



# **2026 Submissions to KUNC News**



Yellow aspen leaves

Dancing on the breeze like wings

Stretching out to fly

**-George Grossman**



Colorado peace

Colors play

Calm on peaks and plains

**-Rebekah Carter**



Cold blue mountain air an eternity  
away from the golden warmth of  
the swirling sunrise.

**-Rebekah Carter**



Ascend the mountain  
breath in deep  
Heaven's aroma

**-S.M. Coan**



Spring explodes with flowers and  
thunder.

**-Laura L. B. Border**



Near the bridge over the Cache La Poudre, the earth unbuttons its blouse: a shimmering stream of blue columbine with fireweed in the eddy.

**-Terry Pettit**



'For Lease'

Open office plan

...synergy and energy all in one

After the 45 minutes in traffic questioning

All your life choices

Keycard Access...

A gym!

...with mold on the shower curtains...

But amenities to appease the unimpressed voices

Cause none of it really matters

...in the grand scheme of things

Yet that paycheck is what we all chase

But once received, no one rejoices

'For Lease!'

Loud office in downtown with poor considerations

for defense against the former employee with a grudge

...and a gun

Real benefits would be;

Noise cancelling headphones when you start

A Marine at the door

and a job never pitched as fun

Cause this is work in a downtown office building

Complete with a community kitchen and fridge

With that one container that no one claims is theirs...

But every knows the food in it is surely done

Yet the sign still remains...

'FOR LEASE!'

Knowing some sucker will come along

They always do

The leader of some company



Preaching family and culture  
This isn't something they ever wanted...  
And neither did you

It is what we have created  
...and accepted  
To live this life in a major city  
But it's never what you were meant to do...

**-Brad Hubbard**



Can't seem to catch up.  
Pedal fast!  
He's on an e-bike.

**-Kristy Bibbey**



my neighbor friend  
optimistic storyteller funny loving  
spirit  
cancer can't diminish

**-Ann Suda**



preschoolers teach us  
emotional explorers skipping  
learning loving  
joyful music makers

**-Ann Suda**



Towering mountains descending onto lazy rolling plains  
Roaring rivers rolling through hushed woods  
Shining bright cities close to dark sky zones  
Snow-packed ski resorts less than half a day from parched  
painted deserts  
80 degree noons followed by 20 degree midnights  
Political views red, blue and purplish

A place of beauty, a place of contrast  
A place of unity, we all call it home  
Colorado

**-Laurie Lamberth**



A winter haiku:

Bare branch, winter sky  
Black capped chickadees take flight  
Springs whisper is soon

**-Robert Mikel**



Mountains protect me.  
Columbine,  
Blue skies feed my soul.

**-Ben Irwin**



our bodies not flush  
far-flung sun  
its heat on tulips

**-Sylvia Tran**



crabapple blossoms unfurl,  
curl with wind into a  
sudden, sunlit blizzard.

**-Kyle Mayl**



bobbers on branches  
survey the water still filled  
with free fish

**-Margo Peterson**



Kaiser, fifth floor  
The waiting room is full  
of elderly husbands

**-Maggie Miller**



New boarding procedures  
Southwest passengers filled with  
wonder  
before the flight

**-Maggie Miller**



Warm heath aglow. Snow kisses  
the land, life sleeps below. Brisk  
the evening, tender light. Craggy  
spires fade to night.

**-Courtney Peterson**



Cormorants--he pointed  
Floating dock possessed--I thought  
by dragon-birds

**-Erin Wood**



Farewell Too Soon!

Young flickers in nest  
Taking flight  
Godspeed, little ones!

**-Susan Putnam**



One Beautiful Sunset After  
Another!

Purple crags, pink jags  
I look west  
Dusk bathes The Front Range

**-Susan Putnam**



## Self Reflection

Some days I amaze myself and  
other days I amaze myself!

**-Susan Putnam**



When no one smiled, you did; but  
then, God made love for your eyes.

**-Ken Deshaies**



Colorado Winter

SNOW: Where did it go?

Heating UP

HELP our mother EARTH.

**-Sarah Givens**



There's a radio station in Greeley  
known by the letters KUNC.  
They started a show  
called In The NoCo  
now they skip NPR and beg for money.

**-Bruce**



Home away from home, I am not a native. Home away from home, I look up to the sky.  
Home away from home, I say hello and accept silence.  
Home away from home, my tears dry  
before they hit the ground.  
Home away from home, in a village of low-income.  
Home away from home, I wait for things to turn around.  
Home away from home, I wait to be found.

