

Trinity Arts Photo Club

www.trinityartsphotoclub.org



A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue N° 17 — Fall 2009

A Competition Checklist

Lana Macko helps us all prepare for the competitions coming down the road with some timely tips

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Forensic Photography

Larry Marx tells us how photography is utilized in forensic police work. The photo below is part of that story.



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Photography as Business

If you have ever thought about making photography your business, you will want to take a look at this article from Bill Webb

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The Economy and Photography

by Mark Lenz

How has the economy affected you and your photography?

I know. What a downer way to start a newsletter. However, the state of the economy has likely had an affect on how we pursue our hobby, or in some cases a money making venture. In my job, I work with distressed retailers, and there has been no shortage this year. While preparing this story, I reviewed several on line sources and this issue has been covered in many blogs during the last year.

One of the largest photography retailers in the country, Ritz Camera, filed for



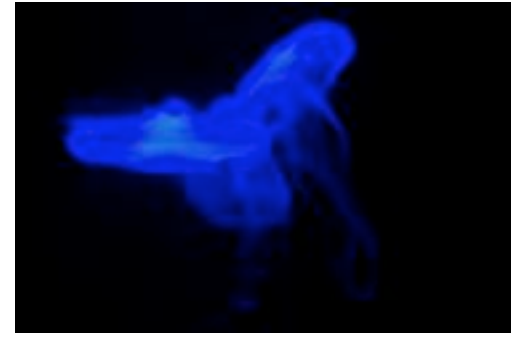
Hopefully we do not need to resort to these drastic measures.

Chapter 11 bankruptcy earlier this year. All of the equipment companies have experienced down years from a revenue standpoint as well. However, unlike other retail outlets, the camera retailers have not yet joined in the discounting frenzy that other retailers, including Saks and Neiman Marcus have not been

immune to. So all of us that were hoping for a deal have instead seen prices stay at similar or higher levels than before (especially for lenses) with some small discounts here and there.

What is a photographer looking for a deal to do? I have looked at Ebay and Craig's List and have found that bidding or prices asked for items I am interested in are still pretty high. The internet retailers...maybe they are a little lower than the local camera retailers, but not that significant. So, it looks like for the most part, we need to be saving our pennies in similar quantities as before the economic crisis to pick up that new lens or that new flash.

Thanks to everyone that contributed to this quarter's newsletter. We have several interesting topics in the letter along with our competition winners from the last few months.



A Competition Checklist

by Lana Macko

I think we all struggle with which photographs to enter in our monthly competitions. I know some members have been disappointed by less-than-stellar comments on their entries.

I thought it might be helpful to share with you a checklist that should be applied to every entry before actually sending it in for judging.

There are a few things that the judges look for first, and expect to be perfect before they get down to the subjective part of the judging.

1. Straighten your horizon or any vertical things near the center of your image.
2. Don't crop off the tops of things, i.e. mountains, rooftops, etc.
3. Check for "hot spots". By that we mean any areas that are way overexposed and "blown out" to almost pure white. The judge will do this and if yours are obvious, perhaps you should choose another photograph.
4. Crop out a bad sky if possible. That is, if your photo has a blown out or dull sky, crop the entire image so the sky doesn't make up much of the photo. the judges will mention it otherwise.
5. With your photo on the screen using whatever editing program you have, zoom in very closely and check for dust or water spots. Believe me the judge will do this and we all have them. So clone them out-- that is allowed under our rules.

6. Check to make sure that what is supposed to be in focus IS in focus. Once again, zoom in and look more closely because the judge will.

7. The judges generally prefer photos where the composition successfully fulfills "the rule of thirds", and photos that don't put the horizon line right in the center of the photograph. If you aren't familiar with the "rule of thirds", there is plenty of information about it on the internet. Police Forensics in Digital Photography

Police Forensics in Digital Photography

by Larry Marx

With the proliferation of digital photography, especially digital photographs taken by the criminal element, there has been a need to be able to match photographs to cameras owned by suspects (chain of custody for you CSI types). The internet has been a tremendous tool for evil by pedophiles, sexual deviants, and the sadists to both boast of their prowess and share in the "spoils" of digital photos. Most of the time, even if by some miracle a set of photos propagated on the internet worldwide could be tracked or traced to a beginner user, the suspect could still fairly successfully deny any knowledge of or participation in the taking of the illegal photos, claiming a hacker or enemy of the individual familiar with computer programming inserted the photos with identifiers falsely leading back to the suspect in question. Recently,

a new development in what could be considered trace evidence in the digital realm has had success in connecting the offender specifically with the photo.

