



Southern Illinois Photographic Society

www.sipscameraclub.com

December 2012 Newsletter

Calendar of Events

December

Meeting: Dec. 4

Program: Christmas Party (members),
Brady Kesner speaking

15 Minutes of Fame: none

Contest: none

Outing: none

Planning Meeting: none

January

Meeting: Jan. 8 (note date change!)

Program: WWII Photos,
George Stone

15 Minutes of Fame: new member
info presentation

Contest: Family (60 day)

Outing: CONWR, TBA

Planning Meeting: Jan. 15

February

Meeting: Feb. 5

Program: Portraiture, Nick Wheeler

15 Minutes of Fame: Dave Hammond

Contest: Birds (1 year)

Outing: Panther Den, Feb. 23 (tent.)

Planning Meeting: Feb. 19

Inside...

News and the latest from Linda Bundren!

November Meeting

Our November meeting program, given by Jim Bornert, covered the Topaz Filters plugin for Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom. This is a professional photo-effects plugin, able to create a wide variety of effects on a photo. There are several programs on the market that do this kind of thing; some are plug-ins while others are stand-alone programs. An example of the latter is photoFXlab. Plugins are nice because they integrate with a familiar workflow (in this case, Photoshop or Lightroom). A typical camera will also often offer effects, but these only apply to JPEG images. Jim prefers to work in RAW, which preserves all of the original information from the shot, but requires postprocessing to "develop."

Topaz has many distinct filters available, including Adjust, DeNoise, Simplify, Lens Effects, DeJPEG, Star Effects, B&W Effects, ReMask, Detail, and Clean. Jim demonstrated a simple DeNoise filter, showing the difference between the DeNoise RAW and a JPEG. He then used Simplify on another image to show how different filters can be composed using layers. Each layer can be a different filter, e.g. B&W, Oil Painting, Sketch, Variety of Colors, Pastel, Wood carving, and many more. Each allows adjustments including detail boosting, color enhancement or change, vibrancy, contrast, etc. They also allow for finishing touches such as vignetting, curvature, borders, and so forth. Jim added layers for the effects using the blending mode in Photoshop. He finished with Dave Horning's doll photo from Haunted Barn to show the possibilities using Adjust and global exposure tools.

The filters can be purchased separately. Jim recommends Adjust and Simplify as the two best to start with; add DeNoise if you want to pick three. A "Photoshop Bundle" can also be purchased for 30% off when attending a Topaz Labs webinar. Topaz lets you preview the filters on their web site, topazlabs.com.

cont'd on page 2 - November Meeting

Linda's Corner

by Linda Bundren

January's contest is Family. The holidays are upon us and spending time with family and friends this holiday season is always a delight. Also getting good images of them is always a challenge and desire for me. To succeed you simply need to relax and let it happen. "Take it easy." Put your camera on automatic and cool your method of operation.

First, you have a huge advantage when your family is your subject: you have easy access and familiarity. If your family is like mine they are used to seeing me with my camera and probably don't pay too much attention to what I am doing; and that's exactly what you want in order to capture photos of them just being themselves.

You'll get the best pictures when people are doing what they're into doing: dinner preparations, gift wrapping, game playing, chatting, table setting. It's not just the Thanksgiving dinner that's photogenic; it's also the team spirit that went into its preparation. During the holidays, it's not just the giving of the gifts, but their wrapping the night before, and of course the decorating.

Second, try to fit in; don't disrupt. You're bringing photography to the action, not stopping the action to take a photo. If you are having them stop to pose, chances are you're missing the best shots.

Timing is nearly everything; but as in real estate, it's location, location, location. You know where the family's favorite places are: kitchen, family room, living room, backyard. Be there. And even if you're not planning on a picture, try to keep the camera at hand; you never know when a great moment is going to happen.

While you shouldn't be the director of their events, there's nothing wrong with having a plan—start a game or contest and be prepared to shoot away. Also during your activities pass the camera around and get images from the others' point of view.

cont'd on page 2 - Linda's Corner

Outings and Announcements

We have no outing in December. Our next outing, in January, will be a "behind the gates" visit to Crab Orchard National Wildlife Reserve to look for eagles. In February, Bill Thomas is organizing a trip to Panther Den, near Blue Sky Winery. This is tentatively set for Sat., Feb. 23.

Jim Osborn and Lynn Love placed in the CONWR photo contest that concluded this month. Congratulations!

Remember that SIH is holding a photo contest to find art for their new resource center opening in the Carbondale Mall in 2013. They are looking for photographs on the subject of healthy living in Southern Illinois. Winners' pictures will be printed to a common size and mounted on the wall of the resource center. Note that all pictures must be oriented vertically. The deadline for entry is Dec. 15; visit public.sih.net/photocontest.nsf/rules.xsp for details.

The Federal Recreation Lands Photo Contest entries are due by Dec. 31. There are several categories, and the grand prize is \$15,000 and your image gets used on the Annual Federal Recreation Lands Pass for 2014. Entries must have been taken since Jan. 1, 2010. Go to sharetheexperience.org for details.

We are soliciting contest ideas for next year. Joanna Gray is bringing a sheet for collecting ideas to the meetings, so look for that or contact her if you'd like to suggest something. We are also looking for outing suggestions.

November Meeting

cont'd from p. 1

Our 15 Minutes of Fame this month was given by Joanna Gray, who talked about her interest in concert photography. Joanna joined in 2005 and likes wildlife and nightlife photos. This evening, she showed concert photos, mostly from Harrah's in Metropolis and some local bands. Joanna uses a Canon 7D and a fast lens, the 50mm 1.8, to deal with the low lighting typical of concert venues. She normally uses ISO 1600 or greater, and tries to have an exposure of 1/125 without flash. Sometimes she will use a fill flash, if the setting is really dark and would otherwise require a higher ISO (3200 or more). She showed lots of nice shots, some using the Topaz filters that Jim had just talked about.

Joanna also brought a guest to the meeting: Mary Sikorski. Welcome!

At the meeting we discussed a new feature of our monthly contests for 2013: digital manipulation. Our current contest rules allow only general enhancement (e.g. brightness and contrast), but in 2013 every third contest will allow unlimited manipulation. The remaining two of every three contests will be held under the old rules, as before. Which contest uses which rules will be noted ahead of time, and of course there is no obligation to manipulate your photo in any event.

This month we had two contests due, the Scavenger Hunt as well as the Mystery Tour. These entries are being evaluated by an outside judge, and the results will be announced at the Christmas party.

December is a light month for club activities, owing to the holidays. There is no outing, contest, or board meeting. Also, please note that the date of our next regular meeting in January is the 8th (not the 1st, as might be expected). This will be held at 7 PM at the Marion library as usual.

Linda's Corner

cont'd from p. 1

Finally, the year is nearing an end and it has been an enjoyable time for me. My goal was for everyone to have fun and hopefully along the way we could improve our photographic skills. Increasing the membership was not my number one goal. Rather, to make sure the activities we plan are of interest to as many as possible in the club and their enthusiasm would spill over to others and accomplish increasing membership as well. I hope we had something this year that was of interest to you. And if not I'd love to have you help us plan better this year. Happy Thanksgiving and I hope to see you at the Christmas party.