



Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com

February 2011 Newsletter

Calendar of Events

February

Meeting: Feb. 1

Program: Stock photography and what-nots (Tom Ulrich)

15 Minutes of Fame: none

Contest: Glamor (60 days)

Outing: Tom Ulrich, SIUC, Feb. 15

Planning Meeting: Feb. 15

March

Meeting: Mar. 1

Program: Studio Lighting (Dave Horning)

15 Minutes of Fame: TBD

Contest: Other Cultures (1 year)

Outing: TBD

Planning Meeting: Mar. 15

April

Meeting: Apr. 5

Program: Basic Do's and Don'ts of Posing (Linda Bundren)

15 Minutes of Fame: Dave Brewer

Contest: Anything Goes (60 days)

Outing: TBD

Planning Meeting: Apr. 19

Inside...

We kick off the new year with a double-size Photo Op.

December Party, January Meeting

We had our annual Christmas party in early December, at SIU-Carbondale. Our guest presenter for the evening was Al Perry, of Evansville, IN, who gave us a terrific program of images and music. Thanks to Al for coming out and sharing his work with us.

Our first meeting of 2011 was well-attended for such a chilly time of the year, with 40 people. We had two new people in attendance. Tara Hull, of Murphysboro likes to shoot scenery and anything else that gets in front of the camera. Max Pardee, of Marion, also likes to shoot scenery as well as wildlife.

Our program this evening, "Lighting and the Better Beamer," was given by our own Dave Brewer. Dave uses a Nikon with a 500mm lens on a gimbal mount, giving him the ability to easily track and frame birds. On top of this, he has mounted the Better Beamer using a bracket custom-built with parts from Lowes. The Better Beamer itself is essentially a Fresnel lens in a holder that straps to the flash unit. The lens focuses the flash light, extending its range while narrowing the field of coverage.

Dave showed us a number of bird images to illustrate his lighting technique, from trips to Dauphin Island, Santa Clara Range, as well as his home.

In the best lighting arrangements, he was able to get feathers well-defined and eyes with catchlight, while bright spots were not yet blown out. Among other tips, Dave noted that the ISO setting on newer cameras has a much higher usable range. After the meeting, Dave added one further: some



Al Perry at SIPS Christmas Party (photo: Linda Bundren)

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Photo Op

by Jim Osborn

I waited until after the SIPS board meeting to write this article because I was interested in getting feedback from the members on the survey that was passed out at the last meeting. So, first, let me say "thank you" for your kind comments! It's nice to know that a number of you valued the articles I wrote for the technical excellence contest. In fact, one comment suggested that I ought to continue to write "how to articles." That being said, it is my plan to try to integrate my passion for photography with some technical suggestions that you might find useful. I am going to call that section Tech Savvy. Please continue to give me feedback during the year. I do hope what I have to say will inspire you AND help you shoot better photos.

For the past 2-3 months I have been actively involved in photographing my two new granddaughters as well as my 6 other grandchildren. Every time I view the images on my computer I can't help but smile. But the truth is that a recent trip to the Union County Conservation Area really got my juices flowing! There were thousands and thousands of geese of all types as well as various species of ducks. As I drove into the area I observed in the distance a "blast off" of thousands of snow geese that filled the sky like a white cloud. If you haven't seen that spectacle it is hard to describe, but it does make your heart race a little. Winter isn't considered by many to be a prime time for photography, but I would argue that there are incredible opportunities out there if you just look for them. Last week I took images of one of the most gorgeous sunsets I've ever seen,



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Meetings

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extra speed can be obtained by using a level of exposure compensation.

A few anecdotes rounded out the program, including some up close and personal encounters with rattlesnakes.

Thanks to Dave for all his insights.

Our 15 Minutes of Fame segment was given by Christine Keeney. She shared many fun images from her trip to Europe last year. Places represented included Switzerland, Austria, Germany, England, France, and Venice. It looked like quite a trip!

