



Placer Color



Volume 45 Number 10 **Newsletter of the Placer Camera Club** Dec 2007 **est. 1952**

<http://www.placercameraclub.org>

Member Delta Council,

Board Members

President Mike Schumacher
Vice Pres. Richard Myren
Treasurer Judy Hooper
Secretary Tony Middleton
Mem@large Howard Godfrey

Committees

Webpage & Publicity

Sue Barthelow

Education Committee

Howard Godfrey
Bruce Gregory
Jim Bennett

Equipment

Judy Hooper
Richard Myren

Judges for Competition

Karen Wyatt

Competition Data

Judy Hoper
Howard Godfrey

Newsletter

Mike Schumacher

Refreshments

Bonnie Godfrey

Greeters

Howard Godfrey
Karen Wyatt

Placer Camera Club meets the third Tuesday of each month, except July and August, at 7:00PM in the Beecher Room of the Auburn Placer County Library, 350 Nevada Street, Auburn, Ca. **Visitors Welcome!**

This months meeting will be Tuesday Dec 18, **2007**. Informal gathering at **6:30** with the meeting starting **promptly at 7 PM.**

This month we have our projected image evaluations followed by an educational presentation by Truman Holtzclaw. Truman will serve as judge for the evaluations.

This month we also have our annual **cookie exchange**. Each person brings a dozen or more cookies, brownies, candy etc. and a bag or container to bring some home in. The cookies are set out and during the meeting you can take cookies and put them in your bag to take home.

If your creation is homemade please include the recipe.



Shooting for Better Black and White Images

by Sue Barthelow

Lee Whiting's excellent November presentation was about digitally editing your photos to create the best black and white images. If you weren't there, you missed out on some valuable processing tips. One thing Lee pointed out was that captivating black and white images start with your photos. No matter how much digital processing you do, you may find that only a select few of your photos can be easily turned into great black and white prints. For the best results, consider taking pictures specifically for black and white conversion. Here are some tips on how to find subject matter targeted for black and white.

Contrast makes or breaks a black and white image. Try to capture an image that has a variety of colors and shades. After converting it from color to black and white, your image should have at least a bit of black and a bit of white. Then, most importantly, it should show itself off with a multitude of gray tones. Think of the gray tones as you think of colors. Each tone is visually different and carries a different weight in your picture. The colors and their shades are what will give you contrast. Use them to your advantage.

Shapes and patterns strengthen your image. Give your viewer something to look at. Use the shapes and patterns to guide your eyes around the image. Beware of pictures that have too many major elements. A busy composition can weaken the image by overloading the viewer with things that demand attention. Look for a composition that has a single strong element and make that element your subject. Let the other shapes and patterns support your subject and glue the image together.

Texture and surface details promote visual interest. Choose a subject that has at least a bit of texture or surface detail and then bring it out with side-lighting. Side-lighting reveals detail from the shadows it creates. Direct lighting works its way into the nooks and crannies, effectively hiding the ridges and valleys from view. Back lighting will obscure most of the surface details.

The *light* gives impact to your image. Harsh light may result in a picture that has too much contrast and loses too many of the gray tones. This super contrast may be perfect in some instances, but most of the time it's the soft light that will give you the best results. You'll get more shades of gray from soft light.

Keep an eye open for compositions that have these four attributes. If some of your digital color pictures look like they might be good in black and white, use Lee's techniques to convert them. Study different pictures and develop your own style. Try doing a photo

shoot specifically for black and white images. You may find that it helps you search out those images that will convert the best.

‘Through the Viewfinder’

**by
Tony Middleton**

In an attempt to add additional content to our monthly newsletter I was asked to submit a small article on something of interest to me. As many of you know, my photography is based mainly on two mediums, the first being landscapes and most recently structures. With this intent, I will attempt to bring a small bit of my process to you on a regular basis.

Each month I will start with a photograph that found its way to my viewfinder and eventually to my computer for storage and possible future use. Normal for me is to delete more than I save, shoot more than I need, and hope that I find 1 or 2 to keep for future evaluation. This column will highlight one of the keepers. I will submit each photograph without modification except to resize them for this format.



This picture was taken on a cold, crisp, Friday afternoon while Mike S. and I were hunting the elusive ‘keeper’.

