



December 2022

# The Bison Rancher

Official Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Bison Association

## What's Happening

### NBA Winter Conference

January 18 - 21, 2023  
Westminster, CO

### Bison @ National Western Stock Show (NWSS)

January 18-21, 2023  
NWSS Yards

### Larry Higgins Memorial Bison Junior Judging Contest

January 20, 2023  
NWSS Yards

### RMBA Spring Conference

March 4, 2023  
Fort Collins, CO

## 2022: RMBA's Year in Review

*By Jen Graves, Board Secretary*

This year, RMBA has once again gathered members for our spring conference and fall ranch tour - a welcome return to normalcy after two years of facing the unknown.

This year, the board has welcomed refreshing discussions about the association's future, networking opportunities, and furthering strategic initiatives to promote bison. Take a look at 2022 - a year spent gearing up for years to come.

### Spring Conference

Our annual Spring Conference was held March 5, 2022, at the Marriott Hotel in Fort Collins,



Colorado. True to tradition, snow was falling from the sky as attendees gathered. For our first conference back after the pandemic, we were happy to see over 50 people in attendance. By the end, all attendees were members of the association.

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## In This Issue

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A Bit of History

### Rocky Mountain Bison Association

303 S. Broadway, Ste B522  
Denver, CO 80209

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## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Adams Natural Meats

*By Mary Adams, Adams Natural Meats*

Where do I begin? A look into my journey in the bison world is an adventure I'm always excited to share.

When people ask me today how I got into bison, I tell them I married into them. My late husband, Bryan, had a small herd when I met him. He started in years past with a bull calf and two heifer calves which he had traded for a blasting job for Paul Jonjak. I soon learned, coming from rural Nebraska, I had a lot to learn about this amazing animal and all the benefits of raising them.

The years went by and we moved the small herd from Colorado to Arizona in 1997 and formed Arizona Buffalo Company. The business plan didn't stop there, as

we all know, and there had to be a place for the end product.

We began this process by culling out most of the original herd and replacing them with genetically better animals from the GTSS, the Northwest Bison Sale, as well as Western Bison Association Show and Sale of which Bryan and I had, along with others, helped to form. Animals were then brought in from Canada and the herd was growing.

We had what we thought was our game plan for the meat and had a walk-in freezer put into our garage. We started promoting our bison products at gourmet grocery stores while flipping burgers on the weekends.

*Continued on page 5*



**BISON**  
ASSOCIATION

## Board of Directors

**PRESIDENT**  
**John Graves**

*JG Bison*  
303-887-9677

**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Kyle Stodola**

*Sunrise Bison Ranch*  
720-364-0835

**TREASURER**  
**Patty Smith**

*Lay Valley Bison Ranch*  
303-906-2638

**SECRETARY**  
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*JG Bison*  
720-891-9360

**DIRECTOR**  
**Ace Ward**

*Brush Meat Processors*  
970-488-0003

**DIRECTOR**  
**Nicole Jeffries**

*Nilisber Bison Ranch*  
303-995-2783

**DIRECTOR**  
**Tiffany Castle**

*Castle Bison Co.*  
720-641-0639

**DIRECTOR**  
**Rick Forepaugh**

*Rocky Hollow Buffalo Company*  
308-235-3214

Elections are held annually at the Spring General Membership Meeting. Meeting minutes & financials are available from the Board Secretary.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# See you in March

*By John Graves, RMBA President*

Looking back on 2022 it feels like it was such a quick year, and yet a very long one too. Life is different post pandemic. Low supply and high costs of goods and services seem to be the new "new normal" - that overused phrase from the pandemic. These high prices and lack of supplies makes ranching even harder than it already was, straining the bottom line and forcing tough decisions.

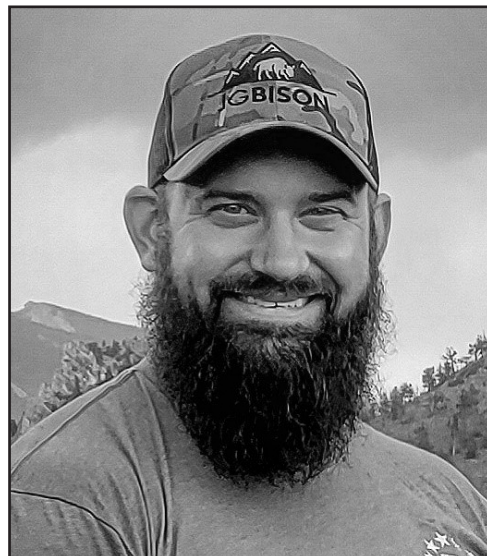
This year I have seen a number of ranchers forced to make the hard decision to cull their herd. I have heard of many reducing their herds to help pay the bills or reduce costs. I know many have faced countless other tough decisions that cause stress for them, their families, and their business. Yet the spirit of the American Rancher is not broken, just drained a little.

