Southern Illinois Photographic Society
www.sipscameraclub.com
May 2012 Newsletter

Calendar of Events

May
Meeting: May 1
Program: Photoshop, Dave Horning
15 Minutes of Fame: Bill Lipscomb
Contest: Macro (12 month)
Outing: Butterfly House,
    Chesterfield MO, May 19
Planning Meeting: May 15

June
Meeting: Jun. 5
Program: Studio Lighting,
    Mike Chervenko
15 Minutes of Fame: Carol Sluzevich
    & Joanna Gray
Contest: Clowing Around /
    Laugh Out Loud (60 day)
Outing: SIPS picnic, Jun. 23,
    Ferne Clyffe
Planning Meeting: Jun. 19

July
Meeting: Jul. 3
Program: Jack Holderfield
15 Minutes of Fame: TBD
Contest: Sports (12 month)
Outing: Richard Day's, Jul. 14
Planning Meeting: Jul. 17

Inside...
News and the latest from Jim Osborn and Linda Bundren!

April Meeting

Our April meeting was anchored by a presentation on Lightroom given by Tom Rabideau. Lightroom is a digital version of the old-style darkroom, and the new version 4.0 has recently been released.

Tom started by noting that, contrary to the notion that negatives are inviolate, the old darkrooms had many kinds of manipulations available. A clever developer could change the chemical temperature, add or subtract transparency (in several colors), adjust exposure, and much more. Lightroom can be used for many of the same kind of transformations, and can serve as your complete resource for going from the raw frame to the print-ready picture. Tom uses Lightroom for the common photo tasks, and Photoshop for additions, subtractions, and other detail-oriented work.

Tom got into Lightroom originally because of the large file sizes of digital photos. Lightroom's processing makes of point of not altering the original picture file, but only working with the "metadata". *(See the note "Lightroom's Nondestructive Edit" below for more detail on this point.)* This saves a lot of space when making edits. Now, memory is not so expensive, but he has found the workflow and cataloging features of Lightroom compelling.

Tom went through the workflow a bit, showing how photos are displayed in a ribbon along the bottom after being imported. Then, there are Library, Develop, Map, Book, and Slideshow modules to use. He spends most of his time in Library and Develop. Lightroom 4 does have some fancy new features, however. The Book module allows you to set up a complete book and send it off for printing or e-book distribution. The Map module can access the GPS information embedded within some photos (commonly, for example, those taken by smartphones). The GPS as well as more conventional information like F-stop, shutter speed, ISO, and so forth are all contained in picture metadata called EXIF.

Photo Op
by Jim Osborn
The May club outing is planned for the Butterfly House in Chesterfield, Missouri. For those who haven't visited the Butterfly House before, I would like to offer some advice. First, the indoor climate is "tropical," meaning it is very warm and humid year-round. If you wear heavy clothing, you won't last long in the enclosure. Second, as soon as you enter the environment your equipment will fog up. While it is best to sit and wait for your equipment to acclimate, it may take 20-25 minutes. Usually, I don't have the patience or the willingness to sit in that hot humid environment just waiting for my equipment to de-fog—so I use a microfiber cloth to clear the lens (or filter)—it is the same cloth I use to wipe off my glasses. You may need to wipe the lens more than once, because the fogging will return until your camera is more acclimated to the climate. FYI—you can minimize the impact on your equipment if your camera is warm before you enter the enclosure. In other words don't leave your camera in your cold car overnight. Third, while lighting is both natural and adequate, you will want to shoot fast shutter speeds. The different butterflies do different things—some perch on leaves for you as if they were just waiting to pose for your shots; others seem to be on the move constantly and never light; some types tend to close their wings together when they settle to feed; still others flaps their wings at incredibly high speeds even while they are feeding. So, if you are going to have optimum success I suggest you use fill flash. Since the little critters tend to take to flight if you get too close, I would recommend a lens in the range of 100mm. I have used a 100mm macro and ring light with pretty good success, but a regular flash will work fine as long as you are far enough from the butterflies that you don't shoot right over the top of them. Some people

Have something for the newsletter? Contact SIPS at info@sipscameraclub.com.

Linda's Corner

by Linda Bundren

I love the spring of the year. Every day the earth is renewing itself from winter's rest. The flowers are early this year but very beautiful. As I worked in my lawn today, the smell of the lilacs was intoxicating and the hue of the wisteria was very visually pleasing. I had to grab my camera to image the purple blooms. The rain has made the bloom's stay very short however. Seeing all the backyard blooms

Bloom in Linda's yard (photo: Linda Bundren)

and the wildflowers on the hike in March has caused me to grab the extension tubes and focus on macro imaging.

Macro has never been a big interest for me but I am trying to stretch my skills. I have tried to image the inside of a tulip but with very close up imaging it must be very still. Our weather hasn't cooperated enough to support that. So my inner tulips haven't met my expectations.

Macro is ideal for abstract images. Strong symmetrical plants are ideal candidates for abstract images (especially in black and white). To create the most impact, keep the composition simple. Try different lighting: for instance, direct flash helps to create strong contrasts and clean lines. Hold the camera square on the plant pattern to make it as abstract and even as possible. Use of a tripod would be a good idea. Either set the camera to black and white mode or capture the image in color and convert it on the computer later.