What has been discovered is that the digital sensors in cameras, which are highly sensitive, and therefore subject to wear and tear, develop patterns of 'fixed' pixels which are extremely unlikely to be duplicated from camera to camera. When a sensor begins to wear out, individual pixels, instead of just going black and not working, actually become stuck on either red, green, or blue. These fixed pixels remain the same color no matter the subject of the photograph, and can be detected with the careful use of programs such as Photoshop CS3 to wash out the pixels which are recording the true colors of the photo, leaving the fixed pixels to stand out in the photo. This processing of the photo can be traced pixel by pixel in photoshop and faithfully reproduced by someone familiar with the tracking history of the processing recorded by photoshop.

After discovering the pattern of fixed pixels, assuming there is a list of possible or probable suspects, there is enough probable cause to obtain a search warrant for the suspect's camera(s), which can then be used to take a photo with the lens cap in place, allowing the pattern of fixed pixels for that sensor to be easily seen. A comparison of the fixed pixels from the illegal photo can then be made to as many cameras as are available from the suspects to determine if there is an exact match!

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Police Forensics in Digital Photography (continued)

This has already been successfully done in a child pornography case recently, which resulted in the conviction of the suspect.

From a practical viewpoint, the average SLR camera user, whether professional or amateur, can use this same process to discover the number of pixels on their sensor which have become fixed, and assist them in deciding when to buy a new camera with, it would be assumed, all the pixels in the sensor operating correctly. For camera buffs with budget issues, they could at least use the process to assist in correcting, one at a time, the fixed pixels in an important photograph.

See website below for a larger version of the photo showing the fixed pixels.

<http://tinyurl.com/qvysdk>

Thoughts on Making Photography Your Business

by Bill Webb

This is harder than I thought it would be. By that I mean, turning a photo hobby into a business.

I knew about the technical side of it all for years. Apertures, shutter speeds, ISO/ASA, composing a shot, metering, depth of field all were well understood. I saw photos for sale and knew I could do as well or better. The technical stuff of making a photograph was just not hard for me.

Satisfying the IRS that I have a photography business wasn't too hard either. These things were necessary: registering with the county/state as a "dba" sole proprietor business entity, setting up a separate bank account for the business, marketing/promoting the business (web site), getting a federal tax ID (so you don't use your SSN), getting a state sales tax permit, becoming a member of a professional organization associated with the business (in my case NANPA) and tracking all expenses and income carefully for tax purposes.

But the real BUSINESS part of it I greatly underestimated.

Setting up a website and deciding what you want to sell and for how much is straightforward but sales are going to be VERY slow that way unless you can get some visibility and pop up on the first page of results on Google or some other search engine. This is NOT easy and there are individuals who make their living telling people how to do it, for a fee, of course.

Here's the bottom line; making a profitable business out of landscape photography is almost a non-starter. "EVERYBODY with a digital camera is a landscape photographer." I read this many times in various magazines and web sites but I thought the power and reach of the web would mean that I could generate a stream of income but it just ain't so. Portrait photography and/or commercial photography are much more likely to generate income near term.

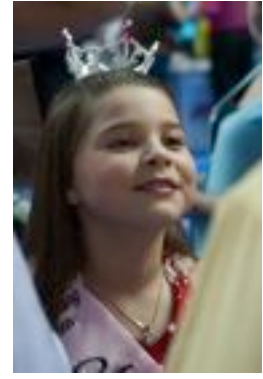
My hat is off to those landscape photographers who print, mount, mat and sleeve a few hundred images and go to art fairs, set up their tents and sit waiting for sales, hoping to cover expenses and many times having to pack it all up and take it back home. Some are successful. Many are not.

