander** was hiking to Cub Lake on an overcast, rainy day in May when she saw something move on the rocks close to the water. What looked at first like an unhealthy marmot turned out to be a muskrat, its long, thin tail draped over the rock on which the animal was placidly sitting, observing her. She was about 10 or 15 feet away and the muskrat didn't seem afraid — but after a while it scrambled down a hole between the rocks and disappeared from view.....Estes Park resident **Madeline Wilson** hiked in early June to Tournaline Lake which lies above treeline past Odessa Lake at 10,500 feet. While sitting on the rocks around the lake, she was surprised to suddenly hear the sound of coyotes howling *above* where she was sitting. The sound was distinct, but it seemed so bizarre, given the elevation and the terrain.....Madeline also noted some gnawed aspen trees at Upper Twin Lake that were unusual in that the remnants of the gnawed trees stood at about 4.5 feet tall. Apparently, as further evidenced by a beaver lodge spotted on the shore of the lake, beaver were chewing on the aspen trees when the snow drifts were at least four feet high in that location.....Keep your cool this summer with a visit to Rocky — and don't forget your sunscreen!



Conservancy Member **Dick Coe** stood within 20 feet of these extravagant male turkeys in Upper Beaver Meadows in early June. Five tom turkeys paraded right and left while displaying to two nearby hens. One of them had several feathers missing from its tail. We can only imagine what shenanigans were involved.....