



# Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com

## July 2009 Newsletter

### July Meeting Notes

We had 56 people present at our July meeting. Mike kicked it off with a mystery object, which he passed around for inspection. Joanna Gray won with the guess that it was part of a flash system. New people this month were Hanna Baker, from Marion, Jaime Lingal from Carterville, Steve Duncan, who likes landscape photography, Pat Will from rural Marion, Linda and Dell Williams from Herrin, and Ron and Felicia Hamberg. Also, we welcomed remote member (and former secretary) Susan Stearns, who is down here from Rantoul this month.

This month, our program was given by Jim Osborn, who talked about critiquing as a process to improve one's work. Jim identified three main aspects to critique: technical, artistic, and emotional. Technical aspects include correct exposure, depth of field, shutter speed and ISO, evidence of camera movement, over-sharpening, color saturation, digital noise, and paper choice (matte, gloss, etc.). Artistic aspects include the Rule of Thirds, appropriate background, definable subject, orientation (vertical or horizontal), appropriate cropping, leading lines and use of diagonals, unintentional elements in the picture, angle and perspective, limited "dead space", and best direction of light. The emotional aspects involve asking questions like: Does the photo tell a story? Would it stand out in a group? Does it convey the subject in an interesting way? Would you hang it on a wall?

Jim then put up a series of pictures as examples, and the audience offered its critiques. Some interesting discussion ensued, especially regarding what the appropriate subject should be for the photo, the best compositional proportions, good crops, and selective focus.

Jim passed around a handout on critiquing as well; look for this on the SIPS web site ([www.sipscameraclub.com](http://www.sipscameraclub.com)).

Our featured member this month was George Stone, who talked about his May trip to Europe. He had some great pictures

and stories about the sights in Munich, Prague, Bratislava, Budapest ("Budapest is not a pest"), Vienna, and Salzburg. The ornate architecture of the palaces, cathedrals, and even town halls in those areas is terrific.

Our Show and Tell was led by some pictures from Dave Morgan (not present), who was recently injured in a close call in the line of duty in Afghanistan, but is well and back and work now. Lori Mascall presented camp photos from the MDA camp, to which some members have donated camera equipment. Brian Stearns (not present) has some pictures presented by Susan, who is down visiting this month.

Our contest this month was our annual mystery tour. Participating members submitted a portfolio of 10 pictures taken along the tour route. The results of this contest will be announced at our August meeting. We had eight entries, from Joanna Gray, Virginia Stith, Jillian Choate, Linda Bundren, Linda Martin, Bill Thomas, Monroe Webb, and Jonathan Springer.

### Photo Op

by Jim Osborn

While this may be a little late for those who have already taken vacations, perhaps some can still benefit. Regardless, keep the following in mind if you are planning a vacation during which you expect to take lots of pictures. First, if this is a first-time vacation location for you, study up ahead of time. There are wonderful resources for photographers looking to shoot, just about everywhere. For my upcoming trip to Vermont and Maine I purchased Photographer's Guide to Maine and Photographer's Guide to Vermont on Amazon.com. Both identify iconic scenes to photograph. In some cases they tell you exactly where to position the camera, what time of day works best, and what lens to use! Also, the internet is chock full of websites that give advice for photographers



### Calendar of Events

#### August

Meeting: Aug. 4

Program: Jim Bornert

Featured Member: Bill Lipscomb

Contest: Vacation (12 month)

Outing: Richard and Susan Day's,  
Aug. 1

Planning Meeting: Aug. 18

#### September

Meeting: Sept. 1

Program: Member vacation photos

Featured Member: Mary Jo Estrada

Contest: The "Eyes" Have It (60 day)

Outing: Cascade of Colors balloon  
festival, Carbondale, Sept. 4-6

Planning Meeting: Sept. 15

#### October

Meeting: Oct. 6

Program: TBA

Featured Member: Nancy Smolak

Contest: Sports (12 month)

Outing: TBA

Planning Meeting: Oct. 20

### Inside...

Meeting and outing reports, Photo Op, Around Town, and Things I Notice!

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*Rumors of fireworks confirmed by that masked seeker of justice, the president of SIPS*

## Outing Notes

*by Mike Hicks*

The monthly outing of the Southern Illinois Photographic Society was scheduled to take place on July 11, 2009 at the fireworks display on the riverfront in the St. Louis metro area. As president I am glad to say that there was 100% attendance - by the president himself.

