



Rocky
Mountain
Conservancy

QUARTERLY

Autumn 2014

THE 1914 ARAPAHO VISIT: ITS TRUE SIGNIFICANCE

by James H. Pickering

About noon on Tuesday, July 14, 1914, three Northern Arapaho Indians arrived by train at Longmont. The oldest, age 73, was Gun Griswold, a rather taciturn retired judge. His younger, and much more animated companion, was Sherman Sage, age 63, dressed for the occasion in his blue-cloth chief-of-police uniform. Accompanying them was Tom Crispin, a much younger man of mixed blood. Crispin spoke fluent Arapaho and English and was there to serve as interpreter. Met at the station by automobiles, by late afternoon the three had been taken to Longs Peak Inn as guests of its owner, Enos Mills.

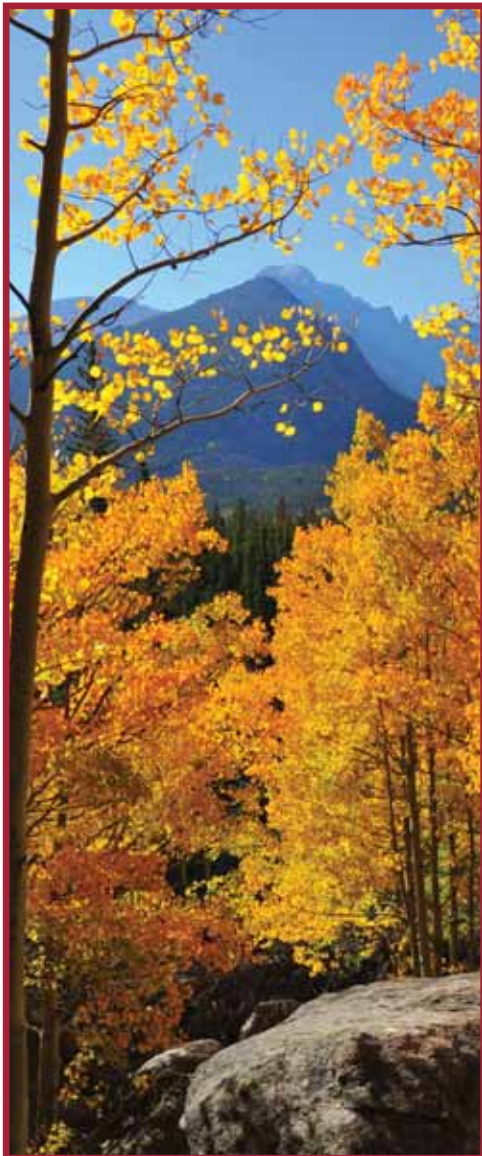
The Arapaho had come from the Wind River Reservation in west central Wyoming at the invitation of the nomenclature committee of the Colorado Mountain Club, as part of its campaign to gain support for the creation of Rocky Mountain National Park. Earlier that year CMC members had come up with the idea of researching the original Native American names of landmarks in the Estes region. Unable to locate professional anthropologists, the CMC turned to the Arapaho themselves, issuing an invitation for a two-week pack trip that July through the area, outfitted and led by veteran guide Shep Husted. Oliver Toll, a 23-year-old lawyer, was recruited to take notes

during their journey. These field notes were organized and published 48 years later, in 1962, by what is now the Rocky Mountain Conservancy under the title *Arapaho Names and Trails*. Thanks in large measure to this trip, some 36 Indian names were subsequently affixed to mountains, trails, lakes, and other local land features (as well as names in translation—e.g. Gianttrack, Lumpy Ridge, and Never Summer). Oliver Toll had no formal training as an ethnologist or linguist. Yet, as the late Jim Benedict has observed, though not ethnography in the classic sense, his notes provide “a delightful — often humorous — account filled with information, much of which has proven reliable.”

But what was, and is, the real and lasting significance of the visit of the 1914 Arapaho? To be sure there are those place-names, and, even more importantly, the legends and stories that the two elderly Arapaho attached to them: the Apache Fort in Upper Beaver Meadows, Longs Peak, Thatchtop, and Specimen Mountain, the waters of Grand Lake, as well as the ancient trails that led up and over the tundra of Trail Ridge. These legends and stories are, as Benedict notes, “all we have.”

Until 1914, there had been paid little or no attention to the region’s pre-history. In fact, Enos Mills, the area’s first historian, in his 105 page narrative published in 1905, *The Story of Estes Park*, dismissed that past in a single brief paragraph: “When Estes first came

(1914 Arapaho continued on page 2)





Larry Von Siedle

(1914 Arapaho continued)

to the Park he saw new lodge poles and other recent Indian signs, but, so far as is known, there never was an Indian in the Park since the white man came." Since there had been no frontier-like encounter between Native Americans and Europeans, their one-time presence had little meaning for Mills.

In 1914 the Arapaho were similarly dismissed with little more than wry humor. The *Longmont Ledger* set the stage, telling its readers that the Arapaho's arrival "suggested dream land, fairy land and Leather Stocking Tales." Oliver Toll recalled that "we became at once public characters to the citizens of Longmont; and in fact throughout the trip were accorded a place in the estimation of the public somewhere between that of a governor and a theatrical troupe." For most, these Native Americans returning home were little more than anachronisms of the Old West, much like the vaudevillians of Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show, a romanticized piece of Americana that lasted until 1913.

I had read Toll's *Arapaho Names and Trails* a number of times, and made frequent use of it in my writings. But its true significance did not occur to me until this past August, when I went down to Bond Park to watch a program sponsored by Rocky Mountain National Park commemorating the 100th anniversary of the 1914 pack trip. On hand were Northern Arapaho elders and their families, who during the day,

shared their history, stories, legends, and culture, as well as their present-day concerns, with those who came by. The next day they were escorted across Trail Ridge to Grand Lake to symbolically complete the pack trip of their ancestors.

That day in Bond Park the Arapaho elders talked about those ancestors for whom the Estes region was once a special place, and about the legends and stories that grew out of their contact with the land itself. It was then that I suddenly understood, in a moment of personal epiphany, the real and lasting significance of the Arapaho pack trip a century ago. The gift of the Arapaho to us was what historians, sociologists, and psychologists refer to as "a sense of place," a combination of characteristics and meanings that make a particular piece of geography unique and special. Human beings naturally wish to understand the places where they live. A fully developed sense of place involves knowing and understanding the human cultural experience that has taken

place in a given landscape over time. It involves not only understanding our own cultural experience in that landscape but something of the cultural experience of those who have gone before. And it involves our ability to connect the two.

Enos Mills, in describing the world that Joel Estes stumbled upon, saw it only as an unpeopled wilderness upon which the Estes family, without challenge, could superimpose their own kind of civilization. Until Mills populated that world with the pioneers who followed, Estes Park had no history, no "sense of place."

In 1914 Gun Griswold and Sherman Sage told us about the myths, legends, and stories their ancestors attached to the land — myths, legends, and stories which they in turn passed down among their people and which Oliver Toll, in turn, passed down to us. The Arapaho sense of place — the Estes Park-Rocky Mountain National Park region — that they shared so willingly in 1914 was one that their descendants confirmed for us in Bond Park a hundred years later. It was then, as I listened, that I finally and fully understood. Without knowing the cultural experience of the Arapaho, however briefly, my own appreciation of this special place would be a diminished one. That was the Arapaho gift to me that August Saturday morning.

