

December 2003 * Happy Holidays!

news letter of

palm desert, california



IN FOCUS

Member Photographic Society of America since 1982
Award: Best Use of Color for a Small Club Newsletter, 2001

December 16: Special Date!!

Judge: Carolyn Redman Categories:
NATURE and OPEN - 1 Slide 1 Print each per Person
Creative Subject: Multiples - 2 Slides, 2 Prints
Rotating Subject: RECYCLE BIN: 1 Slide, 1 Print
See November's IN FOCUS for details on subjects.

December's guest judge, **Carolyn Redman**, is long-Time Desert Camera Club member Marilyn Flarueau's "younger" sister. She has several Minolta SLR cameras and a couple new Nikon cameras. Her theme is, "Have camera - Ready to go" any time her sister says, "Let's go take some pictures!" She has been interested in picture taking since the early 1950s.

Carolyn worked for Beckman, Hughes Aircraft and Aetna Life and Casualty. She enjoyed bringing her camera to office events; photos to the person being honored.

She joined the employee-sponsored Beckman-Coulter Camera Club in 1973, and she and her husband Roy are still members. Then she attended several classes in photography and in judging photos. Since then she has joined other camera clubs as well.

She is currently President of Anaheim Camera Enthusiasts (ACEs), Creative Chairperson of S4C and Treasurer of the Southern CA Roundup Chapter of PSA. She has received many awards and medals in ACEs and S4C.

For many years Carolyn entered the National Date Festival Print Competition. She and Roy would spend a day at the festival taking their turn overseeing the Photo Salon.



ELECTION of OFFICERS: Your 2004 nominating committee presented the following state of officers at the November meeting: President, Roger Kipp; Vice President, Lillian Roberts; Secretary, Judie Ruzek; Treasure, Joan Petit-Clair. Voting will be held at the December meeting at which time additional monitions can be made from the floor. Officers will be installed at the Annual Awards Banquet January 10. *Bob Long*

Announcing our new **DESERT CAMERA CLUB WEBSITE!** Thanks to the efforts of **Stuart Lynn**, our club now hosts www.CVDCC.org. It's still in the early stages, and we could use your input - visit the site and tell Stuart what you think! Eventually this will be the preferred way to distribute IN FOCUS online.

I feel all things as dynamic events, being, changing, and interacting with each other in space and time even as I photograph them. *-Wynn Bullock*

Upcoming Events:

Now thru Dec 19: Dana Melton Exhibit, College of the Desert

December 6: S4C Competition

December 9 **SPECIAL DATE:**
DIPSIG Meeting:

December 16 **SPECIAL DATE:**
Judge: CAROLYN REDMAN
Full Competition!
Regular: NATURE, OPEN
Creative: MULTIPLES
Rotating: RECYCLE BIN

Have A Great Holiday!!!

Jan 10: S4C

Jan 17: Deadline for Circle of Confusion Salon Entry, Glendora

Jan 20: DIPSIG

Jan 27: PET PHOTOGRAPHY with Dale Gilkinson and Diane Racey

Jan 31: SoCal Roundup (Program - see S4C-photo.org for more)

Feb 7: S4C

Feb 17: DIPSIG

Feb 24: Competition

Guest Judge: Ann MacGuire

March 6-7: **WORKSHOP!**
MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY
with Nancy Rotenberg

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THE CREATIVE PROCESS: Beyond The Documentary Photograph... Exposing for eye, mind and heart, by Nancy Rotenberg (first published in OUTDOOR PHOTOGRAPHY) Part 1 of 3

“The limitations of photography are in yourself, for what we see is only what we are” -Ernst Haas.

As a beginner photographer, I wanted to know precisely how to “get the picture”, and so relied on formulas and techniques. While these precepts provided a solid foundation, they were only beginnings.

I soon learned that to create images with visual impact and which were more interpretive than documentary, I had to do more than rely on knowledge of f/stops, shutter speeds and equipment. In fact, the voyage of discovery into interpretive photography relied much more on the search towards transcending technical knowledge. It required the courage to venture into the unknown, to climb into the mode of exploration – of subject and light, and to push assumed boundaries of photography.

While studying the various nuances of light, I realized that the light which a photographer brings to the process – their own light – is an even more important tool. When the photographer’s light is an intrinsic part of the image, the experience becomes a bonding of life and art. This is a Gestalt way of approaching photography, a coming together of all parts, resulting in a fuller experience.