**"The spirit of the  
American Rancher is not  
broken, just drained a  
little."**

- John Graves

There is optimism for our industry. More and more consumers are looking to bison meat for their families. We all know the health benefits; we have all been educating people on it for years.

Consumers want to know where their food comes from and how it was raised. They want to trust the source of their food and they want to consume a high-quality protein that is lean, nutritious, and sustainable. The bison industry knows this. The industry isn't backing down during these tougher



times. They keep looking ahead and doing what it takes.

RMBA continues to attract new producers. I keep getting calls from people looking to start raising bison, and people looking to source bison meat directly from a rancher. This is our market. The educated consumer who uses their hard-earned money to tell the marketplace what they want, because they know the benefits of raising bison in a holistic manner and the value of the bison meat they buy to feed their families.

### Times of Change

New leadership at the National Bison Association (NBA) comes at a time when everything unchanged is changing. Dave Carter led the NBA for so many years and did a wonderful job to push the industry forward and to get it to where it is today. I know everyone is very grateful and thankful for his time and his service.

Jim Matheson was rightfully hired to replace Dave. In the few months that Jim has been at the reins, he has already engaged in important efforts to move the industry forward. He is working hard to increase education and outreach, expanding bison meat exports, looking for more opportunities to get more producers raising bison, and looking at how to help with the shortage of processing facilities.

*Continued on page 5*





# Let's gather for the 2023 Spring Conference

**Saturday, March 4, 2023**  
**Fort Collins Marriott Hotel**  
**Fort Collins, CO**

## Our day will include:

- General Membership Meeting & Elections
- Cutting and Selling the Best Bison Meat Possible
- Best Practices and Options for Managing Invasive Weeds
- Success with Agritourism and Harvest Host
- Key Bison Behaviors
- Hunting, Field Harvesting, and Field Necropsy
- Micro Conversations with Bison Mentors
- Delicious Bison Lunch & Dinner
- Bison Games & Benefit Auction

The conference will be held at the Fort Collins Marriott Hotel (350 Horsetooth Road, Fort Collins, CO 80525). Reserve a hotel room (\$129 per night) by calling the hotel directly at 970-226-5200.

Register online at [www.bisonranchers.com/events](http://www.bisonranchers.com/events) or by completing the registration form below (both sides) & sending it (with payment) to RMBA.

Please contact Jen Graves, RMBA Board Secretary at [jennifer.nmn.gray@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.nmn.gray@gmail.com) with any questions.

## **\*\* NOTICE \*\***

### **- Elections -**

Elections for our Board of Directors will be held at the General Membership Meeting. President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer & two Directors are up for election every year.

If you are interested in serving on the board, please contact Patty Smith ([pbisonsmith@gmail.com](mailto:pbisonsmith@gmail.com)).

### **- Bylaw Change -**

The RMBA Board will present a bylaw change at the membership meeting and call for a vote.

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## RMBA 2023 Spring Conference Registration

*See reverse side for registration fees.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ranch Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Attendees: \_\_\_\_\_

**Early Bird Pricing  
Available!**

**Register online at  
[bisonranchers.com](http://bisonranchers.com)!**

**Registration Due: February 10, 2023**

**Send to:** Rocky Mountain Bison Association  
303 S Broadway, Suite B522  
Denver, CO 80209

# RMBA Proposed Bylaw Change

During the General Membership Meeting at the 2023 Spring Conference, RMBA members will be asked to vote on the following bylaw change of the association. The proposal changes the officer position of Treasurer from an elected position, to one appointed by the Board of Directors to a one year term. The appointed Treasurer will be one of the four officers on the board and would have voting rights. The amendment will be to Article IV Section 2.

