



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.



Celebrate National Poetry Month!



-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 breadtbone 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



A fluttering gnat,
drowning in my cold coffee,
swims to my fingertip

-Jim Weis



Dusk

Spring is also an evening
not only a season, but a reason
for living, for leaving, in epiphany,
what strikes you, and you alone.

So, yes, a moment like this: ringing
through this rare lush atmosphere,
a robin
singing to a nest of mate and eggs
abuzz.



And the horn of a train, just far
enough away.

-Michael Knisely