Jim Pickering is a Rocky Mountain Conservancy Board Member, author of many books and Historian Laureate of the Town of Estes Park.

**Interested in this book?
Find it at
www.rmconservancy.org**



(From left) Shep Husted, Sherman Sage, Gun Griswold, Tom Crispin, Oliver Toll and, seated, David Hawkins (Estes Park Area Historical Museum)

Ask Nancy

Quarterly Editor Nancy Wilson attempts to unearth answers to any questions asked by Conservancy members and park visitors. If you are curious about something in or about the park, email nancy.wilson@rmconservancy.org or write: Nancy Wilson, Rocky Mountain Conservancy, PO Box 3100, Estes Park, CO 80517.

How many vehicles, on average, go off Trail Ridge Road in a year and how are the vehicles retrieved? Fortunately this is an infrequent occurrence, particularly above tree line where the consequences can be more dire. While I don't have actual numbers at hand, each year we see a small number of motor vehicle accidents that involve vehicles leaving the roadway and sliding, rolling, or otherwise ending up somewhere "down there." That "down there" is most often below tree line and a fairly short distance from the road. Accidents typically occur during the winter months when roads are slick and visitors are limited to lower elevation motor touring. That said, on rare occasions we do have a vehicle go off Trail Ridge Road above tree line. In either case, retrieval is typically achieved by contacting a local tow truck service; and collaborative efforts to move the vehicle from "down there" to "up here" are undertaken with the goal of safety, efficiency, and minimal impact to park resources.

On the dire side of the ledger, I recall an incident during the early 1980s when a vehicle catapulted off Tundra Curves ejecting driver, passenger, luggage, groceries and other property.

(Accidents continued on page 15)

My family often stayed in Estes Park with our great aunt who was an in-law of the McCreery family. She lived in a cabin along Lumpy Ridge that was built in 1915. During this time, no one ever referred to the mountains across the north side of the Estes Valley as "Lumpy Ridge." When did the ridge become Lumpy Ridge and for what is it named? According to *High Country Names*, by Arps and Kingery (published by the Rocky Mountain Nature Association in 1977 with a second edition in 1994): "The 1914 Arapahos [during the historic 1914 pack trip] described the rocks that project all along this ridge with a word that translated as Little Lumps. The Colorado Geographic Board, recognizing the appropriateness of the name, retained Lumps but discarded Little. They add two other names in common use on either end of Lumpy Ridge: the rather thick Needles on the northwest, the plump Twin Owls to the southeast."

Are hummingbirds threatened in any way by extracurricular feeding by humans? Do feeders need to be removed in the fall to encourage migration, or is that a myth? As long as feeders are kept clean and filled and a healthy formula is used (no food coloring needed!), hummingbird feeders provide positive benefits. In my opinion, they should be taken down for good by the first week in October and each night in August-September due to bears seeking all the food they can find to prepare for deep sleep in late autumn. — *Jeff Maugans, retired RMNP Interpretive Ranger.*

Rocky Mountain Conservancy's Newest Publication: A Next Generation Fund Project



Mountain Valley Journals *Sketches of Moraine Park and Estes Park Through Time*

The last great Ice Age was over and the climate was warming when the first paleo-hunters came to Moraine Park and Estes Park, two scenic valleys in today's Rocky Mountain National Park area. Other Indian tribes, notably the Ute and Arapaho, followed in their footprints to stalk the valleys' abundant game.

Trappers, explorers and adventurers came and went as America completed its westward expansion. Pioneer settlers built cattle ranches. In the Estes Valley, a tiny settlement grew into a renowned national park gateway resort. In Moraine Park, a different story played out.

This book's beautiful illustrations by noted Denver artist Thomas Haller Buchanan will take you on a trip through 12,000 years of history in the Moraine Park and Estes Park valleys. Artist's journal entries give voice to iconic characters representing key periods along the valleys' historical timeline and introduce readers to important people and events that shaped the valleys — past and present. Softcover, \$12.95 plus shipping.

**Available in December on our website at
www.rmconservancy.org**

Note:

"A Conversation" by Mary Taylor Young, printed in the 2014 Summer Quarterly, was the creative piece she wrote for her Artist-in-Residency and donated to the park. The article was reprinted by permission.

Cover photo credits

(Upper): "Hungry Mink" by Conservancy Member Jim Ward, Estes Park, CO; (Lower) "Autumn Glory" by Conservancy Member Ann Duncan, Boulder, CO

Please send high-resolution images to nancy.wilson@rmconservancy.org by December 1 for publication in the 2015 Winter Quarterly.

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

ROCKY'S SHIFTING GROUND:

AN ONGOING ASSESSMENT OF THE FLOODS OF SEPTEMBER, 2013

by Karina Puikkonen

Water in all its forms is the dynamic force that continually shapes Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP). Glaciers, lakes and rivers have slowly sculpted durable crystalline rock into the majestic vistas we see around us today. While hydrologic processes are relatively steady over time, extraordinary events can change and have drastically changed these landscapes overnight.

The heavy rains of September, 2013, initiated one such phenomenon, and researchers are helping piece together the unexpected, yet recurring chapter of flood in RMNP's natural history.

Last fall's lengthy storm triggered déjà vu. In Horseshoe Park, a suitably named tributary of Fall River lived up to its name for the second time in recent history. Roaring River thundered to life three decades after the Lawn Lake Dam breach flung more than 300 million gallons of water and sediment down the river corridor in 1982, creating the Alluvial Fan.

This time, relentless rain stripped the river's battered banks, which reshaped and expanded the Alluvial Fan, and shifted the river's channel to the west.

No one was more surprised than University of Colorado Boulder veteran researcher Dr. John Pitlick. As a young masters and PhD student in the 1980s, he first studied sediment

transport after the Lawn Lake Flood. After monitoring Roaring and Fall rivers from 1983-1987, he deduced that they had more or less returned to an equilibrium state. This conclusion held until September, 2013.

"The difference here is that Roaring River, because of the instability

caused by these two floods, is a pretty good sediment producer at this point in time," Dr. Pitlick said. "So it's a unique chance to look at the dynamics of a river system that is carrying many orders of magnitude more sediment than it normally would."

The park invited Dr. Pitlick and a new generation of master's students back to track how both rivers now carry this latest deposit. New information about current flow rates and sediment bed loads, along with the original data set, will help project the long-term evolution of these river corridors.

"It's a great opportunity because you don't often get a chance to do this twice when studying rivers," Dr. Pitlick said.