## Current Wording:

There shall be four officers, who are also members of the Board of Directors, i.e. the President, the Vice President, the Treasurer, and the Secretary. Each of these officers shall be elected by the active members, to one year terms, or until their respective replacements are elected.

## New Wording:

There shall be four officers, who are also members of the Board of Directors, i.e. the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the Treasurer. The President, Vice President, and Secretary shall be elected by the active members, to one year terms, or until their respective replacements are elected. The Treasurer will be appointed by the Board of Directors to one year terms, or until their respective replacement is appointed.

## New Sponsorship Opportunities

RMBA has some new sponsorship opportunities available. You don't have to break the bank to support your bison community. If you are interested in affordable ways to get your name in publications and visible at conferences, or perhaps you'd like to make a one-time donation that has an annual impact, or you just never thought you had enough to be a sponsor - we have an opportunity for you!

To learn more or become a sponsor, please contact Board Secretary Jen Graves at [jennifer.nmn.gray@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.nmn.gray@gmail.com).

## Share Your Knowledge: Become a Mentor

The RMBA Board is creating a database of RMBA members who are willing to serve as mentors for new producers or other members looking to learn.

If you have knowledge in bison behavior, fencing, corrals, handling facilities, pasture management, nutrition, marketing, meat sales, contracts, absentee ownership agreements, or other areas - please consider volunteering!

If you are willing to mentor another member, please go to **[bit.ly/3gZiQsP](https://bit.ly/3gZiQsP)** to complete the mentor sign-up form.

Questions? Please contact Board Secretary Jen Graves at [jennifer.nmn.gray@gmail.com](mailto:jennifer.nmn.gray@gmail.com).

## Spring Conference Registration Fees

### Early Bird Registration (Before Jan. 7):

#\_\_\_\_\_ Members @ \$110/ea.      #\_\_\_\_\_ Non-Members @ \$150/ea.      #\_\_\_\_\_ Children @ \$40/ea.

### Registration (Jan. 7 - Feb. 10):

#\_\_\_\_\_ Members @ \$125/ea.      #\_\_\_\_\_ Non-Members @ \$165/ea.      #\_\_\_\_\_ Children @ \$50/ea.

### Late Registration (After Feb. 11):

#\_\_\_\_\_ Members @ \$150/ea.      #\_\_\_\_\_ Non-Members @ \$190/ea.      #\_\_\_\_\_ Children @ \$75/ea.

**Total # of Attendees:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total Amount Enclosed: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: Rocky Mountain Bison Association.  
To pay by credit card, register online at [www.bisonranchers.com](http://www.bisonranchers.com).



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Continued from page 2*

These are not easy tasks, but he is the right man for this job.

### RMBA Behind the Scenes

RMBA has not been as vocal this year as in the past, but our board met regularly this year and had great discussions surrounding our association and the industry. Following are a few quick updates.

The NBA and I had a couple of conversations with a citizens group trying to get bison in Colorado re-classified as wildlife, which ended in us not seeing a justification for the change. Their petition was also submitted to

Colorado Parks and Wildlife who came to the same conclusion.

The Spring Conference in March 2022 was well attended and jam-packed with useful and timely presentations, despite lingering impacts from the pandemic.

Our Fall Ranch Tour at Durham Ranch was one of the best attended tours in several years. I cannot thank the Flocchini Family, Pat Thomson, and Roland Kroos enough for their generous hospitality.

### Moving Forward

RMBA has ordered new RMBA-branded merchandise which we will have available at the 2023

Spring Conference.

As Chair of the NBA's State and Regional Committee, I am collaborating with representatives from all over to share information and better serve our members.

We are working hard to have a very successful Larry Higgins Bison Junior Judging Contest at the Gold Trophy Show & Sale (GTSS) in January.

Our 2023 Spring Conference is set to yet again have a great lineup of speakers and topics and I am really hoping to see all of our members there. There are some we have not seen in a while and I would really like to get us all reconnected and together again.

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

*Continued from page 1*

A second ranch was then purchased in 2000. With the growth and move of the company came the hiring of Kristen McGuire into a full-time position with us, marketing and selling our products. Kristen remains with our Arizona company yet today, coming up on almost 21 years as our dear friend and employee!!!

We incorporated Adams Natural Meats for the selling of our bison products and the Arizona ranch became Adams Acres.