A better way to go about this is to find a niche and exploit that. For example, in my small home town the proprietors of an oriental furniture and jewelry boutique asked if I would display my photos in their store, which I have done. They suggested scenes from around the town or rural scenes that would appeal to the local folks and the people who visited their store. I did that and also created a series of 8 greeting cards with similar scenes. The images they asked for and recommended have sold; not enough to make a living but it IS a thrill to sell your work.

Another example is to concentrate on local craft/art fairs and prepare products tailored to the attendees or the theme of the event. We have a member who is really getting a good start on that avenue of marketing. She has written about her experience in an earlier newsletter.

In each case the key to selling your photographs is to target an audience and deliver things they are likely to be interested in.

More important than any of the above is what got you started in photography in the first place; having fun capturing an image that YOU liked and appreciated. Don't forget that. Once you try to make it a business the fun part may be harder to



Software on a Budget

From Bill Webb

You do not necessarily need to use Photoshop, Photoshop Lightroom or Aperture to process your photos. None are cheap. Here are links to two nice free software packages, Picasa3 and GIMP.

Picasa3

This application is from Google and does all the basics you might want to do in editing a photo and getting it ready for a club contest. It does not do layers and masking but short of that it is a really good beginner-level tool that even lets you level the horizon and fix those pesky sensor dust spots. You can get it here - <http://picasa.google.com/>

GIMP

If you want to have more control and more capability (but that means more complexity) you can get GIMP, also for free. This is REALLY a powerful program that rivals Photoshop with layers capability and a wealth of filters. It even fixes barrel distortion. One drawback is that it does not support RAW files right now. If you usually shoot JPEG then that's a non-issue, obviously. Check out the features and manual at <http://docs.gimp.org/2.6/en/>. You can download at <http://gimp.org/>

I have used Picasa3 extensively and find it to be a very easy tool that is quickly grasped. I have not used GIMP.

Taste of Northeast

By Bruce Hutter

The Trinity Arts Photo Club participated again this year in The Taste of North East benefitting ArtsNet.

ArtsNet contacted the TAPC for help in photographing their yearly event. Seven of your fellow club members took over 600 photos of the activities. These photos have been submitted to ArtsNet for promotional purposes. In exchange for our help, ArtsNet provided us with a booth for promoting our club. We passed out brochures, newsletters and had a display of our photos, both in print and on our laptop. This years event also was an opportunity to display our new TAPC banner, thanks to Cinda's creative efforts. It all looked very professional. We have had new members join our group from the exposure received at the Taste Of North East and hopefully this years promotional efforts will prove to further our clubs membership. Some photos from the event are shared above.

Source for Help on the Basics

by Fonda Johnstone

At the last meeting, I brought a How to Do It - Digital Photography Guide to the meeting. When I bought it at Barnes and Noble, I discovered that all of the contents were on the Internet as well as How to Buy a Digital Camera. When I attended a photography tour in South Dakota, I discussed with the trip leader downloading the info for her future trips. It was not a simple copy and paste but

time consuming project between online ads, etc.

Very little of the information has changed. Both guides are no longer on the web but available for about \$3 each from Barnes and Noble as a PDF file.

There are seven articles on How to Buy a Digital Camera and 13 articles on Digital Photography. All documents are Word but are set up to update when opened and credit is given to Quamut. A partial excerpt of one article is shown below as an example if you are interested. These articles would be good for beginning photographers.

Special Shooting Modes

"In addition to the main shooting modes, most digital cameras have special shooting modes designed to be used in particular situations, such as shooting close-ups or making wide panoramic images. These special shooting modes can be used in conjunction with the camera's main shooting modes. The following special modes are among the most common, but your specific camera may feature even more.

Macro Mode

Macro mode allows you to take close-ups of insects, flower petals, or anything else you'd like to capture in precise detail. Macro mode is usually indicated by a small flower icon. Keep these tips in mind when shooting macro:

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☒ Consider depth of field: It's extremely shallow in macro mode, so sometimes only a small part of your photograph will appear in focus. To get the greatest depth of field possible in macro, use aperture priority mode and choose the smallest aperture.