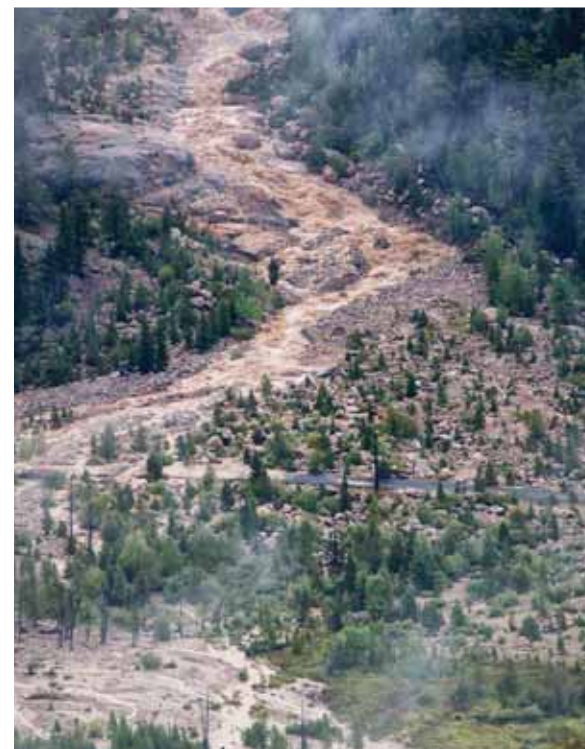
The redesigned Alluvial Fan isn't the only visible scar in the park. The drenching storm also triggered multiple debris flows that are noticeable from many roadways. While some happened in remote areas, others like the Twin Sisters, Cabin Creek and Bighorn Creek



Looking downstream from the Alluvial Fan on September 15, 2013. (Photo: NPS)



Dr. Sara Rathburn stands in the Bighorn Creek Slide. (Photo: NPS)



(Left): The aptly named Roaring River during the 2013 September storm. (Photo: NPS) (Top): An aerial photo of the Twin Sisters debris flow (Photo: U.S.G.S.)

slides rolled right up to or through the doorways of buildings.

Mystery surrounds the natural conditions that led to last year's parallel ground shifting events on the east side. They were unlike the Lawn Lake dam or 2003 Grand Ditch breaches, both of which were caused by human structural failures. The recent events appear unique, but Dr. Sara Rathburn of Colorado State University, who also has been active in post-Grand Ditch breach research, doesn't believe that's the case.

"We know that multiple [events] have occurred and we want to know why and how often they occur," she said.

Initial observations around the Bighorn Creek slide hint of a long history of movement and deposition in the area. Evidence includes old wounds on bordering trees that have been struck by large, tumbling boulders in the past. Curved bark now grows around the healing cambium layers, but lesions from last year's event are evident.

Dendrochronology, or tree ring dating, is one method Dr. Rathburn and master's student Annette Patton will use to reconstruct this his-

tory. Older dating techniques such as lichenometry and carbon-14 dating of slide-path material also can help answer the big question.

"We want to know if this was from an anomalous freak storm," Dr. Rathburn said, "or if there are some other reasons, some other controls that will allow the park to identify areas more prone to debris flows."

Other clues about the underlying physical processes and characteristics that triggered these slides aren't as permanent as long-standing ponderosa pine trees or ancient lichen. Relevant data about the raw size, scope and material composition of these mass movements is slowly eroding away, so Dr. Rathburn and Patton are capturing this information now before it could vanish by next summer.

These landscapes, like many flood-impacted Colorado residences, are in the rebuilding phase. The September 2013 flood was a first for many local people, but research indicates that RMNP has recovered from this disturbance many times before.

It's difficult to predict what future skies may hold, but the dynamic force of water we observed last year

dramatically reminds us that the only constant is change.

Karina Puikkonen is from Utah and has four seasons working in Rocky (nine seasons total in the NPS). She has degrees in zoology and communications with an emphasis in journalism.



Graduate student Luca Rossi measures flow rates in Fall River. (Photo: Karina Puikkonen)



Rocky and Bullwinkle

by Mandy Cluck,
RMNP Interpretive Ranger
Photos by Russel Smith

They're big, they're bulky, they're funny looking. Some say they have a face that only a mother could love. They're decimating the park's willow habitat, and they've been known to attack and even hospitalize people. Despite this, they are the main attraction on the west side of Rocky Mountain National Park. You got it, we're talking about moose — Rocky's very own Bullwinkle.

Moose are the largest member in the deer family. As Rocky's largest charismatic mega fauna, the moose has come to unofficially symbolize the lush, marshy mazes of the Kawuneeche Valley, the birthplace of the Colorado River. Predominantly a wetland resident, moose are common in the valley and at nearby lakes and reservoirs. Eating up to 25 pounds of food per day, moose often can be seen browsing on willow leaves in the mornings and evenings, although they are active at all times of the day. Moose can sometimes overheat in the midday sun and will seek shade or water to stay cool. Higher temperatures farther south make Colorado the southern limit of their range.

Most biologists agree that moose have not lived in the Kawuneeche Valley in the past, to the extent they do today. There is evidence of moose being

hunted here, but there probably were just a few individuals scattered throughout northern Colorado. In 1978, the state of Colorado reintroduced a dozen moose from Wyoming into North Park, about 25 miles north of Rocky Mountain National Park. After a few additional transplants, moose began spreading around north-central Colorado and they now are well-established in Rocky Mountain National Park.

"Where can I see a moose?" As an interpretive ranger on the west side, this is probably the most common question I get from park visitors. "They're common throughout the wetlands of the Kawuneeche Valley," I tell them, although I know they're looking for me to give an exact location. As a ranger who spends lots of time in the field, I see moose practically every day. I've had several close-encounters, and actually moved to Grand Lake ten years ago to assist with a moose study. It could be said that I have a fairly close bond with these animals — they are fascinating animals.

Then, something happened last

year that changed my view of moose. I received a phone call informing me that a dear friend was being airlifted to the hospital. She had been attacked by a moose. After a harrowing night, she made it through, but not without major head injuries and bruises. She had been walking her dog when a moose jumped out of the bushes, no doubt triggered by the presence of what the moose thought of as its main predator, the wolf.

Wolves are one of only a few predators capable of bringing down a moose — usually a young or sick one at that. However, wolves have been extirpated (locally extinct) in Colorado for about 100 years, leaving mountain lions and bears as the only remaining predators, if only very rarely. The elk population in the park recently has been managed for overpopulation, and it's possible that, in time, this same fate could befall the moose.

Why not reintroduce wolves? This has been proposed; however, Rocky is a relatively small park, and wolves would surely migrate outside the park into areas heavily populated by people — historically a recipe for disaster. Many biologists agree, however, that it could just be a matter of time before wolves naturally migrate into Colorado from the north, perhaps providing a healthy balance to the existing food chain.

People, too, have their own impact on moose populations. For thousands of years, moose have been hunted by humans, and they now are one of Colorado's most popular game species. Moose are a desirable species for their wildlife viewing value, of course, but

Many biologists agree, however, that it could just be a matter of time before wolves naturally migrate into Colorado from the north, perhaps providing a healthy balance to the existing food chain.

they also are desirable for sport. The meat is not only nutritious, but delicious, too!

In 2013, the number of moose in Colorado was estimated by Colorado Parks and Wildlife to be above the target population at more than 2300 individuals, which corresponds to

the increase in hunting licenses issued in recent years. A total of 228 licenses were issued, a number that included an increase in the number of hunted females allowed.

