



NEWS RELEASE
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Contact:

Sara Otte Coleman, 701/328-2525
E-mail: socoleman@nd.gov

Cassie Theurer, 701/328-2525
E-mail: ctheurer@nd.gov

2016 North Dakota Governor's Photo Contest winners selected

BISMARCK, N.D. — First Lady Betsy Dalrymple today recognized the winning photographs and honorable mentions from the 13th annual North Dakota Governor's Photo Contest in a ceremony in Memorial Hall of the North Dakota Capitol building.

Joining the First Lady in the presentation were North Dakota Tourism Director Sara Otte Coleman, North Dakota Council on the Arts (NDCA) Executive Director Beth Gigante Klingenstein and AAA Senior Public Affairs Representative Gene LaDoucer.

The contrasting colors of "Watching the Sunset at Double Ditch" catches the attention of a viewer and encourages us all to take a moment to enjoy the beauty all around us, earning Nick Hornbacher the Best of Show and People category awards.

This year's contest set a record with 1,382 photo entries and the most popular category was scenery.

"Today we celebrate the talents of our state's amateur photographers, who uniquely capture the beauty and originality of North Dakota," the First Lady said. "They experience first-hand the state's legendary attractions and beautiful scenery awaiting our visitors."

Photos were judged on originality, subject matter, visual appeal and ability to portray North Dakota as a legendary travel destination in the categories of adventure and recreation, places to visit, events, people, scenery and wildlife.

"Each year, we're amazed by the beautiful photos North Dakota's amateur photographers take and share for this contest. I thank them for sharing their talents with us," Otte Coleman said.

The North Dakota Governor's Photo Contest began as a collaborative program between the Governor's Office and North Dakota Tourism and has grown to include AAA as a contest sponsor and the NDCA as a collaborative partner.

The 2016 winning photos will be on display during the months of October, November and December at the Capitol in the offices of Governor Jack Dalrymple, First Lady Betsy Dalrymple and Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. This is part of a cooperative program between NDCA and the First Lady's office. Canvas displays were printed and sponsored in part by Mathison's.

"I am impressed with the creativity and the eye for beauty that is embraced by these North Dakota photographers," said Klingenstein. "The beauty of the human spirit and of our state are captured in these wonderful photographs."

AAA, North America's largest travel organization, will also display winning photos as part of its sponsorship.

"Not only do the state's photographers do a great job of capturing inspiring images, they serve as ambassadors to the state," LaDoucer said. "Who better to tell the story than those who are living it?"

This was the seventh year that photographers could submit photos online through image and video hosting site Flickr.

Top category photographers will receive a \$200 cash prize for each winning photo and have their work featured in North Dakota Tourism's marketing materials, along with even greater exposure through contest partner AAA. A Best of Show photo was selected from the winning photographs, and the photographer received an additional \$300 cash prize and a free, one-year basic membership to AAA. Honorable mention winners will receive \$50 and may also have their images featured in the state's tourism marketing materials.

The North Dakota Governor's Photo Contest is held annually and is open to any North Dakota amateur photographers. Next year's contest will begin in May 2016. Winning photos can be seen on the North Dakota Tourism website: <http://www.ndtourism.com/articles/2016-north-dakota-governors-photo-contest-winners-named>

2016 Governor's Photo Contest Winners (by category):

Best of Show

Winning Photographer: Nick Hornbacher, Bismarck

Winning photograph: "Watching the Sunset at Double Ditch"

Adventure and Recreation Category

Winning photographer: Aaron Kennedy, Grand Forks

Winning photograph: "A Cat Takes Flight"

Honorable Mention

Photographer: Katherine Plessner, Verona

"A Fine View"

Events Category

Winning photographer: Lacey Kaiser, Streeter

Winning photograph: "Circle 'Em Up"

People Category

Winning photographer: Nick Hornbacher, Bismarck

Winning photograph: "Watching the Sunset at Double Ditch"

Honorable Mentions

Photographer: Katy Vetter, Surrey

"Father Son Fishing"

Places to Visit Category

Winning photographer: Jeffery Smith, Bottineau

Winning photograph: "Mystical Horizons"

Honorable Mentions

Photographer: Clint Fleckenstein, Bismarck

"A Cow's Eye View"

Photographer: Thomas W. Wirtz, Bismarck

"Old State Library"

Scenery category

Winning photographer: Karl Swenson, Kindred

Winning photograph: "Dark Sunset"

Honorable Mentions

Photographer: Crystal Ann (Swoll), Grand Forks

"Winter in Blue"

Wildlife Category

Winning photographer: Brad Starry, Fargo

Winning photograph: "Big Horn Gathering"

Honorable Mention

Photographer: Stephen McDonough, Bismarck

"Red Fox Kits"

Honorable Mention

Photographer: Thomas W. Wirtz, Bismarck

"Sharp-tailed Grouse"

ATTACHED: 2016 North Dakota Governor's Photo Contest Best of Show winning photo – "Watching the Sunset at Double Ditch" by Nick Hornbacher.

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