



Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com

March 2009 Newsletter

March Meeting

This month we welcomed Karen Genter as the speaker. Karen displayed a collection of her prints while she talked about her creative process. Karen related her philosophy of photography as a means to an artistic end, rather than a representational endeavor. This was evident in photos that were used as the starting point for other works, but also in photos such as the painted cars, which despite being strictly representational in a technical sense, had an abstract feel. Karen also showed her versatility with some excellent traditional landscapes and still lifes.

Karen said she starts with composition, and then goes to the "what ifs": what about upside-down, or from the ground, or with a color filter? Where does your eye go in a picture? "Nothing is ordinary, it's all in how you shoot it."

Our featured member this month was Linda Bundren, who showed some terrific photos of her own from this past year. Her collection included landscapes, wildlife, and family pictures. (Linda also made it really easy for the Secretary by encoding her whole presentation as a DVD.) For more about Linda, see Ray's Around Town column in this newsletter.

We had several new people as the meeting this month, including Dean Maddox of Harrisburg, Mork Bosco of Herod (he's interested in landscapes), and Jody Hawkins of Marion (who comes to us via Joanna Gray).

For Show & Tell, Jim showed the Better Beamer, a flash extender. Dave Brewer had some snowy egret prints, and Dave Hammond had a report from NANPA as well as prints from his trip out west. Ray Brown mentioned he gave an interview to WMCL this month, mentioning the club.

Our contest this month was on the topic of winter, with a strong showing of 32 entries. Our winners in this crowded field were

- 1st place: Dana Tetzlaff
- 2nd place: Joe Hall
- 3rd place: Linda Martin

Coming up, our April meeting contest is on humor, with photos from the past year being eligible.

Finally, the new member directory has taken shape now, and will be distributed to members electronically. We do need many more member pictures, however. Ray has offered to take pictures for use in the directory, for anyone who wants.

Photo Op

by Jim Osborn

Fifty-four people attended the March SIPS meeting. It seems that every month we have several "first-timers" who join the club. March was not unusual in that we had an excellent program, Linda Bundren shared with us her outstanding collection of photos from the past year, we saw terrific photos from the Orchid Show outing, and both David Brewer and Dave Hammond treated us to some of their newest and finest nature photos (both are also recently published). It all gave me pause to wonder what the reaction was from the newer members and guests. I remember the first time I looked at a copy of Nature's Best magazine. My stunned reaction was, "There is no way I'll ever be able to take pictures like those....I might as well just give up now." To my own credit, I put things back in perspective. My photography goal is simple—I just want to learn as much as I can so I can take better pictures. I don't aspire to be a professional photographer—I just want to have fun. The reality of this hobby is that the most stunning nature images require a combination of time, skill, patience and the right equipment. Not all of us have an abundance of free time to devote to this hobby; many of us probably lack the patience to wait hours in a blind to get the bird shots we would like; few of us have the ability or money to travel at will around the country or the world; and most of us don't have the finances to buy the best



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Calendar of Events

April

Meeting: Apr. 7

Program: Steve Schlaeger

Featured Member: Jonathan Springer (change)

Contest: Funny/Humorous (12 month)

Outing: LaRue Pine Hills, Apr. 18 (date change)

Planning Meeting: Apr. 21

May

Meeting: May 5

Program: Dan Overturf

Featured Member: Dana Tetzlaff

Contest: Eggs (60 day)

Outing: Piney Creek Ravine, date TBD

Planning Meeting: May 19

June

Meeting: Jun. 2

Program: Composition, Nancy Smolak

Featured Member: TBD

Contest: Macro (12 month)

Outing: TBD

Planning Meeting: Jun. 16

Inside...

Meeting and outing reports, member news, Photo Op, Around Town, plus the return of Things I've Noticed!