There is no recent population count for moose in the park because there has not been an official study since 2004. Moose are very difficult and expensive to research. It costs too much to put radio collars on them, and they are not effectively monitored by aircraft, as are elk and deer. Colorado Parks and Wildlife flies low-flying aircraft in the winter to count mule deer and elk, and they literally count them from the air. When this was done for moose in the Kawuneeche Valley, they found something like 4 moose, total!

Based on the research project in which I participated in 2004, we estimated between 60 and 80 moose in Rocky. The words "carrying capacity" become relevant here,

referring to the number of moose that can healthily be supported in the valley. Could we be reaching this number? Evidence points to yes. The willow carrs of the valley appear to be over-browsed. Beaver, one of the staples of a healthy wetland, are moving elsewhere. More and more disturbing moose/human interactions are occurring.

What to do? Moose appear to be here to stay. The lush riparian zones of the Kawuneeche Valley provide the perfect habitat. This is a challenge that is being faced by wildlife managers in the park and throughout Colorado, and one that will continue for the foreseeable future.

But one thing is certain: moose will continue to be a source of awe for all who visit Rocky Mountain National Park.



Park Puzzler

by RM Conservancy Member Joel Kaplow

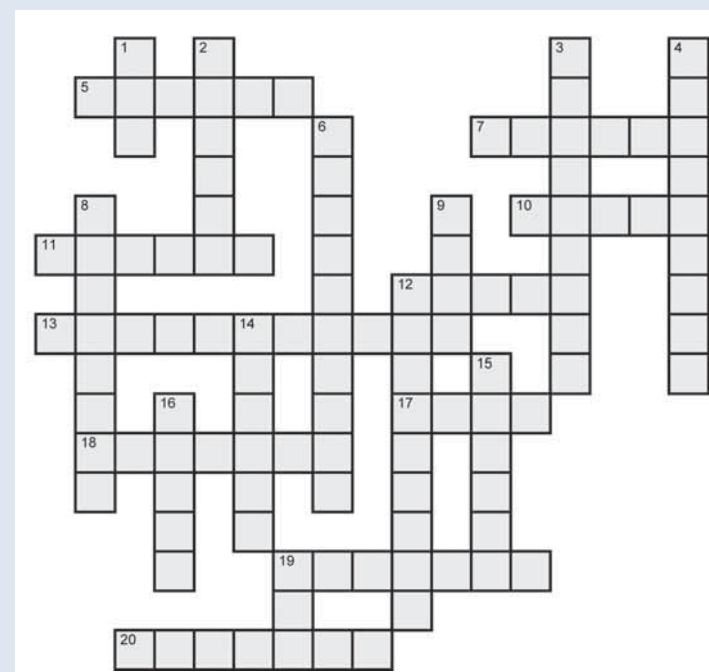
Across

- "Explore, learn, and protect!" is the motto of the ___ Rangers, an activity-based program conducted in almost all US national parks that is geared toward kids aged 5 through 12.
- One cute RMNP resident, the short-tailed weasel, is also known as an ___, which turns all white for winter camouflage, except for the black tip of its tail.
- At the west end of Wild Basin, below Boulder-Grand Pass, lies Lake of Many ___, named during a blustery day.
- A Conservancy Field Institute program that began last year and went strong this past summer is Grand Lake ___: An Educational Adventure by Bus, which travels the length of Trail Ridge Road to explore the park's history, wildlife and geology.
- South of Pagoda Mountain lies Keplinger Lake, named for a young member of John Wesley Powell's party who was the first documented person to summit ___ Peak in 1868.
- Not to be confused with the Grammy-winning jazz singer, can you name the *Quarterly* editor who first took the job as a young lass in 1990? After a short break, she's been there steady since 1996! (2 wds)
- Ever wonder why the color known as hunter orange (also safety or blaze orange) helps keep hunters safe from each other, but doesn't act as a visual alarm for deer? Deer see that color as green or ___.
- Citizen ___ projects are intended to enhance the knowledge of the participants and improve the overall stewardship of park resources. Volunteer students may be seen around RMNP measuring willows, counting birds, testing for mercury, checking for pine blister rust, and any number of other data-gathering activities.
- The RM Conservancy's Conservation Corps (previously known as the American CC) worked their ___ summer in the park, mostly doing extensive trail repair due to the flooding of September 2013.
- The logo selected for the RMNP's upcoming centennial anniversary was designed by Carol Welker, and features two ___ sheep.

Down

- Southwest of the park's Steep Mountain lies Mt. ___. An approximation of the Arapaho word for grizzly bear, it was named in 1923, long after the grizzlies had been wiped out of the area.
- ___ Lake can be found nestled between Jackstraw Mountain and Mt. Ida on the park's west side.
- ___ is a term that describes two or more life forms living together and depending on each other. As an example, lichens are a combination of algae and fungus, each benefiting from the other in a win-win living situation.
- RMNP is home to a moraine and lake named for famed landscape artist Albert ___. A fourteener west of Mt. Evans also bears his name.
- The flooding of September 2013 caused twelve of these potentially deadly earth movements in RMNP. When it comes to ___, you don't want to be in the wrong place at the wrong time!

- The name of RMNP's ___ Park in the southwest sector is in sharp contrast to Hell Canyon, just to its south in the Indian Peaks Wilderness.
- This park critter has over 40 different local names throughout North and South America, such as panther, cougar, puma, painter and mountain screamer. You probably call it a mountain ___.
- ___ pines have been dubbed the "weeds of the conifers" by foresters because they can grow up to two feet per year.
- The park's hummingbirds will steal an extremely strong material from neighboring arachnids, spider web silk, to reinforce their nests, which are commonly compared to the size of half a ___ shell.
- Also known as a rock chuck or whistle-pig, the yellow-bellied ___ can be seen scurrying around rocky areas in the park's high country.
- The Enos ___ Cabin, now a museum, was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973. Built in 1885 when he was age 15, it is found at the foot of Twin Sisters Peaks' west slope.
- The Moraine Park Discovery Center, formerly known as the Moraine Park Visitor Center, formerly known as the Moraine Park Museum, formerly known as the Moraine Lodge reopened its doors this year after being closed for ___ summers due to funding shortfalls.



Rocky Mountain National Park Fund Project Priorities Identified for 2015



BEST USE

There are many ways your gift to "Greatest Need" may be used to support the park. Projects and programs such as trail restoration, youth education, publications and exhibits, land protection, historic preservation and much more would not be possible without friends like you. Undesignated gifts are the most versatile donations we receive because they allow us to apply the funds when and where they are most needed.



NEXT GENERATION FUND

Thanks to *you*, the Rocky Mountain Conservancy makes sizable contributions to the educational programs of Rocky Mountain National Park — to the tune of more than \$500K per year. Highly regarded programs for youth include the beloved Junior Ranger Program, park internships, our own Conservation Corps, and Field Institute classes for kids. Help reach and inspire many thousands of young people, the youth who will care for our public lands in the future.



TRAIL IMPROVEMENT

There are more than 350 miles of trails in Rocky Mountain National Park — that's a LOT to take care of. Between routine maintenance, impact from heavy visitor use, severe weather events (such as the floods in 2013), new construction and needed improvements, these trails always need a helping hand.