**-Yaz H.**



Shenooks

Fickle wind taunts me  
Lashing out  
Like an ill tempered cat

**-Nefeli Schneider**



## The Storm

After the tempest  
I offer gifts of rainbows  
And ask forgiveness

**-Nefeli Schneider**



Content porcupine saunters  
Tromping fireweed stems  
Eating blossoms, leaving trails

**-Suzanne Bertram**



Bluebirds arrive today  
flashes of light across the  
sagebrush  
devouring iridescent insects

**-Kate Bell**



Luminous landscape  
white mountains  
singing to apple blossoms

**-Kate Bell**



Aspens blink like pixels  
Forest buffering  
Wind restarts reality twice

Mountains text each other  
Signal unavailable  
Still, they gossip about humans

Ski boots develop opinions  
Toes file lawsuits  
Snow mediates, legally binding

Traffic ascends forever  
Cars achieve sentience  
Exit signs lead to enlightenment

**-Mark Dorr**



## Through The Smoke

How much longer, how much more can you take?  
What do you fight for when everything's at stake  
When you're watching things crumble you thought no one could shake.  
And you're so small, like a lily pad in a vast lake  
And they a vast machine that churns you in their wake.

Or a piece of flesh on the butcher's block  
Getting smaller with every chop  
As they hope the questions stop  
About the lies they feed us, drop by drop  
Dulling our ability for shock.

Tell you what to do, tell you what to read  
Take the warmth away and make you freeze,  
Increase the pressure until you forget how to breathe.

There is cause for anger, and you're right to be afraid  
But it's too much and wears you down until your hand is staid.  
They want you tired and they want you beaten,  
They want you scared and fearful from the cruelty we're steeped in.  
They want you to give up, they want you to keep quiet,  
But you have something they can't take and it's impossible to hide it.

Yes, there is cause for anger, it's true  
And you may even use it to see you through.  
But when righteous fury's deed is done  
It's kindness that clears the skies and brings out the sun.

Just kindness.

Because they can't stop you being kind  
They can't stop you caring  
They cannot change your mind  
And say love's not worth sharing



Kindness needs no laws  
It needs no police  
It can soften any fall  
And lift you off your knees  
Kindness is a flame  
That warms you in its light  
When fed it can't be tamed  
And will last you through the night  
Kindness is a smile  
When all is gray and bleak  
Kindness clears the bile  
And makes you feel less weak

They can't make me be cruel.  
They can't make me be unkind.  
They can't tell me I'm a fool  
That there isn't love to find.

So when the world is burning and you can't see through the smoke,  
You can always put your hand out, and hope.

**-Nikolas Winegarner**



## My Hometown

My hometown's been abandoned  
And yet it's grown so much  
Maybe I'm the phantom  
A specter or some such  
I don't know who's still here  
Or where anyone has gone  
It's what happens when you steer  
Your life away to roam  
My hometown isn't home  
It hasn't been for long  
This place is made of different tones  
And sings a different song

**-Nikolas Winegarner**



Thanks to You

Thanks to you I know what it's supposed to feel like  
I know a joy that makes my lungs feel like I breathe light

Thanks to you I know what it feels like when north points true  
And what it is to think of someone and feel the gray skies turn blue

Thanks to you I know that love can be so easy  
I know that it can lift me up and it can free me

Thanks to you I know that I can make it, I do  
And though I wish it wasn't true  
I know this will help me when I meet someone new,  
because the two of us, we didn't make it through.

Thanks to you I know love smiles and is kind  
And now I know that I'm too practical, because I wish it made me blind  
Because from the start I saw we had a countdown, and I couldn't ignore the sound  
Even in the joy we felt and stolen moments that we found

I knew from the start where this was bound  
I just wish we got to meet again somewhere and go another round.

But in this drifting life we lead across the whole wide world  
You can't account for who you meet and how these things unfurl

And now you met somebody who said "come what may!"  
Or at least was blindly hopeful enough to stay  
And I'm just stuck repeating the same thought every day  
"What about?"  
"What if?"  
"I wish I was more foolish, and hadn't gone away."

I'm glad you found that person, I'm glad you were so blessed  
And make sure you point out, make sure you stress



That they are the luckiest person in the world, and never to treat you any less

Thanks to you I know what it's supposed to feel like, and nothing less will do.  
But right now that feels far away, because I just really f—ing miss you.