After starting our trip with plans to photograph a totally different location we found ourselves wandering up Old hwy 40 stopping along the way to take a few shots of late fall meadows and old buildings as they appeared through the windshield that afternoon. After getting all the way to the often-photographed Donner Lake overlook without much success, we decided to go into Truckee to see if anything presented itself.

We parked downtown and grabbed our chosen gear for the walk we decided to take. On this day I grabbed my Canon 20D with my Canon 10-22 mm super wide-angle lens. I chose this lens because it allows me to get an entire building or point of interest without having to be very far away from my subject. I also took along a Canon Power Shot A520 point and shoot camera I was trying out.

This day the wide-angle paid off because this picture was taken about 10’ from the subject to avoid the support post of the porch from the building next door. The photo was taken in the “P” or program mode on the 20D. In this mode the camera does all of the thinking and makes the needed adjustments. All I need to do is frame the shot, hold steady, and click the shutter (no small feat when it is 25 degrees and I forgot my gloves). As a beginning photographer I use this setting a lot. It provides me with the opportunity to concentrate on the picture and not the equipment.

Things I learned on this trip:

1. Even if your original plan doesn’t work out, keep going. The ‘keeper’ you set out to find may be waiting for you, hiding on the alley side of a building that you can’t see from your windshield.
2. Anticipate the weather. This time of year you can quickly find yourself needing hat, gloves, and coat (not to mention directions to the nearest Starbucks).
3. Be willing to take some time, walk around, and really look to see what is waiting to show itself “through the viewfinder”.

* * * * *



Day Not Going as Planned? Change Your Plans

Text and Photos by Sue Barthelow



We gathered in the Auburn fog at 7 a.m. to start our trip over to Hawk Hill in the Marin Headlands. It had rained on Tuesday and was supposed to rain again on Thursday. This Wednesday should have been a good break in the weather. The four of us expected the migrating raptors to be out in force as they continued their flights down the coast.

We fought the fog and the traffic over to Vallejo where we turned onto Hwy. 37 and crossed the marshlands. It seemed like every

other power pole had a hawk of some kind perched, listening and watching for breakfast.

To our dismay, the coast remained fogged in. A bit of blue opened up overhead, but not enough to bring the birds to the air. It was time to punt, to make the most of the day.

In the woods, the spider webs glistened and the moss dripped. The sun broke through the trees gifting us with a moment of glorious rays beaming through the pines. I searched the woods for award-winning compositions.

Up on the hilltop, the sun played hide and seek with us. The fog rolled about in the canyons below us, playing with our desire for clear views. Its ever-changing patterns provided a wealth of interesting features as it



crept up and down the landscape. The Golden Gate Bridge and finally some of the city poked through the fog, never fully clear but captivating nonetheless. Bicyclists road through the S-curve in the road below.

On Hawk Hill, the volunteer raptor spotters peered in every direction hoping to start their daily count. I took the opportunity to snap a couple of photo journalism shots as they waited patiently.



Moving off the hill and back down into the fog, we drove looking for something else to shoot. We stopped at one of the bunkers left from wars past. The structure hunkered in the damp and provided some fun shots.

Finally giving up on the headlands, we ended up in Sausalito. Buildings and alleyways joined the set of photos in our cameras. Along the waterfront, crabs crawled on in to join the other images. A great blue heron posed for us on the jetty. The scene was

too busy for a great picture, but we had fun with it anyway. Over in the marina, dozens of great reflections beckoned.

Some photo shoots are like that. When things don't go as planned, change your plans. Sometimes, that's when you get your best shots.



Cold Weather Clothing

by Bruce Gregory

If you looking for outdoor clothing and gear try: Cabelas, www.Cabelas.com (try their "bargain cave" for deals), L.L.Bean Co, www.llbean.com (look for "sale" in the left column), and REI, www.REI.com or the store across from Roseville's Galleria, near EXPO.

Cabelas and L.L. Bean carry tall sizes. Look carefully to see that the item you're interested in is one for "outdoor performance", and not just a fashion statement.. Check out the insulation on jackets, type of fabric, etc. I've done business with all three of these companies for years and have found them reliable.

Sierra Trading Post www.sierratradingpost.com (closeouts and seconds) Top quality stuff with cosmetic blemishes mixed in with fashion items. If they have your size, prices are great. Retail Store in Reno.