CONSERVATION CORPS

The Conservation Corps program provides youth with the opportunity to spend their summers learning about natural resource management, developing job skills, and completing conservation work alongside the National Park Service and USDA Forest Service to foster the next generation of stewards to our public lands. *"The RMC-CC experience is an excellent growing experience. All in one summer I had the unique experience of working and bonding with my crew, developing leadership and communication skills, and learning about and conserving the beautiful land of RMNP and surrounding National Forests."* — Connor Enright, a second-year participant in the Conservation Corps

Planning Your Estate: Planned Giving Collaborative to Launch in Estes Park

In January 2015, the Estes Park Nonprofit Resource Center will launch the newly formed Estes Valley Planned Giving Collaborative.

The purpose of the Collaborative is to provide information and assistance to individuals who donate to Estes Valley nonprofits which will help them maximize the tax benefit of current and future gifts, including estate gifts. The Rocky Mountain Conservancy is proud to be a Founding Member of the Collaborative.

Once the Collaborative's website is launched, you will enjoy: educational programs regarding planned and estate giving; full access to a Gift legacy website; private, unbiased, confidential planned gift counseling; and access to professionals with the credentials appropriate to assist you in making planned donations.

By pooling our resources, the Collaborative will give Estes nonprofits, and our members and donors, a

wide range and depth of knowledge which will allow us all to maximize and sustain our charitable missions in the future.

We will provide more information when the Collaborative's resources and educational opportunities are available in January. We hope you will find it a valuable tool as you plan your estate.



Dear Friends,

Thanks to your generosity and support, we've had an incredibly busy and productive year at the Rocky Mountain Conservancy!

We've recovered from the 2013 floods, generated a new name and logo, and launched a beautiful new website. Our capacity to work on behalf of our partners continues to grow, allowing us to clear more trails, engage more visitors of all ages, and protect more of Rocky Mountain National Park and surrounding forests than ever before.

From all of us here at the Conservancy, thank you!

Here are our plans for 2015:

The Trail Improvement Fund: Rocky's beloved and spectacular trails are always in need of regular repair and maintenance. Your gift may be used to completely rebuild the flood-damaged Alluvial Fan area making it fully accessible, or restore the aging Lily Lake Trail. Help make these and other beloved trail resources safe and available to all.

The Next Generation Fund: This year, thanks to you, the park swore in an all-time high of 15,815 enthusiastic young Junior Rangers, distributed nearly 44,000 Junior Ranger books, offered 200 Junior Ranger programs, provided life-changing experiences for college-aged interns and fellows, and more. The busy fall school season is upon us and with your help the park will provide environmental education to thousands of kids. Help create even more future stewards of this park in 2015!

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy - Conservation Corps: This summer, with your help, we were able to place a record 36 youth in RMNP and National Forests. They helped with flood recovery, maintained 270 miles of trail, and more, all on valuable public lands in Colorado. Help us do even more in 2015!

And, as always, indicating your gift to "Best Use" allows us the flexibility to respond quickly to the greatest needs as they arise, whether it's trail restoration, youth education, land protection and historic preservation and much more. None of these important projects would be possible without friends like you.

Whichever project means the most to you, please take a moment to return the enclosed envelope with your thoughtful donation. You drive the Conservancy's important work, and we can't do it without your help. Thank you! As always, contact me any time. I'd love to hear from you.

Best regards,

Charles A. Money
Executive Director

***You can also make a gift at our new website: www.rmconservancy.org**

Nature. Pass it on.

PO Box 3100 Estes Park, Colorado 80517 Phone: 970-586-0108 www.rmconservancy.org

NEXT GENERATION FUND PROGRAMS FIRSTHAND

by Jo Wurst

The group huddled like penguins on the frozen bank. Wind swept around us, hurling icy daggers toward our scarf-wrapped faces. Why we ever thought doing a program that day was a good idea is beyond me. But, nonetheless, we were outside; we were on snowshoes; and we were teaching a troop of boy scouts about Winter Safety and Survival.

I made eye contact with my co-instructor, Ranger Jen, and she gave me a nod. I gathered up my pack and briskly walked back along the trail and out of the group's sight. Today, it was my turn to bury 'Bob' — a red, synthetic bag containing an avalanche beacon. So, I trudged through the fresh powder and dug a pit. Once I was finished, I greeted the troop on the trail, passed them their beacons and avalanche poles, and watched as they recovered 'Bob' from his frozen hole.

That cold, blustery January day is just one of many fine adventures my two internships with the Rocky Mountain Conservancy brought me. In late May of 2013, I was hired as the Bailey Education Fellow for the Field Institute. In this position, I taught children to create scat replicas out of Tootsie Rolls, watched a 90-year-old visitor dance joyously on the alpine tundra, and helped kick-start children day camps to support the flood recovery effort last September. My experience continued when Rocky Mountain National Park's Education and Outreach Program invited me to join their education team this past January, a program that hires interns, funded by the Rocky Mountain Conservancy. As an Environmental Education Intern with Rocky, I've led natural and cultural history themed field trips for elementary and high school students. I instructed snowshoe hikes. I facilitated classroom programs for schools. All-in-all, the past 16 months provided a multitude of spectacular experiences.

As an Environmental Educator, I witnessed how environmental education benefits the next generation. Environmental education provides hands-on, experience-based learning that is absent in many public classrooms. Many of the students I taught had never been to Rocky before; some had never even travelled outside the Denver-Metro area. As a direct result of the funding and support from Rocky Mountain Conservancy, these children could be exposed to nature and so form lifelong connections to natural areas. Because of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy, there are fellows and interns available to interact with these students and to make nature tangible and understandable.

So, thank you for your support of the Rocky Mountain Conservancy. May forever the next generations continue to bundle up and go outside on cold, blustery January days.

ROCKY: A PLACE OF MANY "FIRSTS"



by Mark DeGregorio,

RMNP education program manager

For many children living along Colorado's Front Range, their first visit to Rocky Mountain National Park is part of a field study with their school, facilitated by park Education Technicians, and Rocky Mountain Conservancy-sponsored interns. The park's *Heart of the Rockies* education staff hears about these first experiences daily in the autumn, during their busiest two months of the year.

This year, more than thirty schools will conduct field studies with the education staff in September and October alone. The students range in grade from kindergarten through undergraduate college level.

What does the education staff teach? The topics are as varied as the astounding resource diversity of the park and the variety found in the Colorado Academic Standards that schools are required to follow.

All of the park's K-12 programs are closely aligned to what is being taught at grade level at the time students visit. Doing so is crucial for keeping Rocky's education program relevant to schools which are under

pressure to not take time away from the classroom and standards-based instruction.

Learning to instruct to such a wide range of ages, from child to adult, a wide range of grade levels, subjects, and audience diversity, both in the field and the classroom, and to do so with all those variables changing day-to-day over a ten-month span is what gives the Rocky Mountain Conservancy-sponsored *Heart of the Rockies* education interns an unparalleled experience.