For the purpose of this review the president has changed his name to Clayton Moore. The great horse, Silver, and the spotted palomino, Scout, were not available for this trip over to St. Louis so Clayton and his sidekick guest, Jay Silverheels, rode double in the semi-silver Mitsubishi Eclipse. The Eclipse was much faster than Silver or Scout could ever take them. They breezed along on I-64 yelling, "Hi-oh semi-silver," all the way to their destination.

Upon arrival Clayton and Jay parked the semi-silver Eclipse in the parking lot of the Casino Queen and proceeded stealthfully on foot to the platform just

south of the casino, all the while, keeping an eye out for any SIPS Indians who may be in waiting. Not one was found so they continued their careful trek to the observation platform on the south side, after walking all the way around the east, north, and west sides of the casino, carrying photo gear and a lawn chair.

Upon careful scrutiny of the observation platform Clayton decided to go to the Eads Bridge where similar observations of fireworks on the river had taken place in the past. So Clayton and Jay walked all along the west side of the casino to the elevator to the second level and ultimately to the deck of the Eads Bridge. On that day Clayton became the most fatigued SIPS chief ranger in the west..., east..., north..., and south of the casino.

Clayton reached the spot on the Eads Bridge where he wanted to be, so he then set up tripod, camera and lawn chair in anticipation of a wonderful fireworks show. The expected time of the fireworks was 9:15pm because that was the time it was on the previous week, July 4, when crowds of people bumped into each other with the eagerness of catching a glimpse of a celebrity. 9:15 came and no fireworks but the barge appeared to be in place and the music by the Gateway Arch in the distance raged on and on and on. After several minutes that seemed like about five hours, the music stopped and the barge had moved closer to the center of the river. Everyone on the bridge with the exception of Clayton had become impatient. Clayton however, had remained steadfastly convinced that the fireworks display would not be disappointing, despite pleas from Jay asking "Kemo Sabe" to leave.

Then, at 9:45, what sounded like repeated discharges of silver bullets were heard and a gorgeous display of colorful

fireworks ensued from the barge in the middle of the river. Clayton had his trusty Canon 40D in place with ISO set at 200, aperture at f16, and the shutter on "bulb" to capture movement of the colors. Clayton learned a little more about his hobby, photography, as a result of the trip to the St. Louis riverfront where he was the only SIPS member in 100% attendance. Clayton still recalls the comment he heard after the display as he was leaving, "Who was that unmasked man?" His companion and friend, Jay Silverheels, had provided the answer to their inquisitive nature, "That is the Lone SIPS Chief Ranger himself."

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## Member News and Upcoming Events

This summer, SIPS has had an exhibit running on the third floor of the Marion Library. We'll be trading out pictures before our next meeting on August 4; this is expected to be the last month of our show.

The Carbondale "Tree Mend Us" community photographic project seeks photos of storm or storm damage for its contest and show. Entries are due Aug. 17 for an exhibit Nov. 4-7 at the civic center. There will be awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place entries. There is a \$15 entry fee for up to 5 photos.

At our meeting, Ron reminded us of the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge contest in September.

A few years ago, SIPS had a show at the SIU Museum in Faner Hall. We've recently heard that a couple of member photos from that exhibit, by Dave Hammond and Nancy Smolak, were purchased by the museum for its collection and are currently on display. For extra incentive to go visit the museum, as reported by email last month there is a photo exhibit currently showing entitled "27 Master Photographers from the Museum's Collection." Photos include works by Edward Steichen, Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, Harry Callahan, Todd Walker, Imogene Cunningham and the like.

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## Around Town

with Ray Brown

This month, Ray interviews Carol Sluzewich



Ray: "Hello, Carol. I said I would call you back in about one hour, so here I am. Are you able to give me an interview now?"

Carol: "Yes, I'm ready to do this."

Ray: "Well, OK. Let me ask of you, when did you first become interested in photography?"

Carol: "I've been interested ever since I was a young girl, because my dad was in Viet Nam and when he came back he brought back a couple of Minolta 35mm cameras. I would have been in middle school at that time. My dad taught me how to use those cameras. He also brought back some binoculars. I was interested and I took a lot of pictures for the yearbook at school and took some photography classes at SIU. I originally wanted to major in photography but there was so much time required in the lab with the development of black and white film. I had two jobs. I worked forty hours a week plus I went to school full time. It just wasn't fitting into my schedule, so I ended up changing my major, which I kind of regret now. I have had an interest for a long time."