But why stop there? We bought a second home back in Colorado in 2006 and when more land became available, our dream continued, expanding Adams Acres into Evergreen, Colorado, as well as Arizona Buffalo who owns all of the bison and Adams Natural Meats with the opening of our second meat store in December 2018.

### Growing & Looking Ahead

Fast forward to today, we have been blessed to continue raising these majestic animals, knowing Bryan's respect of them and honoring his legacy and the love

he had for the bison, be it through our stores or with my sitting on the National Bison Association Board of Directors as the Region 1 Director.



Colorado Adams Acres now holds many GTSS trophy winners, including Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Female winners for 2021 and 2022. Our production animals are purchased usually as calves or yearlings from the City of Denver, NBA or Rocky Mountain Bison Association member ranches.

The Arizona Adams Acres ranch is expanding in numbers as well, purchasing 30 two year-old bred heifers this past winter from Canada. Between the two ranches, our herd numbers at 150 bison.

Our stores continue to flourish and as with others, processing through COVID was a challenge - but with perseverance, we weathered the storm and have come out at the top of our game in sales.

We continue to market our bison products throughout Arizona, Colorado and on social media. Daily we put our product in front of the public, taking pride in the grass fed only bison product we provide for their consumption.

We have laughed at our mistakes. We have learned from our experiences. We are blessed to say, we have persevered in the bison world and continue to grow.

Our company believes we are all in this together as a bison family and we will continue to increase the public's awareness of the benefits of bison, learning from each other, and succeeding in the promotion of the majestic bison we all were introduced to, no matter the circumstances.

Marrying into them is a story I continue to proudly share.

# The Importance of Quality Photos for Your Ranch and Business

By **Tiffany Castle**, *Castle Bison*

In today's day and age, the majority of consumers are shopping through websites, social media, their phones, online ads, and other virtual means. What we know about ourselves and our customers is that we often shop with our eyes first.

**"Marketing is no longer about the stuff you make but the stories you tell."**

You can use photos to show customers the story of: the faces behind your business, the history of your operation, your mission, vision, values, and more.

Having quality photos allows you to:

- acquire new customers by getting their attention
- engage with your community
- get recognized by your target audience
- show up in consumers' lives more frequently
- build trust within those relationships

Sharing photos throughout your business in places like your website, your social media accounts, email newsletters, packaging, advertising, brochures, business cards, market or store displays, decorative products, and more can increase your chances of effective engagement.

## Photos & the Bison Industry

We are fortunate to be living a life that many people can only dream about. We work with, take care of, and live among these amazing animals every day. There are so many things we can share

through photos with our potential clients including yourself, your family, your products, your animals, where you live, your storefront, your customers and their locations, where you travel, daily chores, roundups, fencing, vet checks, etc.

## Finding a Professional

There is a lot you can do on your own (see tips in the sidebar). If you'd prefer to keep your focus on the other aspects of your operation you can always hire a professional photographer to take photos for you!

You can find a professional photographer in many ways, in many places including: locally, regionally, and globally. Finding the right fit can be done via Google and social media searches, asking other businesses who they have used, and asking friends and family for recommendations.

When you are looking for a professional, look for these three things first:

1. someone whose work and style you love
2. someone with a professional online presence
3. someone with experience in photographing projects similar to yours.

## Vetting a Professional

Once you find "the one" be sure to ask them the following questions prior to hiring them:

- Do they offer commercial use rights? (Commercial releases allow you to use your photos for sales and sharing in your business as you see fit.)

*Continued on page 8*

## How to Deliver Quality Images

- Use what you have. Even a modern cellphone can take a beautiful photo- you just have to use it!
- Use a lot of light (natural light is best).
- Be mindful of your background and remove distractions.
- Make sure your subject is in focus.
- Be aware of harsh shadows on the subject.
- Consider this perspective - our boring day-to-day is someone else's dream. Share your experience with them!
- Try and try again. Digital photos = endless chances. (You can always delete those that don't appeal to you.)
- Experiment and get creative.
- Ask for feedback - but don't take it personally.
- Take inspiration from those around you.
- Practice!

There is a lot you can do on your own to elevate your products and the story you are sharing. Small steps can cover great distances. You shouldn't be intimidated to try this yourself.



