Southern Illinois Photographic Society
www.sipscameraclub.com
October 2014 Newsletter

Calendar of Events

October
Meeting: Oct. 7
Program: Document a Town,
     Karen Carlson
15 Minutes of Fame: Dave Hammond
Contest: Wildlife
Outing: East Shawnee Nat'l Forest
     Colors, Garden of the Gods, Bell
     Smith Springs, Cave-in-Rock
Planning Meeting: Oct. 21

November
Meeting: Nov. 4
Program: Panoramas, Mike Hicks
15 Minutes of Fame: Swap Meet
Contest: Calendar
Outing: Studio Lighting
     with Dave Horning, Nov. 8
Planning Meeting: Nov. 18

December
Meeting: Dec. 2
Program: Christmas Party
15 Minutes of Fame: none
Contest: none
Outing: none
Planning Meeting: none

Inside...

All the news, the latest from Linda Bundren, and extra from Jim Bornert!

September Meeting

Our program for this month was Jim Bornert, on the subject of HDR. Jim went through an intensive course at the Rocky Mountain School of Photography, where he honed his HDR technique. He walked us through the process and illustrated it with several examples of his own work. Dave was kind enough to write up his notes so they could be included in the newsletter, so for additional details, please see his article in this newsletter.

Our 15 Minutes of Fame program was given by Jo Dodd, who recently attended Rocky Mountain Writer and Photography Workshop. She showed us a number of pictures from Glacier National Park, as well as elsewhere in MT and Alberta, Canada. Subjects included marmots, mountain sheep, bears, and moose, old buildings and barns in Kalispell, and other wildlife and landscapes at Logan's Pass, Lake MacDonald, and St. Mary's Lake.

We had several visitors this month: Cathy Jennings, who likes nature photography; Jeff Fletcher, who likes pinhole, large format, and experimental; and Elvis Lanton, who likes nature and would like to try portraits.

SIPS has arranged with The Pavilion in Marion to show a collection of member photos. Eleven members set up in the space on Sept. 17. These photos will be up through mid-December, so stop by and check them out!

Nominations for the SIPS board were accepted at this meeting. See the box nearby for the ballot details.

Friends of the Shawnee has a contest running Mar. 1 through Nov. 14. This celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Details are at **snffriends.org**.

Our contest this month was "Wheels." Unlimited photo processing was allowed for this contest. The winners were:

1st place: Lynn Love, "Wagon Wheel Garden"

2nd place: Jim Bornert, "Locomotive

Linda's Corner
by Linda Bundren
Howdy!

With the digital cameras came a renewed interest in photography. This is partly due to one's ability to control the process of taking, retouching and printing the images. We are becoming more computer savvy with photo editing programs like Lightroom, Photoshop and Photoshop Elements.

This digital era has also renewed interest in photography clubs. The benefits of camera clubs are many and varied. A club provides us with the opportunity to come together with others with the same passions for photography.

Your local camera club is the ideal place to gain more knowledge and share your images. There are opportunities to hear professional and amateur speakers and presentations every month, and also share your images in our monthly contests, 15 minutes of Fame, and Show and Tell. At the Southern Illinois Photographic Society (SIPS) I have found a great group of photographers who are willing to share their knowledge and skills. There are professional photographers and very creative digital photographers. There are also newbies who are interested in gleaning as much information on techniques and composition as they can from others.

One of the best things in the club to help you learn is the trips and excursions. This provides you with the opportunity to shoot with pros, who are interested in the same type of photography, whether that is wildlife, landscapes, macro, or portraiture, etc. Club outings provide you with the opportunity to take day trips with a knowledgeable guide to show you the best vantage points to shoot from. It also gives you the opportunity to explore new places.

Clubs also give you the chance to critique others work and have your art evaluated. This can help you hone your skills and improve your photography. You may need to have tough skin to have your own images

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

Introduction to HDR

by Jim Bornert

It was a pleasure to give the presentation on HDR at the SIPS meeting on Sept. 2. I would like to provide a summary and several helpful things you can do to improve your HDR experience.

HDR stands for High Dynamic Range. Every scene, camera, computer, monitor, printer, and type of printer paper has a dynamic range. The dynamic range is the ratio or difference between the darkest and lightest element. Your eyes rapidly adjust to the scene, so you don't notice that it has a broad dynamic range. But if the scene is extremely wide our eyes may take a few minutes to adjust. If you walk into a dark room with a single window that has bright sunlight streaming through it, your eyes have to adjust to one or the other. But what about our cameras and other equipment?

My Canon 5DII has a range of about ten stops if I shoot a RAW file, and about five to seven if it's a JPEG. Compact cameras have a range of about five to seven stops. Your computer, monitor, printer and paper have relatively narrow ranges compared to a RAW file. So, if you view a scene with a wide dynamic range of say 24+ stops, how can you capture that entire tonal range? Let's take RAW for example with its ten stop range. If you shoot the scene at the camera recommended exposure, the highlights will be "blown out" and the shadows will mostly black. If you want the correct exposure, to reveal properly exposed detail and tone throughout the range of the scene, then an HDR approach will be helpful.

Take multiple shots at differing exposure levels. Experience will tell you what works best with a particular scene. You may only need two or three shots -

Above: Single exposure from camera. Below: Composite HDR image. (Photos: Jim Bornert)

one at normal exposure, one at +2, and one at -2. Or you may want to take a wider range of twelve or twenty shots. Even one shot can work on a scene with a very moderate dynamic range if you make a copy and process the images by altering their exposure in the computer.