Ray: "I know you shoot digital now. When did you buy your first digital camera?"

Carol: "I bought the first digital when the first one came out. I think it might have been about a 3 Megapixel. I used it for awhile, but I didn't have a lot of time to use it. About four years ago, I left work and got bored really bored so I decided I needed to pick up a hobby again. I did some research and decided what camera I wanted."



Minolta Hi-Matic, circa 1962.

Ray: "What did you finally buy?"

Carol: "I bought a Pentax K-10-D about two years ago."

Ray: "So that was your second digital correct?"

Carol: "Yes, it was, and also my second SLR, if I can count my first Minolta! I still have it. I used it all through school. The light meter went out on it. I bought a hand-held light meter and continued to use it. I liked it and it did what I wanted it to do. I used it for many years. I don't recall having any other, than what we have talked about."

Ray: "Do you consider yourself to be an amateur or a professional photographer?"

Carol: "I would say I'm an amateur as I haven't done anything for sale or trade. I would like to do that. I would like to see a club meeting dedicated to that how to market and sell your work. I just do this for my own pleasure. I have taken two classes from Rene deGroof, which I loved. I also took a class from Jack Holderfield at JALC. I just love the fellowship. The classes are great and I learn a lot and I really like being around these folks that have the same interest in photography that I do. A lot of us have made friends and that is so nice."

Ray: "You should have come to the picnic. We had a super nice time."

Carol: "I wanted to do that but it was my grandson's 2nd birthday, so I had to go to that party! I told my husband it never fails. It seems a lot of times two things fall on the same day. I have made friends with people from both clubs and I enjoy going on these photo trips. I learn as much from these folks as I do from the classes, such as perspective and many view points, some technical, and of course, we always have to eat!"

Ray: "What ever we do, we must eat! I think that is in the club by-laws! I have never heard anyone say 'Oh, let's not do that.'"

Carol: "Eating helps to grow new friendships. This has been a great experience for me. It has given me something to do. It has given me a new perspective. It's amazing when you look at something and then look at it with a photographer's eye how different it is!"

Ray: "You are so right - most people look, but they don't see. I started learning about

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## Photo Op

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who are traveling—just google “travel photography” to find a few choice sites. Want to see pictures of the locations you are going before you go? Check out flickr.com (or a similar type website) and type in the location as a keyword search. When in doubt, ask friends who've been where you're going. You can ascertain all kinds of good information about what to expect such as seasonal weather, crowds, and best locations (especially if you are strapped for time and need to prioritize your side trips).

Second—decide what you absolutely have to take with you. It is foolish and back-breaking to haul around 50 lbs. of gear only to realize when you return home that you didn't use half of it. Decide what you think you are most likely to photograph on your vacation and then select your equipment accordingly. Landscapes? Architecture? Wildlife? People? Events? You probably already know what lenses you want for which categories, but leave that lens home that you probably wouldn't use more than once. Not only will it save your back, but it certainly won't get damaged at home in a cabinet.

Third, and I've said this before. If you have the means and the ability to take a second camera body with you, make it a high priority. Nothing is worse than to have your one and only camera body develop a glitch on a once-in-a-lifetime trip. Speaking of avoiding glitches—I prefer to use several different flash cards on a trip. I view this as “not putting all my eggs in the same basket,” if you know what I mean. I would rather lose one day of shooting that a whole trip that I photographed on one defective 16gb flash card.

Finally, take LOTS and LOTS of pictures. It's free to take the shots and later you will have more to select from before you print the best of the best. Oh, yeah, HAVE FUN!!

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this when I was very young. I learned on my own how to track rabbits in the snow, and that ducks and geese always land and take-off against the wind. I shot my first rabbit when I was 8 or 9, - I'm not sure of  
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## Around Town

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my age. The reason I did this was because my dad was not an outdoorsman at all. He took me fishing only one time when I was six years old. I did teach a fellow how to see, and not just look, many years ago. Someday, I'll tell you about it. It was very satisfying for me."

Carol: "Sometimes, it's the simplest thing that makes the photograph. I'm always looking for that!"

Ray: "I might add something that I do that might be helpful to you and others - and that is take your camera with you all the time. I do now, but that was something I had to train myself to do. I'm hardly ever without a camera of some kind."

