



# Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com  
April 2010 Newsletter

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## Calendar of Events

### April

Meeting: Apr. 6

Program: Travel Photography: Brazil  
Pantanal, Linda Martin

15 Minutes of Fame: Bill Lipscomb

Contest: Black and white (12 month)

Outing: Azelea and Dogwood Festival  
Charleston, MO, Apr. 10

Planning Meeting: Apr. 20

### May

Meeting: May 4

Program: Mushroom photography,  
Joe McFarland

15 Minutes of Fame: Bill Thomas

Contest: Symmetry and Patterns  
(2 month)

Outing: Chinese Cultural Days,  
MO Botanical Garden, May 15

Planning Meeting: May 18

### June

Meeting: Jun. 1

Program: TBD

15 Minutes of Fame: Linda Bundren

Contest: Bounty of Nature (12 month)

Outing: SIPS picnic, Ferne Clyffe,  
Jun. 12

Planning Meeting: Jun. 15

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## Inside...

Meeting news, outing reports, plus our regular columns.

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## March Meeting

Our March meeting program was our own Dave Hammond, speaking about marketing and copyright. He gave a great overview of the subject, springing from his own experiences as an independent photographer. Dave distinguished between outbound marketing (sales) and inbound marketing (knowing your product). It's important to think about who your clients are, and who your competitors are. Make a logo, and build your brand. Obtain a web site, business cards, and stationary. Create some dedicated office space, even if it's just in your home. There are also some legal logistics to address such as getting a tax number and getting insurance if you plan to set up space at fairs.

On the subject of copyright, Dave informed us that these days a photo is automatically yours from the moment you snap the shutter, for life plus 70 years. In the past it was necessary to register to obtain copyright protection, but now it is only needed as a way of establishing ownership in case it is disputed in court.

Our "15 Minutes of Fame" member this month was Dave Morgan, who shared photos from his recent tour of duty in Afghanistan and subsequent stay at Walter Reed Medical Center. Thanks Dave - as he said more than once, "Freedom is not free."

We had a good turnout at our March meeting. We welcomed a number of new people, including Mark Bartel, Nellie Pritchett, and Gary Roman, all of Marion. Mark takes kid's portraits, Nellie photographs kids and scenery, and Gary focuses on motor events.

Sparked by the news that Goldline Photo in Marion is closing, there was a brief discussion of options for getting prints made. Jim Osborn showed some very high-quality prints made by **mpix.com**, using a couple of different paper options they have.

Jim has also been heading up the committee to select the photo contest topics for the rest of the year. They have now filled in the schedule, which is:

*cont'd on page 2 - March Meeting*

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## Photo Op

by *Jim Osborn*

For this installment of Photo Op I am going to discuss two more categories in the Photographic Excellence Contest—Indoor portrait or still life with flash and Indoor portrait of still life without flash.

If you are shooting a portrait or still life inside with a flash, there are several considerations. First, when shooting a portrait, you need to avoid "Red-Eye." Red-eye occurs when the light from the flash reflects off the red blood vessels at the back of the retina. Cameras that have Red-Eye Reduction features have a pre-flash that constricts the iris of the eye allowing in less light, thus reducing the area on the retina that might be reflected. Cameras that use separate flash attachments position the flash above the plane of the lens and the eyes; thus, they are less prone to producing red-eye. Assuming you are using a flash that attaches to the camera, there is another consideration. If your flash is set straight at the subject there is a strong possibility that you will have dark shadows behind the subject in your image and/or a light reflection (hot spot) off of the subject.

There are a couple different tricks to avoid the unsightly shadows. First, make sure your subject is not close to a wall or other surface that will display the shadows. Shooting the subject in the middle of the room will lessen that possibility. Better yet, if the head of your flash unit adjusts up, set it up to bounce the light off the ceiling. Point it at an angle where the light will bounce down on the subject from above. You will be amazed at the difference. If you are not very familiar with your flash unit, read the manual and practice taking images with varying amounts of light. Most flash units let you adjust the light output. You will need more light from the flash when the subject is farther away and less light if the subject is close. Many photographers who shoot portraits use a "soft box" on the flash unit. This can be



*cont'd on page 4 - Photo Op*



*18 Degrees on I-57 (photo: Christine Keeney)*

## The Adventure Behind the Photo

*by Christine Keeney*

This photo is definitely not one of my best, but it is one of the ones I learned the most about my new camera on.

