

# KOHLER, BERN

**BERN KOHLER** Chemistry Professor, Montana State University

**HOMETOWN** Born in Chicago, Illinois

**TSRC** Since 1993. Participant

**I KNEW I WANTED TO BE A SCIENTIST WHEN** My father was a scientist who had more fun doing whatever it was he was doing than anyone else, so I always knew I would be a scientist, too. Scientists get to do so many different things like integrate and differentiate, solder, use a lathe, and fix leaky pipes.

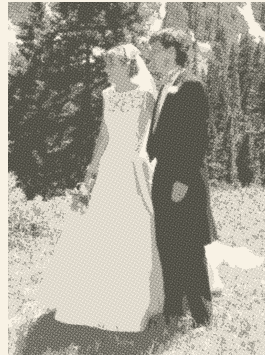


**HIS STORY** I attended my first Telluride Workshop as a postdoc in August 1993. My advisor at the time (the late Prof. Kent R. Wilson, University of California, San Diego)

had used that meeting as bait to convince me to leave my previous postdoctoral position in Switzerland and join his research group. He knew what a nut I am for mountains, and it worked! Kent had attended a Telluride workshop for the first time a year or two earlier, and was determined to share this experience

**“Less than one year after we met in Telluride, our wedding was held at 11,300’ above sea level in a meadow outside Alta Lakes Observatory about five miles out of town; now our kids love to ride the gondola and bungee jump in Mtn. Village.”**

widely. He generously brought his entire group and our families to Telluride, including Bonnie, his office administrator, who came with her husband, their two kids, and a certain younger sister named Peggy. After the first morning of meetings, Bonnie introduced me to Peggy on the steps of the Telluride Elementary



Bern & Peggy Kohler

School. Peggy, like her sister Bonnie, had grown up in Alaska, but was living in Manhattan pursuing a career as an opera singer. She missed the mountains terribly, and I knew that I had met a kindred spirit. During that week, Peggy and I hiked Sneffels Highline

Trail by ourselves and took many walks along the San Miguel River. Late one night near the end of the week, we were sitting on the steps of the Elementary School, talking about our impending departures to opposite coasts when I pulled a tattered Alaskan fishing license from my wallet. Peggy, who had fished commercially in Alaska to put herself through Oberlin’s Conservatory of Music, appreciated its true value. It was as if I had pulled a glass slipper out of my wallet, and we both sensed that our separation would be temporary. Two dates and four months later we were engaged. Less than one year after we met our wedding was held in Telluride.



Bern Kohler

**FAVORITE HIKE** Sneffels Highline Trail