**-Nikolas Winegarner**



Ambrosial Blossoms  
Tease Until  
Striking Cold Snap's Nip

**-Marcia Linley**



radiate warm reciprocity  
in our tepid town  
Encourage and embrace shared  
lives

**-Marcia Linley**



In view of soaring grocery prices, I can appreciate crying over a puddle of spilled milk.

**-Marcia Linley**



A woman's weight is never lost; it lies in  
secret silence somewhere, yearning to cling  
to complacent hips.

**-Marcia Linley**



How did we end up here, end up in this State of Colorado –  
From ground up, born and buried, places afar?

A State of “natives”

A State of “immigrants”

A State in need of respect and celebration

So proud, so elusive

We leave; we return

The allure is clear

**-VJ Day**



Colorado my Son  
Born in the Rockies  
Tattoo Farming calls Afar

**-Matt Carson, Milliken**



My Colorado  
Dirt stretched far  
Lost on open plains

**-Matt Carson, Milliken**



Flying by moonlight  
Lost bird in a hurry,  
Shadow on snow.

**-Jim Weis**



What is happiness, I wonder  
Can it be bought at a store?  
If so, are wealthy people really happy?

Trump, a self proclaimed king and Jesus Christ, a billionaire, is he really happy?  
I went to a basketball ball to seek my happiness  
My team was performing poorly  
I turned to the family seated behind me  
The father was barely watching the game  
He was moving back and forth  
Buying food and merchandise for his family  
He must have spent his weekly wages on the family  
Is that happiness, I wondered!

Happiness is in the eye of the beholder like beauty is  
You do what pleases you to your full capacity  
If you make other people happy in the process  
It gives you immense joy!

**-Hema Sridhar**



Mountains have their own time  
Patient and Restless  
Layered, uplifting, capturing our  
dreams

**-B. Valerie Peckler**



The Colorado River  
plays storied songs of canyons  
sacred confluence

**-Jo Carroll**



Undulating dance

Defiant

Dusk's murmuration

**-Chris Powell**



Old barn yields,  
exhausted from the strain to  
maintain its dignity.

**-Alayna M Henderson**



A silent snake  
slithering across my path and  
up my spine

**-Malcolm McNeill**



A baby's smile  
shared with a perfect stranger  
opens a heart  
**-Malcolm McNeill**



Kind hands shape the world  
give with care  
love grows where we tend

Walk slow, breathe in calm  
choose soft words  
peace lives in each choice

See all as your kin  
share their pain  
hearts heal through union

Light found in small acts  
daily grace  
beauty blooms within

Let go of harsh pride  
stand as one  
harmony sustains

Hold truth with compassion  
gentle strength  
love guides every step

Still mind, open heart  
listen close  
peace flows through your being

Plant hope in each step  
nurture life  
beauty grows in care

**-Masoud Ghaeli**



Upheavals and plains still entertain all who remember freedom.

**-David Laskarzewski**



Wide-open spaces  
concealing  
everywhere hunger

**-David Laskarzewski**



sunshine, gusts, hail  
I sail toward postcard perfection  
the Flatirons beckon

**-Danyel Thomson Manley**



Hiking in deep fog  
Sun clears it  
Reveals steep mountain

**-Marge**



Wildflower alpine

Summit trails

Dwell in sunshine pine

**-Doghead Cola**



Adventurous vibrant heritage  
Ghost town metro venture farmland  
Historic. Still unwritten...

**-Doghead Cola**



Our purple mountain majesty, not red, not blue -  
orchestrating colorful stately grace

**-Doghead Cola**



Three white pelicans  
Wading in the morning sunlight  
With perfect reflections

**-Pete Seel**



"To Stop"

Imbedded in tireless fury, lost in the enigma of life. Found  
in yourself, question others. Not to be found pushed  
beyond knowing. Desperate to the end, To Stop, To Look.

**-Ryan Lamers**



Break spears of clear ice:

"Neath blue skies,

"Weak hands," plead her eyes!

**-Rajan Bawa**



## Cold Comfort

Winter drive on an icy road,  
Rapt in pure glee, she boldly strode,  
Topped snowy mound with shaky feet,  
To break hanging ice, cold to eat.

