



# Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com

July 2008 Newsletter

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## Calendar of Events

### September

Regular Meeting: Sept 2

Location: Rend Lake College

Planning Meeting: Sep 16

Contest: Garden (12 month)

Featured Member: Janet Sundberg

Program: Dave Cooper

Outing: Sept 27 - Paducah Barbecue Fest

### October

Regular Meeting: Oct 7

Location: Marion Library

Planning Meeting: Oct 21

Contest: Photo Manipulation

Featured Member: George Stone

Program: TBA

Outing: Oct 18 - American Thresherman  
Annual Fall Festival, Pinckneyville (Tent)

### November

Regular Meeting: Nov 4

Location: Marion Library

Planning Meeting: Nov 18

Contests: (1) Mystery Tour: Route 37  
from Effingham to Cairo. (2) Make Your  
Own Calendar (12 mo.)

Featured Member: Open

Program: David Brewer - Avian Imaging

Outing: TBA

### Upcoming 12 mo. SIPS Contests

2009 Contests are posted on the website.

**Request from the Secretary:** If you referred a new member to the club or attended an outing, please inform the secretary so that you can earn your member of the year points.

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## Aug/Sept in Review

August was a month full of events and changes. In addition to our monthly outing at the Centralia Balloon Fest, we had a club photo exhibit in Carterville. The reception saw good attendance from club members August 15. Photos of some of the photographers attending to show of their work are available on page 4 of the newsletter. Two changes were brought forth at our August meeting. First of all, we have had to change our meeting location: the October, November, January, and February meetings will be held at the public library in Marion, IL. Second, we said, "till next time." to Brian and Susan Stearns. Susan, our secretary, has taken a new job in Rantoul. Susan will continue to create the newsletters and update the website for the remainder of the year until new board members are elected for the upcoming year. The Backlighting Contest winners were Dave Horning-1st, Rene Degroof-2nd, and Mike Hicks-3rd.



The September meeting, held at Rend Lake College, was an outstanding meeting with over 50 people in attendance and 4 new members joining. Janet Sundberg gave a presentation of photos from the Flora and Fauna Cache River Wetland Area and Cedar Lake. The September outing at the Paducah BBQ fest was announced. It was also announced that it is time to start thinking about who will fill our board member positions for next year. Nominations will be accepted at the October membership meeting. Garden Contest winners were Jim Osborn will 1st and 3rd place, and Linda Martin with 2nd place.

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## Around Town

with Ray Brown

Interview with Bob Luebbers



Ray: When did you first

become interested in photography?

Bob: Oh I think I was about 13 or 14 years old. I think I was influenced by my father who came back from Europe during World War II with a lot of Leicas. I think I was also influenced quite a bit by my high school which formed a photography club. I was very active in the club. We had our own darkroom which made it very nice.

Ray: Do you think of yourself as an amateur or professional photographer?

Bob: Oh I would say an amateur for sure.

I'm always learning. I've learned a lot from our SIPS Club. I'm somewhere in between a film user and a digital user. I still have my Nikon F2 film camera. I'm just getting into digital. It's a two step process as I have to learn how to use the digital camera and the setting. I also have to learn how to photo-edit in the computer.

Ray: What do you shoot mostly?

Bob: I would say photo-journalism. I will have to qualify that by saying If I am retired and in my previous life when I was working for the state of Illinois in the dept of public health and also the dept of human services I became the self appointed photographer for or conferences. I enjoyed it immensely because it did several things. It allowed me to sharpen my portrait skill and my journalism skills because I had to take notes and write captions along with a brief description, and who the people were in the picture. I would say I have probably taken photos of at least three governors and a lot of politicians in that span of time. The greatest satisfaction was photographing the local health dept. agencies such as the children that were coming into the clinic along with their mothers. So there is a whole gallery of photos floating around somewhere in an archive in Springfield.

When that came to an end I continued doing it for my church and for my high school web site. I'm the web

By Jim Osborn



New members often say their reason for joining SIPS is "...to learn to take better pictures." Certainly club meetings can help with the technical aspects of taking better images through our programs, show and tell, and informal conversations on the side. However, another good way of learning to take better photographs is by participating in the monthly SIPS photo contest.

The monthly contest serves a couple purposes. The first is to get people out in the field and be active photographers. You know the old adage—"Practice Makes Perfect." Certainly, someone who wants to take better pictures can learn by trial and error using

different camera settings on a particular subject, then evaluating the results. This is especially easy to do with digital.