I bought my first DSLR right after Christmas a couple of years ago. I work retail, and the holiday season is insane, with extremely late hours even up to a few weeks after Christmas. I purchased the camera during this time and was quite anxious to use it despite the hours I was keeping. After spending a few days going over the basics of the camera, I took it to work with me one night, knowing the shot I wanted to capture. Light trails had always interested me, but with my point-and-shoot I did not have the capability to capture these magical shots that caught my imagination so well. This night I was going to see what I could do.

I was done with work a little after one in the morning so I headed home the back way. This way took me on an overpass over Interstate 57. One little detail that might have stopped others didn't even faze me: it was 18 degrees outside! That just adds to the fun after all.

I parked at the end of the overpass and walked back so that I was over the highway. I had read that I needed to

change my settings to manual so I did so, then I worked on my shutter. My new d80 had a bulb setting, which I had learned would let me hold the shutter open as long as I wanted it to stay open and could hold it down. I held my camera to my eye...and couldn't see. Hmmmm, how do you focus in the dark? Problems.... Then I remembered that when I hold the shutter down in auto mode my flash pops up and lights the red-eye reduction light. I switched the settings, held the shutter down, and found a street sign through this beam. I found settings that I hoped would work and went back to manual.

The cold is now beginning to seep into my brain (it's been in my body, but I've been ignoring it) and I have a slight shiver going on. I hold the shutter down and take my first light trails shot. So excited! So blurry! Wow shivers can really make those lights dance around in circles, especially when you have the shutter held down for 20-25 seconds. Okay, time to rethink this. Not giving up, oh no, but rethink, yes. Time to kneel down, the railing will allow me to balance my camera. So down I go, nothing like a little gravel to add to the moment. And my hands resting on metal in this weather? Well, nothing like some memories to add to a story. (Good thing.)

Now I set the settings all back up and snap. Not great, I'll admit that, but I am happy. Plus I took away a couple of great things that I still have with me: there is now a flashlight in my camera bag so that I have a beam of light to focus on in the dark and I learned that beanbags will help me in many different scenarios when out shooting. I set out to learn about my camera and to get a shot that has always captured my attention when I see others examples. It is a great first-time experience and I will be happy

with it always.

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## March Meeting

*cont'd from p. 1*

May: Symmetry and Patterns (2 month)

Jun.: Bounty of Nature (1 year)

Jul.: Insect World (2 month)

Aug.: Ravages of Time (1 year)

Sep.: Still Life (2 month)

Oct.: Music (1 year)

Nov.: Technical excellence contest (1 year)

Dec.: none (results of Nov. contest)

We also went over contest rules (you can find full details on our web site).

This month's contest was "Winter."

Congratulations to our winners:

1st place: Dana Tetzlaff, "Burden Falls"

2nd place: Virginia Stith, "Pond in Winter"

3rd place: Dave Hammond, "Geese"

We had time for a few show and tell photos. Jim Osborn and Linda Bundren brought in photos from the February Union County outing. Jim also shared some pictures from when the roller derby came to town. Also, Jim Bornert brought some Black & White magazines and some vendor handouts on the use of light meters and histograms.

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## Around Town

with Ray Brown

This month's interview is with Jonathan Springer.

Ray: Jonathan, do you have time to give me an interview for the club newsletter?

Jonathan: Yes. Do you want to do it now?

Ray: Yes. The first question for you is, when did you first become interested in photography?

Jonathan: I've been interested in photography for a long time. I really got into it in a serious way when I was in college. I had an interest but never acted on it until college.

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

Jonathan: Amateur for sure.