You may want to just isolate a bloom. To make the most of brightly colored flowers, look for a dark background. (You can create a dark background by placing a dark cloth or cardboard behind the flower.) This will help to isolate both the shape and color of the image. Use a long focal length to reduce the depth of field and to help to further isolate the flower. Expose for the brightest parts to leave the shadowed areas dark in contrast.

When shooting extremely close to the plants, the more detail you will see.

However, the depth of field drops greatly, so it is hard to get everything looking sharp. If using a point and shoot, use the highest sensitivity available. DSLR's today have gotten "out of sight" with ISO settings. Use as high as you can and still avoid noise. Use the macro, or close-up mode, as well as a wide-angle zoom setting. Again try to line up the main features so they are square to the camera, to make the most of depth of field.

Explore different vantage points; using stems, leaves, pistil or stamen. Look for lines, symmetry and patterns. Hope you are having better luck with macro than I am, but have fun out there and I'll see your images in the upcoming contest.

Photo Op

cont'd from p. 1

bring tripods but if you are prepared to shoot images at a high shutter speed I don't think you necessarily need a tripod. From my perspective it is hard to use a tripod when trying to photograph small objects that are moving in all different directions. If the butterflies aren't cooperative you can always photograph the flora. The flowers are exotic and stunningly beautiful. Come along on the outing and have fun!

April Meeting

To demonstrate typical usage, Tom showed a picture of a black bear, taken on his recent trip to the Smokey Mountains. The bear was very dark, and adjusting the exposure didn't help. Lightroom 4 splits up the fill light into highlights, midtones, shadows, and whites, allowing specific areas to be adjusted separately. It also has clarity, saturation, balance, and other settings similar to Photoshop. Lightroom can also do HDR and automatic white balance adjustment from RAW.

A very nice feature of Lightroom is that it can take a set of changes you have made to one photo and apply them to a large group of other photos instantly. Thus, for example, you can adjust the white balance in one photo, and then immediately correct all other photos from that shoot. Photoshop additionally has "presets" that allow application of thousands of images changes with one click (like an Action in Photoshop, but faster). Most presets are free.

For changes that are too detailed, Lightroom offers an easy way to launch Photoshop to edit any given photo. Keep in mind that both programs use a lot of memory, so it's good to be working on a computer with plenty of RAM.

Our 15 Minutes of Fame this month was by Mike Hicks, who covered his trip to Los Angeles and Puero Vallarta, Mexico. He had several good photos taken from the airplane at height. An unexpected layover in LA allowed him to get a wonderful sunset. His other shots covered food, the market, street scenes, houses, landscapes, flowers, vendors, and people of all descriptions. Mike's contest picture of an Iguana came from this trip as well.

For show and tell, Jim Osborn brought in a brass Kodak Eastman glass plate developer from B&L Photo. According to the markings, the patent was registered in 1908. Bill Lipscomb pointed us to a hummingbird in-nest camera at phoebeallens.com. We also found out that The State of Southern Illinois, a book published by SIU, has a cover photo by Dave Hammond, and 20 interior photos as well.

A visitor from the Centralia camera club (**llclub.info**) had information about a photo contest sponsored by the town of Elsah, IL. They hold this contest annually, and pay money for the top 2 photos. Architecture in Nature is this year's theme. There is no entry fee. Go to **www.elsahevents.com/photoexhibit.htm** for details. We also heard that Creve Coeur Camera has business cards for discounts on gift items (but not camera equipment).

Our monthly contest was "Pets," in which we had 15 entries. The winners were:

1st place: Joanna Gray, "Midnight"
2nd place: Virginia Stith, "Fluffy"
3rd place: Mike Hicks, "Iguana"

Congratulations to all of these. The other entrants were Lynn Love, Linda Bundren, Sharon Wallace, Denise Szaro, Lori Mascal, Frances Walker, Myers Walker, and Karen Carlton.

Coming up, Mike Hicks has volunteered to lead our outing for May to the Butterfly House in Chesterfield, MO. That will be on Saturday, May 19. Also, our Scavenger Hunt contest items have been announced; see box below for the list. Entries for that are due at the November member meeting.

Lightroom's Nondestructive Edit

by Jonathan Springer

In his presentation, Tom talked about how Lightroom works on the photo metadata, never changing the original. To accomplish this, Lightroom in essence saves the operations that you do to alter a photo, separate from the photo itself. Later, when you go back to look at your edited photo, Lightroom reads the original photo and the summary of edits it has saved alongside it, and quickly applies the edits to the original. This happens fast enough that it looks to you just like you are opening an edited version of the picture distinct from the original. The benefits are (1) vastly reduced storage space for multiple versions of the same picture and (2) avoiding any degredation in quality that might come from multiple generations of JPEG re-encoding.

The saved edits are kept in Lightroom's catalog, so the original file never has to be changed. Note that what is saved there is not *the effect of your changes* (which would be another image file), but *the operations used to create it* (e.g. "apply a blue tint" and "reduce contrast").

If you are interested in (a lot) more detail on how Lightroom does this and its concept of the catalog, check out the Adobe white paper "Non-Destructive Imaging: An Evolution of Rendering Technology", by Peter Kroch, available at **http://www.adobe.com/digitalimag/pdfs/non_destructive_imaging.pdf**