But a second reason for the contests is to stretch each individual as a photographer. Many SIPS members have subjects they prefer to shoot. They may include nature, wildlife, portraiture, landscapes, macro, family, architecture, black and white, etc. These are their photo "comfort zones." However, I contend that shooting outside your comfort zone will make you a better photographer. Let me share an analogy with you. I used to frequent flea markets searching for a particular small item that often would be located in a showcase. To optimize my time at a large flea market, I would scan booths and display cases for the items I was after. I got to be very good at finding the small rare items, but when my wife

would ask me if I saw the larger desirable collectable that was on a shelf in booth 689, I would have to admit that I had totally missed that item. I had limited myself and ignored a great item because my focus was so narrow.

Shooting outside your comfort zone can help you learn to see things you never saw before—you may learn to see new perspectives and relationships which you can then apply to your photographic passion. I truly believe that exploring your environment by going outside that comfort zone will help you take better images of the things you really care about.

So....my advice is to go out and explore by shooting less familiar subjects, and **participate** in the monthly contests. Every once in a while challenge yourself to go out and shoot something different—it may make a world of difference.

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### ...Around Town cont'd from page 1

shepherd. That meant I go to a lot of the reunions. I don't like being designated (the photographer) because that stifles the class from being creative so I always try to take a low profile. I encourage these classes to take as many photos as they can and give them to me. I will put them on the web site usually to cover some of the photographic background.

So I would say I like to shoot people and a lot of nature shots.

I have worked with the Cache River Area Wetlands Center. Not so much now, but in the past.

Ray: Who would you name as a mentor?

Bob: I would say Mike Jeffers who is a naturalist and an entomologist photographer with the Illinois Natural History survey. He has got us all first up about the wetlands. Some of us are photographers, writers, and sketch artists. We use all these skills to interpret nature at the wetlands. I also enjoy several folks in the club. Joanna Gray, Rene DeGroof, Jim Osborn and others.

Ray: What has been your favorite film camera over the years?

Bob: I have to say my Nikon F2. I bought it in Vietnam. It's virtually indestructible. When I got over there I had an Argus C3. I used it 'til it just fell apart. I dropped my Nikon on concrete once and also another time the film canister fell out and there was springs and screws all over the carpet. I picked everything up and took it to B & L Camera. I talked to Brian and he fixed it

at a very reasonable price.

Ray: Did you ever shot much black and white?

Bob: Yea, I shot black and white when I first got into photography because that was the big thing at the time. I shot Kodachrome when I was shooting slides. I also shot Black and white for test purposes. We got out a topography map and I had a fellow sit by the side of it. I used that to check the resolution. I sent the film to my dad. He developed it in his darkroom and sent the pictures back to me as post cards. This drove the mail clerk crazy. I haven't done any black and white for about twenty years. It's kind of hard to find.

Ray: When you did use black and white what speed of film did you like?

Bob: I didn't shoot a high speed film; not over ASA 200.

Ray: When you shot Kodachrome did you shoot ASA 64 or 25?

Bob: I shot ASA 64. I did some work for the Southern. Someone at the paper told me they only used Fujichrome 400 as that film covered a lot of sins. What got me started with the Southern? I saw a really bad wreck between a motorhome and a car. The car did a complete 360° roll. Parts and tires were flying everywhere. Well I photographed what had happened. I called the Southern and they said to bring in what I had. I did several of these kinds of events for awhile until I felt uncomfortable about taking pictures of someone's misfortune.

Ray: What is your favorite color film?

Bob: I don't think I have a favorite color

film.

Ray: Now what kind of digital camera do you have?

Bob: It is a Panasonic DMCZ30. They couldn't come up with a name so they came up with a bunch of letters. I have a buddy that works for the state and he is a very good photographer and swore by this camera. I bought it knowing it was discontinued. It was also used but just like new. I got this camera because the other camera I had I shot it into the ground. What really did it in was the fact I took it out in the rain, got it wet, and that did it. I got the Panasonic because I was going to hike the Appalachian Trail. The camera did a good job for me. It has a twelve power zoom lens and that lens worked great.

Ray: Do you use any darkroom programs?

Bob: Yes, on the computer I do. I took every computer class I could at John A. Logan. The instructor introduced us to a lot of programs. The one I liked was called Digital Image Pro. It does all kinds of things for me. It edits photos, does business cards, graphics, digital scrap-booking, iron on logos for tee-shirts, Christmas cards, greeting cards - all this right out of the program. I use it for my web site.

Ray: Have you ever worked in a traditional dark room?

Bob: yes when I was in high school and in college. I had the privilege of using my dad's darkroom. It brings back a lot of good memories. The smell and the magic

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## THINGS I NOTICE

by Ray Brown

### Does God answer his own mail? You decide.

Either God takes the time to answer his mail or there is a beautiful soul working in the dead letter office of the US Postal Service.