Ray: What kinds of subjects do you like to photograph?

Jonathan: I prefer to photograph landscapes and architectural types of photographs...anything that's interesting, really.

Ray: I have enjoyed your architectural photos and your night scenes are very pleasing to my eye.

Ray: When you first started taking photos, did you use film or digital?

Jonathan: At the very beginning I had a little Kodak 35mm camera and I shot film.

Ray: Did you shoot black and white film or color film?

Jonathan: It was all color. I took pretty much mainstream-type photographs - the things that most everyone tries to shoot. I am always trying to get the

good shot within the limits of the camera.

Ray: Have you taken any classes in photography?

Jonathan: No, I've never had a photography class in my life. Not because it wouldn't be interesting, just because of time. I always had other things to do and couldn't find a spot for it.

Ray: When you were shooting film, what kind of color film did you use?



Jonathan: At that time I wasn't conscious of what the different varieties were. I would just pick up some Kodacolor. The only thing I cared about was the ISO.

Ray: I know you work with a digital camera now. What kind of camera do you have now?

Jonathan: At this time I have a Canon Digital Rebel XT. I believe I bought this camera in the fall of 2006. It's a little old now, but still very serviceable.

Ray: When you were in Jr. High School or High School or college, did you ever have the opportunity to do any work in a darkroom?

Jonathan: No, I really don't have much knowledge about darkroom work.

Ray: I'll tell you a story about when I taught photography for the college of DuPage. One of the places I taught at was a darkroom at a Jr. High School in Hinsdale. They had a really nice darkroom. I used it for my classes. The kids got their chemicals mixed up with the chemicals I used for my class. I didn't know this had happened until I tried to develop a roll for my class ahead of class time. What I got looked like a big, long lump of coal. That night I didn't teach on what I had in mind. (I did it the next week.) I was not a happy camper. The next day I laughed about what happened and thought, well, live and learn! I moved the chemicals to where the kids couldn't get to them. Okay, that's enough of my story.

Ray: Do you have one or two favorite websites?

Jonathan: Yes. The ones I enjoy are the technical ones [like [dpreview.com](http://dpreview.com)].

Ray: Do you take any photography magazines?

Jonathan: No.

Ray: Now that surprised me. I thought you would.

Jonathan: Just a matter of time.

Ray: Can you tell us the names of a couple photographers that you admire or really like their work?

Jonathan: Yes, I have a couple in mind. I like Larry Kanfer a lot. When I was in Champaign-Urbana I came across his book *Prairiescapes*. I really enjoyed it. I think that's what got me more interested

in photography. I also like Henri Cartier Bresson. I like his street photography. It impressed me a lot. I don't think I can do what he did, but it's something I would like to get better at.

Ray: Tell me about any other hobbies

that you have.

Jonathan: I guess my main other hobby would be computer programming. That's what I do professionally and I enjoy it, so I have various little home projects that I work on.

Ray: How did you get started in computer programming? Was it something you liked when you were a kid?

Jonathan: It was something I did from pretty early on. I started in about the eighth grade. My dad brought home an Apple II computer from work and let me play around with it, and that is more or less how I got started.

Ray: Do you have any other hobbies?

Jonathan: That's about it...and reading.

Ray: Do you have any places where you have taken photos that you would like to share with our club members?

Jonathan: Yes, I would say that one of the things that I have had a chance to do which I've enjoyed is to take pictures while I'm traveling. I would encourage people to travel farther afield perhaps than they are used to or comfortable doing because it can really be an eye opening experience, and you can get a lot of great pictures.

Ray: I know you take a lot of trips to the orient, is that right?

Jonathan: Yes, I've taken many trips to Japan.