Bruce

* * * *

Gray Snow

by Mike Schumacher

Do your shots of a snowy winter wonderland turn out gray? Here's something that may help. A digital camera's metering system exposes for middle gray. So if you meter bright snow, you get middle gray snow. Here's what I do, I set my exposure compensation for +1 or +1 1/3. When you take a picture it is vital that you check your histogram. You want it to come close to the right side. If it doesn't, crank up the exposure compensation. If you are clipping on the right side (tall spikes) crank it down. Another thing that helps is to set a custom white balance. Take a picture of open snow, be careful of shadows, and use that as a custom white balance. Another thing that will help is shooting in raw. Snow reflectance will vary on overcast and sunny days. A sunny day will have lots of contrast whereas an overcast day will have soft even lighting. Use your histogram!

* * * *

What is a Histogram?

by Mike Schumacher

A histogram is the representation of values of light in an image. There are 256 values from 0 to 255 with 0 being pure black and 255 being pure white. It's like a plot, values run from black on the left to white on the right and the higher the display from bottom to top the more of that value. Middle gray is in the middle of the graph. When you look at a histogram and see the display bunched up against the left side, your image contains a lot of dark light values and is most likely under exposed. Likewise if it's bunched up against the right side you are most likely over exposed and have blown out the highlights. Most of the time you want a display that is not bunched up against either side. This will allow open shadows and detail in the highlights. A histogram is one very good way to adjust exposure in the field and in the digital darkroom. Most digital cameras and image editing programs have a histogram

* * * *



Swap Shop

For Sale - Canon bg-e2 battery grip for
Canon 20d & 30d \$90

Call or e-mail Mike Schumacher at 530-
367-4505 or radioman@ftcnet.net

FOR SALE

Nikon Nikkor 200mm f/4 Micro IF AIS lens. This is the manual focus model which focuses down to a reproduction ratio of 1:2 (half life size) without any attachments. Even at 1:2 magnification, the free-working distance is approximately 19.5 inches between the front of the lens and the subject. This is one of the big advantages of a long focal length macro lens over shorter ones. This lens is among the few top rated close-up/macro lenses in the world. It is tack sharp and easy to use. It will work on both manual and auto focus Nikon camera bodies, (in manual focus mode of course which is likely all you'd use in macro photography), both film and digital. Many people forget that it is also an excellent telephoto lens.

The glass is flawless. The diaphragm is crisp and smooth with the blades being perfectly dry. It has both the built-in tripod collar and sliding hood shade, each of which operates as new. Both original front & rear caps are included. I'm also providing a 52mm UV-Haze filter if you want to be extra careful with that front element.

As a bonus, also included is the **Nikon 4T Close-up Attachment Lens.** This is a high quality, multi-element diopter which increases the magnification ratio of the base lens without losing any light. It simply screws onto the front of the lens just like a filter. It is a great accessory for this lens. It is in mint condition and comes with its original box and paperwork.

For those that were subjected to my club presentation on Close-up/Macro Photography a few months ago, the majority of the images I shared during that time were captured using this very lens.

I'm looking to get \$310, (which incidentally is less than what comparable lenses are selling for on eBay, *without* the 4T, which is \$30-50 itself). I'd love to see someone in the club continue to enjoy this lens as much as I have.

I'll be bringing the lens to the next few club meetings if you want to attach it to your Nikon (or Fuji) 35mm or digital camera body and see what it can do. I can also be reached at 530-268-3475 or 530-320-8961 or rjgk@suddenlink.net.

Thanks, Richard Myren.

* * * *

If you want to sell or are looking for photography related items members can list them in the newsletter or on the club website. Email or call me. Listings are free for members. Mike 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

* * * *

Huey Monitor Calibration

The club has a Huey monitor calibration system for use by club members. Contact Judy Hooper to 'check out' Huey. 530-888-8308.

* * * *

Calendar of Events

December

18th – Camera Club Meeting – Christmas Party & Proj Image Eval

January

15th – Camera Club Meeting – Print Image Evaluations

Placer Camera Club Webpage

Check out the Placer Camera Club webpage. Webmaster Sue barthelow has been doing a fantastic job! Thanks Sue!

<http://www.placercameraclub.org>

→ *Please feel free to contact me with items for the newsletter!*

Mike Schumacher (Newsletter) 530-367-4505 radioman@ftcnet.net

See you at the meeting Nov 20th at 7 PM!!