

# Trinity Arts Photo Club



www.trinityartsphotoclub.org



A Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2010

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## What is in Your Backyard?

by Mark Lenz

If you are a working stiff like me, you do not have time to take long trips for the purpose of pursuing your photography habit. So instead, we need to look in our backyards, both literally and figuratively, to find things to shoot.

I recently spent some time over a several day period in my literal backyard where I found some outstanding subjects to shoot. I love macro photography and it opens a whole new world of opportunities. Not only were the subjects great, the outcome was pretty good as well. If I had only done this before last month's competition... Oh well, that is another story for another time.

So let's go back to the backyard. The benefits are many. The short commute saves on gasoline. You do not have to fight traffic. Sunrise photos mean you just have to fall out of bed and walk outside. It gives you the opportunity to work with your camera every day if you want to. Now to the drawbacks. Those weeds you hoped would die seem to multiply instead. Mosquitoes. You see all the chores you should be working on instead of taking photos.

To ensure that you have appropriate subjects, you can plant some interesting plants; create a habitat for certain insects such as butterflies, dragonflies or bees; create a great place to photograph your pets or children.

Now how about that figurative backyard? Every one of us has a passion and a talent for photography. All around the area there are opportunities to use that passion and talent to help others. Using myself as

an example, I have been the "official unofficial photographer" (that means unpaid volunteer) for the high school gymnastics team when my son attended Trinity HS, the "official unofficial photographer" for the Trinity choir for a year when my daughter was there, the "... for the Corps of Cadets unit my son is in at Texas A&M and the "... for my church here in Bedford. The parents will love you and appreciate every shot you take of their kids. The church will appreciate it as they do not have to pay a professional photographer to take photos. There are other organizations around your backyard that would love some photos as well. That figurative backyard also has some places to go and take photos just for the fun of it. The commute may be a little longer and the wake up time may need to be a little earlier, but we all know those places in DFW that provide a place to hone our skills and take great photos.



## The Exposure Value Triangle

by Bill Webb

Just about any article on taking photos or tweaking exposure mentions "exposure value or maybe you'll see a comment like "for this situation set ev +1." We also talk of "stops" as in "increasing exposure by 2 stops." This is the same as 2 ev and you can substitute "stops" for "ev" in this article but ev is actually a bit more accurate because we are changing more than just the f/stop as you will see.

So, what is this "ev" and how do we change it to a +1 or a -1 or anything?

To explain this I use what I call the "exposure value triangle." Consider an equilateral triangle with the following at each of the corners: Shutter speed (time), Aperture or f/stop (area) and ISO (sensitivity)

These three things determine how our digital "film" is exposed.

Shutter Speed - how long the camera keeps the lens open

Aperture - how big the lens opening is (f/stop)

ISO - how quickly the "film" is exposed to store the image

They are all interconnected and result in the "exposure value" of any particular image. Changing any of them will require a change in some other one (to

keep the same ev). We are used to thinking of tweaking the shutter speed or the f/stop but our ev triangle shows us that ISO is just one more variable we can use to our advantage as we seek to get that image under what might be difficult conditions.

An ev of 0 (zero) means the camera is set just as the camera's meter and automatic modes said it should be. We frame the scene, focus and take the picture. No adjustments are being made to what the camera says is right. OK, that's 0 ev but what about the plusses and minuses?

An ev of +1 means we are setting things to gather TWICE the amount of light as usual. An ev of +2 means 4X as much. Similarly, an ev of -1 means ½ as much light. An ev of -2 means ¼ the light. Well, you get the idea. Basically, "+" ev's add light and "-" ev's reduce the light and each jump either doubles the light or halves the light from the previous setting.

Example: Let's say we are shooting an outdoor shot with some open sky or some other bright area in the frame. We've got the ISO of our camera set at 400 and maybe the camera tells us to shoot at 1/125 second at f/8. We take the photo and check the LCD of our camera and see that some of the bright parts of that scene are "blowing out" that is, going pure white and looking overexposed. We know that "blowing out the highlights" is one of the supreme no-no's of photography so we need to adjust something.

Well, we can get rid of some or all of that by reducing the exposure by setting a "-" ev. We might try a -½ or -¾ but let's keep

it simple and go for a full -1 ev to be sure we don't blow out the highlights. How could we accomplish this change?

For a -1 we know we need ½ the amount of light so we can reduce the amount of time the shutter stays open. In this case, the shutter speed should be changed from 1/125th of a second to 1/250th (easy to see how that's ½ as much light).

What if for some reason we don't want to change the shutter speed, what could we do? Well, we can use another apex of the ev triangle and adjust the aperture, the f/stop. Now it's easy to see how going from 1/125 to 1/250 cuts the exposure in half (-1 ev) but what about the aperture. We're using f/8. To reduce the amount of light using the f/stop (aperture) we need to make the aperture smaller to let in less light. We need to cut the light in half (remember we're going for a -1 ev) and to do that we would set a BIGGER number, in this case f/11.