Carol: "Yes, I'm trying to learn to do that."

Ray: "What kind of pictures do you like to take?"

Carol: "I have been going on the tours that Rene sets up. We have gone to Giant City, Botanical Gardens in St. Louis, and other places. I like to do outdoor photography - scenics, flowers, landscapes. I love taking these types of pictures. That may be because I think that is what I'm best at. I need to learn other things that I'm not good at. I learned yesterday that trying to take pictures of my two year old grandson running through the party place, is not an easy thing to do!"

Ray: "When you were shooting the film cameras, what kind and type of film did you shoot?"

Carol: "Of course, it was all B&W because this would have been in the 70's and as a poor college student, that's all I could afford and at that time that's all they taught at SIU. I think I used Kodak film."

Ray: "Which one (a.s.a.)?"

Carol: "I'm not sure that's been a long time ago. I think I might have used some 400 a.s.a., and I don't remember what else I might have used. I have a Pentax K-10-D now and I shoot only digital. I bought the Pentax because it's much more water and dirt resistant."

Ray: "Do you work with a darkroom program, such as PhotoShop?"

Carol: "Yes, I use PhotoShop Elements 5.

I still haven't decided if I like it. I don't have it all figured out yet."

Ray: "So you did do some film developing in college, correct?"

Carol: "Yes, we did our own developing, printing, and matting."

Ray: "I know you said you have taken some classes other than college. Have you ever taught any photography?"

Carol: "No, I'm not there yet. Not ready to take that step."

Ray: "Do you have a favorite photography web sight?"

Carol: "Oh, let me think. When I was researching a camera, I went to a web site: [www.dpreview.com](http://www.dpreview.com). I liked it quite a lot as I thought it gave unbiased information about different cameras and brands, lenses, and features."

Ray: "What photography magazines do you subscribe to, if any?"

Carol: "Popular Photography and Shutterbug."

Ray: "Which do you like the most?"

Carol: "I would say Shutterbug. Some of the magazines that I have bought at the news-stands are somewhat over my head as they go into the photo-editing side. I need that, but I also need more photo tips right now. I think I need more of the basics. I save them and will go through them again later."

Ray: "Who are two or three photographers that you really like?"

Carol: "I really don't have any favorites. I do like the photos that Ann Gettties takes of the kids. I think her work is fun and creative. I like doing my own think. I want to learn technique and my own style. I don't want to be influenced by a lot of other photographers. I would repeat: I want to develop my own style."

Ray: "You are so right. Ten people can look at the same picture and perhaps seven will like it and three will say, 'Why did they take that?'"

Carol: "Exactly! That's a lot of how my photography class was at SIU. Something that I thought was pretty cool and the instructor would say, 'Why did you do that?' - very subjective. I think that was part of the difficulty in majoring in photography. On the artistic side, it is very subjective and very personal. I think on the journalistic side, not so much."

Ray: "If I can look at a painting or a drawing, and some photography also, and know what it is, that's fine. If not, I think what the heck is this? Some people like that kind of art and that's fine for them, but not for me."

Carol: "The instructor at SIU didn't want to know what it was."

Ray: "I did that also, when I taught at C.O.D. I didn't want to know. I would ask questions like: 'What shutter speed did you use, what f-stop did you use, and why? Also, what film did you use? When you took it, what size print did you plan on making? Did you think that you might have to do any cropping?' Sometimes other (different) questions depending on the subject matter.

Can you tell me about any hobbies that you have other than photography?"

Carol: "Well, I like to volunteer."

Ray: "That's a very worthy thing to do."

Carol: "I do enjoy it so much. I have most recently been with Big Brothers-Big Sisters program. I've been a Big Sister to a young girl for three years. I'm president of the Volunteer Advisory Board."

Ray: "Is that separate from the Big Brother-Big Sisters?"

Carol: "It's the same program. I volunteer two ways for it: I volunteer as a mentor to a thirteen year old girl, and I also volunteer as a board member. I will tell you this, Big Brothers as we know it, is under the "H" group formally known as the Franklin-Williamson County Human Services. They are dissolving the program under their umbrella. I and nine other board members, are in the process of creating another mentoring program to take its place. So, while it won't have the same name or the same umbrella, we will be our own separate entity. We just got our new name three days ago. It's called Mentors 4 Kids."