This year's class of interns, who started in March and work through the autumn, have led winter ecology and mountain safety snowshoe programs and conducted spring field studies with four grade levels of Estes Park students, as well as with a half dozen high-needs inner city Denver schools. The interns also have organized and helped parents facilitate activities with their children during

"As an intern in Rocky, I've had the opportunity to engage children through exploring a unique and amazing resource. As an environmental educator, I've also had the opportunity to, once again, become a student myself."

— Kathy Moldawer, park intern

the popular summer "Discovery Day" programs at Moraine Park Discovery Center, and the interns will teach Advanced Placement Biology in the fall.

The value of the *Heart of the Rockies* program lies

in not only giving many children their first national park experience, but also in giving education interns an experiential pathway toward meaningful careers. Intern alumni now work as rangers in other parks, including one park superintendent, and as resource managers in federal and state agencies. A number of them have gone on to become classroom teachers. All of these interns' "first" experiences were made possible by donations to RMC's Next Generation Fund.

Thank you!

What YOU make possible: GeoEducators in the Park

Rocky Mountain National Park holds an incredible story of geology and how the mountains came to be. It is a story that is complex, and some think uncharismatic. How then do we teach this story to schoolchildren in a way that is exciting and engaging? The answer is through a geologist who also happens to be a great teacher.

Each year since 2003, RMNP has participated in the GeoCorp America Program, sponsored by the Geological Society of America through the National Park Service's Geological Resource Division. Through the program, GSA places all levels of geoscientists — college students, professionals, and retirees — in temporary positions with the National Parks Service, BLM, and the USDA Forest Service. Many parks place geoscientists in mostly research positions. Rocky has gone a different route, integrating the geoscientists in the park's *Heart of the Rockies* program which serves K-12 education and youth groups.

Although not an internship, the GeoCorp scientists are partially funded by the Conservancy's Next Generation Fund, and work right alongside Rocky's education instructor interns who are fully sponsored by the Conservancy. Together, they make the geological resources of the park come alive through hands-on programs that align with the Colorado Academic Standards.

A number of Rocky's GeoCorp Scientists have gone on to teach Earth sciences at the high school and university levels. GeoCorp scientists work with the program from March through May.

In Memorium:

Richard Beidleman 1923 – 2014

Richard "Dick" Gooch Beidleman — beloved husband, father and professor at The Colorado College — passed away on August 7, 2014. His battle with cancer ended at his home in Pacific Grove, California, with family members at his side. He was 91.

Dick loved Rocky Mountain National Park and teaching visitors and students about its magnificent resources, both as a summer ranger-naturalist in his early days and as a Rocky Mountain Nature Association seminar instructor for many decades later in his career.

He taught with boundless energy and enthusiasm, a memorable sense of humor, and compassion. His legacy lives on in the lives and accomplishments of the thousands of students he inspired, creating in them, as one wrote, "better and more responsible advocates for the natural world."

Aside from attending classical music concerts and opera performances, and



singing, Dick's personal hobbies were his professional ones. He was happiest when teaching, researching, traveling, and observing nature — counting birds or identifying plants.

A "Celebration of Life" ceremony will be held on October 12, 2014, at 9 a.m. at The Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in the Shove Chapel.

For a more detailed biography, visit Dick's obituary at www.estesparknews.com/dr-richard-g-beidleman-1923-2014/

"I have known and looked up to Dick my entire NPS career. He was a renaissance man: a TRUE naturalist, going far beyond the mere name of something he studied and forging into patterns, relationships and systems; a skilled teacher, planting the seeds of excitement and wonder in the minds of all he influenced; and a beloved friend of the National Park Service. One of the big trees in the forest has fallen — he will be missed."
— Kathy Brazelton, RMNP interpretive ranger

Dick Beidleman, a scholar, a seasoned naturalist, a great teacher, a true conservationist, a mentor and an orator. He combined a life time of study with a lifetime of sharing. I've known only a handful of teachers who could match both his intellect and his communication skills. But what I liked most about him was his wit. His humor made serious subjects entertaining, certainly interesting, and, at the very least, engaging. His lifelong efforts served our common wealth: wildlife, wildlands, education, parks, and forests. What a role model for public service! — Curt Buchholtz, historian and former RMNA Executive Director

When I first met Dick over 30 years ago, I tagged along on some of his field seminars. I was impressed by not only his extensive knowledge of birds and their identification, but also by his ability to discuss birds in an ecological context explaining why one would expect a particular species in a given habitat. He did this with an easygoing style that put novices at ease. He also had a terrific sense of humor, and lots of amusing anecdotes to share with whomever was in the field with him, which made his seminars particularly enjoyable. These are all qualities worthy of emulation, and the time I spent with Dick during his classes has certainly made me a better field instructor. I will miss him. — John Emerick, ecologist



Dick Beidleman was a strong presence in the Rocky Mountain Nature Association Field Seminars program from 1971 through 2010. His enthusiasm and support for our educational programs was unflagging and unconditional. He will be sorely missed by staff and students alike.

Rocky Mountain Field Seminars taught by Dr. Richard Beidleman

Animal Ecology
(1971, 1972)

Rocky Mountain Ecosystems (1973, 1974, 1975, 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983)

Bird Ecology
(1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, 1984, 1985, 1987)

Birds of the Rocky Mountains
(2000, 2001, 2003, 2004)
with Carol and Linda Beidleman

Rocky Mountain Birds
(2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010)
with Carol and Linda Beidleman

Gem Lake Hike
(2006)

Rocky Mountain Flora
(1995, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010)
with Linda Beidleman



The early years as a summer ranger-naturalist in Rocky, with ranger-naturalist Ferrel Atkins (right) circa 1952.

RMNP License Plate LAST CHANCE to Sign the Petition by December 1

We're almost there! We have gathered approximately 2,783 signatures on our petition to introduce a Rocky Mountain National Park Group Special License Plate. We need at least 3,000 VALID Colorado resident signatures (unfortunately signatures from Botswana and Florida don't count) to present the bill for this plate to the Colorado legislature in January 2015.

The Conservancy, in partnership with Rocky Mountain National Park, plans to release this special license plate that will be available to Colorado-registered vehicle owners.

Colorado State Representative K.C. Becker (House District 13) has agreed to sponsor this bill for us and bring it to a vote in the Colorado legislature in January 2015. Our hope is that the legislature will approve this initiative to coincide with Rocky Mountain National Park's Centennial celebration.

Conservancy Explores New Opportunities with Trail River Ranch

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy, through a partnership with the Grand Lake-based Friends of Trail River Ranch (FoTRR) and Rocky Mountain National Park (RMNP), is exploring a new opportunity to operate Trail River Ranch as an education venue.

Trail River Ranch, known by many as the Betty Dick property, sits in the Kawuneeche Valley astride the confluence of two tributaries of the Colorado River. Only four miles into the park from the west side entrance, the ranch offers breathtaking views of the valley and surrounding mountains inspiring a quiet, contemplative experience for those who visit the simple, rustic buildings.

During the past three years, the park

has allowed FoTRR to use the site under a year-to-year Special Use Permit for a variety of educational and community-based programs. Given the popularity of the programs and the site, the Conservancy has been asked to join as a partner in promoting the ranch for educational purposes. As



Trail River Ranch formerly was a property held by Betty Dick that reverted to the National Park Service upon her death.

a result, FoTRR officially has become integrated into the Conservancy.