Why in the world is f/11 = ½ of f/8?

Well, there's no easy rule for this so just memorize the f/stop progression: f/1, f/1.4, f/2, f/2.8, f/4, f/5.6, f/8, f/11, f/16, f/22, etc. Each of those jumps admits ½ as much light as the step before it. Again, bigger number = less light. If you noticed, the steps are in increments of 1.4 (or close) which is √2 which is part of the math for the area of a circle which is - ah, heck, just remember the numbers and forget the math. If you really want to understand it just catch me at a meeting and I'll bore you (even more) with the details. (The aperture setting also controls depth-of-field but that's for another article.)



The last part of the triangle is the ISO. Some of our cameras allow us to set the ISO very easily and this comes in handy, especially when shooting in dark environments or where flash wouldn't be allowed. Think of ISO as the same as the old ASA film speed rating. The higher the number the "faster" the film or in our case the faster the sensor will respond. In our example we said our camera was set on ISO 400 so we could cut that in half and set it at ISO 200 and accomplish our goal. ISO numbers are straightforward. ISO 800 is twice as fast as ISO 400 and ISO 200 is 1/2 as fast. Note that high ISO's sometimes result in more noise in the photo so use it carefully.

Now that I have you scared or confused you or both, let me say, thankfully, our cameras usually allow us to "dial in" some +/- ev right on the camera and we don't have to fiddle with the actual shutter speed or f/stop. Your camera will likely allow you to adjust the ev in 1/3 ev steps and take care of everything for you. Check your camera's manual so you know how to do that.

Understanding the ev triangle, though, will help you make the right kinds of adjustments or at least understand what your camera is doing.

## Motion blur or 'digital impressionism'.

by Barbara Denman

Why would you want to purposely blur a photo? I think it creates an opportunity

for the viewer to use their imagination and really have to look at an image. Personally, my favorite motion blur opportunities come as a passenger (not driver) in a moving vehicle. You get a sense of 'being there' with a motion blur image, the sense of the action that is captured at that moment.

I realize when I want to create that motion, that blur, that ethereal look and feel, it is not so easy. Creating the end result of your vision takes time and much trial and error. You may be moving as you take the photo or you may use a tripod with numerous camera adjustments while photographing a moving subject. You may think this type of photography is for sport events only - it is NOT. Imagine being in a busy city and you see an interesting person. You want to convey the solitary person with the hectic city around them. One way to do that it to take a motion blur image.

I have included a few of my images.



Here are some basic suggestions to begin with for your adventure. Be ready to make lots of adjustments and take lots of photos - don't give up and do have fun.

- **SHOOT IN MANUAL MODE.** Do not let this frighten you, making blurred photos is the goal.
- **Use slower shutter speed.** The photo will be impacted by the speed of your subject. If you are panning a moving race car your shutter speed will be faster than if panning a casual bicycle rider.
- **Use camera movement or not?** For that night street shot of passing cars you'll want the camera on a tripod, but for a person walking you'll move your camera with them.
- If there is lots of light use a smaller aperture, decrease you ISO, and maybe use a polarizing filter or a neutral density filter.

What could be a good subject of a motion blur photo? Use your imagination, but here are a few ideas. A carnival, a child running, a night photo of someone moving a colored light, a salt water fish in a tank, a kite, an airplane, a bird in flight, someone waiting for the TRE, dancers, a dog running, skaters, pouring wine into a glass.

Ok, yes I enjoy this type of photography. Get out there, get creative, get some friends and have some fun.



## 12 Elements of a Good Competition Image

by *The Professional Photographers Association*

1. **IMPACT** is the sense one gets upon viewing an image for the first time. Compelling images evoke laughter, sadness, anger, pride, wonder or another intense emotion.
2. **CREATIVITY** is the original, fresh, and external expression of the imagination of the maker by using the medium to convey an idea, message or thought.
3. **TECHNICAL EXCELLENCE** is the quality of the image itself as it is presented for viewing. Retouching, manipulation, sharpness, exposure, printing, correct color are some items for consideration.
4. **COMPOSITION** is important to the design on an image. Proper composition holds the viewer in the image and prompts the viewer to look where the creator intends.
5. **LIGHTING** ( the use and control of light) refers to how dimension, shape and roundness are defined in a n image. Whether the light applied to an image is manmade or natural, proper use should enhance an image.
6. **STYLE** is defined in a number of ways. It might be defined by a specific genre or simply be recognizable as the characteristic of how a specific artist applies light to an object. It should impact the image in a positive manner. If the

subject and style are at odds, it can have a negative impact.

7. **PRINT PRESENTATION** affect an image by giving it a finished look.

The mats and borders should enhance the image not distract from it.

8. **CENTER OF INTEREST** refers to the point or points the maker wants the viewer to stop as they view the image.