☒ Use the LCD: When you're up that close, the image you see through the viewfinder won't match what the camera actually records. Use the LCD screen instead.

Continuous Shooting Mode

In continuous shooting mode, you press the shutter button and the camera takes photos repeatedly until you let go. You might not be able to see each photo as you shoot, so be sure you've framed your shot perfectly before pressing down the shutter. To use continuous shooting mode, prefocus (see How to Focus Your Digital Camera), then hold down the shutter button for as long as you'd like—most cameras allow you to shoot until you've filled up your memory card. This mode's icon is usually a stack of overlaid photos.

Video

Nearly all entry-level digital cameras now feature a video mode that lets you shoot digital movies complete with sound and full-motion video. Though you can shoot for hours in this mode—if your memory card has enough storage, that is—the quality of digital camera videos is much lower than that of videos shot with a camcorder. Digital camera videos also eat up memory quickly and become huge files, often totaling more than 50

megabytes. The video mode icon is usually a tiny video camera."

Hurst Library Photography Exhibit and Competition

In May, the TAPC hosted a juried photography exhibit and competition along with the Hurst Library. The photos were shown throughout the month of May with winners determined by three judges during the month. The judges took six and one half hours scoring 85 photographs from 65 different photographers that entered the competition.

The winners were as follows. Congratulations to all.

Winners - Color				
#	TITLE	TOTAL	PLACE	EXHIBITOR
48	Swings	70.2	FIRST	Scott Denman
3	Quiet Carnival	68.2	SECOND	Bill Webb
59	Those Magnificent Men...	65.7	THIRD	Ashlyn Martino
5	Under the Arch	65.0	HON. MEN.	Jamie Knorpp

Winners - Black & White				
#	TITLE	TOTAL	PLACE	EXHIBITOR
4	Marriott by Munch	68.9	FIRST	Bill Webb
7	Hoofbeats	63.2	SECOND	Elizabeth Knorpp
60	Simple Elegance	60.8	THIRD	Molly Strehl
29	En Garde	60.3	HON. MEN.	Ansley Dougherty

There are millions of photographers who have NEVER entered any of their work in an exhibit or contest. Each individual that entered has taken the step of putting their work "out there" for people to see and had the guts to do that knowing that it was going to be not only on display but scrutinized by multiple experienced and professional photographers. Everyone who entered is to be commended. Each

individual should each feel proud to have participated. Trinity Arts appreciates everyone's entry.

2009 Officers

- President -Cinda Benton
- Vice-President- Larry Marx
- 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 (Ted Black), Competition (Bill Webb), Monthly Program (Open), Field Trips (Open), Publicity (Open), Website (Bruce Hutter), Membership (Open), and Refreshments (Jan Weaver)

Website Info

by Bruce Hutter

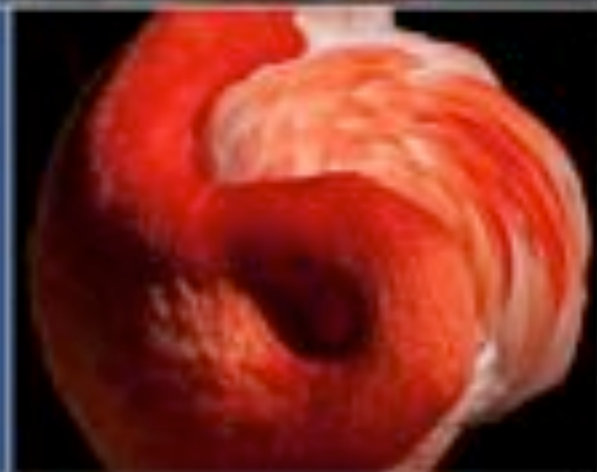
On August 22nd, we had 31 users online on our forum. The most ever since we started the forum.

This stat came a couple days after our promotional efforts at the Taste of Northeast. See more about the Taste of North East on the previous page in this newsletter.

So, be sure to check out the TAPC forum on our web site to see what everyone is talking about!

www.trinityartsphotoclub.org

April 2009 Competition Winners



May 2009 Competition Winners



June 2009 Competition Winners



July 2009 Competition Winners