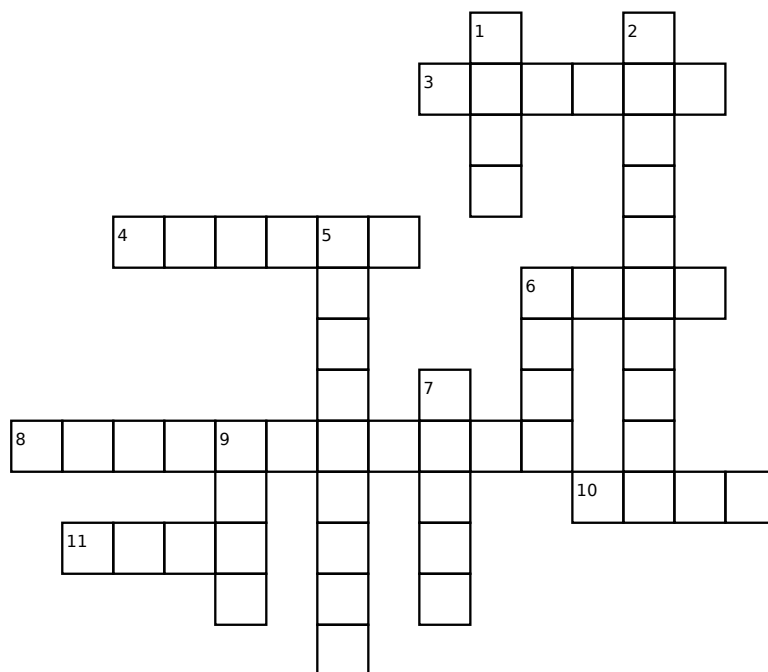
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ROUNDUP  
 JERKY  
 HORN  
 NUTRITION  
 TRAILER  
 WALLOW  
 COW  
 CORRAL  
 HIDE  
 MARKET  
 TAG  
 MEAT  
 RUMINANT  
 CONFERENCE  
 RMBA  
 MEMBERS  
 COAT  
 SALE  
 BISON  
 ASSOCIATION  
 HEIFER  
 PRODUCER  
 BULL  
 HERBIVORE

## RMBA Word Search

## RMBA Crossword

*Answers on page 11*



### Down:

1. Offspring
2. Gathering for Learning, Discussion and Networking
5. Goal of RMBA
6. Not Antlers, But...
7. Our National Mammal
9. Bison Jacket

### Across:

3. Depressions in Soil from Bison Rolling
4. Our Current Season
6. Group of Bison
8. Group Organized for Joint Purpose
10. Bison Snow Shovel
11. Your Favorite Association (abbr.)



# A Bit of History

## *The ABA and NBA Associations From My Perspective*

*By Patty Smith, RMBA Treasurer*

The National Buffalo Association (the old NBA) was founded in 1967. The first few buffalo association meetings that Ron Smith and I attended were old NBA meetings – mostly in South Dakota where it was started.

In 1974 a small group of young ambitious buffalo ranchers (most from Colorado and surrounding states) decided that they needed an association that reflected more of what they wanted in the industry and the American Buffalo Association (ABA) was founded in 1975.

Both associations grew with

the industry. Many of us were members of both, attending several meetings a year. After a few years of just volunteers doing all the work, the ABA hired an executive secretary but still did not have a permanent office.

The ABA started the Gold Trophy Show and Sale in 1980 during the National Western Stock Show in Denver. In 1985, they established an office in Denver in the Livestock Exchange Building at the Stockyards. Sometime in the ensuing years, the ABA chose to change its name to American Bison Association.

There was a push in 1995 to combine the two associations into one and the National Bison Association (the current NBA) was formed with offices remaining in the Denver area.

As the association grew, state and regional associations were starting to form to address local issues, provide sales opportunities and give newcomers smaller group settings in which to network. This was the impetus for the founding of the Colorado Bison Association (now known as the Rocky Mountain Bison Association) in 1996. More about that in the next newsletter...

## Quality Photos

*Continued from page 6*

- Do they have a contract? (Contracts establish clear expectations for both parties and protect you and your investment.)
- Have they done a project similar to yours before? (Nothing beats the wisdom of experience.)
- What is included? (Get a clear understanding of the products and uses you are purchasing.)