Club members with Tom Ulrich before his lecture at SIU, Carbondale, March 16

Photo Op

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cameras, the best lenses, the lightest tripods or the fanciest flashes and strobes necessary to do work that would be worthy of publication in Nature's Best magazine. The best we can do is to focus on improving our SKILLS. Like almost everything else in life, the learning curve will vary with your interest, involvement and experimentation. SIPS does a wonderful job of providing a high benchmark for aspiring photographers. All the time I hear "old timers" in the club talk about how the quality of photos entered into the monthly contests has improved markedly over time—and they are right! There are a lot of people in SIPS who have tremendous knowledge, experience and talent AND they are willing to share their knowledge with others in the club. Now, if any of this strikes a chord with you, all you need to do to go the next step is to assimilate what you learn at the club meetings into practice, participate in some of the outings, and ask questions freely. I'm glad that I didn't quit photography after seeing my first copy of Nature's Best. I'm glad I kept shooting!

Tom Ulrich Lecture Outing

This month many of us went to see Tom Ulrich's presentation at SIU. We have come to expect some amazing photography from Tom, and this year was no exception as he presented some stunning shots from his past year of travels. His photos came from all over, ranging from close to his home in Montana to Africa and the Galapagos. Some of the most striking were his up close and personal pictures of poisonous snakes.

We had opportunities to socialize both before the meeting, with some meeting for dinner at Quatro's, and after it, at Panera in Carbondale. Tom was able to join us at the latter, and he also very kindly consented to a group photo with the many club members in attendance at SIU, as shown above.

Around Town

with Ray Brown

This month, Ray had an interview with Linda Bundren.

Ray: Hello Linda. Would you have time to give me an interview for the newsletter?

Linda: Yes, I think I can do that.



Ray: OK, thanks a lot. For the first question: When did you first become interested in photography?

Linda: Oh, I think it started when I was a child like most of the folks in the club. I was about eight or ten years old when I got my first camera. It was a Kodak, a little brown camera.

Ray: I feel sure you started out with B&W film, correct?

Linda: Well you're right. That's about all there was back then. I took color prints later in the 50s.

Ray: I can't remember when I started taking color prints. I think in the 50s. I know I took color slides in 1950. Do you consider yourself to be an amateur or a professional photographer?

Linda: An amateur for sure. I'm still learning.

Ray: What do you like to shoot?

Linda: I like to take portraits, wildlife, landscapes. I'm not too much into the abstract stuff.

Ray: I'm not either. If I can't look at it and know what it is I'm not interested. When you did take film, what was your favorite film camera?

Linda: I had a Canon AE-1; it was the second year they had automatic focus. Before that I had a Gray Flex. I still have it. It was made by Seikosha.

Ray: Did it give you good results?

Linda: Yes, it was all manual, nothing automatic about it. You had to use a 35mm the way they were intended to be used. It had only a 45mm lens and that was all it had.

Ray: What was your favorite B&W film back in those days?

Linda: I don't remember first; what ever was on the shelf.

Ray: What color film did you use?

Linda: I don't know. I know it was Kodak. I wasn't that much into photography back then as I am now.

Ray: You work with a digital camera now, correct?

Linda: Yes I shoot digital now. I forgot to tell you the last film camera I had was a Minolta that I had for about four years before I went digital. The first digital I had was a little point & shoot by Nikon. I wore it out. That's when I got a better

From the Secretary

by Jonathan Springer

Every year, digital cameras are getting better and better, and the camera manufacturers put out more powerful models with more features with astonishing frequency. But it can also be a bit daunting, and it's useful to get a bit of perspective on where the industry has been and where it is headed.

Digital camera have actually been around for a little while, with consumer models coming on the market around 1990. At the "low end," the Logitech FotoMan, from 1990, was 0.09MP (yes, just under a tenth of a megapixel) for \$1000. At the higher end, Kodak demonstrated its DCS-100 1.3MP digital SLR in 1990 (at Photokina), and put it on the market the next year with a list price of \$30,000. (At the really high end, the Hubble Space Telescope, launched in 1990, used 4 digital CCD sensors of 0.64MP each. The telescope cost somewhere north of \$2 billion.)