Instead of snapshots of life, you respond with your own light, your whole being, thus bringing much more to every image. This is a holistic response and makes seeing a visceral experience. It is about *what* you see, *how* you see, and *in what manner* you convey the story. The photographic process becomes not just about looking, but about searching, feeling, finding, reflecting, taking in, releasing.

You cannot pursue creativity without exploring your own depths. If the process of photography remains superficial, the act of creativity remains dormant. Unliberated living and unliberated photography share a common nemesis.

Exposing for mind and heart might make some feel apprehensive. I can almost hear the moans of protest... “I’m not creative.” “My thinking doesn’t go that way.” “The camera club judge will hate it.” “The rule of thirds is the only way to go.” “I will fail!”

Don’t let those voices drive your bus. Those censoring, inhibiting cries can’t wait to tell you to use the “correct” exposure, the “perfect” composition”, the “right” lighting. Instead of helping, these ever-cautious souls really only provide barriers to creativity and reinforce your fear of failing.

Bypass some of these mind filters. (These, of course, are not the filters that screw onto the front of lenses.) Listen to voices like Freeman Patterson, who invite you to jump up and down with your camera, or Dewitt Jones’ warning about being concerned with “good-ones-per-roll.” Even listen to Woody Allen; “If you’re not failing every now and again it’s a sure sign that you’re not trying anything very innovative.”

This “off-the-track” philosophy does take a leap of faith, but as Julia Cameron, author of “The Artists Way”, writes; “Leap and the net will appear.”

The path that leads you beyond documentation is not always obvious, and, as Joseph Campbell said, “If the path before you is clear, you’re probably on someone else’s.”

Practicing Beyond Documentary Photography... Art From Art:

Pay attention to other artists’ interpretations, as ideas generate ideas. We learn so much from photographers who came before us and who photograph with us. We’re not looking to adopt someone else’s style, but imitation helps you to discover your own voice, strengths and weaknesses.

If you’ve studied other artists, you can bring their expertise to the field. If I’m “stuck” and can’t seem to go further with a subject, I think about some of the work that I’ve admired and wonder what those photographers would do next. Studying other artists’ work encourages you to go deeper, and to throw another log on the fire.

I try to read every photography book I can find, but I also look at watercolor and creative writing books. My office is a resource-rich environment, overflowing with images, books, poems and wonderful music. There are sweet children’s faces everywhere and mementos from special people. You may think that this has nothing to do with photography, but creativity is a lifestyle and each resource is an invitation to a party providing inspiration. “We don’t make a photograph just with a camera; we bring to the act of photography all the books we have read, the movies we have seen, the music we have heard, the people we have loved,” said Ansel Adams.

Continued next month...

Nancy Rotenberg will be conducting a weekend seminar and workshop March 6-7, 2004, hosted by the Desert Camera Club. Watch IN FOCUS for more information.

From The Presidents' Desk

By Joe Ramsey

HOLIDAYS FOR PHOTOGRAPHERS

Thanksgiving is already past but there are lots more festivities still to come. From now through New Year there will be gatherings of family and friends with a spirit that only comes once a year.

How do you plan to remember and share those times? As a photographer these are wonderful opportunities to capture these joyous occasions in photos that can be shared with everyone involved. Not only can you make prints and slides for personal enjoyment but with the widespread distribution possible on the internet your photos can be shared around the world. Now doesn't that warm the cockles of your heart?

Coincidentally, an old school classmate of Scottish ancestry told me last week that he had included a photo I had made of him playing bagpipes in an email to some friends in Scotland and England. He wanted to show them how Americans celebrate their Scottish heritage. This is what makes photography fun.

The coming month offers similar opportunities to all of you. You only have to take advantage of each situation. Thus, my holiday admonition to you is take your camera with you and use it every chance you get. Be sure you have fresh batteries and plenty of film or memory cards then get out there and make lots of memories for yourself, your family and for your friends. You'll be glad you did.



Learning Underwater Photography

By Lillian Roberts

Nature photography is enough of a challenge with both feet planted firmly on the ground. Once you don a wet-suit, mask, fins, and air tanks (plus equipment to help you float, and weights to help you sink), borrow an elaborately unfamiliar camera setup and jump off a perfectly good boat into the open ocean, it begins to feel like an exercise in pure futility.