Be it you or a professional capturing photos of you, your products, your family, your animals, where you live, your storefront, your customers and their locations, where you travel, daily chores, roundups, fencing, vet checks, etc. is the best way to share your story and promote your products. Getting your story out there by way of imagery is one of the best forms of marketing and reaching your ideal clients.

## Welcome New RMBA Members!

The board would like to welcome the following new RMBA members in 2022:

Landon Ash	Tricia McKenney
Joseph Barlow	Gregg Stults
Justin Hambrick	Will Wade
Robert Howard	Morgan & Joshua Woodward
Ronald & Jacqueline Huber	

## Monthly USDA Bison Report

The monthly USDA Bison Report has a wealth of information, such as:

- This year the average prices reported to the USDA have remained fairly stable, with small ups and downs witnessed throughout the year.
- The last 10 months have seen an average price per pound for young bulls at \$3.84 and for young heifers at \$3.66.
- 58,754 bison were processed at Federally Inspected plants between January and October.

You can always find the latest report and past reports here:  
<https://mymarketnews.ams.usda.gov/viewReport/2827>





*The Larry Higgins*

# Bison Junior Judging

## Contest

**Friday, January 20, 2023 at 9 a.m.**

### Top 3 Individuals Earn a Scholarship

**\$1,500 for  
1<sup>st</sup> Place**

Sponsored by the  
National Buffalo  
Foundation

**\$1,200 for  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place**

Sponsored by the  
Rocky Mountain Bison  
Association

**\$900 for  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place**

Sponsored by Rocky  
Mountain Natural  
Meats

*Scholarships will be  
awarded to the top  
three scoring individuals  
and paid to the higher  
education school of their  
choice.*

*Hosted by the National Bison Association (NBA) and Rocky Mountain Bison Association (RMBA). Held in conjunction with the Gold Trophy Show & Sale during the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colorado.*

### Contest Highlights

- Participants will judge four classes of bison and provide oral reasons on one class, as selected by the judges
- Everyone participates individually and is eligible to earn a scholarship. Additional recognition will be provided for the top three registered teams and the top three junior participants (12 years of age or younger)
- No entry fees
- Open to individuals 8 to 21 years old who are academically eligible (i.e. passing all classes)
- NBA/RMBA membership not required, but available

Participants are encouraged to review information on Livestock Evaluation/Judging and Oral Reasons to prepare for the contest. Resources are available via a web search or by contacting your local FFA or 4H chapter. (*Membership to these organizations is not required.*)

### How to Enter

Register online at <https://bit.ly/3ePi8gw> or in-person. (Day-of registrants are asked to check-in earlier than 9 a.m.)

The contest will be held in The Yards at the NWSS, by the bison pens. Check-in is at 8:30 a.m. Awards will be presented around 12 noon.

**For more information:** Contact Jim Matheson at [jim@bisoncentral.com](mailto:jim@bisoncentral.com) or 303-292-2833.



RMBA members played a spirited game of "Heads or Tails" at the Spring Conference. Games like these are a fun and important part of each conference and help keep RMBA events affordable.

*Continued from page 1*

As always, our spring conference included a General Membership Meeting and annual elections. President John Graves provided updates on the board's upcoming initiatives, and the role of the association in ongoing discussions about bison as an amenable species. He welcomed membership feedback on association priorities and led a discussion about a formal mentorship program.

Elections were held at the end of the meeting. Officer positions (i.e., President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) are one-year terms and all current officers were re-elected to their position. Two of the four Director-at-Large positions were up for reelection and four members were nominated. Both of the current board members, Tiffany Castle and Rick Forepaugh, were re-elected.

"We love the interest our membership has for being on the board," said Treasurer Patty Smith. "But Rick and Tiffany haven't had a chance in their positions given the impact of COVID."

Presentations covered topics

such as parasite management, marketing your story, rural healthcare, quick presentations on fencing, corrals, trailers and hauling, and a Q&A panel aimed at helping newer ranchers.

Evening events are a member favorite. Following dinner, John led participants through a lively game of "Heads and Tails" followed by his debut appearance as an auctioneer. (While entertaining, we are happy to report that Jud will be back for the 2023 auction.)