With the new year, we went over some of our standard club functions. Jim Osborn explained the

rules and procedures of our monthly photo contest. (These rules can also be found at sipscameraclub.com in the Contest Rules section.) He also introduced our yearlong contest: a seasonal calendar to be completed and turned in at the November meeting. Finally, we reviewed the guidelines for the "Show and Tell" that we do during the meeting: please limit to 5 images and 2 to 3 minutes of comments (per person). If more time is needed, we do have the "15 Minutes of Fame" segment available for signup.

Dave Brewer announced an opportunity to image swans at Burning Star #5, a former mining property near DeSoto. This trip has been made our January club outing, though please note it is actually taking place on Feb. 5. Preliminary logistics have been sent via email and will be followed up and appear on the web site.

Dave Brewer was also in the news for his image published in the December issue of Outdoor Illinois. Dave Hammond had an image published in the most recent SIU Press catalog. Finally, a recent article in The Southern highlighted Linda Martin and Jo Dodd's attendance at the Rocky Mountain Outdoor Writers and Photographers conference. The article features a few of their award-winning

images. Congratulations to all of these members!

Dana Tetzlaff shared a picture she obtained at a yard sale, apparently signed by Ansel Adams. It's framed so that it is difficult to determine if it is an original or not. She also showed a hot pink point-and-shoot she received for Christmas.



Esther and Jim Bornert at the Christmas Party (photo: Linda Bundren)

Dana, SIPS treasurer, also gave us the club financial status. We're in good shape, but as is usual for this time of year, our funds are relatively low, so please remember to pay membership dues to Dana. We also have a membership information sheet to fill out, so if you didn't get that at the January meeting, talk to Linda Bundren. This information feeds into the member directory.

Speaking of the member directory, note that we have space in it for a photograph, and many members are not taking advantage of this yet. Pictures for the directory can be sent to Jonathan.

Our contest this month was "Up! Up! And Away!" We had 14 entries; the winners were:

1st place: Mike Hicks

2nd place: Linda Bundren

3rd place: Shawn Gibson

(We unfortunately didn't get titles for these photos this month.) Next month, our contest subject is "Glamor."

Finally, a big "thank you" again to Jim and Esther Bornert, who donated a new projector and screen to the club. We expect these to make their debut at the February meeting.

Photo Op

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reflected off the ICE of Crab Orchard Lake. Before this winter is over, I plan to travel to the Alton area or to Clarksville, Missouri to photograph bald eagles. If the Mississippi River is frozen the birds will congregate near open water where they can fish. The lock and dam at Clarksville, Missouri provides that open water. Coupled with the city park right on the river's edge it is an ideal venue to observe eagles as they soar and dive to

pluck fish right out of the river. About 4 or 5 years ago I was fortunate to see almost 500 bald eagles at Clarksville. This ONLY happens in the winter! If we get more snow, you might be able to find interesting drifts, snow-laden boughs of pine trees and snow-covered country roads that make idyllic photographic images. Because of the high contrast opportunities, you might even experiment with converting some of your digital color images to black and white. The opportunities are boundless so get out there!!

Tech Savvy

by Jim Osborn

With so many flash memory cards on the market, how do you know what to buy? There are two important considerations in choosing a flash memory card, capacity and speed. Compact flash cards now come with capacities up to and in excess of 100GB. The greater the capacity the higher the cost will be. If you shoot hundreds of images at a time in JPEG, or if you shoot primarily in the RAW mode you might want to consider buying a card with more capacity. The largest card I own is 16GB and I have never filled it up. The second factor to consider is the writing speed. If a card says the writing speed is 60X, you need to know that the X equals about 150KB of information, so the speed at which the card transfers the data from your camera will be about 9MB per second. Depending on your equipment and whether you are shooting jpeg or RAW, 9MB might be fast enough for you or it might be too slow. If you like to shoot RAW in a burst mode (the Canon 7D can shoot 8 images per second), you will need a faster memory card. Again, the faster the card the more expensive it will be. So...consider what you usually shoot. If you take pictures of your grandkids in JPEG, you will probably do fine with a lower capacity, moderately fast (and less expensive) card. If you are shooting diving bald eagles in RAW format in a burst mode you may need to consider a higher capacity card with a faster writing speed. One more tip—don't buy cards that are more technologically advanced than your camera. If you have a 6 megapixel camera, you don't need a card that writes at 20MB per second. Have fun!!