Nevertheless, Steve Bein and I swam through (sorry) the Nikon School of Underwater Photography, a week-long course held on the small Caribbean island Cayman Brac, this past August. I heartily recommend it for anyone who loves to dive.

The only real requirement is that you be SCUBA certified (refresher courses can be arranged on-site; for that matter so can an entire certification course.) Tuition was a ridiculously low \$1495 plus airfare, including lodging, all meals, 3 boat dives per day, 10 rolls of film, all instruction and use of a full line of Nikonos underwater camera gear. (Starting in 2004, they will offer an all-digital program as well, but tuition is slated to increase.)

Special challenges (besides the obvious):
 _Framing an image while hanging suspended in moving water yet not disturbing the fragile reef
 _Using just the right amount of film – you can't change rolls underwater!
 _Selecting the best lens for a location, often based solely on your guides' description. Some places are great for macro, others best suited to wide angle.
 _Gaining your subject's trust – fish don't seem to like having cameras thrust at their faces any more than some people do!

For more info see www.nikonschool.com.



The **MACRO WORKSHOP** with **Nancy Rotenberg**, March 6-7, looks like a big hit! Please get your registration in as soon as possible – registration forms are enclosed, or have been emailed, and are available on request and at club functions. Help us welcome this superb photographer to the desert! See part 1 of Nancy's article, THE CREATIVE PROCESS, on page 2 of this newsletter. Visit NaturalTapestries.com to see her images!

January's Creative Category – A different perspective: This month, choose a subject and photograph that subject from a different perspective. What this means is rather than stand in front of your subject, frame your shot, then shoot it, explore it from different angles. Be creative in how you look at objects and observe your surroundings. The possibilities are endless. You are allowed 2 prints and 2 slides for this category.

JANUARY'S SPECIAL PROJECT: CAPTURE THE ESSENCE OF FALL: The object of this month's Special Project is capturing the essence of the fall season. Whether it's a landscape of brilliant fall colors, a stack of ripe pumpkins, or kids dressed up for Halloween, there are numerous things that say "fall".

Color correction, brightness and contrast controls, dodging and burning, and cropping are the only adjustments that are permitted for this competition.

The intention of Special Projects is not to see what you can do to an image in PhotoShop, but rather to help you learn to more effectively use your camera and lenses, whether digital or film, to take a better photograph.

Be creative in your use of lenses, filters and lighting. So, go for a drive in the country, go up in the mountains, or just roam around your neighborhood, and find unique fall images. The competition is open to both the print and slide divisions, with 2 entries allowed for each division.

The picture area must be a minimum of 8x10 or larger, mounted on a 16x20 black or white mount board according to club specifications.

If you have any questions, please contact me prior to the night of competition at DsiCameraClub3@aol.com.

S4C Trip Saturday, November 8, 2003 *by Joan Petit-Clair*

At 6:45 am, on Saturday, November 8, 2003, Lillian Roberts, Stuart Lynn and I headed out of the desert to attend the monthly S4C competition in Rosemead, Ca. Being a novice, competing outside of our club was a new experience for me. We arrived in Rosemead around 8:30 and met up with Steve Bein, another Desert Camera Club member.

Inter-Club and Individual competition was scheduled to start promptly at 9:00 am in the following Divisions: Creative, followed by Nature, then a break for lunch, and then back at 1:00 pm for Color and Photo Travel / Photo Journalism.

I was quite impressed with the way S4C ran things. We all congregated in the meeting room where coffee and donuts and competition entry forms were available. Tables were there so that you could fill out your forms before bringing them into the entry receiving. Once your entry forms were filled out, you brought them into the entry receiving room and placed them on the tables in the designated categories.

In the judging room, there is a table across the back where the projector is and the judging committee sits to record and tally scores. The images are scored by a 3-member judge's panel. Once the judging room door closes, no one can enter.

S4C uses the Absolute judging system, each image is judged on its own merit. There is no pass through, and all Class levels are combined and judged together. The image is projected on the screen, scored, the scores called out, and they move on to the next image. Personally, I like the S4C system of judging, which I think is a much fairer system, better than the Relative judging system that we use. By doing a pass through, the judge gets a preview of all the images entered, and can then compare one image to another when giving a score.