“*Photography is not like painting. There is a creative fraction of a second when you are taking a picture. Your eye must see a composition or an expression that life itself offers you, and you must know with intuition when to click the camera. That is the moment the photographer is creative. Oop! The Moment! Once you miss it, it is gone forever.*”  
—Henri Cartier Bresson

“*The prairie landscape is not beautiful in the traditional sense; certainly there are no soaring mountains or rugged coastlines. But there is a gentle, subtle beauty apparent to those who take the time to discover it; to those who make the effort to look, and then look again.*”  
—Larry Kanfer, *Prairiescapes*

cont'd on page 4 - Around Town

## Burden Falls & Bell Smith Springs Outing

This past month, SIPS members headed to the Shawnee National Forest in Pope County to visit Burden Falls and Bell Smith Springs. Members gathered early Saturday morning at the Ozark General Store (picture at right) on the eastern edge of the forest before heading in. We had what may be a record number of attendees at this outing, including: Mike Hicks, Donald MacDonald, Jillian Choate, Ruth Hilton, Dave and Lu Horning, Teresa McIntosh, Monroe and Louise Webb, Lynn Love, Linda Bundren, Jan Sundberg, Jonathan Springer, Linda Martin, Bill Thomas, Bill Randall, and Marty Will. It's likely there are a couple more names that have been missed as well - our apologies (and please let Linda Bundren know)!

This outing marked the first appearance of the new SIPS radios, allowing members in different vehicles and at various points on the trail to communicate about sights and schedules. This turned out to be fairly convenient; the chief issue with the radios was that there simply weren't enough to go around.

As a bonus, Linda Bundren arranged a last-minute addition to the itinerary: Cedar Falls at Camp Ondessonk. This is reputed to be the highest falls in Illinois, and it was impressive. We were able to visit it both at the bottom and at the top.



*SIPS members at Burden Falls outing (photo: Zach Hurt)*

After Camp Ondessonk, we headed to Burden Falls. This was also spectacular, although the close cliff walls give it more of a hidden, intimate feeling.

We closed out the morning's activities with a great lunch in Eddyville. Afterwards, we dispersed to various places. Some members additionally visited Bell Smith Springs, though reportedly the area was not very accessible due to recent rains.

Next month, we are heading into Missouri to see the azelea and dogwood festival in Charleston. Hope to see everyone there!

Bell Smith Springs is one of the most beautiful recreation areas the Shawnee National Forest has to offer. It contains a series of clear, rocky streams and scenic canyons bordered by high sandstone cliffs and an abundance of vegetation unique to Illinois. The trail system consists of eight miles of interconnected trails featuring strange and wonderful rock formations, such as Devil's Backbone, Boulder Falls and a natural rock bridge. Hiking this system of trails is a favorite activity because of the rock features, scenic overlooks, hidden springs and lush flora and fauna.

Due to the area's distinct number of plant communities and its unique geological features, it has been designated a national natural landmark. This combination of geological and ecological qualities has created a variety of habitats for a diversity of plants and wildlife. Birders come from all over the country to find tanagers, sparrows, pileated woodpeckers, eastern phoebes and several different species of vireos. The canyons and wooded slopes provide habitat for over 700 species of flowering plants, ferns and lichens. That is about 20% of the total number of plants and lichens known in the entire state of Illinois.

—U. S. Forest Service pamphlet on Bell Smith Springs



*At the top of Cedar Falls, Camp Ondessonk (photo: Jonathan Springer)*

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## Photo Op

*cont'd from p. 1*

used to diffuse the light from the flash creating a more appealing image. Also, you may have seen professional photographers who have a small white card attached to the back of the flash that extends above the light when pointed at the ceiling. This helps direct the light toward the subject and can help put a “twinkle in the subject’s eye.” Finally, if you are not using automatic white balance on your digital camera or shooting in RAW, then make sure you set the white balance in the camera for “flash.”