Our 14-year-old dog, Abbey, died last month. The day after she died, my 4-year-old daughter, Meredith, was crying and talking about how much she missed Abbey. She asked if we could write a letter to God so that when Abbey got to heaven, God would recognize her. I told her that I thought we could. So she dictated these words:

Dear God,

*Will you please take care of my dog? She died yesterday and is with you in heaven. I miss her very much. I am happy that you let me have her as my dog even though she got sick.*

*I hope you will play with her. She likes to play with balls and to swim. I am sending a picture of her, so when you see her, you will know that she is my dog. I really miss her*

*Love, Meredith.*

We put the letter in an envelope with a picture of Abbey and Meredith, and addressed it to God in Heaven. We put our return address on it. Then, Meredith pasted several stamps on the front of the envelope (because she said it would take lots of stamps to get the letter all the way to heaven). That afternoon, she dropped it into the mailbox at the post office. A few days later she asked if God had gotten the letter yet. I told her that I thought He had. The next day, there was a package wrapped in gold paper on our front porch addressed, "To Meredith," in unfamiliar handwriting. Meredith opened it. Inside was a book by Mr. Rogers titled, "When a Pet Dies." Taped to the inside front cover was the letter we had written to God. On the opposite page was the picture of Abbey and Meredith and this note:

Dear Meredith,

*Abbey arrived safely in heaven. Having the picture was a big help. I recognized Abbey right away.*

*Abbey isn't sick anymore. Her spirit is here with me just like it stays in your heart.*

*Abbey loved being your dog. Since we don't need our bodies in heaven, I don't have any pockets to keep your picture in. So, I am sending it back to you in this little book for you to keep and have something to remember Abbey by.*

*Thank you for the beautiful letter and thank your mother for helping you write it and sending it to me. What a wonderful mother you have. I picked her especially for you.*

*I send my blessings every day, and remember that I love you very much. By the way, I'm easy to find. I am wherever there is love.*

*Love, God*

Reprinted from  
Heartland Women 7-21-2008

### ...Around Town cont'd from page 2

of watching the prints come to life. I did mostly 35mm. I didn't get too deep into the dodging and burning. I watched my dad do a lot of it. I never really developed a good eye for the contrast. You really have to be able to see it. When I see a classic black and white movie it brings back a lot of memories.

Ray: Have you ever taken any photography classes?

Bob: Yes

Ray: Have you ever taught photography?

Bob: No, but when I was working several people asked me to teach. I didn't do it because if it came down to teaching the different modes on all the different cameras I don't know if I could do it because I'm not sure I learned them properly.

Ray: Do you subscribe to any photo magazines?

Bob: You bet I do. I take one called P-C Photo. I had Popular Photography for awhile but I like the P-C Photo because it covers both film and digital worlds and it has a strong section on gadgets.

Ray: Who is a photographer that you admire?

Bob: I got hooked on Bruce Dale. He has more than 3000 photos that have been in National Geographic. His work is called "Notes from the Field."

Ray: Tell me now about any other hobbies you have?

Bob: I do gardening, woodworking, genealogy, and hiking.

Ray: Now it's your turn to tell me anything you want included in this interview about photography or anything else.

Bob: Well I would say one of the finest

## Nov. Mystery Tour

Turn in a portfolio of 10 photos with captions. Maximum size is 5x7. The route is along Route 37 from Effingham to Cairo. You may take photos within 1/2 mile from the road or anywhere in cities and parks along the route. \$5/entry.

## Calendar Contest

We are having a calendar contest in November.

You create your own 12-month calendar. There are no restrictions as to how you put together or create your calendar except that there is a size limitation of 8½ by 12 inches when closed. You

pick the theme for your calendar. There will be two categories available to enter: a) Nature, and b) Everything Else. The entry fee is \$5 per calendar. First place will be awarded for each category; there will be no second or third place awards. Each first place winner will receive 50% of the entry fees collected. The entries will be judged by an outside judge and winners will be announced at the December meeting.



things we have is SIPS. It's an excellent way to keep alive, keep engaged, and to learn. It's also a good way to interchange good equipment.

Ray: Do you have any place where you have taken photos that you would like to share with our membership?

Bob: Yes anywhere on the Cache River. You can't beat the tranquility and the profound beauty that you find among the cypress trees. You can go almost in any direction and find solitude.

Ray: This is the last question. Do you have any place that you would like to photograph, that you haven't been or would like to return?

Bob: Oh yes the Grand Canyon for sure.

Ray: Where else?

Bob: I guess the Great Wall of China, also the Root Burn Trek in New Zealand – absolutely beautiful.

Ray: Bob I want to thank you so very much for your time and the nice compliment you sent my way during our conversation. I wish you many more years of enjoyment with your photography and all the rest of your hobbies. Above all I wish you and your wife good luck on building your new home.

August 2008 Club Photo Exhibit