Once all the slides for a particular Division are judged, the Competition Chair gives the total number of points needed for an Honorable Mention, how many images there were that scored that many points. They then do a run through of the winning images, giving the titles and photographer's names. This process is repeated for all awards in all Divisions. They do not give out first, second, or third place awards. Winning images receive either an Honorable Mention ribbon or an Award ribbon. After the all competitions are over, you go back into the entry receiving room, pick up your slides and score cards and any ribbons you may have won.

The overall quality of the slides that were entered was excellent and I found it interesting to see how the judges scored them. One thing that was stressed for Nature and Photo Journalism Divisions, was that "the story telling value of a photograph must be weighed more than the pictorial quality." The image should be able to tell its own story, hence the saying "A picture is worth a thousand words." While I didn't always agree with all the scores that they gave, it was definitely a learning experience for me. Some of the Nature and Photojournalism shots were outstanding. Between Lillian, Stuart, Steve and I, we managed to secure nine Honorable Mention ribbons and four Award ribbons.

The S4C definitions for each category follow PSA guidelines. Copies of the S4C Definitions and Descriptions of Divisions will be available at the November meeting for anyone who is interested in competing. It's a great experience and gives you an idea what other clubs are doing.

The next S4C Competition is Saturday, December 7, 2003. The Slide Divisions are Color, PT/PJ and Nature. There will also be Competition in the Print Division. If you plan on entering slides or prints in S4C, please make arrangements to get your slides or prints to Lillian Roberts, Bob Graff, or me well in advance of the December competition.

Members Showcase

What an interesting evening we had at the last Club meeting. It was a nice change to see members work without the competition. It gave us a chance to see what interests each of the participating members.

Ruth Young had some wonderful pictures of pictures that her Father had taken with a very old type of camera. She showed us the prints and we got to meet some of her family along the way.

King McWilliams had a nice variety of pictures that he had put together for our enjoyment. Stuart Lynn showed travel pictures of Rio and Chile and had us all wanting to be there with him and have the opportunity to take some great pictures of those Countries.

Then we had the pleasure of seeing the beautiful Floral Collection that Joan Petit-Clair had compiled. A few odd looking bugs were among the blooms and added interest to some of the prints.

I had the opportunity of going to San Francisco and Alcatraz and showed a slideshow that turned into a tour of Alcatraz. For our finale, Joe Ramsey showed some spectacular shots of England as he followed his wife around with her Choral Tour. Because members were asking what cameras and lenses they used, it made the evening more interactive, and it was a shame that more people didn't participate. Or that more didn't show up to the meeting. We had a good time. We missed you!! *Judie Ruzek, Secretary*

Dana Melton, a former long-time member of the Desert Camera Club, has a one-woman show of her work at a photographic exhibition "Windows to Nature" at the Walter N. Marks Center for the Arts at the College of the Desert in Palm Desert, now through December 19th. Gallery open Monday - Friday, 1-4 PM, admission free.

Ann MacGuire, long-time PSA competitor and S4C member, and our guest judge for Feb 2004, will be exhibiting her work at the Living Desert Thanksgiving weekend, Friday 28Nov-Sunday, 30Nov, 10AM-9PM in the Irvine Patio area (where the education center is located). The theme is "Wildlife and Wild Places". You might imagine that would be nature wildlife (not carousing in Las Vegas) and 'scapes. Check it out if you get the chance!

Don't Miss PhotoTaggers Showcase! At our December meeting PhotoTaggers will display the results of their endeavors over the past seven months (plus summer break). There will be display boards showing all the photos from each camera used in this project. Follow the travels of each camera on the Shooting Log and see what caught the fancy of the photographer each month. Everyone will vote for Best Photos in three categories. Full details for printing and displaying photos have been emailed to PhotoTaggers.

**1st: Stuart Lynn,
INTO THE FUTURE**



**CREATIVE SUBJECT:
ARCHITECTURE**

**Advanced Division
PRINTS**



**3rd: Woody Kaplan,
END OF PIER**

**2nd: Stuart Lynn,
GRANDE PLACE**



SLIDES:
**1st: Karen Wheeler, MINER'S
CABIN**
**2nd: Karen Wheeler,
LEADVILLE RELIC**
(Images Not Available)