Since then, the dominant feature of digital camera evolution has been the "megapixel race." Cameras have been marketed primarily according to how many megapixels they have, and the number keeps increasing every year. However, this will be changing. On the supply side, pixel sizes are getting small enough that it's becoming increasingly difficult to avoid "noise." On the demand side, there are signs of diminishing returns. Akira Watanabe, manager of Olympus Imaging's SLR planning department recently said in a ZDNet interview "Twelve megapixels is, I think, enough for covering most applications most customers need." One could argue that for many users (SIPS members excepted), 12MP is even too much: it takes a large print size to show any difference compared to lesser pixel counts.

But digital camera development isn't going to stagnate; it is just going to move to other areas. As the sensor hardware continues to improve, rather than increasing megapixels, it can be used to increase sensitivity, raising the effective ISO. Also, as the computer chips in the camera are getting more powerful, they will be used to provide new features. One of the most obvious recently has

been the "face detection" technology that allows the camera to automatically focus on the right parts of the scene.

Down the road, researchers are working in "computational photography," using computer algorithms to enhance the functionality of the camera. An example of this that has been mentioned at SIPS meetings is high dynamic range (HDR) photography, which combines a series of photos of the same scene at different exposure levels to produce a composite image that captures detail in both the brightest and darkest parts. This technique has been done manually in the past, but will be done in-camera in future models. A similar process can be applied to depth of field, allowing multiple exposures focused at different depths to be combined to produce an image that is sharp everywhere. A Columbia University researcher (Shree Nayar) has developed a technique in which the sensor is moved along the camera's optical axis during exposure, effectively sweeping the plane of focus through the scene. A computer algorithm is then applied to decode the scene to achieve a sharp image from a single exposure through a large aperture.

We are just starting to see the sensor improvements turned to non-megapixel qualities like higher ISO settings, and the increasing computer power inside the camera used for things like face detection. The next few years should be an interesting time in photography, and I'm looking forward to seeing the creative ways people will use these advances.



Hubble (NASA, 1997)

Around Town

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digital camera.

Ray: Have you ever done any work in a film darkroom?

Linda: Never.

Ray: Have you had any classes in photography?

Linda: I've taken the classes they have over at John A Logan over the last five years.

Ray: Well you have taken a lot of classes in the last five years.

Linda: Yes, I took the primary class. Then later I took the advanced class. I've taken it twice over the years. I've taken one in Photo Shop. I didn't learn much in that class. It was way basic and I knew most of it already.

Ray: Who was your instructor for the early classes?

Linda: Jack Haddonfield. The lady that taught Photo Shop, I don't remember her name.

Ray: Have you ever taught photography?

Linda: No I haven't. Well a little bit to my nieces. They are about twelve and seven years old.

Ray: Well that's really nice. At that age it might spark their curiosity and it might stay with them. At least we hope so. I have noticed and had several people tell me they liked it as a child. Then they drop it for a while - come back to it - drop it again and return again later on. There is something about it that keeps drawing you back.

Linda: I did not get real interested until the kids got real busy with all the things they were involved in.

Ray: How many children do you have?

Linda: Two girls.

Ray: Are you grandma yet?

Linda: Yes, one grandson.

Ray: How old is he?

Linda: He's four. He's coming to see Grandma this weekend.

Ray: I know you will be taking some more pictures.

Linda: Oh, yes. I'm sure I will.

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Around Town

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Ray: That's when they are a joy. Then something strange happens they grow up.

Linda: They come back to you after a few years just as sweet as they were after some of those terrible years.

Ray: Do you have a favorite photography web site?

Linda: I look at several of them on flicker and Ansel Adams now & then. I think anyone that does landscapes looks at his work. I also look at Susan & Richard Day. When I hear about someone at the club meeting, I come home and take a look at what they have to offer.

Ray: That's good. That's what the club is for.

Linda: I think it helps you to develop an eye for different things.

Ray: Do you subscribe to any photography magazines?

Linda: Yes, American Photo, Popular Photography, and Images.