9. **SUBJECT MATTER** should always be appropriate to the story being told in an image.

10. **COLOR BALANCE** supplies harmony to an image. If the tones work together it can enhance the emotional appeal. Color balance is not always harmonious and can evoke diverse feelings for effect.

11. **TECHNIQUE** is the approach used to create the image. Printing, lighting, capture, presentation and more are part of the technique.

12. **STORY TELLING ABILITY** refers to the image's ability to evoke imagination. One beautiful thing about art is that each viewer might collect his own message or read her own story into the image.

## Recent Programs

by *Mark Lenz*

Thanks to Loretta Renick and Lawrence Jenkins for providing their time to the club during the past few months.

Loretta, operates Visual Image Fine Art, a company involved in Art Image Capture, Fine Art printing and Artist Management. She manages all aspects of sales and marketing. Loretta graced us with her presence twice in the first part of 2010, once to discuss color in photography and the other to discuss composition. Loretta has a background in both painting and photography.

Lawrence Jenkins is a documentary photographer in Dallas/Fort Worth. His professional career spans over 15 years, spending several years as a newspaper photographer. In September of 2004, following more than five years as a staff photographer at The Dallas Morning News, Lawrence became a freelance photographer. He made a presentation about his career and showed the club some of his most special photographs.

## Spring Club Field Trips

by *Mark Lenz*

The club has sponsored some great field trips during the spring. Thanks to Scott Denman for making things happen. Several club members headed off to Llano at the end of January to take photos of bald eagles and their young at a nest just outside of town. It was a chilly morning and the eagles were fun to watch, but maybe due to shivering, most of our photos were blurry, even with a big 600mm lens wielded by Bill Webb and myself (see photos). But the barbeque afterwards made it all worthwhile.

Next, a group of us went to the Dallas Arboretum for the tail end of Dallas



Blooms. It was a beautiful sunny morning when we showed up at opening time. The spring bulbs were in full bloom and their flowers posed for many great photos. After several hours taking photos throughout the Arboretum, we left as the crowds began filing in.

The last adventure was an early morning sunrise shoot at the Fort Worth Nature Center. We arrived in the dark and made our way to Greer Island to shoot the sun coming up over Lake Worth.

We generally had the same group of folks come to each field trip. We would love to have more members attend the field trips as it is a good way to work with other photographers and learn different ways to approach subjects in real time.

## To Blog or not to Blog, that is the Question.

by Mark Lenz

Since I was over a month late getting this newsletter out, I started thinking about that Blog again. As I said in the last letter, I have never had a blog. But this is later in 2010 and, well, it seems like if you do not have a blog, it is so 2000.

Some sites have done away with the monthly or quarterly newsletter in favor of an on line blog that is used by various club members to share stories about trips, techniques or software. Since I am responsible for the newsletter, that would seem to put me out of a job. But that would probably be a good thing. due to my lateness in publishing the quarterly (soon to be biannual) letter and I am

always asking for other members to help me out with articles.

As discussed in the last newsletter (a long time ago) we could have a gatekeeper that ensures that the Blog is maintained in a professional manner and that it is updated with new materials regularly. I am open to any thoughts from the membership and will continue my toils on the newsletter if everyone deems it to be the best communication vehicle for the club.

## 2010 Officers

A **BIG** thank you to Cinda Benton for her time as club president. As you all know, she decided to resign for family reasons, and we will miss her leadership. We all wish her the best in her future endeavors.

*President -Barbara Denman*

*Vice-President- Open*

*Treasurer- Denise Remfert*

*Secretary-Mark Lenz*

*Officer at Large – Bill Webb*

*Officer at Large – Bruce Hutter*

## Committees

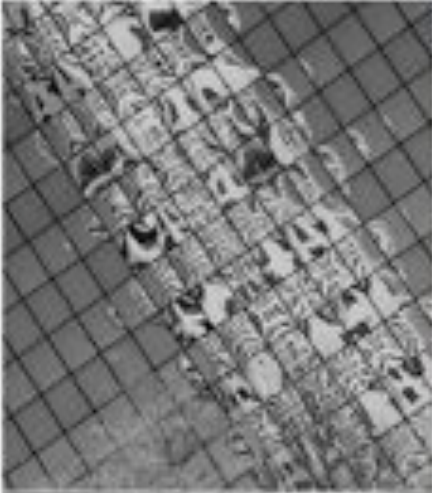
Members are always welcome to join any committee they are interested in. Contact any of the officers above if you are interested. Committee opportunities (and current chair) include Programs (Open), Competition (Paul Oney), Field Trips (Open), Publicity (Open), Website (Bruce Hutter), Membership (Open), and Refreshments (Open).

*You can see that Mr./Mrs./Ms. "Open" still have lots to do, so if you think you can step in to help out, Open would appreciate it very much.*

*January 2010 Competition Winners*



*February 2010 Competition Winners*



*March 2010 Competition Winners*