**Intermediate Division
PRINTS**

**1st: Stan Spiegel,
CHRISTO REY CHURCH**



**2nd: Edward
Oppenheimer,
SAN FRANCISCO**



Oct Winners, pt 2, cont

**1st: Roger Kipp,
KELSO DEPOT**



**Special Project:
WIDE ANGLE LENS**

PRINTS

**2nd: Lillian Roberts,
TREE & MOUNTAIN**



**3rd: Stuart Lynn,
TOP OF THE ANDES**



**HM: Stan Spiegel,
AUTUMN ASPENS**



**HM: Lillian Roberts,
POPPIES & STORM
CLOUDS**



1st: Lillian Roberts, THE DEEP



SLIDES

**2nd: Karen Wheeler,
PINNACLES
(Image Not Available)**

Ingrid Knight was born north of Bavaria in Germany but ended up in Yucca Valley, with Charlie, her husband of 37 years, three decades ago. She was a secretary in her native country but if you wonder why she is always dressed so beautifully, it is because she worked in “finer women’s wear” at I. Magnum’s in Palm Springs for 15 years.

Knight’s interest in photography began about ten years ago.

“I bought a Nikon 8008 and enjoy this hobby because it brings me out into nature,” she said. “I was in a camera club in Yucca Valley and after they folded I heard about this one. I enjoy coming to meetings to see what others take photos of and how they do it. The judges help us to learn how to improve our pictures. I just love photography.”

Knight has won many ribbons with her color prints and slides.



Bob Graf joined our club a year ago because of his friendship with Jean Cohen. This Milwaukee native is a building inspector and construction consultant. In addition, he raises, breeds, trains and shows Alpacas. He spent one month in Peru as he is also an international judge.

They say that the only difference between men and boys is the price of their toys and Graf is no exception.



“I had a digital camera but they wanted \$135 to fix it so I decided to spend about \$1000 on a Canon 10D,” he said. “Well, I found one for \$1350 and then had to spend \$600 for a lens. I also have an Epson printer 2200. I’ll enter some photos as soon as I know I can get a blue ribbon,” he added with a laugh.

Graf is currently taking a digital class at COD, which he highly recommends.

“I never use automatic equipment and as soon as you learn the adjustments you can have a lot of fun,” he explained. “I wish the people who win (club competitions) would explain how they set up their pictures, lens, setting, etc.”

Here Comes the Judge *by Anice Schwartz*

Is it possible that if we had more information about a judge’s guidelines then we could all enter perfect photos? Maybe not perfect photos, but we’d certainly make better judges.

I was one of the judges for our September club competition and although a real learning experience, it was very hard for me. Judging a photo is a lot more difficult than judging a beauty contest. With beauty contests, you are not friends with or know the people you are dealing with. It is more impersonal, but you still have some information on which to base your decision such as the contestants likes, dislikes, hobbies, educational background, statistics, etc.

If all our members were provided with a photo-judging dictionary of buzzwords and guidelines then we’d be prepared when called upon to fill in as judges for our competitions. This information would not only make us better judges but would alert us as to what to look for when making up our own competition photos.

I realize that the members learn a lot by a judge’s remarks, but I found myself speechless. I just pushed the voting button because I didn’t have the ‘word power’ to critique each photo. We need to get this information together and distributed so the next time I have this opportunity you’ll hear from me.



Newsletter of the
Coachella Valley Desert
Camera Club
June 2003

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Meeting Information: The Desert Camera Club meets the 4th Tuesday of each month, 7PM at The Fountains, 41-505 Carlotta Dr., in Palm Desert. Go east on Hovley from Cook St., past two signals. Carlotta Dr. is the second left after the second signal. The Fountains is about 300 yards north, on the left. Dial 100 and tell the receptionist you are with the Camera Club. Enter, and park almost straight ahead. The auditorium is easy to find down the hall and on the right. Please attend your first meeting as our guest. For information, contact Joe Ramsey: 760-320-4678/ email Dstcamtopdog@mindspring.com or call Joan Petit-Clair: *82 - 341-7265/email DstCameraClub3@aol.com .

DIPSIG, the Digital Photography Special Interest Group, meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month, 6:30PM at The Marriott Courtyard Inn, southwest corner of Frank Sinatra Drive and Cook Street. Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop computer and an extension cord. For information, contact Joe Ramsey: 760-320-4678/ Dstcamtopdog@mindspring.com.

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Digital: Joe Ramsey
Membership: Jean Cohen
Programs: Lillian Roberts
Special Projects: Joan Petit-Clair
Ways and Means: Karen Wheeler
S4C Delegates: Joan Petit-Clair, Lillian Roberts (Slide Chair)
S4C Print Chair: Bob Graf