Later this fall, a proposal will be submitted to RMNP management detailing how the site would be used and maintained. Once the proposal has been reviewed and, hopefully approved by the park, the Conservancy will manage and maintain the ranch with the able and energetic support of the FoTRR volunteers. The Conservancy is excited by this possibility to expand opportunities to provide in-depth educational experiences in the park. We are especially eager to partner with our friends on the west side of the park in perpetuating the inspirational use of this special place that is Trail River Ranch.



If you'd like one, sign the petition today!

Celebrate the park's Centennial and show the world your love for this spectacular and beloved place.

Sign the petition today!

To learn more and to sign the petition, visit the Rocky Mountain Conservancy's website:

www.rmconservancy.org

Rocky Mountain Conservancy Launches New Website! www.rmconservancy.org

The Rocky Mountain Conservancy is pleased to announce the launch of its new website and online Nature Store! Explore our virtual storefront and do all the following and more:

Discover how the Conservancy works to enhance Rocky and other surrounding public lands.

Shop our Nature Store for a great selection of RMNP products, including items celebrating the Park's Centennial.

Enroll in our award-winning Field Institute programs.

Sign up for Elk and Trail Ridge Road Bus Tours, and other educational adventures occurring this fall.

Become a member and receive discounts in the Nature Store and Field Institute classes, and at partner public lands in Colorado.

Donate to support your favorite park program or improvement project.

Participate in building a constituency for your favorite national park — Rocky! Introduce your friends to the website and the Conservancy.



Login instructions

Username: your email, or, FirstNameLastName (no spaces, as it appears on your member card)

Password: member number (located on your member card)

If you need login assistance, call us at 970-586-0108 x 21

You also can visit the site as a guest and register for classes, donate or shop at our Nature Store.



SUPPORT YOUR FAVORITE NONPROFIT ON COLORADO GIVES DAY, DECEMBER 9

Mark your calendars! Colorado's largest one-day online giving event, presented by Community First Foundation and FirstBank, is coming up — the Rocky Mountain Conservancy needs your support.

On Tuesday, December 9, 2014, thousands of donors will come together to support Colorado nonprofits like ours. Last year, a record-breaking \$20.9 million was distributed to Colorado nonprofits. This year, our goal is to raise at least \$13,000 for the Conservancy through this special event. You do not need to live in Colorado to participate!

Colorado Gives Day is powered by ColoradoGives.org, a year-round website featuring nearly 1,500 nonprofits. ColoradoGives.org encourages charitable giving by providing comprehensive, objective and up-to-date information about Colorado nonprofits and an easy way to support them online.

\$1 Million Incentive Fund

Thanks to Community First Foundation and First Bank, Colorado Gives Day features a \$1 Million Incentive Fund, one of the largest gives-day incentive funds in the country. Every nonprofit receiv-

ing a donation on Colorado Gives Day receives a portion of the Incentive Fund, which increases the value of every dollar donated. Note that this is not a one-to-one match, but the value of your gift is increased a bit.

How to Donate:

Visit www.rmconservancy.org and click on the Colorado Gives Day logo. Your gift allows us to do our work to support Rocky Mountain National Park. Beginning November 1, 2014, donations can be scheduled ahead of time to post on December 2.



The Rocky Mountain Conservancy expresses special thanks to the following people for their donations toward projects in Rocky Mountain National Park:

June 9, 2014 – September 10, 2014
155 gifts ~ total donations \$147,233.53

CONSERVATION CORPS FUND

Katherine Dines and David Miller, Denver, CO
Jack and Hildreth Wold, Denver, CO
Richard and Janet Coe, Estes Park, CO:
In Memory of Dorothy Kingsman

LAND PROTECTION FUND

Hartley & Margaret Dellinger, Indianapolis, IN
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George Mattingly, Reisterstown, MD:
In Memory of Robert Calfee
Nancy Cowen, Denver, CO:
In Memory of Tim Fromelt

LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND

Maxine E. Johnson, Denver, CO

SPECIAL PROJECTS

James Pickering, Estes Park, CO
Gina Salazar, Montgomery, AL

NEXT GENERATION FUND (RESTRICTED GIFTS)

Next Generation Fund Restricted Colorado State Questers, Greeley, CO
Anna Davis, Brookline, MA
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Lauren Finucane, Providence, RI
Anthony Flood, Austin, TX
Jennifer Harp, Fayetteville, AR
Taru and William Hays, Englewood, CO
Kathleen Kase and Dan DeBlasio, Estes Park, CO:
In Honor of Bob Kase for his birthday!
Michele Lueck, Englewood, CO:
In Honor of the Wedding of Katherine & Daragh Mulready
New Belgium Brewing Inc., Ft. Collins, CO
Trish Nicholson, Corpus Christi, TX
Chuck Westerheide, Stillwater, OK

All in Memory of Bruce and Elaine Gilmore:
Richard & Barbara Ford, Victorville, CA
Romaine Ford, Arlington Heights, IL

Mike and Barb Metzger, Kearney, NE
Steven Gilmore, Ft. Collins, CO

NEXT GENERATION FUND (UNRESTRICTED GIFTS)

Deborah Ann Adams, Grove City, OH:
In Memory of Dorothy Kingsmore
Mary and James Alfred, La Grange Park, IL
Anonymous

AT&T Foundation, Princeton, NJ
Joanna & Bob Atkinson, St. Charles, MI
Kenneth & Susan Brunk, Centennial, CO
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Duane Graham, Grand Lake, CO
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In Honor of the Wedding of Kate Loyd and Kevin Matthews

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In Memory of Their Sister-in-law, Dorothy

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In Honor of Michael and Merium Brassil's Wedding Day

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Shirley and Thomas Sullwold, Fort Collins, CO:
In Memory of Their Son, Brandon Sullwold

Trail Trekkers, Estes Park, CO
Ronald and Linda Wagner, Shawnee Mission, KS

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TRAIL RIVER RANCH

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Charles Money and Julie Dreher, Estes Park, CO
Jutta Neumann, Pflugerville, TX:
In Memory of Inge Adam
Phong Phan, Austin, TX

Silicon Valley Community Foundation, Mountain View, CA
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In Memory of Marguerite Glynn
The Giving Campaign, Norfolk, VA
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Kristine Van Cleve, Cedar Rapids, IA:
In Memory of Dr. Donald Barron
Evelyn McLagan, Denver, CO:
In Memory of Dr. William Cook

All in Memory of Carl Thornburg:
Jane Asphaug, Centennial, CO
R. Keith Raney, Annapolis, MD
Lloyd Tolley, Buchanan, VA

(Accidents continued from page 3)

Unfortunately, neither person survived and the car came to rest many hundreds of feet down the steep north side of Trail Ridge Road with items strewn along the way. Retrieval was accomplished by numerous trips on foot, carrying loads on pack frames. I remember folding part of the vehicle hood as best we could, strapping it to the pack and working back up the steep slope with wind gusts influencing both load and balance, making travel up the steep rocky terrain a bit "sporty." The remainder of the vehicle was retrieved at a later date by helicopter.