Shooting a portrait or still life inside without a flash has a few tricks as well. Practicing this type of shooting can be useful if you ever want to take photographs in a museum or church where flash is not allowed or when photographing an infant/child that you don’t want to disturb or distract with a bright flash. The trick is to adjust the settings so that you get a shutter speed fast enough to avoid camera shake if you are shooting hand-held (approximately 1/250 second or faster). If you are using a tripod, the shutter speed is a moot point because you shouldn’t have to worry about camera shake. To get the maximum amount of light onto your sensor and thus increase the speed of the shutter, you may need to adjust the ISO to a “faster” setting. Normally, you can shoot ISO’s in the range of 1600 to 3200 without getting too much “digital noise” in the image. Second, open the aperture of the lens as much as you can (the lower the f-stop the better) without sacrificing the desired depth of field. Finally, if you have control over ambient light in the room use as much of it as you can—open the curtains or blinds, shoot during the day, position the subject near light, turn on lights in the room, etc. One word of warning—when shooting indoors try to avoid including direct external light from a window in the image. Your camera probably won’t be able to meter variations in light of more than 5 f-stops, thus resulting in exposure problems with the image. Good shooting!!

## Around Town

*cont'd from p. 3*

Ray: Do you travel to places other than Japan?

Jonathan: Yes, I've been to a lot of places in Europe.

Ray: Where might these places be?

Jonathan: Well lets see...I've been to Spain, Germany, England, Denmark, Austria...

Ray: That's so nice to get to travel like that.

Ray: Jonathan, it's your turn to tell me anything you want to have included in this interview that I didn't ask you about.

Jonathan: Well, I think the thing that comes to mind first is just that Southern Illinois is very fortunate to have a club like this where people can come and meet with other photographers, especially photographers of such high quality. I've been very fortunate to stumble into this club and I really appreciate all the help people have given me over the years.

Ray: Have you been in any other clubs?

Jonathan: No, this is the first one. It was very nice that I could come in as an inexperienced photographer.

Ray: You know, that's one thing I have to say for our club that I really do like. We have people all the way from beginners to professional. I really like that and you know we were all beginners at one time and we should remember that from time to time.

Ray: Thank you, Jonathan. It has been my pleasure.

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## The Technical Side

*by Jonathan Springer*

This month Jim's subject is indoor photography, with and without flash. For this article, I would like to focus on the flash unit itself.

Flash power is specified as the "guide number." The guide number is nominally the distance to the subject times the f-number needed for correct exposure at ISO 100. For example, my Speedlite 430EX has a guide number of 141 ft, which means that I can correctly expose a subject at f/4 at about 35 ft (141 divided by 4). I have to be careful, though, since that only works at the flash's narrowest

arc, 105mm. If I use a wider angle lens, the flash will likewise increase the arc of illumination and effectively lower its guide number.

A modern electronic flash works by causing an electrical discharge through xenon gas. The very high voltage required for such a discharge (a few thousand volts) cannot be produced directly from the batteries (6 volts in my Speedlite), so the flash unit employs a capacitor to store up the big charge so it can be released all at once. When you turn on your flash, that ascending whine is the capacitor being charged from the batteries (actually the step-up voltage transformer).

The discharge of the capacitor through the xenon produces a very brief flash of light - perhaps only 1/1000 of a second. Interestingly, with a typical camera flash, the intensity is set by controlling the duration, so at minimum power, the flash may last only 1/12000 sec. This can be useful if you want to do very high speed photography: try using a flash on low power.

The shortness of the flash duration can introduce difficulties when used with a high-speed shutter. You may have noticed that your flash doesn't work normally below about 1/200 of a second shutter speed. The issue is actually in the camera: at high shutter speeds, not all of the sensor is exposed at once. Instead, the leading and trailing edges of the shutter create a little window that moves over the sensor and aggregates to a full exposure. Since the flash duration is so short, it would illuminate only the part of the sensor under that window at the instant it fires, leading to a light band in the picture.

To combat this problem, high-end flashes now often have a "high speed sync" feature. This feature causes the flash to pulse repeatedly to illuminate all parts of the sensor equally as the shutter traverses. The tradeoff is that the maximum power of the flash is decreased, due to the pulsing.

“I've never been interested in the process of photography, never, never. Right from the beginning. For me, photography with a small camera like the Leica is an instant drawing.  
—Henri Cartier Bresson