### Spring Conference Sponsors

The goal of the board is to keep our membership, conferences and tours affordable. We couldn't do that without our sponsors. Rocky Hollow Buffalo Company and Patty Smith both made monetary donations for the conference. Meat for the bison taco bar and dry-aged bison steaks served at the conference were provided by Great Range Bison. Thank you sponsors! (If you are interested in sponsoring an event, contact a board member. Contact

*Continues on next page*



Roland Kroos of Crossroads Consulting talks with Fall Tour attendees about holistic management at the Durham Ranch near Wright, Wyoming.



information is listed at [bisonranchers.com](http://bisonranchers.com).)

### Bison's Wildlife Classification

In March, RMBA and the NBA were asked by the Colorado Wildlife Commission to provide a stance on a citizen petition to reclassify bison as big game. After a discussion with the board and NBA, John provided them with a statement, summarized by: "The RMBA Board of Directors met on Friday, March 4, 2022, and unanimously voted to oppose this petition. The regulatory changes proposed in this petition seek to impose a solution to a problem that is not yet clearly defined. The board felt the petition sought to address bison that are ranging into Colorado from the Book Cliffs herd in Utah. To date, the extent of this ranging is not well documented, and most evidence is based on anecdotal evidence at best." The Colorado Wildlife Commission agreed, asking petitioners to place cameras to document the roaming animals.

### RMBA's Take on Amenable Species

In June, John put out a statement regarding proposed legislation to change the classification of bison to be an amenable species, placing them under the Federal Meat Inspection Act. The board discussed multiple facets of the bison industry that would be impacted by a change in status, including to marketers, producers big and small, feed lots, processing plants, and (of course) the consumer. John released a statement on behalf of the board, summarized by the following:

"The RMBA Board of Directors does not support a change in classification of bison to be an amenable species. We feel more information on potential rules and regulations are needed to allow for a definitive position from the RMBA Board."

### Fall Ranch Tour

This year's Fall Ranch Tour was held at Durham Bison Ranch, just 35 miles south of Gillette, Wyoming. Approximately 50 attendees toured the 55,000 acre bison ranch. Herd Manager Pat Thomson led the tour, providing a detailed view of their water systems, handling facilities, mineral delivery system, pastures and, of course, the herd.

In the afternoon, participants were treated with a presentation on Holistic Range Management by Roland Kroos. Roland has provided valuable guidance to the Durham Ranch for many years and was able to not only build on member's current knowledge of holistic management, but also point to examples at the ranch.

Attendees then headed to The Open Range Steakhouse at The Wright Hotel for a delicious bison steak dinner. This steakhouse regularly serves bison from the Durham Ranch and opened on Saturday specifically for RMBA members.



Fall Tour attendees view part of the Durham Ranch herd and their mineral distribution system at in September.

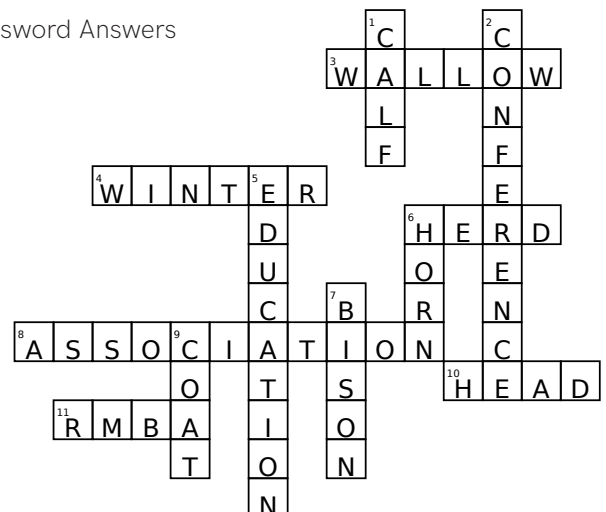
A huge thank you to John and Gaylynn Flocchini for hosting RMBA and for providing the bison burger lunch.

### Future Initiatives

The Board is already running full steam ahead on future efforts. Work is continuing behind the scenes to revamp RMBA's fundraising efforts with new merchandise and revamped games. The team is also working on the creation of bison evaluation criteria, much like what is available for FFA students for cattle judging.

With the National Western Stock Show rapidly approaching, John is preparing for the Larry Higgins Bison Junior Judging Contest held in collaboration with the National Bison Association and Gold Trophy Show and Sale. Quickly following this event will be the 2023 Spring Conference in Fort Collins, Colorado. We hope to see you all there!

Crossword Answers







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**First Class**



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