Consequently, with a series of RAW files you have the best situation, giving you tons of information to select from for your print. The problem is that your monitor and printer and print paper cannot reveal all this combined HDR image at one time. So, you and your software get to decide what the final image will look like (within the constraints of your printer and paper). This brings up the question, what is a "normal" "out of the camera" "unmanipulated" "unphotoshopped" image? If HDR is just used to bring out what a person would see with their eyes, and is just an adjustment of exposure, isn't it a basic adjustment?

Tone Mapping is what is used to select from all the tonal possibilities to reduce the tones for your monitor and printer. You can choose the tonal emphasis and details that you consider to be important. There is a great deal of information available on the internet. Just google "tone mapping," and 'HDR photography." Tone mapping is what our software is doing in the camera, computer, printer, and paper. If you shoot a JPEG, let you computer process it, and printer print it on whatever paper you have on hand, you have given over your creative ability to

September Meeting

Wheels"

   3rd place: Mike Hicks, "At the Fair"
   Congratulations to these winners! Next month, our contest is "Wildlife." Also, please note that our program is the results of the "Document a Town" outing to Golconda. Bring your best 10 shots from that event for showing!

Linda's Corner

critiqued, but when done in the spirit of friendship and caring, it is a very valuable tool in helping you improve your skill.
   To keep our club growing, get involved. Invite others to join us, lead an outing, share what you would like to do next year, attend planning meetings, run for office or volunteer to help with our meetings. We value you as a member and would love to see your images and hear about your photographic adventures, as well as your ideas.
   We meet the first Tuesday of every month except December (when we have our annual banquet). We meet at the Carnegie Library, 206 South Market St. in Marion, IL. at 7-9 p. m. We dismiss at 9 and congregate at Dairy Queen on DeYoung St. for fellowship, fun and food. Our planning meeting is the third Tuesday of every month except December. We meet at various restaurants, presently at Mackie's Pizza at 6:30 p. m. We usually arrive early so we can dine together prior to the meeting.
   Y'all come! And like Minnie Pearl, "You'll be just so proud to be there!"

SIPS at Mr. Koolz

Mr. Koolz in Marion has agreed to host SIPS member photos at their location (east of the mall north of Rt. 13). Contact Joanna Gray or Lu Horning to sign up. Bill Thomas is on display for October, so go check it out!

SIPS at The Pavilion

The Pavilion in Marion hosting SIPS member photos from Sept. 17 to Dec. 15. We have 11 members displaying; stop by and check it out!

Introduction to HDR

the designers of your hardware and software. So, control it and get creative!
   At the presentation I demonstrated the use of single and multiple images for the process. The software I used was Photoshop HDR Pro, Photomatix Pro, and NIK HDR Efex Pro. They can be found at Adobe.com, HDRsoft.com, and Google.com/NIKcollection. The Photoshop HDR software leaves much to be desired. The NIK and Photomatix are both excellent. But I believe Photomatix is superior, because it gives you the most control over your HDR image. It's interface is well laid out, and provides you with many presets that you can adjust and even make your own presets. NIK is also well laid out and allows you to make presets. The NIK advantage is it's Upoint technology that allows excellent local adjustments. I have been using Photomatix since about 2006 and am very satisfied. All of these programs will give you a free trial period and are reasonably priced for the ability you gain.
   Some basic observations:
   1. Know your camera, especially how to change shutter speeds without looking at the camera display.
   2. Be familiar with the capabilities of your equipment and software.
   3. Use a tripod if you are able, but a steady hand works well. The HDR software can align images.
   4. Use your camera timer to avoid shake.
   5. If hand-held, shoot quickly. Manually focus. Use auto exposure bracketing (AEB) if needed.
   6. Keep your ISO as low as possible. Noise limits the dynamic range of your camera sensor and processor.
   7. Shoot a second sequence. Digital shots are cheap. Between sequences take a shot of your hand or some familiar object so you know where one ends and the next begins when you get the images on the computer.
   8. If there is movement in the scene (which causes ghosting), some can be compensated for by the software. Know the limitations.
   9. Keep your monitor calibrated. Make a shade for it out of cardboard or foam core to block the ambient light.

Workflow - what I do
   1. Compose. Choose your lens and aperture. Take a normal shop and review it. Is it want you want? I normally set my camera on Manual and keep the Aperture the same for all the shots so the depth of field doesn't change, and vary the shutter speed. For moving water you may want to do the opposite for interesting effects.
   2. Take plus shots (+1, +2 . . . +12 or more), whatever you need to reveal the most detail in the dark shadowy areas. Viewing the camera screen is sufficient. When I feel that it is sufficient I take a few more just to be sure. Do the same in the negative stop direction for the bright highlight areas.
   3. Take as few shots as two or as many as you like. More is better, because you have more to choose from. Try different combinations in your HDR software.
   4. Save the resulting HDR file as a PSD, TIFF 8 or 16 bit, or a JPEG, depending on what you will do with it.
   An excellent book on this subject is Creating HDR Photos by Harold Davis. Available from Amazon for twenty dollars. Thank you again for the opportunity to bring this presentation. We look forward to seeing your HDR photos (which can be very "normal").

SIPS Board Nominations

Nominations for the SIPS board were accepted this month. The ballot is:
   President: Linda Bundren
   VP: Bill Thomas
   Treasurer: Dana Tetzlaff
   Secretary of Technology: Jonathan Springer
   Secretary of Records: Joanna Gray
   Board Member (pick 5): Dave Hammond, Sharon Wittke, Jo Dodd, Myers Walker, Mike Hicks
   Write-ins will also be accepted on the ballot. Voting will be done at our October meeting.