Ray: "Well, it sounds like Big Brothers is going broke."

Carol: "Big Brothers, nationally is not, but the local group they are just closing it."

Ray: "If these kids can be saved and grow up to be productive citizens, that would be really nice. We already have too many

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*Buzz Aldrin walks on the moon during the Apollo 11 mission. Photographer Niel Armstrong is reflected in Aldrin's faceplate.*

## From the Secretary

*by Jonathan Springer*

It's been in the news a bit, but in case you missed it, this month marks the 40th anniversary of the first manned landing on the moon. The Apollo 11 mission was launched on July 16, 1969, the lunar module touched down a little over 100 hours later, and about 6 hours after that, at 2:56 (UTC) on July 21, Armstrong set foot on the moon. This is certainly one of the most impressive accomplishments in the history of mankind. Above is the famous picture of Buzz Aldrin, taken by Niel Armstrong, during that first moon landing. In fact, there is something a bit strange about this picture, which we'll get to later.

For documenting this and other space mission events, NASA has supplied its astronauts with a variety of still cameras. The first handheld camera carried by a NASA astronaut was a Minolta HiMatic (also marketed as the Ansco Autoset), carried by John Glenn on the Friendship 7 mission (Feb. 20, 1962). This mission, part of the Mercury program, conducted the first American orbital spaceflight. The HiMatic was drilled full of holes (presumably not into the film box!) to reduce weight, and a handle was attached for easier manipulation.

The camera manufacturer that is most closely associated with the NASA program, however, is Hasselblad. The

Hasselblad 500C made its NASA debut aboard the Sigma 7 Mercury mission, on October 3, 1962. Astronaut Walter Schirra purchased it in a Houston camera shop, equipped with a Planar f/2.8 80mm lens. NASA modified it by removing the lining, mirror, focusing screen, and hood, in order to reduce weight. (Cost to move material into space runs to several thousand dollars per pound.) The 500C continued to be used into the Gemini program, until being replaced by the Hasselblad SWC on the Gemini 9 flight. This camera was paired with a Zeiss Biogon f/4.5 38mm lens on that

mission.

Since the days of the space race, NASA has used a wide variety of handheld cameras. Cameras used on the International Space Station and Shuttle missions have included

- Hasselblad 500 EL/M 70mm
- Linhof Aero Technika, with 5-inch film format and 90mm and 250mm lenses
- Rolleiflex 70mm
- Maurer 70mm, with Xenotar f/2.8 80mm lens
- Nikon 35mm film, D1 digital (2.7 megapixel), and D2Xs (12 megapixel) digital

The Hasselblad 500EL was the iconic camera that was used for the Apollo 11 flight. Each astronaut was equipped with one, with a Zeiss Biogon 5.6/60mm lens and a Reseau plate, giving the images that distinctive 5-by-5 overlay of crosses. The cameras that went down to the lunar surface were actually discarded and left on the moon, with only the film being taken back, again in order to conserve weight.

The picture we saw above was taken with one of the 500ELs. It's actually a nicely-composed shot: lighting highlights the astronaut, the

reflection in the faceplate adds terrific interest, and the tilt of the horizon gives a dynamic feel. Beneath the surface, however, is evidence that great pictures sometimes have a little help. The strange thing is this: notably absent from this picture is the OPS antenna that normally extends up from the backpack of the astronaut. Why is this? The reason is that the original frame taken by Armstrong was aimed a bit too low, and the edge of the field of view actually ran just along the top of the backpack. At the bottom of the page is a scan of the original frame for this picture. The composition didn't look quite right, so as can be seen, a black band was added to the top of the famous picture. (In this version, a bit was cropped from the bottom as well, plus a substantial amount of lighting curve adjustment to increase contrast.) This black bar edit was done early on, and is already present in the NASA

Headquarters release of the picture made within hours of receipt of the original film in Houston. Many edits use a substantially larger black bar, with less cropped from the bottom, making the above one of the more conservative edits of this picture that can be found.

I guess the lesson for us as photographers is that a great picture can be saved with a judicious edit, even if it's done using the 1960's equivalent of Photoshop in a film darkroom.



*Original version, frame AS11-40-5903*

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## Around Town

*cont'd from p. 4*

people that think the government should take care of them from the cradle to the grave."

Carol: "I will remain with my little girl. I can't just drop her, she needs me."