Ray: Can you tell me the name of some of the photographers that you really like.

Linda: Bryan Peterson, Ann Geddes, the one that takes a lot of baby pictures and Ansel Adams.

Ray: Tell me about any other hobbies that you are interested in.

Linda: I like to do sketching and drawing. I like to hike. Of course, you can always take a camera along on a hike. I do some scrapbooking. Again we have pictures involved.

Ray: What do you use to sketch with? Pencil, charcoal, pen & ink or something else?

Linda: I don't do as much painting as I use to but as I said I do sketch some. I use charcoal.

Ray: Just B&W or do you use some color?

Linda: They have some colored pencils out now that have colored chalk in them. Sometimes I draw just with a pencil and then color it in.

Ray: How large are your drawings?

Linda: The largest one I've ever done was a mural at my church.

Ray: How large is it?

Linda: It's about eight feet tall and about six or eight feet wide. It's a picture of a temple. I did that about ten years ago.

Ray: Well, how nice. Now a lot of people are going to find out about this that never knew before this interview. Where have you taken pictures that you would like to go back and take some more?

Linda: I think it would be Estes Park and other places in Colorado. Also out west I think the mountains are really nice. I would like to go back to Washington D.C. My girls played in a hand bell choir. They were invited to play on the steps of the White House. It was a very busy weekend. Not enough time to see a lot of the things I wish they could have seen.

Ray: Ok Linda, it's your turn to tell me anything you would like to have included in this interview. It's your turn.

Linda: I get a lot of enjoyment out of photography now. A lot of that enjoyment comes from being with the people in the club. That is as much fun as taking the pictures.

Ray: I know you are a nurse. Could you tell us a little about your years in the nursing field?

Linda: I started in nursing school right out of high school. I was eighteen. I worked most of my career at Marion. I worked in Norfolk, Virginia for a few months when Alan was in the Navy. Came back and worked at Marion Memorial for 27 years. I've been at the VA for eight years.

Ray: I think you must have worked in all the different departments in all of those years.

Linda: Yes, I did mostly post operative nursing most of my career. I was the manager of the surgical unit for ten years. I've done ER and some recovery room. Right now I'm doing same day out patient surgery. We admit them. We get them back after surgery. We watch them and get them ready to go home.

Ray: I've always heard from some policemen when I lived up north that there were always more shootings and stabbings and other kinds of mayhem under a full moon. Did you notice that in the ER?

Linda: Yes, always the ER would be busier at that time of the month.

Ray: Also more babies under a full

moon. What about that?

Linda: OB nurses always said yes more babies.

Ray: Linda, I want to give you a big thank you for spending this time with me. I also think you should be commended for your nursing work. To do what you have done for all these years tells me you're doing it because you want to. You couldn't do it that long if you weren't dedicated to your profession. Thank you.

Things I've Noticed

by Ray Brown

On February 1, 1893

Thomas Edison finishes the first movie studio on his property in West Orange, NJ. The studio, a frame cabin covered with black roofing paper, was built on a pivot so it could be turned to face the sunlight throughout the day. Edison spent \$638 building the studio, which he called a revolving photographic building. This is to the credit of the History Channel.

The cigarette lighter was invented before the match. (I wonder about that.) Americans on average eat 18 acres of pizza every day. As a person learns the innermost secrets of the people around them they are rewarded in many ways to first keep quiet. Happiness is like jam. You can't spread even a little without getting some on yourself. Taking a moment to take it easy is being a friend to yourself. A habit is like a soft bed. It's easy to get into but hard to get out of.

An apology is a good way to have the last word. If we never try we shall never succeed. The smallest deed is better than the grandest intention.

Only in America:

Can a pizza get to your house faster than an ambulance.

Are there handicap parking spaces in front of a skating rink.

*Live life today as though today were all.
Our yesterdays are days beyond recall.
Rest not upon the victories you have won.
Your yesterdays ended with the sun.
If you have failed, surrender not to fear.
Tomorrow has not come; today is here.*