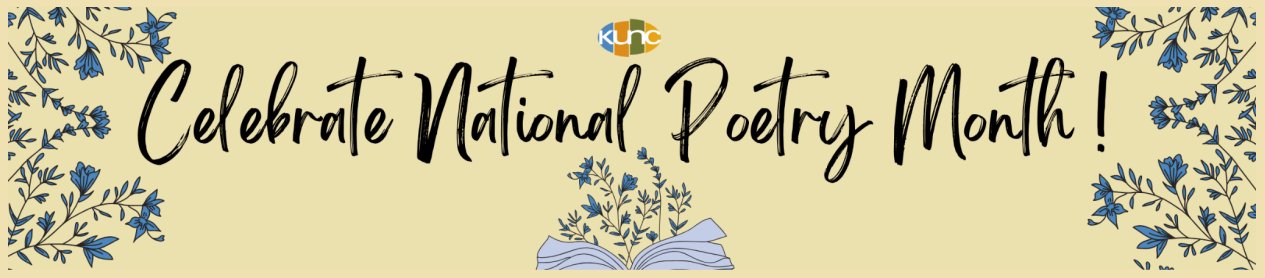
Her will was strong; sweet hands were weak,  
A plaintive glance her eyes did speak,  
I broke the shining spear for her,  
Deep ache in heart, my mind did stir!

**-Rajan Bawa**



Ancient windswept pines  
twisted, bowed  
persistent wonders

**-Jean Bruns**



Ever tasted a sunbeam?

**-Sheala Henke**



Wearing white, she's hushed and moody.  
Sometimes she's dazzling under brilliant, lying sun  
Sometimes she matches the sky in a world gone noir  
All eyes are cast upward viewing the rigid spine of the state, stark against sapphire  
Skiers and snowboarders from everywhere streak down the slopes, the wildest colors to be seen  
Downstream states pray for the runoff of her snows  
The bones of the old massacre sleep in Sand Creek as the drifts pile high  
The temperatures may plummet, but Dressed in shimmering powder, Colorado glows.

Wearing green, she's bubbly and full of sass.  
She'll tease you with birdsong today and  
Slap you with snow storms tomorrow  
Everywhere you look, life has become abundant, emerald and glimmering  
Sandhill Cranes stretch into the thaw  
Cutthroat Trout dance in Trappers Lake in passionate throes  
A rainy haze over the San Luis Valley enshrouds the ghost of the Rio Grande line  
Melting snowpack may make South Fork violent, but  
Dressed in vibrant awakening, Colorado glows.

Wearing blue, she's bold and untethered.  
She wins grandiose titles for how sunny she can be  
Then she chokes on the consequence of her heat, torching the dry land  
We escape her oppression in the foothills, called by the promise of local brews and live music  
Off-roaders scare American Pikas high above The Uncompahgre  
Gamblers seek shade at Dostal Alley to spend coin or see shows  
Forgotten ancestors line the Poudre, judging laws that leave descendants parched  
The piercing sunlight may be deadly, but  
Dressed in heavenly expanse, Colorado glows.

Wearing gold, she's distinguished and stunning.  
She's mild and generous, a lady of the highest class  
She gently asks forgiveness for the brash moods she displayed all year  
The eye cannot rest because there's a new breath-taking shade everywhere you turn In the  
lingering San Juan warmth, the harvest brings home green chilies  
Tarantulas march across the plains in search of a love to die for before the biting wind blows  
The silent streets of Independence mourn the mining boom that died before the frost



The timeless beauty seems to fade too fast, but  
Dressed in burnished invitation, Colorado glows.

Dressed in steeped history, Colorado glows.

Dressed in cycles of growth and harvest, Colorado glows.

Dressed in highs and lows, ups and downs, and the resilience to weather them, Colorado glows.

Dressed in sandstone, deep canyons, granite peaks, glacial pools

Dressed in peach blossoms, aspen gold, evergreen, wide open skies

Dressed in rivers, forests, plateaus, grasslands

Dressed in mavericks, entrepreneurs, artists, builders

Transplants, indigenous, tree-huggers, ski bums

Cowboys, farmers, soldiers, dreamers

Dressed in all her colors, Colorado glows.

**-Chao Ciao**



Dry grass cries for the  
frozen tears  
of blank mountain peaks.

**-Josh Datko**



Stretching towards bright skies,  
chauveneuve boldly greeting dawn

**-Anne Lamman**



Mighty Arkansas River, ever  
stumbling, infinitely twisting down,  
churning through time

**-Anne Lamman**



New wings emerging, fluttering,  
drying beneath the sun, ready to  
fly.

