



Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com
June 2011 Newsletter

May Meeting

We had 35 people turn out for our May meeting, including Harvey Hays, a guest of Joan Levy. His interests are in scenery.

Our program for May was a video, "Perfect Exposure," by Tim Cooper of the Rocky Mountain School of Photography. This presentation explained the zone system, made popular by Ansel Adams, with the addition of color. In it, the photographer evaluates the scene in terms of its apparent brightness at key points, seeking to match them to zones within an exposure scale. The mid-toned area of a scene should be exposed for the middle zone, zone 5. The photographer adjusts for brighter or darker subjects by selecting higher or lower zones. The typical SLR camera's meter makes this adjustment straightforward, but it is important for the photographer to recognize the proper zone to use for what is in the scene.

Our 15 Minutes of Fame segment was given by Jon Muller, who gave an interesting overview of Civil War photography. He showed a number of images taken in the 1860s together with his pictures of the same battlefields today. Two of the most notes photographers were Matthew Brady and Alexander Gardner. He indicated that most of the original images were made in stereo. Some of the photographers were not above adjusting their scenes, as can be seen with the movement of one fallen soldier in two pictures.

Our May outing was to be to Rattlesnake Road near Alto Pass, but owing to heavy rains had to be canceled. Instead, members are encouraged to go a local event such as the Herrin Festa Italiana (May 26-30) or the Paducah Lower Town Art Festival (May 20-22). Bring up to 3 pictures to the June meeting for showing.

Our next outing is our SIPS picnic, coming up on June 25 at Ft. Massac State Park. We will be sending out details about just where we'll congregate and the timing, but plan for an evening meal, and SIPS

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Photo Op

By Jim Osborn

I haven't used this column often to discuss photo products, but I have a story to share and a product to tell you about. Sometimes, it pays to follow-up on potential opportunities that are presented to you. A few months ago I read an article in NatureScape's email newsletter that a German company was looking for individuals to try out a new type of camera strap. I went to the website and "applied" to be a tester. The information said that if I was selected to participate as a reviewer and met a couple other conditions, that I could keep the camera strap. It seemed like a good deal, so...what the heck! Anyway, a few weeks later I received notification that I was chosen to receive the camera strap and to review it. How cool! The moral here is it pays to check things out.

A couple of weeks ago I received the camera strap in the mail. The strap is called the Sun Sniper Pro and it just may be the best camera strap I have ever used. I have to admit that I am not a big fan of the stereotypical camera straps. Until now I have used a very short strap that allows me to hang on to something other than the camera body without the camera swaying back and forth. I also hate to put the straps around my neck. The camera flops around and the whole rig just feels awkward and uncomfortable. The Sun Sniper changes all of that. This strap is design to hang like a sling over one shoulder with the camera resting on your hip on the opposite side. The strap has a connecting swivel that screws into the ball head screw slot on the bottom of the camera. The strap also has a shoulder "pad" that has some material on it to make it nominally tacky so it doesn't slip off your shoulder. The Sun Sniper is adjustable for your height so it is easy to position your camera where it feels most comfortable. Before I tried it on I wondered if the strap would actually stabilize the camera while I was walking around with it,



Calendar of Events

June

Meeting: Jun. 7

Program: Raw Editing (Dave Hammond)

15 Minutes of Fame: George Stone

Contest: Yellow (60 days)

Outing: SIPS picnic, Ft. Massac State Park, Jun. 25

Planning Meeting: Jun. 21

July

Meeting: Jul. 5

Program: Travel Photography (Jonathan Springer)

15 Minutes of Fame: Lorraine Highlander

Contest: TBD

Outing: Richard and Susan Day's, Alma, IL, Jul. 30

Planning Meeting: Jul 19

August

Meeting: Aug. 2

Program: My Five Best Shots

15 Minutes of Fame: Show and Tell

Contest: TBD

Outing: Classic Car Show

Planning Meeting: Aug. 16

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News and the latest from Jim Osborn!

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Meetings

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members are welcome to bring a guest. The month after, in July, our outing will be to Richard and Susan Day's in Alma. That event will take place all day on July 30. For that event, there is a \$50 fee, but unlike in previous years, there is no signup limit.

Later this year, we have an extended outing planned to Parke County Indiana, to see the covered bridges. This will be an overnight trip, so outing leader Nancy Smolak has made arrangements with the Billie Creek Inn to get a group rate of \$77 per night for SIPS members. Let Nancy know if you'd like to sign up for this.

Another event that we are planning is the photo scavenger hunt. Thanks for all of the suggestions that were sent it; Dana will be making the final selection and we should see them at the June meeting.

Our contest this month was "People At Work." Our winners were:

1st place: Dave Horning, "Danny"

2nd place: Mike Hicks, "Tilt-a-Whirl Assembly"

3rd place: Karen Carlton, "Roofers"
Congratulations to these winners! Our contest for next month is "Yellow," which has a 60-day timeframe. We can also look forward to a program on Raw Editing by Dave Hammond, and a 15 minute presentation from George Stone.

Photo Op

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but it really does work! Perhaps the best thing about the Sun Sniper is that you don't have to remove the strap from your shoulder to take pictures. The swivel is made to slide along the strap such that you can just pull the camera up in front of you to take pictures. I used the Sun Sniper on a recent trip to Oregon. I am used to carrying a second camera and lenses in a backpack and I worried a little about how the two would work together, but I had no problem. The Sun Sniper held the camera in place at my side while the backpack stayed on my back.

In the vein of being super-critical, there are a few issues with the Sun Sniper Pro. First, if you are a photographer who shoots primarily with a tripod, it could be kind of a pain to have to unscrew the swivel from your camera each time you wanted to attach your camera to the ball head of tripod. While I do use a tripod, most of my images of wildlife are taken "on the fly" (when you don't have time to set up a tripod). As such, the Sun Sniper works very well for me. Also, the tackiness on the shoulder pad was not so tacky that the pad didn't slip from my shoulder a couple times when I brought the camera up in front of me to take shots—but that is a pretty minor point. Finally, the strap is a little bulkier and weighs a little more than traditional straps, but that is only an issue if you have very tight space limits when packing your camera and gear.

Since I received the Sun Sniper in the mail, I have noticed that the company is now running ads for it in several national photo magazines. So....for what it's worth, I recommend following up on opportunities such as this to try new products and, for what it's worth, I highly recommend the Sun Sniper. For more information, check out www.sun-sniper.com or to locate a dealer, www.sunsniperusa.com.

June 15—Nature Photography Day

June 15th will mark the 6th year of observance of Nature Photography Day. The North American Nature Photography Association which initiated observance of this day has suggestions on how to observe Nature Photography Day. The association suggests individuals can participate in the following ways: (1) experiment by taking photos of the same subject in different and interesting ways, and share them with others; (2) visit a gallery or buy a nature magazine to see how photographers capture images; (3) create a gallery at home by displaying your photos of animals, plants and landscapes; and, (4) think of ways that nature photographs can be used to further the cause of conservation.