I sometimes wonder why we don't see more vehicles off Trail Ridge Road above tree line. After all, this high altitude scenic drive presents with a fairly narrow roadway, limited shoulders, minimal guard rails, scenic vistas and wildlife to divert attention, and includes inclement weather and adverse conditions that can surprise the unprepared and inexperienced mountain driver. Perhaps these factors, and the obvious precipitous drop-offs, demand a higher degree of situational awareness and caution that helps to mitigate such occurrences. Signing, information and education, high quality road maintenance, warranted closures and proactive ranger patrols with focus on traffic safety contribute to our low accident rate. One thing is for certain, driving Trail Ridge Road is a spectacular experience for all and for some, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Safe travels! — *RMNP Chief Ranger Mark Magnuson*

PARK PUZZLER SOLUTION



Park Holds Centennial Kickoff Events at Hidden Valley and Holzwarth Historic Site



Rangers Wendy Allison and Jim Caretti rode in to greet guests at Holzwarth Historic Site. (Photo: NPS)

On September 3 and 4, 2014, Rocky Mountain National Park kicked off its Centennial Celebration with events at Hidden Valley and Holzwarth Historic Site.

During the two events, nearly 800 people were entertained with music, fun activities and special speakers. The Estes Park and Grand Lake Woman's Clubs served as hosts for the events, just as they did back in 1915. Enos Mills, played by Kurtis Kelly, made a special appearance; Brad Fitch premiered the official Centennial song, "Rocky's a Place for All"; and students from Middle Park High School and Eagle Rock School gave stirring testimony about

how youth are the future of our national parks.

These two events served as an open house to honor the past, celebrate the present, and inspire the future with the goal of encouraging visitors and staff to engage in the year-long celebration that will culminate in a Rededication Ceremony on September 4, 2015.

A full schedule of centennial events is available on the park website at www.nps.gov/romo. Please check the website to find out more about the many ways you can get involved and celebrate Rocky Mountain National Park's 100th Anniversary.



Nearly 400 people enjoyed beautiful weather and music by Cowboy Brad Fitch at the Centennial Kickoff event at Hidden Valley. (Photo: NPS)



Rocky Mountain Conservancy

Charles Money, executive director
Nancy Wilson, *Quarterly* editor
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There's nothing quite like an autumn blue sky in Colorado....Photo: Conservancy Member Norma Andersen

Nature Notes

Snow on Longs Peak at the end of August, along with the occasional bugling elk and changing aspen leaves felt a little on the early side this year. Higher than average rainfall this summer left the grasses lush and green long into autumn — a rarity in this neck of the woods. Intense fall colors at Bear Lake were enjoyed by throngs of visitors during the last weekend of September. Vivid red aspen leaves were brilliant to behold.....Bear sightings have been high, frequently reported in neighborhoods in Estes Park. Retired RMNP Secretary **Helen Keutzer** had left a tub of food in her totally closed car overnight only to find the next morning that the windows of her car had been broken and the contents strewn all over the place.....A sow with her cub were seen on the lower end of the Homer Rouse trail by the Cheley Camp in early September..... Estes Park resident **Michael Sisk** walked outside his house to find a freshly killed mule deer carcass with claw marks raking the sides of the unfortunate animal. Not wanting to witness the slow decomposition of the deer over time, he dragged it up the hillside with the hope that this would suffice. The next day, the deer, now less intact, was back in front of his door, causing Michael to take more drastic measures to remove the carcass, farther and more permanently out of the way.....Conservancy Member **Jim Ward** makes a habit of walking at Lake Estes in the early morning hours with his camera. He's treated to many unusual sights, including multiple sightings of what turned out to be an American mink. He captured many shots of this rare creature, one of which graces the cover of this publication, that capture it in the middle of its hunting spree. Mink are in the *Mustelidae* family, along with weasels, otters, badgers and wolverines.....Conservancy Executive Director **Charley Money** often sees a bald eagle flying over Lake Estes as it searches for its fishy breakfast in the early hours. Frequently, a resident osprey will approach it in the air and dive bomb the eagle to chase it out of its territory, causing the eagle to turn upside down (in the air, mind you) and flex its talons for a brief moment as a threat. This seems to be enough to ward off the osprey, but only temporarily, as the osprey will always return and repeat the onslaught until it succeeds in driving the eagle away.....Conservancy Development Director **Julie Klett** spotted a rare Three-toed woodpecker at Lake Irene at the end of September. She first heard the territorial drumming sound twice, then the pecking sound as it sought bugs under the scales of the tree, and then as it flew over the lake, spotting the distinctive yellow marking on its head.....Conservancy Member **Gene Putney** saw a bear and her cub in mid-September, just past Rainbow Curve at about 11 AM near a water cascade near treeline. The bears were about 50 yards from road, peacefully grazing on delicious tundra tidbits. At one point, the sow sat down with her nose up in the air, sniffing. The bears were visible for about 30 minutes then disappeared into the treeline.....Retired RMNP Wildlife Biolo-

gist **Gary Miller** was on the Fern Lake Trail with a group from the American Ornithologists' Union in late September that observed a Steller's jay capture a bat (likely a *myotis* or *pipistrel*) in mid-air and then, raptor-like, perch and consume it.....he also noted a lot of beaver activity on the south shore of Lily Lake.....Conservancy Corps Manager **Geoff Elliot** spotted a bear that was eating chokecherries in his neighbor's tree in Estes Park.....He also reported the sighting of a long-tailed weasel loping across the rocky area below Rainbow Curve to dive into a small hole. The weasel returned with a squealing chipmunk, which it quickly ate.....West side Interpretive Ranger **Mandy Cluck** has been alerted to multiple sightings of a very dark colored bull elk seen near Harbison Meadows. He is completely black/dark brown, like a moose, but definitely an elk. It has been determined that it is an elk that has rolled in a wallow — a urine-soaked puddle. Elk do this to cover themselves with this potent scent, which acts both as an attractant to females and a deterrent to other males.....Mandy also reported the visitation at the Kawuneeche Visitor Center by a Townsend's solitaire, a medium-sized thrush that is fairly common on the west side, but not often seen.....On a midday drive up Bear Lake Road in mid-September, Conservancy Member **Dallas Heltzell** encountered a dark brown adult bear just before the Glacier Basin turnoff as it loped across the road not 20 yards in front of him and disappeared out of the midday sunshine and into the forest. This was the first bear he'd seen in the park in 30 years!.....The second sighting Dallas had may have been even more unusual: walking along the Sprague Lake Trail was a middle-aged gentleman wearing a full dark business suit, white shirt and tie, and carrying a briefcase. Could he have been taken a wrong turn?.....Let us know if you see something interesting in the park — we're always looking for engaging stories to share! Happy Trails!



Conservancy Member Marlene Borneman of Estes Park watched this bobcat kitten in her back yard. It was obviously a young thing, possibly its first hunt on its own, and it chased a little vole or mouse around until it quickly pounced on its victim and ran up a tree where Marlene got to watch it eat dinner. Here she caught a picture of it smacking its lips after devouring its little snack.