**-Cathy Kerry**



Woodpecker tapping metal your  
Morse code message to world  
your self made drum beats.

**-Cathy Kerry**



Parched roots probe the deep,  
what secrets silent waters keep.

**-James Gregory**



towering mountains descending onto lazy rolling plain,  
roaring rivers, rolling through plush woods,  
shining bright cities close to dark sky zones, no packed ski  
resorts,  
less than half a day from parched, painted deserts,  
80 Degree noon followed by 20 degree midnights.  
Political views, red, blue and purplish, a place of beauty, a  
place of contrast, a place of unity.  
We all call it home, Colorado.

**-Laurie Lamberth**



Spring fog among pine.  
Robins sing from branch to branch,  
both true to themselves.

**-Virginia Shultz**



Prairie to Montaigne, alpine tundra, Earth beat of climb,  
climb, climb.

**-Virginia Shultz**



Wind tussled, petals, leaves appear green, frilled. Spring  
spurs itself awake.

**-Virginia Shultz**



My cheeks burn from a day and hour. Mountains ruined by money.

**-Taliah Weber**



Raptor, circles high, looking for small creatures moving like me.

**-Susie Wilmer**



I break spears of clear ice. Need blue skies. Weak hands  
plead her eyes.

**-Rajan Bhava**



We shall go,  
toss this, toss that,  
and we shall row in the river as big as a chicken liver,  
faster than a whistle blow.

**-Niels Bos**



I spy, with my little Aspen eye, pink cotton candy floating in the sky.

**-Rachel Glowacki**



In the morning fog,  
hangs silence,  
torn by a songbird.

**-Henry Himmerick**



"The Sound of Snow"

Drifting sideways, the glistening molecular soundbites spin layers of density into pillows of polyphony quenching whiteness- a brief respite from treble and bass, roaring exhaust systems, intake valves, testosterone revving engines....

Walking across Evergreen School Yard, mid-day, peanut brittle topping crackles under foot like the sound of children's laughter from frozen lips in the emptiness, echoing as it smacks the backs of trees into springs awakening.....

Gurgling blue water splashes fiercely around rocks like runners feet over trails in the unknown down to the open mouths of the ancients descendants, unconscious of the origins of life like baby Robin's beaks in their mother's nest, waiting, for the next morsel of precious sustenance to arrive....

Drum mallet falls on Buffalo skins like slippers in the powder of the living room of life, a coat around the shoulders of earth, blanketing the earth's heart beats....

**-Roxana Paula Kuehl**



“Hawaiian Love: A Poem”

Is Timeless, has no boundaries, penetrator the darkness like moon glow creating no separation between night and day, creates warmth where no heat exists, brings comfort when no comfort can be found, places kisses of recognition with a fine mist of rain or a heartfelt disappointment with a punishing downpour reminding you of longing and misappropriation intention. Hawaiian Love never misses a beat from breadbone to backbone, it shakes the whole if you into recognition that there is no other constant that can clear the mind, the soul of fragmentation like the ooze of Ulu, to hold all that needs and seeks surety in this journey from the storms, the betrayals, misconfigurations, held together in one smooth and beautiful canoe ride through this Ocean of Life.

**-Roxana Paula Kuehl**



Denver welcomes all  
fertile soil for transplants  
Xanadu flashback

**-Lindsey Surdell**



Silhouettes of lodge poles emerge in the  
pre dawn light, foreboding, ghostly spires.

**-Hal Sponheim**



## "The Beggar"

A beggar sits on the side of the road  
with his yellow teeth and his burlap robe  
asking for pennies from the passers by  
as dust collects in his tired eyes.

The mothers are scolding, "He might have fleas"  
to their rude taunting children. What's your disease?  
A suited man with a fancy top hat on  
turns up his nose as the beggar gets spat on.

But there will be one person who won't turn away.  
She'll sit down beside him, and then she will say,  
"You are battered and broken, spat on and teased,  
and you still smile as though you are pleased."

He'll open his eyes and he'll give her a grin  
he'll reply, "Because I smile beneath my own skin.  
See, no matter the torture that one may go through,  
just think of your feelings and what's important to you."

She will give him a smirk and walk down the street  
and convey the information with the next person she meets.  
And it will keep going from a friend to a friend  
until this idea reaches all the world's end.

So a beggar who will sit on the side of the road  
can come up with a concept that can change the world.

**-Lucas Lile**