Ray: "Well for that little girl, I say thank you."

Carol: "I know a man that has been with his kid, who isn't a kid any longer. He is 23 years old and he is married and has his own kids and they still get together and go to ballgames and do other things together after all these years."

Ray: "Do you have any place that you would like to return to just to take photos?"

Carol: "Yes, I like the Botanical gardens a lot. I love Florida. I was raised at Ft. Walton Beach. That area has the nicest beaches I've ever seen. As I get better at photography, I would like to do more of that kind of photography. Locally, I really like the Botanical Gardens. Every month they have something different. "

Ray: "Alright, Carol, my last question for you. Now, it's your turn to tell me anything you would like to have included in this interview - anything, at all."

Carol: "My husband really supports my photography hobby. He really encouraged me to buy my camera. He knew I was getting pretty bored. He has joined the club with me. He supports the trips and comes with me. He has his camera and enjoys photography, also."

Ray: "Carol, I want to thank you for your time! I think it's very nice of you to be involved with all your volunteer work. I hope everyone involved, especially that little girl, will remember that someone cared. I will speak to the photo gods, to get you some help when it comes to taking pictures of two year old grandchildren!"

## Things I Notice

*by Ray Brown*

Well folks, here we have the last four commandments from "The Ten Commandments of How to Get Along with People":

No. 7 - Let your virtues, if you have any, speak for themselves. Refuse to talk of another's vices. Discourage gossip. It is a waste of valuable time, and can be extremely destructive.

No. 8 - Be careful of another's feelings. Wit and humor at another person's expense may do more damage than you will ever know.

No. 9 - Pay no attention to disparaging remarks. Remember, the person who carried the message may not be the most accurate reporter in the world, and things became twisted in the retelling. Lie so that nobody will believe them. Nervous tension and bad digestion are common causes of backbiting.

No. 10 - Don't be too eager to get the credit due you. Do your best, and be patient. Forget about yourself, and let others remember. Success is much sweeter that way.

That's it - on to other things!!

Apples are more efficient at waking you up in the morning than coffee.

Most dust particles in your house are made from dead skin.

All U.S. Presidents have worn glasses. They just didn't like being seen wearing them in public.

Marilyn Monroe had six toes.

### THE BOOMING VOICE

A man walking along a California beach was deep in prayer. Suddenly, the sky clouded above his head and in a booming voice the Lord said, "Because you have TRIED very hard to be faithful to me in all ways, I will grant you one wish." The man said, "Please build a bridge to Hawaii, so I can drive over anytime I want." The Lord said, "Your request is very materialistic. Think of the enormous challenges for that undertaking; The supports required to reach the bottom of the Pacific!; The concrete and steel it would take!; It will nearly exhaust several natural resources. I can do it, but it is hard for me to justify your desire for worldly things. Please take a little more time and



think of something that would honor and glorify me." The man thought about it for a long time. Finally, he said, "Lord, I wish that I could understand my wife! I want to know how she feels inside; what she's thinking when she gives me the silent treatment; why she cries; what she means when she says 'nothing's wrong'; and, how can I make her truly happy?"

The Lord replied, "Do you want two lanes, or four on that bridge?"

### REJECTION LINES: From either sex to the other (We have ten of these).

10. I think of you as a brother.  
Translation: You remind me of that inbred banjo-playing geek in "Deliverance."

9. There's a slight difference in our ages.  
Translation: I can't print this answer.

8. I'm not attracted to you in "that way."  
Translation: You are the ugliest dork I have ever laid eyes on.

7. My life is too complicated right now.  
Translation: I don't have time to baby sit.

7a. I have a boyfriend.  
Translation: I prefer my male cat and a half-gallon of Ben and Jerry's ice cream.

6. I don't date men where I work.  
Translation: I wouldn't date you if you were in the same solar system, much less the same building.

5. I'm going to be very busy for the next several months.  
Translation: Not even if she brought her own deodorant.

4. It's not you, it's me.  
Translation: Its you.

3. I'm concentrating on my career.  
Translation: As bad as I hate to say it, a rerun of **The View** would be more stimulating.

2. I'm celibate.  
Translation: I wouldn't date you even if you shaved your legs.

1. No, I can't go on a date today.  
Translation: You are ugly.

Bonus: Let's be friends.  
Translation: You are so ugly that when you were born, the doctor smacked your mother.

That's it till next month.